

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

A meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was held on Thursday 24 March 2005 at the Town Hall, Petersfield.

PRESENT: Mr R Ayer (Chairman)
Mr V Clarke
Mrs J Butler
Mr K Hick
Mr C Jenner
Mr G Watkinson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs B Macken (Town Clerk)
Mrs S Watts (Responsible, Financial
Officer)
Mr B Dutton (Town Mayor)
Petersfield Herald
Petersfield Post

and 0 members of the public

F 0721 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman informed those present that it had been intended to include on the agenda for this meeting an item relating to the Town Council's insurance cover for 2005/6, but unfortunately this had been overlooked during the agenda discussions. The premium for 2005/6 would be paid this month, but the matter would be discussed in detail at the April meeting of this Committee.

F 0722 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All members being present, there were no apologies for absence.

F 0723 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

It was then

RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned for a 5 minute period in order for members of the public to discuss matters of interest with councillors. As no members of the public were present

The meeting was re-convened.

F 0724 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2005 be approved, subject to the following amendments:-

F 0642 Financial Recommendations:
A Grounds Committee:

G 0590 Planting Scheme for Petersfield 2005/2006
- amended to read "At the Grounds Committee meeting on 17 February 2005 members received ..."

The following recommendation included:
"G 0623 Love Lane car park - Members received notice from the Solicitor to EHDC that the lease will terminate on 12 August 2005 and also asking for consideration of the acceptance of the surrender of the lease before that date. Following consideration it was RESOLVED i. that the termination of the lease be regretfully accepted and ii. that the possibility of the Town Council making this a pay car park as a source of income be investigated."

B Public Halls Committee:

PH 0635 Sheet Village Hall fire alarm system - the resolution amended to read "RESOLVED that a manually operated bell be installed and RESOLVED that the following virements be agreed ..."

PH 0636 E Festival Hall office suite - the resolution amended to read "RESOLVED that this be approved by the F&GP Committee and RESOLVED that all movements to and from reserves be approved by F&GP and recommended to full Council if appropriate."

F 0645 Freedom of Information Act - the recommendation amended to read "that the current charging policy be suspended for six months, subject to reasonable requests and that the requests for information be monitored."

F 0725 FINANCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Grounds Committee

No recommendations.

B. Public Halls Committee

No recommendations.

F 0726 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members considered regulation 3.4 which stated that "The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the

expenditure, subject to a limit of £200. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter".

Both the Chairman and RFO felt that the limit of £200 was too low and the Chairman sought proposals for an increase to a more practical level. Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED that Financial Regulation 3.4 be amended to read: "The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £750. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter."

F 0727

COUNCIL TAX LEAFLETS

Members received a letter from the Finance Manager of EHDC, seeking the Town Council's opinion on an improvement in the level of information on Town/Parish expenditure and the ability of the Town Council to provide the necessary level of information.

The Chairman explained that the only heading under which town and parish councils in Hampshire were able to classify their expenditure, was "Other", which was not very informative. However, he believed that the Town Councils in East Hampshire would be able to suggest headings more appropriate for their particular spending, as was shown with Town Councils in the Borough of Waverley. The RFO advised that she had also discussed the matter with Havant and Winchester Councils, whose forms differed from those of Hampshire. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED

- i. that the writer be advised that the Town Council believed that including town/parish councils' expenditure within EHDC's sheet was the right way to go; and under these headings.
- ii. that the RFO liaise with other Town Councils within East Hampshire on possible, alternative headings that would be more meaningful to the public.

F 0728

GRANTS/FUNDING TO APE

Members received a report from the Town Council's

Representative to the Organisation, Mr. Watkinson, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. The new Chairman of Petersfield Marketing Ltd. was Vernon Peake (95 Rival Moor Road, telephone 233714 or 07966 764971) and the new Entertainments Secretary was Sarah Saltiel (telephone no. 268791). Following consideration of the information contained therein, it was

RESOLVED

- i. that the outstanding funding earmarked for APE in 2004/5 not be paid.
- ii. that the Land and Property Manager of EHDC be informed that the Town Council supports markets in The Square (in addition to the markets on Wednesday and Saturday).
- iii. that the Town Council supports the issue of a licence to Petersfield Marketing Ltd.

F 0729

PETERSFIELD TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Members received and considered a letter from the Chairman of the Petersfield Twinning Association regarding an "unofficial twinning" with Warendorf, Germany (copy attached to these minutes). The Chairman emphasized that the Mayor of Warendorf was hoping for a letter of intent, showing that the two Councils give their blessing to the unofficial "twinning" between Petersfield and Warendorf: whilst the Petersfield Twinning Association would welcome the Town Council's support but understood that anything more formal was probably still some way off. Following consideration, it was

RECOMMENDED that an informal letter of support be sent.

F 0730

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE REVIEW

A letter was received from the Mobile Services Manager, seeking the views of Members and their parishioners on the current service, how it could be improved and what changes were felt necessary. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the Mobile Services Manager be advised:-

- i. that the Town Council strongly supports the Library Service, particularly that for Petersfield.
- ii. that the Town Council would like to see the listing for Mobile M8 route 2 Petersfield Rival Moor (w) be identified more specifically as being at the corner of Heath Road and Rival Moor Road.

F 0731

PTC NEWS

Members considered a report from the Deputy Town Clerk (copy attached to these minutes) which advised that it would not be possible for future copies of PTC News to be distributed with the EHDC publication "Partners", but with details of the distribution service offered by Post Office Customer Services. Members agreed that the current distribution was very patchy and the Chairman suggested the use of the newsstands in Waitrose and Tesco as collection points. Queries were raised on the cost of producing the newsletter and whether door-to-door delivery was a requirement of QPS. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED

- i. that Officers obtain a quotation for the door-to-door service, per year, for consideration at the April meeting of this Committee.
- ii. that Officers investigate different means of production, whilst maintaining quality of printing.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

Report for F&GP Committee Meeting 24 March 2005.

APE/Petersfield Marketing – Directors Meeting.

As the Town Council's representative I was invited to attend the meeting of the Directors of Petersfield Marketing, to hear what has happened over the past 6 months, to meet the new Directors and to hear what the plans were for the coming year.

The meeting I found to be very open and most informative. The following bullet points are the key matters, which I believe, will be of interest to councillors: -

1. The title APE has been dropped, in future the title Petersfield Marketing will be used.
2. There are 4 directors (3 male 1 female) and the treasurer. At this moment they are waiting for Mr Cardu to sign a document, which is the final stage before these directors can be formally recognised as directors and their signatures authorise cheques etc.
3. Last years accounts were available to view, once the new directors are installed these will be signed and a copy of the accounts will be forwarded to the Town Council for information. The accounts showed that there is £8,519 available for the coming year (this time last year the funds stood at £5500); there is a small amount of VAT refund to come. The accounts also showed that in the past year a third of the business members had stopped their monthly contributions. The accounting period has been amended and will now run August to August.
4. The new directors discussed ideas for the coming year and have set themselves a number of targets to work towards these include: -
 - a) Organising a "Families Day" in the Square for the end of May holiday weekend.
 - b) To seek the support of those businesses that withdrew from the organisation last year and to seek additional membership.
 - c) To see if they can have a link event Bonfire Night subject to the agreement of the Bonfire Organisers agreement, thereby boosting visitors and funds towards Bonfire costs. (Possible ideas are a parade of floats, Guy Fawkes competition and help raise funds if necessary.
 - d) To hold discussions with the Petersfield in Bloom organisation with a view to providing floral displays in, say the square, and to persuade businesses to sponsor flower baskets/tubs etc.
 - e) To investigate the holding of musical events in the square and possibly the Heath subject to TC approval.
 - f) To investigate an event in support of Children in Need.
 - g) To hold "Family Events" in the Square for the Summer Bank Holiday and as a lead up to Christmas.

5. Much of their thinking depends on holding the licence to operate on the Square other than Market Day and Farmers Market. I was surprised to hear that they only have the licence until 31 March, in order for them to be considered for a new licence for 2005/6 it will require a recommendation from the Town Council to EHDC (Mr Fairhead), which has not been received. This was news to me and, post meeting, I find a surprise to the Town Clerk. I will therefore at the end of my report make a proposal for Council to debate at the earliest opportunity. I was very surprised to hear that they had been told that even if they had a licence all bookings would have to still be done through Mr Fairhead. I thought that this would be an unworkable scenario and suggested that they contact Mr Fairhead and clarify the position.
6. I was also asked if PM would be allowed to hold events on the Heath, I have told them that when they have firm ideas put these in writing to the Town Clerk so that the Grounds Committee may debate and come to a conclusion on this.
7. There then followed a lengthy discussion on Christmas and in particular the lighting of Petersfield at Christmas. There were a number of thoughts and ideas, it is my understanding that the Directors are very aware that last year was "disappointing", whatever is done this year must be of good quality and effective. This may mean concentrating on the Square decorations this year and improve High Street/Lavant Street next year. It all depends on cost (government H&S regulations don't help) and getting volunteers to help check, build and help with the installation. To this end it is intended to call a meeting where townsfolk can offer their ideas and also offer their help. This meeting will be in the not too distant future, date, time and place to be published in the press. The directors also intend talking to other town and parish organisations to see what, how and at what cost they decorate their town or village.

The meeting concluded with some questions directed at me.

- First I was asked if I could state the Town Councils position with Petersfield Marketing particularly with respect to any possible funding. My response was that the Town Council supported the principles marketing Petersfield by bringing more people into the town we were not of a mind to just hand out ratepayers money willy nilly. I then explained that they were on the "perennial" grants list, which was considered automatically every year when the budget was compiled. A request for Grant funding would be considered providing a breakdown of what the funding was required for and a set of accounts so that the council could see that previous funds had been spent in an appropriate manner. Such requests should be made in writing to the Town Clerk then F&GP would debate and approve if appropriate. The same applied for funds towards Christmas Lights.
- Secondly I was also asked if I had any thoughts on how to improve their "image" and overcome a rather poor and negative press. My response was "not to bite off more than they could chew" i.e. don't say you are going to do

something and then for it not to happen for any reason. Also to cultivate the press by giving them early notice of events and a full honest response to any appropriate questions that reporters may have from time to time.

Before leaving the meeting I asked if I could be given any information about the "Snowflake" decorations from last Christmas. The Directors understand that the firm that supplied them stated that this type of decoration had not been tried in the open before. It was also understood that the firm had asked for a length of the supply cable and as many snowflake units as remain to be returned for investigation, then after further testing replacement strings, which will all be at the firm's expense. The Chairman is waiting to receive the firm's address from Mr Cardu; the firm will then be contacted to find exactly where to return the items and the best method of shipment.

In conclusion I found the meeting to be very open and of great help to me, the directors also thanked me for my time and explanations as to how the councils grants policy worked. I feel confident enough to say that in my opinion that the recommendation I made to F&GP some weeks ago not to release the remaining grant funding from 2004/05 was a correct judgement and that this should remain as Petersfield Marketing are not in debt or urgent need of those monies. I can foresee a request for some of next years funding to be release in the next month or two.

I would now like to make a recommendation: - that Mr Fairhead, at EHDC, be informed that we support the issue of the licence to Petersfield Marketing to manage Petersfield Square, excluding Petersfield Market on Wednesday's and Saturday's and the monthly Sunday Farmers Market.

M G Watkinson
Town Councillor.

23 March 2005.

fac. 1/3/05

Postcard ack sent @
SD request > 1/3/05.

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PETERSFIELD TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Rowans,
Reservoir Lane,
Petersfield,
Hants.
GU32 2HZ

28th February, 2005

Brian Dutton, Esq.,
Town Mayor,
The Town Hall,
Heath Road,
Petersfield, Hants.

Dear Brian,

This letter is an official notification that we in the Twinning Association have heard from Warendorf that the mayor there, Herr Jochen Walter, would like to take the budding links between our two towns a step further by having a 'letter of intent' signed by both mayors, showing that the two councils give their blessing to the unofficial 'twinning' between Petersfield and Warendorf. This is something that the then German mayor and Michel Bentot, mayor of Barentin, put forward as long ago as 1992 when the charter between Petersfield and Barentin was signed. It was pointed out at the time that we felt we needed to make a success of one partnership before becoming involved in a second one, though it was agreed that to make a triangular link between the three towns one day would be a good idea.

As you know, we here have had visits from people in Warendorf, and some of us in the Twinning Association have visited there (and plan to go again this year) over the past 3-4 years. The friendships already made are beginning to blossom, and there is a really warm atmosphere between those who have got to know each other. However, it has been pointed out to the Germans that there is very little possibility of any civic money being available for a formal charter. We also know that the Germans have virtually no money for such a charter either.

However, it seems to be felt in their council that they would like to acknowledge the good work already done for Anglo-German relations by

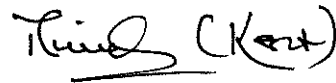
both ourselves and their Friendship Group *without* any civic expenditure being involved on either side. Apparently, Herr Walter had hoped to have a 'letter of intent' signed by yourself and him during the weekend early in May when Warendorf and Barentin are celebrating 40 years of twinning. Understandably, because of the V.E. Day commemorations in Petersfield at the same time this will not be possible. I did explain on the telephone last week to our main contact in Warendorf that, in any case, I was sure our council would need time to consider this proposal.

Perhaps you would have time in the near future to bring this letter to the notice of the other councillors, so that they are aware of the suggestions of the Warendorfers. As Chairman of the Twinning Association I can say that our members would welcome the council's support but we understand that anything more formal is probably still some way off, though it would be nice to think that that may be possible some time in the future.

Meanwhile, having received an invitation from the Warendorf Friendship Group, there are seven members of the Association's committee (including Councillor Kenneth Hick and his wife) planning to attend the 40th anniversary celebrations in Warendorf in May.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim (Kerr)". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Chairman: Petersfield Twinning Association

Distribution of Newsletter to be discussed at F & GP 21 March 2005

I have spoken to Steve Bradley at EHDC to ask if it would be possible to “piggy back” the distribution of PTC News with Partners Magazine. Unfortunately Steve has advised that this will not be possible.

The Post Office Customer Services advises that the Post Office operates “Door to Door with the Post Office” to deliver leaflets at a cost (for under 20,000 copies) of £48.50. This would cost £194 per year to deliver the newsletter to every household in Petersfield. This would be covered by the budget provision of £2060 for next financial year.

I am currently trying to ascertain further information regarding this service (including confirmation of the cost!), which I hope to have before the meeting on the 21 March 2005.

Sue McMorran
18 March 2005