



Cricklade Town Council

First Town on the Thames

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POLICY & RESOURCES MEETING

Monday, 7th November 2011

7pm at Ockwells

Councillors present – Cllr G Chapman (Vice-Chair)

Cllr B Beasley

Cllr M Clarke

Cllr J Harmer

Cllr M Hatton

Cllr A Jensen

Cllr J Norman

Cllr Robertson

Cllr R Szybiak

Cllr Colmer (Wiltshire Councillor and non-voting member of this committee)

Five members of the public were also present.

Fire evacuation instructions were pointed out before commencement of the meeting.

Public Question Time - There were no questions.

MINUTES

11.24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor D Tetlow.

11.25 Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest	Action
Cllr M Hatton	6 – Town Council Grants	Personal	Member of Christmas Lights Team	Spoke and voted

11.26 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting dated 12th September 2011 were approved as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

11.27 Clerk's Report. The Clerk's report was **NOTED** as follows:

11.16	Thames Hall – At the meeting on 12 th September, Members had resolved that: i) A new temporary agreement between the Town Council and the Thames Hall Management Committee (THMC) be drawn up extending to end March 2012 ii) A meeting should be held between the Chair of the THMC, hall users and CTC's representatives to discuss concerns raised iii) Investigate with other local groups the possibility of acquiring an industrial floor cleaner for use in the Thames Hall and other community buildings. A new agreement had been drawn up to end March 2012 and signed by the Chair of THMC and the Town Clerk. A date was awaited from the THMC for a hall users meeting with CTC representatives. Now that remedial work had been completed to the floor, investigations around the possibility of acquiring an industrial cleaner would begin. Ongoing
11.17	Ockwells – See Minute 11.30.
11.18	Tourism – See Minute 11.31.

11.19	<p>Front Office Opening Hours – At the P&R meeting on 12th September, Members resolved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To agree the new opening hours for the Front Office which would be 10am – 5pm, Monday – Thursday and 10am – 4.30pm on Fridays ii) That the funding for the increased hours from 19.5 to 25 hours for the new Administrator/Receptionist beyond end March 2012 would be revisited during the 2012/13 precept round iii) To delegate authority to the Town Clerk for a start date for the revised hours (dependant on the start date of the new member of staff) and any publicity around this (Chronicle, Notices, etc) <p>The new opening hours had begun on Tuesday, 1st November. An element for the funding of the increased hours for the Administrator/Receptionist was included in the budget sheets for the 2012/13. The new hours had been advertised through the Chronicle, on notices throughout the town and on the website. Neighbouring town and parish councils, Wiltshire Council, TICs and local organisations and voluntary groups had all been informed via e-mail.</p> <p>Closed</p>
11.20	Budget 2012/13 – Precept Planning Process – See Minute 11.35.

11.28 Correspondence

Members **NOTED** the contents of a letter from the Lake 12 Partnership which confirmed that the group were no longer fundraising for the purchase of the lease for Lake 12 as the guide price was prohibitively high. A grant of £100 awarded by this committee on 12th September (Minute 11.15) had subsequently been returned.

Members **AGREED** that a letter be sent by the Town Clerk to the Treasurer of the Partnership offering encouragement for its continuing campaign to maintain the lake and an outdoor educational centre.

11.29 Town Council Grants

There were 3 grant applications to consider:

Cricklade Cricket Club – Members **RESOLVED** to award £1,000 to the Cricket Club towards the installation of fencing around the perimeter of the cricket ground. (*With Powers – Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19*)

Cricklade Art Group – Members **RESOLVED** to award £402 to the Art Group towards the purchase of exhibition shelving and display lighting. (*With Powers – Local Government Act 1972 s.145*)

1st Cricklade Guides – Members **RESOLVED** to award £395 towards craft and sports equipment for guiding activities. (*S137. Local Government Act 1972 s137*).

Members **NOTED** that the balance remaining in the 2011/12 budget was **£248**.

11.30 Ockwells

Members **NOTED** a report by the Town Clerk giving an update on Working Party discussions with Wiltshire Council around the renewal of the lease on 113, High Street due to expire in May 2012.

In line with the Ockwells Working Party recommendations, Members **RESOLVED** that:

- i) In view of the work around a split site campus for Cricklade (with the options of a Town Centre site being either Ockwells or the Police Station) then the current Ockwells lease be held over until such time that the outcome of the Shadow Community Operations Board's proposal is known. And, to avoid legal costs, that this takes the form of an exchange of letters with the landlord, Wiltshire Council, to include, where possible, a variation on the arrangements around service charges and
- ii) Authority is given to the Working Party to continue discussions with Wiltshire Council around the continuation of the sub lease for the Wiltshire Council office, the contribution of the £10,000 towards the original Ockwells purchase

11.31 Tourism in Cricklade

Members **NOTED** a report by the Town Clerk. Councillor Clarke, Chair of the Working Party, gave a brief overview of progress, the main points of which were **NOTED** and included that:

- Work set out on the Actions List was taking place
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter) would soon be added (at no cost) to the website
- Membership of the Working Party now included the Chair of the Business Association
- Discussions had begun with Cricklade Bloomers around a potential project to improve signage to the entrances to the town, more details of which would be brought to a future meeting.

In line with recommendations by the Tourism Working Party, Members **RESOLVED** that £250 be added as part of the 2012/13 P&R Committee budget line for subscriptions (Code 1524) towards shared membership of Visit Wiltshire should the Business Association agree to go ahead with this joint approach.

11.32 Civic Regalia

Members **NOTED** a report and recommendations by the Town Clerk about a proposal for additional civic regalia. Main points of discussion were that:

- The Chair of the Council had a chain of office and the Vice Chair, who also had a representational role, had no regalia
- There had been an increase in civic and other events
- Although one option was that all Members were issued with Council badges, it was more appropriate for the Chair and Vice Chair to be able to properly represent the town. And that Councillors should anyway be well known within their community without the need for an official civic badge
- It was important that any regalia was of high quality as it would be used by Council representatives for many years

Members **RESOLVED** that additional civic regalia was needed for the Vice Chair only and that the Town Clerk researches the options for high quality medal and neck ribbon style regalia up to a cost of £750 and submits a report and recommendation for consideration by Full Town Council as a one-off payment from General Reserves.

11.33 Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

Members **NOTED** a short report about the Town Council office opening hours over the Christmas and New Year period and **AGREED** that there should be a privilege holiday on Wednesday, 28th December.

Friday, 23 rd December	Open – normal working hours
Monday, 26 th December	Closed (Public Holiday – Boxing Day)
Tuesday, 27 th December	Closed (Public Holiday in lieu of Christmas Day)
Wednesday, 28 th December	Closed
Thursday, 29 th December	Open – normal working hours
Friday, 30 st December	Open – normal working hours
Monday, 2 nd January	Closed (Public Holiday in lieu of New Years Day)

The Town Council Offices to re-open as normal on Tuesday, 3rd January 2012.

11.34 Schedule of Meetings 2012

Members **NOTED** the Schedule of Meetings for 2012.

11.35 Precept 2012/13

The Budget Sheets and proposed expenditure for the Policy and Resources Committee were considered together with a report by the Town Clerk. General points to note were:

- As in 2011/12 central government would again be awarding grant money to principal authorities such as Wiltshire Council (and the Police and Fire Authorities) to the equivalent of a 2.5% increase of their 2011-12 council tax if they froze the 2012/13 tax. Town and parish councils would not be included in the scheme and would not have to freeze the local precept.
- The Band D Council Tax Base for Cricklade which is used to calculate the overall

precept figure has been *estimated* at 1615.48 - a rise from last year's 1595.05 households. The rise is due to a number of factors less unoccupied houses, a decrease in discount claimants, new builds, etc.

- In line with previous years, Cricklade Town Council will be contributing to the North Wiltshire edition of the Wiltshire Council's Tax leaflet distributed to all households.
- The precept figure must be with Wiltshire Council by 20th January 2012.

Specific discussion points about the proposed Policy and Resources Budget for 2011/12 were:

- That late submission by Wiltshire Council of the forecast of Service Charges for 2011 may have an impact on the final precept figure levied to Wiltshire Council
- A decision on whether Wiltshire Council would renew its sub lease on the small ground floor room was still awaited (this would affect the income line)

Members also considered Budget Sheets submitted by the Planning, Transport & Conservation and Community & Leisure Committees and **AGREED** that a number of one-off payments totalling £9,950 could be made from General Reserves. These were:

Election Expenses	£200
CTC Open Space	£2,000
Diamond Jubilee	£5,000
Grant to Cricklade Leisure Centre	£2,000
Civic Regalia	£750

A Summary Sheet (which showed an estimate of what the precept to levy to Wiltshire Council would be) was circulated to Members and with the above adjustments, this represented an increase of 3.5% on the 2011/12 precept.

It was **RESOLVED** that a precept figure of 2.5% should be recommended with a report by the Town Clerk to Full Town Council on 5th December. In order to achieve that figure, Full Council should consider:

- i) the above payments from General Reserves,
- ii) reductions for the following budget lines:
 - 1101 -1102- 1103** - The contingency element of the salary/NI and pensions (a reduction of 1%)
 - 1661/2**- Grants – A reduction of £500
 - 1518**- Ockwell Service Charges – A reduction of £500
- iii) including income lines with regard to sales of Jubilee promotional items in 2012/13
- iv) a review of the Groundsmen's Machinery Schedule (C&L Budget Code Line 2563)

Also, that an analytical review of TIP sales is made as a separate exercise.

11.36 Working Party Updates

Members **NOTED** updates for the Ockwells and Tourism Working Parties.

The meeting closed at 8.33pm