

REPORT of the Meeting of the Finance and Policy
Committee held 3rd March 2016

Present: Cllr: Guy Rawlinson (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs: Bob Griffin
Benj Emmerson
Shirley Holloway
Clive Parkinson
Angela Symonds
Maggie Tyrrell (late arrival)
Gail Whitehead
Judith Payne (Town Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: Helen Harrison (Out of Thornbury)
Matthew Stringer (Family Commitment)

2. POLICE MATTERS

The police were not in attendance but a copy of the report produced for the Town Centre Partnership had been circulated to members, via e-mail, prior to the meeting.

The following matters were brought to members' attention:-

- Staffing Levels were good at the present time, with 2 beat managers, a full time special constable and 3 PCSOs
- The organisation was looking to change the way events were policed, reducing the supply of parking cones and the policing of major events, but locally the Thornbury team were committed to Thornbury and will do all they can to continue supporting local events.
- There have been low level thefts in Tesco, the Co-op and the Chemists most of which are still under investigation and not thought to involve local suspects.
- 6 persons have been banned under the "Pub Watch" Scheme most of the incidences had been in the White Lion over Christmas.
- Youth and ASB type incidents remain low with just a minor problem with skateboarders in St. Mary Centre. This situation has improved over recent weeks
- Drugs are still a problem locally but the situation has been improving with local police targeting dealers. PC Sean White was working to improve the situation further.
- A vagrant has been sleeping rough in St. Mary Centre and, although this male was not a major problem for the police he was arrested under the Mental Health Act. He was known to the Police but he has not been seen in the town for about two weeks.
- Burglaries have been the main issues over the winter period with a spate before Christmas but with no suspects arrested. Another spate occurred in January/February with houses broken into and money/phones and, sometimes, vehicles stolen. A local male was arrested in Thornbury Library and the burglaries have ceased.
- A new neighbourhood watch group will be created in Warwick Place which will include the Church and Castle area from Kington Lane.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

(a) Thornbury Hospital/Health Centre Development

Cllr. Shirley Holloway reported on a telephone conversation with Ben Bennett when he stated that the key to the Health Project was to have an affordable plan for the Hospital Project. At the present time there were delays over the land sale but, as planned, the outline stage of the process should be available by March and the final terms of the land sale by July. It will then take approximately 18 months to build and organise the sequencing of the work. It is, however, likely that Frenchay will be built first as the site is clear. Mr. Bennett confirmed that Out-Patient services will be provided but he was unable to say where that would be.

Cllr. Holloway had also received an e-mail from Julie Sharman, Business and Quality Lead for Sirona Care, which stated that the company was in the process of putting a business case together for Thornbury Hospital and Ms. Sharman was optimistic that the case would be robust. She did not think that much progress had been made with the GPs and expressed her disappointment at this lost opportunity. Ms Sharman advised that it was hoped to keep a dialogue going with the GPs for a future redevelopment of the Health Centre.

The information was noted.

(b) Safer and Stronger Community Group – Meeting of 23.2.16

9 people had turned up for the meeting and the one main item concerning Thornbury was the request for a crossing outside Crossways School. It was agreed that, in the interest of children's safety, the installation of a pedestrian crossing would be important. The request was agreed at the subsequent meeting of the Area Forum. The information was noted.

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

There was nothing further to report on this matter but Youth Funding would be discussed under item 4(a) .

(d) Creating a Dementia Friendly Community

Two more sessions had been held with representatives from Council staff and member attending. The sessions had been very informative but it was felt that advice on how to deal with dementia occurrences in the community, such as confusion, loss of keys etc., would have been helpful. The information was noted.

(e) Police Premises in the Town Hall

No date had been received when the police would be taking up residence in the Town Hall but it was anticipated that it may be late March. The proposed installation of an aerial to boost radio signals was going ahead but it would now be located in the roof space and not on the roof.

Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell arrived

(f) Retirement of Town Clerk and Appointment of Successor

RESOLVED that in accordance with Standing Orders and under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business on the grounds that it involves likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Para. 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

On return to open session members resolved to provide ALCA with copies of the job descriptions for the Clerk and RFO and seek advice on the recommended salary scales for the individual roles.

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

There was nothing further to report on this matter and it was agreed to remove the item from the agenda.

(h) Policy for Street Naming

The Working Group had met on the 29th February to consider the criteria for Street Naming. Cllr. Benj Emmerson had been endeavouring to obtain information from ALCA on guidelines for naming streets after individuals but no such information existed. The Clerk said she would post a request on the SLCC Forum site to ascertain if any other Councils had produced a such a policy or guidelines.

(i) Lease of the Offices at 67 High Street

Negotiations for a new lease of the above would be commencing in the near future

4. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(a) South Gloucestershire Council – Universal Youth Budget – Future of Positive Activities Study

Copies of the report had been e-mailed to members prior to the meeting for information.

Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell reported that at South Gloucestershire Council's Budget meeting, plans to reduce the Youth Service budget from £500,000 to £250,000 was revealed. It was unclear where this reduction would fall but it was apparent that priority neighbourhoods would be protected. The matter had been referred to the Children's and Young People Committee budget but there was no indication what the future intentions for this budget were. Cllr. Tyrrell advised that members had tried to move an amendment which would have resulted in the £250,000 being reinstated but the amendment failed.

A group of youth service providers were in discussion with South Gloucestershire Council to see if they can come up with a funding option. Penny Baker of Krunch was part of the group discussion but, at the present time, she will have to close the Thornbury Youth Club for 1 night a week and this would reduce further next year.

Cllr. Clive Parkinson said that the reduction in funding would have an impact if the youth service was to continue in Thornbury. Funding will have to be sought elsewhere but at the moment no-one really knows the level of funding for the forthcoming year. He felt that there must be some mechanism for cutting the budget from £500,000 to £250,000 and hoped that there would be a transition period.

Cllr. Parkinson reported that the possibility that rents could be trebled for Krunch in the New Year would not happen. The lease for Krunch's standard Wednesday and Thursday session would continue to be a direct lease arrangement between Krunch and South Gloucestershire Council. Krunch will still have 6 or 7 hours on a Tuesday for mentoring courses.

Cllr Parkinson stated that Council has awarded Krunch £10,000 for Wednesday and Thursday sessions but consideration could be given to increase the grant to £12,000. It is understood that £20,000 would be sufficient to keep the Youth Club operating until next year but Council would wish to know the situation for 2017-18 and 2019-20.

Cllr. Tyrrell reported that she would be meeting with Amanda Deeks, South Gloucestershire Council's Chief Executive, to discuss the future of Turnberries but that it may take six months before there is a clear picture of the situation.

It was agreed that the matter be referred to the next Full Council Meeting for further consideration.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Financial Statement for January 2016 was received and noted.

6. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

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

DVLA	Vehicle License – EX53 UPN	225.00
Corona Energy	Gas – Town Hall	810.08
Corona Energy	Gas – Museum	255.84
Corona Energy	Gas – PFC	381.47

(b) It was proposed by Cllr Clive Parkinson, seconded by Cllr Maggie Tyrrell and unanimously agreed that the following accounts now due for payment be approved:-

Central Services

Petty Cash		50.00
Bristol Water	Water Bill – Town Hall	195.04
Danwood	Extra printing charge for photocopier	50.56
SITA UK Ltd	Waste collection	249.73
Viking	Ink cartridge	128.74

Playing Fields & Cemetery

Abbey Loos	Hire of toilet unit	100.80
Avon Displays	Dog walking sign	643.20
Bowcom	Grass seed	281.23
Bristol Water	Water Bill – PFC	551.33
Brass Founders	Brass plaque	122.98
Countrywide Farmers plc	Nails	14.17
GAP Supplies Ltd	Sand, cement, screws etc	151.28
Abbey Loos	Hire of Toilet Unit	100.80
Thornbury Motors	Petrol	81.73

Environment

Avon Displays	Britain in Bloom plaque	321.60
Bristol Water	Water Bill – Fountain	18.29
Fairtrade Foundation	T-shirts & posters	94.30
Fairtrade Foundation	Printing & stationery	40.40
Fairtrade Foundation	Refreshments for Fairtrade event	35.73
Landcare	Trees	244.16
Landcare	Trees	1,345.20
South Glos Council	Localism services – January to March 2016	10,160.06
Thornbury Garden Shop	Autumn 2015 & Spring 2016 Planting (TinB)	1,187.96
Horders	Fairtrade Newsletter 2016-03-03	54.00
Thornbury Motors	Petrol	54.48
Fairtrade Foundation	Goods For Fairtrade Fortnight	68.33

Land & Property

Bristol Water	Water Bill – Offices 67 High Street	69.60
Bristol Water	Water Bill – Flat 67 High Street	69.59

Grants & Contingencies

Bristol Water	Water Bill – Museum	92.79
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7. CORRESPONDENCE

(a) South Gloucestershire Council - Extra Care Housing Charging Policy Review - Consultation

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

(b) South Gloucestershire Council – Review of One Stop Shops and Customer Services - Consultation

Copies of the consultation had been circulated to members for information, via e-mail, prior to the Meeting. One Stop Shops and customer services had been identified as an area to cut cost and three options of how these savings could be made were as follows:

- Option 1: Closure of the Thornbury OSS and replacement with a digital by default option.
- Option 2: Part time opening of Thornbury OSS and also either Patchway OSS or Yate OSS.
- Option 3: Further reduction of up to 3 full time equivalent post in the Corporate Contact Centre, equivalent to a 12.5% reduction in current contact centre resources and a 46% reduction overall in recent years.

Members agreed that the all-electronic Option 1 was wholly inadequate and inappropriate for exiting users of the OSS and would also not be helpful for all the extra residents from Thornbury's new housing estates. It was agreed, therefore, that Council would support Option 3.

(c) South Gloucestershire Council – Changes to Library Services – Consultation

Copies of the consultation had been e-mailed to members for information prior to the meeting.

Cllr. Benj Emmerson advised that purpose of the consultation was to save costs but either the parishes contributing to cost of running the libraries or providing volunteers to run them. One of the options was to cut the number of opening hours for Thornbury Library from 44 to 36 hours per week but members did not support this option.

Members agreed not to support any changes to Thornbury Library.

8. SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATIONS

No publications had been received.