

REPORT of the Meeting of the Finance and Policy
Committee held 29th October 2015

Present: Cllr: Helen Harrison (Chairman)

Cllrs: Benj Emmerson
Bob Griffin
Shirley Holloway
Clive Parkinson
Guy Rawlinson
Matthew Stringer
Angela Symonds
Gail Whitehead
Judith Payne (Town Clerk)
Sandra Richardson (Deputy Town Clerk)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Brett Harrison introduced himself as a member of Thornbury Composting Site and referred to a letter he had sent to members requesting a revenue grant for the Site based on the fact that Council staff used the composting site on a regular basis to deposit green waste. Mr. Harrison had not intended to discourage Council's outside staff from depositing the waste at the site and hoped that it had not been interpreted in this way. Cllr. Clive Parkinson said that Council had a standard format for considering grants which entailed completing a formal application form giving detailed information on why grant aid was required. Cllr. Parkinson also advised that the reason Council staff were asked to make arrangements elsewhere for the disposal of the green waste was because it was apparent that the capacity at the site was overstretched necessitating extra loads of clearance. It was hoped that if Council stopped using the site the pressure would be relieved.

Mr. Harrison was advised that he would be sent a formal application form which would be considered in December.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr: Maggie Tyrrell (Other Commitment)

2. POLICE MATTERS

PC Natalie Jones had sent apologies for non-attendance and had provided a report for members' information.

The following matters were brought to members' attention.

- A police check of the toilets in several of the public houses in Thornbury had revealed traces of cocaine in the male and female facilities in all the tested pubs. Further checks would be made and officers would be accompanied by a South Gloucestershire Council Licence Officer.
- A call had been received from a Bath Road resident reporting that youths were smoking cannabis at the rear of her property. Police had completed regular patrols but, to date, nobody had been seen in the area. The situation would continue to be monitored.

- Anti-social behaviour had been reported relating to youths running across Thornbury Hospital roof. Calls will be monitored and the area will be patrolled when possible.
- A theft had been reported in a High Street shop. Evidence was seized which is being examined by Crime Scene Investigators.
- On 19th October a cat had been shot by an air rifle in Hamble Close and had subsequently died from its injuries. Enquiries into the incident are on-going.
- Thornbury Leisure Centre reported an incident of anti-social behaviour involving approx. 20 youths aged between 13/14 congregating around the fire exits creating a nuisance. Police had completed an area tour without any trace of the youths.
- On 28th October unknown offenders smashed their way into the High Street branch of Barclays Bank and used gas canisters to gain entry into the ATM. 2 persons on motorbikes were seen leaving the scene and there is an on-going investigation by CID
- Also on 28th October a garage was broken into in Park Road and property valued at approx. £2,000 was stolen. Police are investigating the incident.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

(a) Project Steering Group for Thornbury Hospital

There was nothing to report on this matter at the present time.

(b) Safer and Stronger Community Group

Correspondence had been received from Robert Walsh, South Gloucestershire Council's Head of Safer and Stronger Communities, advising that a solution had been found to continue providing SSCGs across the whole of South Gloucestershire following the reduction of resources supporting the Groups. The solution was to reduce the number of groups from 20 to 14 by amalgamation and the meetings to be convened three times a year instead of four. It was proposed that the Thornbury and Alveston group amalgamate with the Severn Group.

Members discussed the matter and it was agreed that the Clerk write to South Gloucestershire Council suggesting that the Safer and Stronger Community Groups and the Area Forums should cover the same areas which would result in Thornbury and Alveston being amalgamated with Severnside.

(c) Youth Provision in Thornbury – Potential Changes to Youth Services Funding

A letter had been received from Peter Murphy, South Gloucestershire Council's Director for Children, Adults & Health advising of potential changes relating to the Council's Positive Activities Subsidy (PAS) grant. The PAS was established for a three year period 2013-16 to support organisations providing positive activities for young people in South Gloucestershire. South Gloucestershire Council members had requested that a consultation takes place to assess what the impact may be if the PAS programme was discontinued after March 2016.

Members expressed grave concern at South Gloucestershire Council's possible decision to cut its £30,000 contribution to the Youth Service which, with Town Council's grant of £10,600, ensures the viability of Thornbury's very popular and vibrant Youth Club.

It was agreed to oppose any cut in the PAS which would result in the closure of the Youth Club. The Club has helped vulnerable young people and has certainly been instrumental in reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour in the town, a fact that has been confirmed by the police.

(d) Creating a Dementia Friendly Community

The next meeting of the Group will be held on 12th November.

(e) Castle School Students – Ideas for a Teen Council

There was nothing further to report on this matter at the present time. It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda until further information had been received.

(f) Police Premises in the Town Centre

The Clerk had received a draft Heads of Terms of Lease from the Police and would be perusing its contents in the next few days. Works on the premises would commence on 2nd November 2015 and were expected to take approximately three weeks to complete.

The information was noted.

(g) Remembrance Day Road Closures and Street Marshalling

Arrangements for Remembrance Day had been agreed and Cllr. Matthew Stringer advised that he had booked the Chantry for refreshments after the service and ordered cakes from Riddifords.

(h) Request for a Plaque on the Pump

A letter had been received from Mrs. Fergus, the daughter of Lyndon and Kathleen Hawkins requesting permission to place a plaque on the Town Pump in memory of her parents who had been donated the pump to the town.

A copy of the wording and design of the plaque had been provided and members agreed to the placement and suggested that the best location would be on the slab at the base of the pump.

(i) John Riddiford – Parking for First Responder Vehicle

Cllr. Clare Fardell was pleased to advise members that South Gloucestershire Council had agreed to provide a waiver for John Riddiford to park his First Responder Vehicle in the residents' parking zone at the top of the High Street. The information was welcomed.

4. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(a) Retirement of Town Clerk and Appointment of Successor

A draft timetable prepared by the Chairman had been tabled for members' information. Agreed that the timetable be adopted as below:-

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|-------|--|---|---|
| (i) | Advertise post | - | Friday 30 th October |
| (ii) | Closing date two weeks after Posting | - | Friday 13 th November |
| (iii) | Agree Shortlist | - | By Wednesday 18 th November |
| (iv) | First Interview – interview content to be confirmed | - | Week commencing 30 th November |
| (v) | Second and Final interview for no more than three candidates – interview content to be confirmed | - | Week commencing 14 th December |
| (vi) | Offer post | - | Week commencing 21 st December |

It was agreed that the timetable be adopted as a basis for the recruitment programme.

Copies of the following had also been tabled by the Chairman for members' consideration:-

(i) Copy of Advertisement

A draft advertisement had been tabled and was approved as drafted. It was agreed to place the advertisement on the 'Opportunities' website, the Society of Local Council Clerks' website and on Council's own website with a facility to apply on line.

(ii) Job Description

It was agreed that the Job Description be approved as drafted for use as part of the application package.

(iii) Person Specification

The specification stated Essential Attributes and Desirable Attributes for a list of different aspects of the job. The specification was approved as drafted.

(iv) Structure Plan

This plan showed the staff and committee structure of Thornbury Town Council.

(v) Application Form

A copy of the application form was approved as drafted.

(vi) Salary Scale

It was agreed that the post be offered commencing at national salary point 47 (without a CILCA qualification) or point 48 (with qualification) rising to point 51.

It was agreed that the Final Interview Panel would consist of Cllrs. Guy Rawlinson, Helen Harrison, Maggie Tyrrell and Clive Parkinson

(b) Request for Twinning with Pibrac, France

An e-mail had been received from Vanessa Gilbert, a local councillor, in the French town of Pibrac requesting that consideration be given to Thornbury twinning with Pibrac. Her Council was extremely keen to twin Pibrac with a town that had a similar profile (size, links to Airbus, etc.) and she had included a list geographical, food and wine, cultural, festival and historical points to support her request.

Members discussed the proposal and agreed that further information should be sought especially what twinning arrangements did Pibrac Council envisage. This information would be required before the views of Thornbury's local residents could be ascertained. It was also noted that Thornbury's neighbouring parish Alveston was twinned with Courville-sur-Eure in France,

It was agreed to obtain more information from Vanessa Gilbert.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement for September was received and noted.

6. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

(a) Resolved that the following accounts paid out of meeting be approved:-

South Gloucestershire Council	Rates (October) – Town Hall	1294.00
South Gloucestershire Council	Rates (October) - Cemetery	278.00

(b) It was agreed that the following accounts now due for payment be approved:-

Central Services

Danwood Group Ltd	Extra copy charge	46.44
Postage by Phone – Pitney Bowes	Franking machine top up	160.80
Yate Supplies	Heavy duty bin liners	62.18

Playing Fields & Cemetery

Abbey Loos Ltd	Hire of standard unit	109.20
Bowcom	Grass seed	281.23
GAP Supplies Ltd	Sand and cement etc	133.28
HAGS SMP Ltd	Washer and nut	23.52
Murray Hire Centres Ltd	Motor and transformer	48.60
Playdale Playgrounds Ltd	Play equipment	1390.20
Sullivans	Oil	46.00
Sullivans	Blades and air filter	28.62
Travis Perkins Ltd	Cement etc	42.55
Travis Perkins Ltd	No nails	12.19
Brass Founders	Brass Plaque	119.64
Matrix BES	Repairs to MPF Flat	4854.79
Barriersdirect	Height Restriction Barrier –MPF	964.66

Environment

Thornbury garden Shop	TIB Autumn Plants	1215.84
T & J Owen	Autumn Planting – Town Hall	609.36
T & J Owen	Autumn Planting – TIB	60.00
T & J Owen	Autumn Planting – TIB	662.76
Thorn District Heritage Trust	Tea Towels	28.50

Grants & Contingencies

The Festive Lighting Company	Christmas Lights	3736.92
LITE Ltd	Christmas Lights	2268.00
Citizen's Advice Bureau	Grant	1000.00

7. CORRESPONDENCE

(a) South Gloucestershire Council - Draft Street Trading Policy and Application Guidelines 2015-2018

Copies of the Policy and Guidelines had been circulated to members, via e-mail, prior to the meeting and the information was received and noted.

(b) South Gloucestershire Council- Special Expenses & LCTR Support Grant – Consultations

There was nothing further to report on this matter.

(c) South Gloucestershire Council – Review of Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Team 2015

Copies of the Review had been e-mailed to members prior to the meeting for information. Members considered the information and felt that inappropriate expenditure should be looked at on an individual parish basis. As far as Thornbury was concerned there should be no changes to the existing provision.

Copies of the minutes had been e-mailed to members prior to the meeting and the information was received and noted.

(d) South Gloucestershire Council – Queen Elizabeth – 90th Birthday Celebrations

Copies of an e-mail from South Gloucestershire Council's Chief Executive's Personal Assistant concerning details of an event to mark the Queen's 90th Birthday had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. It was anticipated that the event would be in the form of a service at St. Mary's Church on Thursday 21st April 2016, would be district-wide and by invitation only. The Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Dame Janet Trotter, would be organising the event and had chosen Thornbury as a form of recognition for the town.

Certain information was requested as follows:-

- Who would be chair of Council in April 2016
- Were members aware of any parishioners who would be 90 on 21 April 2016
- Were members aware of any parishioners who would already be in their 90s in 2016
- Were members aware of any voluntary groups/charities that they thought should be invited.

Members felt that more information was required on the criteria for local groups/charities but agreed that, in the first instance it would be helpful if the Clerk wrote to local nursing homes etc. to ascertain the number of nonagenarians in the town that may be eligible for an invitation.

8. SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATIONS

No publications had been received.