

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2011 AT 7.00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, EAST STREET, WAREHAM

Present: Councillors D. Budd (Chairman), D Critchley, Mrs J Spooner

Officers present: Mr R M Curtis, Town Clerk

45. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

47. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st August 2011 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment: Minute 39, line 3 – Delete ‘he also’, insert ‘Councillor K Critchley’.

48. MATTERS ARISING

- Minute 34 – check that waste bin at bus stop near railway station has now been secured.
- Bid to Viridor for tarmac surfacing grant, still to be auctioned.
- Some roof tiles at Town Hall north elevation had been replaced due to falling off in severe weather. Town Council’s appointed surveyor for Phase II works had been requested to investigate.
- Carey shops – notice board nearly ready for re-erection, following construction of new board by Wareham St Martins parish council. Cost of board to be shared with Wareham Town Council.
- Self-closing gates at the BMX facility – budgeted for but not yet actioned, to be delegated to Clerk of Amenities Committee for completion during current financial year.

49. BUDGET LINES FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/2013

The Committee considered its budget lines for the next financial year. On completion of the setting of its budget lines it was:

RESOLVED that the attached Budget for the Amenities Committee be referred to the next Policy, Resources and Finance Committee meeting when all Committee

budgets would be considered in order to recommend a final budget/precept to the Town Council at its meeting on 12th December 2011.

50. DONATION OF PUBLIC BENCH

The Town Clerk referred to the offer of a lady resident of Carey to donate a bench for use by the public in the vicinity of the Spar shop in that area. The resident had selected a suitable bench with arm rests that was more resistant to the activities of skate boarders and cost £539 excluding VAT. The Town Clerk had identified £200 of unspent funding from the street furniture budget and it was suggested that this could be allocated towards the seat, leaving the resident to pay the remainder plus pay for a suitable plaque if she wished.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk write to the Spar Shop manager with a view to entering into a written agreement regarding the placing of an 'Evergreen' bench for public use in the vicinity of his shop frontage and that the Town Council offer to part fund the bench in the sum of £200 from the street furniture budget and install it, subject to the agreement of the lady resident to pay the remainder.

51. FOOTPATH LIGHTING – HAUSES FIELD

The Town Clerk reported on the possibility of installing solar panel lighting at the Hauses Field footpath, following investigations with Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council and research into the cost. He referred to the cost of the lighting being very expensive, a typical solar powered lighting column being almost £4,000 without installation costs and added yearly maintenance charges. In discussion, the Committee did not consider that the cost would be justified. It was confirmed that no funding had been allocated towards this project.

RESOLVED that solar powered lighting columns for a footpath at Hauses Field be not pursued due to the capital cost being more than a conventional lighting system which was equally unaffordable since this item had not been included in budget estimates for the present Financial Year.

52. REAR YARD, WAREHAM TOWN HALL

The Town Clerk referred to the shed in the Town Hall rear yard as being near the end of its useful life and incapable of being moved due to rotting wood underneath and a defective roof. It was understood that the shed belonged to the Museum yet storage was shared with the Town Council. He suggested an option of either a new but larger shed or a purpose-built storage facility using two walls of the yard as sides plus a roof, which would give a much larger area and enable the caretaker to work under cover on repairs and construction work.

In discussion, the Chairman referred to a sectioned building, pre-fabricated, which may also be suitable although the cost would be much higher than a new shed.

RESOLVED that it be agreed in principle to replace the shed in the rear yard and the Town Clerk be tasked to investigate the costs of suitable structures and report back to the committee.

53. WINTER SNOW AND ICE MAINTENANCE – WAREHAM TOWN

(a) **Winter Maintenance** - Following his attendance at a County Council Highways briefing on winter snow and ice maintenance and the role of parish and town councils during severe winter weather in the future, the Town Clerk gave a resumé to Members, as follows:

- A new County Highways structure
- DCC policy on the Winter Plan
- Operational arrangements
- Community self help arrangements
- Salting of roads – had been prioritised into a main precautionary salting network, a community routes network and a snow priority ploughing network.
- Duty engineers would make the decisions on when to salt roads and there were 9 special road weather stations and 5 road weather domains to assist in this process, using a variety of forecasts.
- All vehicles in the fleet of 30 county-wide salting units were ready and in place for use by 1st October, with 24 operatives on 24 hour standby until 31st March to deal with winter maintenance.
- Stocks of salt were at optimum levels at the start of the winter season and Wareham had 1300 tonnes.
- The total stock of salt, however, was 12000 tonnes in the county, enough to do 171 salt runs at 8g/m² - or only 12 days in a heavy snow situation.
- The need for salting of roads had increased since 2006/07 and there was bound to be pressure on national levels of salt stocks during a future period of heavy snowfall, as in the winter of 2010/2011.
- County Highways managed over 1000 salt bins in Dorset and all known salt bins had been filled. Each salt bin had been assigned a unique reference number and they would continue to replenish bins this coming winter dependent upon resources at no charge.
- Like other parishes, Wareham had been assigned to a Highways Area with a technical officer who should be contacted if there were bins that had not been filled, and for extra supplies if salt was running low.

The Town Clerk/Finance Administrator had maximised stocks of salt for the Town Council and a salt bin was positioned in Howards lane car park for use by the Caretaker and the Lengthsman. The Lengthsman had a duty in his job description to salt the footways (pavements) in the town centre in the event of heavy snow, however County Highways recommended that shopkeepers and businesses should clear their frontages, as part of community self help arrangements, as soon as snow stopped falling so that it would not turn to ice and presented a real danger to pedestrians.

There were plans for each parish and town council to complete a Winter Plan and a guidance document had been given. The Town Clerk had commenced this process and had forwarded contact numbers and e-mail addresses to County Highways in preparation for it.

(b) **Salt/Grit Spreader** - turning to the requirement for the Lengthsman to salt the town centre pavements and maintenance of Howards Lane car park during heavy snow, the Town Clerk gave details of a hand operated salt and grit dispenser (Turbocast 300) that was recommended by County Highways. A demonstration had been given at the briefing session. A short video was shown and Members agreed that it would be ideal for the Lengthsman's duties, the optimum levels of salt/grit being spread up to two metres each side as he walked along. It would also dramatically decrease the time taken to salt the car park; it was vital to ensure that this facility remained open for use during severe weather in order to maximise Council income.

The Turbocast 300 salt/grit spreader was available from Glasdon Ltd and with a small discount was sold for £1059 excluding VAT and with no delivery charge. It was robust, being made of heavy duty double skinned plastic and would last much longer than a cheaper metal version. The Town Clerk recommended its purchase and drew attention to a sum of £375.00 that had been raised by the sale of various items of scrap metal by the Caretaker and Lengthsman during the previous two weeks and which could be put towards the purchase (with the prospect of another £60.00 to come). Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the Turbocast 300 salt/grit dispenser be purchased in the sum of £1059.00 excluding VAT for use by the Lengthsman, with the addition of funding raised from the sale of scrap metal, the balance to be taken from the current account reserves and subject to agreement of the Chairman of Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. *(post-meeting note: The Chairman has since given his agreement and the item has been ordered).*

54. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 8 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

55. **PREMISES AT MILL LANE**

The Committee discussed a range of options for presentation to representatives of Wareham Town Band following discussion of severe accommodation problems currently being experienced by the Purbeck Citizens Advice Bureau who were tenants on the ground floor of the Mill Lane premises. It was noted that Councillor Mrs Kenyon would attend a meeting with the Town Band representatives and the Town Clerk in the near future and any progress on this ongoing matter would be brought to the next meeting.

56. **ANY OTHER OR URGENT ITEMS – FOR REPORT OR FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Nil

57. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted that the date of the next meeting was scheduled for **Wednesday 23rd November 2011** at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber.