

## PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Thursday 19 June 2008 at the Town Hall, Petersfield.

**PRESENT:** Mr G Watkinson (Chairman), Mrs H Ayer, Mr R Ayer and Mr P Molloy .

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mrs S McMorrان (Deputy Town Clerk) Mr P Jones (MCO) and 1 member of the public

### **F 0091**      ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

The Chairman called for nominations for Deputy Chairman. Mr Molloy proposed Mr Hick and this was seconded by Mrs Ayer.

**RESOLVED** that Mr Hick be elected as Deputy Chairman of Finance and General Purposes committee for the ensuing year.

### **F 0092**      CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman had no comments.

### **F 0093**      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs Hick and Ms Vincent.

### **F 0094**      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Ayer declared a personal interest as he was a governor of Herne Junior School, minute number F 0102 refers.

Mr Molloy declared a personal interest as he was the Town Council representative for the Petersfield Town and Town Juniors Football Club, minute numbers F 0102 and F 0109 refer.

**RESOLVED:** that Standing Orders be suspended for a 5 minute period in order for members of the public to discuss matters of interest with Councillors.

As no questions were forthcoming, the meeting was re-convened.

### **F 0095**      APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2008 be approved.

- F 0096      FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES
- No financial recommendations.
- F 0097      GRANTS PANEL
- Members were asked to recommend three members to sit on the Grants Panel.
- RECOMMENDED**    that Mr Watkinson, Mrs Ayer and Ms Vincent be appointed to the Grants Panel for the ensuing year.
- F 0098      STAFF PANEL
- Members were asked to recommend three members to sit on the Staff Panel.
- RECOMMENDED**    that Mr Hick, Mr Jenner, Ms Vincent be appointed to the Staff Panel with Mr Watkinson as stand in deputy.
- F 0099      APPEALS PANEL
- Members were asked to recommend three members plus one stand-in deputy who were not members of the Staff Panel to sit on the Appeals Panel.
- RECOMMENDED**    that Mrs Ayer, Mr Molloy, the Town Mayor be appointed to the Appeals Panel with Mr Bowers as stand in deputy.
- F 0100      TELEPHONE SYSTEM
- The Town Clerk asked that this matter should be deferred to a future meeting of committee as it was likely that the Town Council's contract with BT would be difficult, at this time, to cancel without penalty charges.
- RESOLVED**    that the provision of a new telephone system for the Town Hall be deferred to a future meeting, when the contract with BT is nearing its end..
- F 0101      CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR
- Members were asked to give consideration to the format of the co-option procedure for full council on 7 July 2008.
- Following consideration it was
- RESOLVED**    that candidates be asked to give a presentation (maximum of 5 minutes) to Council on 7 July " Why you want to be a Councillor and what can you do for the community", which would be followed by a question and answer session. Voting on the co-option would then take place by secret ballot.
- F 0102      GRANTS - FIRST TRANCHE JUNE 2008
- RECOMMENDED** that the following grants be awarded:

Petersfield Youth Theatre	-	£750
Festival for Young People	-	£500
Friends of Petersfield Heath	-	£500
Petersfield Cricket Club	-	£1000
Petersfield Town FC	-	£760
Cruse Bereavement Care	-	£250
Herne Junior School	-	£655

F 0103 **ORDERS RAISED UNDER FINANCIAL REGULATION 3.4**

Members were advised that an emergency order had been raised to cover the cost of clearing gullies and replacing gully covers at Love Lane. This was noted and approved.

F 0104 **TOWN GUIDE**

As Mr Hick was not present it was agreed that this item be deferred.

F 0105 **SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Members received a consultation review of sub-regional allocation of primary land-won aggregates in the south coast which was noted.

**RESOLVED** that the document be received and noted and that Councillors be advised to comment individually on-line if required.

F 0106 **FARNBOROUGH AIRPORT**

Members received a preliminary consultation document from TAG Farnborough Airport.

**RESOLVED** that the document be received and noted and that Councillors be advised to comment individually on-line if required.

F 0107 **QUALITY PARISH SCHEME**

The Chairman reminded members that Petersfield was the first town in Hampshire to gain Quality Status.

Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED** that a re-application be made for Petersfield Town Council to retain its Quality Status.

F 0108 **BUDGET COMPARISON FIGURES - YEAR TO DATE**

Members received and noted budget comparison figures for the year to date, copy attached to these minutes at Appendix A. The Town Clerk advised that this was intended to be presented to committee bi-monthly. This was noted.

F 0109

**LOVE LANE SPORTS GROUND:****A. Car Park**

Members received estimates for the re-surfacing of the car park together with a report and recommendation from the MCO which is attached to these minutes at Appendix B.

**RECOMMENDED** that contractor 3 (L. Kattenhorn and Partners) be appointed to carry out the re-surfacing works at the car park at Love Lane with the difference

**B. Casual Hire of Pitches**

Members were asked to set a price for casual hire of football pitches at Love Lane. The pitches were being used by various teams on an ad-hoc basis currently at no charge. It was thought that the identity of the teams involved would be easy to ascertain.

Mrs Ayer had researched other costs of pitches in the area and was of the opinion that the current charge at Penns Farm was too low for a casual hire.

Following discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED** that the charge for a casual hire of a football pitch at both Love Lane Sports Ground and Penns Farm Playing Field be set at £38.50 plus VAT per hire.

**C. Schedule Inspection Summary**

Members received and noted the Zurich Inspection summary on the skate park at Love Lane.

F 0110

**PETERSFIELD TOWN JUNIORS FOOTBALL CLUB - ANNUAL RENT REVIEW**

Members gave consideration to the annual rent review for pitches at Love Lane Sports Ground and Penns Farm Playing Fields.

Members generally felt it was sensible for the rent review to match the RPI increase for the Grounds Maintenance costs.

**RESOLVED** that the charges for pitches at Love Lane Sports Ground and Penns Farm Playing Fields to the Petersfield Town Juniors Football Club be increased by 4.1%.

F 0111

**GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

Members received a report from the Town Clerk a copy of which is attached to these minutes at Appendix C.

To allow Mr Christian Dupont of Voice Grounds Care Limited to address the meeting it was

**RESOLVED** that standing orders be suspended.

Mr Dupont advised those present that whilst his company was happy to agree to an extension to the contract the issue was money. Costs had escalated over the period of the contract. Fuel prices alone had increased by 25%. In reality Mr Dupont stated that the current contract just broke even. He was looking at a 10% increase on the total cost of the contract (£60K) for the extension period of 9 months. He wished to be as reasonable as possible and did not want to hurt the Town Council. He noted that the Town Clerk had advised that a figure must be agreed by the autumn of this year. He voiced the hope that the new contract would be much simpler than the current contract.

The meeting was re-convened.

**RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk and Mr Dupont continue to negotiate and that the Town Clerk report to a future meeting of the Grounds Committee.

**F 0112**      **LITTER PICK**

The Chairman advised that the Town Mayor had ideas for the new format of the litter pick. Following which it was

**RESOLVED** that the format of the litter pick be an agenda item for the Full Council meeting in July 2008.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8 pm.

Appendix  
A

**PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**ACTUAL V BUDGET COMPARISONS**  
**APR - MAY 08**

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Over/Under(-)</u>	<u>%</u>
<b><u>F &amp; GP</u></b>				
Income	22851	4938	-17913	21.61%
Expenditure	62833	17214	-45619	27.40%
	<b>-39982</b>	<b>-12276</b>	<b>-27706</b>	<b>30.70%</b>
<b><u>Public Halls</u></b>				
Income	166663	34738	-131925	20.84%
Expenditure	476247	101060	-375187	21.22%
	<b>-309584</b>	<b>-66322</b>	<b>-243262</b>	<b>21.42%</b>
<b><u>Grounds &amp; Open Spaces</u></b>				
Income	59665	16056	-43609	26.91%
Expenditure	196671	19772	-176899	10.05%
	<b>-137006</b>	<b>-3716</b>	<b>-133290</b>	<b>2.71%</b>
<b><u>Total</u></b>				
Total Income	249179	55732	-193447	22.37%
Total Expenditure	735751	138046	-597705	18.76%
	<b>-486572</b>	<b>-82314</b>	<b>-404258</b>	

**Bank Balances as at 31st May 2008**

Current Account	£8,471.06 OD
30 Day Notice Account	£265,762.15 CR
Fixed Term Account	£501,099.38 CR

## Appendix B

### Love Lane Car Park Refurbishment.

All contractor's quotations satisfy the specifications and include adequate preparation and laying of appropriate bitumen surface, kerbs and edgings and "Acco" channel drains along lower edge of car park, adjacent to pavilion.

Contractor 1.            £48,350.00 + VAT

Total cost includes adequate drainage to 2 x plastic crate soakaways.

Contractor 2.            £47,688.00 + VAT

Total cost includes adequate drainage to 2 x perforated concrete ring soakaways.

Contractor 3.            £38,428.00 + VAT \* (RECOMMENDED)

Total cost includes adequate drainage to 2 x perforated concrete ring soakaways.

Contractor 4.            £66,000.00 + VAT

Total cost includes adequate drainage to 2 x perforated concrete ring soakaways.

MCO  
19/06/08

## Grounds Contract Review

### 1 Institute of Groundsmanship

Officers have met with the Institute of Groundsmanship consultant to consider the best way of moving forward in the re-writing of the contract.

As a result, letters have been written to most of our 'users' requesting comments on the maintenance of the grounds that they use and these will be considered in due course. Similarly, the residents have been invited to comment with an article being included within the newsletter.

Invitations have been given to our major users, such as the sports clubs, Friends of Petersfield Heath and PADAC to attend an interview with the consultant on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

The Grounds Committee and any other councillor who wishes are invited to meet with the consultant at 4.00 p.m. on 3<sup>rd</sup> July to provide thoughts and suggestions on what members wish to see (or not to see) in the re-written contract. Please let either myself or the Deputy Town Clerk know if you wish to attend. If you cannot attend and have opinions that you want the consultant to consider, please pass them to me for onward transmission – preferably by email.

### 2 Existing Contract Extension

Members will be aware of Voice Grounds Care Limited's response to our request for them to extend the current Grounds Maintenance contract by 9 months (attached). I met with the contractor to understand more fully his requirements, the meeting having taken place on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May.

The contractor has stressed that he wishes to be supportive to the Council in accommodating their request, but he also has to consider the matter from his business perspective. He also recognises that it is not in his best interests to 'hurt' the Council financially.

The main points that came from the discussion are as follows:

- All equipment currently used is owned by Voice Grounds Care Ltd
- The equipment was originally purchased to accommodate a 4 year contract with the possibility of a 2 year extension. This timescale is now being extended by a further season
- As a generality, the busiest time of the year for the contractor is the 9 months that we are asking for the contract to be extended for when the income he receives from us probably doesn't reflect the work that is done. The final 3 months of the year is the reverse allowing machine recovery and maintenance

- The contractor is confident that the machinery will last a further year, but with all things mechanical, as equipment ages it tends to cost more to run.
- Economically, the situation has become far more difficult in recent months with fuel prices in particular rising well above the general rate of inflation. Other costs specific to the grounds maintenance industry have also seen very significant rises, such as fertiliser and turf.

I endeavoured to get a steer from the contractor over the level of 'uplift' he was seeking in the price for the 9 month extension. In view of the almost daily increases in the price of fuel, the contractor would not wish to give such a commitment at present, although I pointed out that it was imperative that I had this information before the autumn.

At present, the basic grounds maintenance contract is for just under £60,000 per annum. The best indication I was able to obtain was that at current economic prices, an increase of £5-6,000 would be sought, although further increases in the price of fuel and other costs may alter this. I have given no indication of whether such a figure would be acceptable to the Council or not and have encouraged the contractor to attend the committee meeting to answer any questions that members may have.

Neil Hitch  
Town Clerk  
6<sup>th</sup> June 2008