

**REPORT of the Meeting of the Finance and Policy  
Committee held 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008**

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*Present:* Cllr. Phyllida Parsloe (Chairman)

Cllrs. Clare Fardell  
Bob Griffin  
Neil Halsall  
Shirley Holloway  
Clive Parkinson  
Maggie Tyrrell  
Judith Payne (Town Clerk)  
Sandra Richardson (Deputy Town Clerk)

*Apologies:* Cllrs. Alan Dukes (Out of Thornbury)

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**1. POLICE MATTERS**

The Chairman welcomed PC Roger Jones to the meeting and invited him to report to committee.

P.C. Jones reported that crime had been sporadic in the town with no discernible trends. There had been some distraction robberies in the South Gloucestershire area with one occurring in Avon Way in Thornbury.

Other crimes in the town included a car theft, broken window and a burglary in the High Street. Forensic Evidence left at the scene of the burglary had led to the arrest of a Lockleaze man.

There had been some incidences of anti social behaviour in St. Mary's Centre in the vicinity of Bailey's news. Extra patrols had been deployed in the centre and several youths intercepted.

PC Jones advised that although the Safer and Stronger Community Group had identified tackling anti social behaviour at the Mundy Playing Fields as the priority issue, there had been little trouble in that area over the past few weeks. Cllr. Clive Parkinson advised that the Safer and Stronger Community Group would be meeting on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September at the Armstrong Hall to discuss the issue of security measures at the Mundy Playing Fields.

Sgt. Ogborne had asked PC Jones to ascertain Council's views on placing signs in the Mundy Playing Fields near The Close entrance advising that the area was subject to anti-social behaviour. Sgt. Ogborne had also wished to establish that, should a gate be installed at The Close entrance to the playing fields, the opening and closing of it would not be a matter for the police.

Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell reported that she had met Rhodri Briggs, South Gloucestershire Council's consultant on CCTV matters, on site and he would be producing several CCTV surveillance options for Members to consider.

Sgt. Ogborne and three South Gloucestershire Council officers had visited the Mundy Playing Fields on behalf of the Safer and Stronger Community Group to look at the feasibility of installing CCTV cameras to combat anti-social behaviour. The consensus of opinion was that there was insufficient light in the area requiring surveillance to allow cameras to operate efficiently. The preferred option for tackling the problem appeared to be the installation of a gate at the entrance and the Clerk advised that members were unanimous in their opposition to this course of action.

The South Gloucestershire Council Officer responsible for tackling anti-social behaviour advised that the signs referred to in para.6 had been effective in other areas and suggested that Council consider displaying them in the Mundy Playing Fields. It was agreed to consider provision of signs but, before action was taken, members would seek the views of the Safer and Stronger Community Group.

A letter had been received from the residents of The Close stating that they considered the installation of a gate as a superior option to CCTV for tackling the problems and gave several reasons for this opinion.

Cllr. Shirley Holloway sought information on the recent occurrence of vandalism at Marlwood School and PC Jones updated her on the current situation.

PC Jones asked if there would be any objection to the police having a Police Display Unit at the Round Table Firework Display in the Mundy Playing Fields. The unit would act as a Mobile Police Station and members supported the request.

Members were advised that there would be a police presence at the Remembrance Day Parade to assist with any road closures but asked if Council would provide the road closure signs. The Clerk agreed to contact South Gloucestershire Council to ascertain whether signs would be available.

PC Jones was thanked for his attendance and left the meeting.

*It was agreed that as Gary Wintle of the Citizens' Advice Bureau was in attendance item 3(a) would be taken as next business.*

### 3 (a) Citizens' Advice Bureau – Operational Changes

Gary Wintle, Chair of Citizens' Advice Bureau Trustees was introduced to Committee and invited to address members.

Mr. Wintle advised that the Bureau operation had been criticised by South Gloucestershire Council and as a result had lost major funding. The Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) was a registered charity with no government funding and to lose a large proportion of its income had been a major set back. The CAB now had to re-evaluate its position and Mr. Wintle had joined the board to inject a commercial aspect to its operation.

Some criticism had been levelled at CAB for not operating enough open doors sessions at Staple Hill. The Thornbury Bureau had always run four open doors sessions totalling twelve hours a week, Yate's Bureau was open to the public for eight hours a week and Staple Hill five hours. This has now changed with one session being taken from Thornbury and redistributed between the other two bureaux. Thornbury would now be open to the public nine hours a week, Yate nine hours and Staple Hill seven hours.

CAB had also managed to acquire premises in Chipping Sodbury, Hartley House, free of charge and was using these premises to train seven new volunteers.

The next stage of the plan was to stretch resources to set up a Telephone Advice Centre which, with a gateway of three bureaux, would give people easier access to advice. It was anticipated that although the Thornbury Bureau would now be closed to public on Wednesdays and Fridays a larger number of enquiries could be dealt with through the Telephone Advice Centre. Members asked if the new opening hours would be advertised and suggested that the CAB consider submitting an article to Thornbury Magazine advising residents of the changes. Mr. Wintle was also asked to consider replacing the old notice on the Thornbury CAB entrance.

Mr. Wintle was confident that, although resources were very limited. The CAB would be operating efficiently by Christmas. It was important to produce better results to gain the confidence of South Gloucestershire Council.

Cllr. Clare Fardell suggested that Mr. Wintle contact the Volunteer Centre in the town hall for help in identifying possible sources of funding. Mr. Wintle was also asked whether statistics would be kept on the number of enquiries dealt with as it was important that the number of enquiries did not decline as a result of the Thornbury Bureau's opening hours being reduced by 25%. Members were assured that statistics would be kept.

Mr. Wintle was thanked for his attendance and left the meeting.

## **2. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT**

### **(a) Project Steering Group for Thornbury Hospital – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**

Cllr. Phyllida Parsloe advised that she had attended a meeting with the group yesterday and no progress had been made. The personnel had changed and the project was now being taken forward by Mr. Addington and a consultant. The same material had been revisited and no information had been collated to produce a business plan. Cllr. Phyllida Parsloe had requested that a Stakeholder Group Meeting be convened as soon as possible.

Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell had attended a meeting with Penny Harris, South Gloucestershire Council Primary Care Trust's Chief Executive, where the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment had been discussed. There appeared to be a large amount of raw data collected and it would be relatively simple to extract and interpret the data relevant to Thornbury. There was also an enormous amount of joint organisational work being carried out by senior officials which included the Joint Commission Strategy for the Elderly and the Joint Social Care and Health Assessment.

Council's representatives on the Project Steering Group would continue to monitor the situation rigorously.

The information was noted.

### **(b) Access Issues**

Cllr. Shirley Holloway reported that Shopmobility was now operating in Thornbury on Wednesdays and Thursdays but the use of the facility was still quite poor. The scheme needed a much higher profile to make residents aware of its existence.

### **(c) Thornbury and Alveston Safer and Stronger Community Group**

The item was dealt with under 'Police Matters'

### **(d) Review of Allowances for Councillors**

The working had discussed the issue of members' allowances and recommended that no payment should be made and that Councillors' status remain totally voluntary. Cllr. Clive Parkinson and the Clerk would be looking at the possibility, now that so much information was sent to members by e-mail, of providing Councillors with such items as paper and ink cartridges to print out pertinent Council documentation. It was deemed reasonable that volunteer Councillors should not incur personal expenditure in the course of their duty.

### **(e) Mayors' Insignia Badges**

The issue of providing past mayors with an Insignia Lapel Badge was once again debated. The overall cost for fifty badges, including a set up cost, would amount to approximately £1,500. Cllr. Bob Griffin advised that he would be willing to donate £500 towards the cost of producing the badges.

The matter was discussed at length with some members expressing discomfort at the amount of expenditure and others of the opinion that, as the badge would be presented to all past mayors, the cost of £1,500 could be viewed as being apportioned over 25 years and therefore comparatively small.

It was agreed that members attempt to gain sponsorship for the insignias and Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell agreed to speak to Thornbury Chamber of trade to ascertain whether its members would be willing to contribute.

(f) 67 High Street – Offices

The Clerk advised that the original tenants were still using the premises and that the rent was paid in full.

The information was noted.

(g) Mr. G. Quintana – Application to the High Court for Judicial Review

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 i.e. to consider the Application by Mr. Graham Quintana to the High Court for a Judicial Review on the grounds that it involves likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in part 1 para 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person)

On return to open session it was resolved that the Clerk and Chairman's decision to refer this matter to Council's solicitor had been correct and that the Clerk would obtain more information on the Hearing process should Mr. Quintana's application be unsuccessful.

*Cllr. Bob Griffin left the meeting at this point to fulfil a Mayoral Engagement*

**3. MATTERS IN PROGRESS**

(a) Citizens' Advice Bureau – Operational Changes

This item was dealt with as first business.

(b) Cultural Olympiad

Cllr. Clare Fardell produced a report of her and Cllr. Shirley Holloway's attendance at the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

The meeting had been divided into two parts, the first part was a discussion on how cultural activity might be promoted within South Gloucestershire and what constituted Culture. It was noted that South Gloucestershire had no large, central cultural venue but, as the area was made up of a number of diverse communities and towns, it was likely that Bristol may be considered the major centre. It might be more advantageous to concentrate on ensuring that each community had adequate facilities for their own cultural events. Yate, however, thought that it might be designated as the Cultural Centre for South Gloucestershire and may get a performance facility there.

The second part of the meeting was to receive information on how the Cultural Olympiad Vision would be realised in the South West Region. However, as Weymouth was the venue for Water Sports in 2012 nearly all efforts would be centred on the South of the region with the exception of an event in Gloucester Docks and a Sports event in Bristol/South Gloucestershire.

The information was noted.

(c) Remembrance Day Parade

The proposed road closure for the event had been dealt with under 'Police Matters'.

An e-mail had been received from Brian Derry of the Royal British Legion advising that it was customary to pay for the services of a Parade marshal (£25) and the band (£60). It was agreed that as, the local branch of the British Legion had closed and funds were no longer available, Council would cover the cost of the Marshal and band.

The Clerk agreed to confirm that Council's wreath would be supplied by the Royal British Legion.

(d) Quaker Lane Public Convenience – Terms of Lease

The Clerk had received the draft terms from South Gloucestershire Council and had raised several issues with the Corporate Resources Department which had been answered. Copies of the draft Terms and Conditions, the Clerk's comments and South Gloucestershire Council's response had all been circulated with the agenda for members' information.

Members approved the draft terms with the amendments agreed by South Gloucestershire Council and the Clerk would now progress the matter.

**4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Financial Statement for August 2008 was received and noted.

**5. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

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

South Glos Council	Rates – Town Hall	1097.00
South Glos Council	Rates – Cemetery	121.00
South Glos Council	Rates – Quaker Lane Toilets	62.00

Resolved that the following accounts now due for payment be approved:-

**Central Services**

Bristol Water	Water & Sewerage – Town Hall	198.12
The Consortium	Stationery	48.75
Hawkins of Thornbury	Material for chair repair	11.54
Sage UK Ltd	Pay envelopes	24.68
Pitney Bowes Postage by Phone	Top up for franking machine	150.00
Siemens Financial Services Ltd	Rental for photocopier	575.19
NTL Telewest Business	Internet connection	25.85
Thornbury Motors	Petrol	165.91

**Playing Fields & Cemetery**

Brass Founders	Brass Plaques	182.89
Brass Founders	Brass Plaques	130.72
Brass Founders	Brass Plaques	100.40
Bristol Water	Water & Sewerage – Mundy Playing Field	482.58
Days Contract Hire	50% Administration fee	14.69
Days Contract Hire	50% Extension for Ford Transit	161.63
Hawkins of Thornbury	Webbing	4.36
GAP Supplies	Paint etc	124.59
HAGS Play Ltd	Flooring	226.48
Hawkins of Thornbury	Paint for football posts	11.18
GB Sport & Leisure	Shackles for accessible seat	15.86
Peter Knapp Building	Screeding changing room floor	850.00

Matta Products UK	Supply and installation of matta	2481.60
Milbury Heath Garden Supplies	Sleeper for Osprey Park	278.48
South Glos Council	Dog waste collection	29.90
Sutcliffe Play South West	Play equipment	8025.25
Thornbury Tyres Ltd	BMV Tubes	31.72
Thornbury Motors	50% alternator	92.84
Thornbury Motors	Petrol	55.31
True Blue Tarmac Surfacing	Repairs to Skate Park	587.50
Wybone Limited	Steel Seat	252.80
Veolia Environmental Services	Container exchange	166.47
Veolia Environmental Services	Container exchange	92.73

### **Environment**

Days Contract Hire	50% Administration fee	14.69
Days Contract Hire	50% Extension for Ford Transit	161.63
Thornbury Motors	50% alternator	92.84
Tony & Sue's Flowers Ltd	Potato Picker repair and installation	23.43
Tony & Sue's Flowers Ltd	Planting for putchers, tubs, potato picker	186.82
Tony & Sue's Flowers Ltd	Tools etc for Castle School project	70.29
C Zair	Logo mugs	36.00

### **Grants & Contingencies**

Armstrong Hall Complex	Mortgage 4 Chapel Street (September)	182.05
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### **Land and Property**

PHS Group plc	Sanitary Waste – Quaker Lane Toilets	45.14
South Glos Council	Cleaning toilets – Quaker Lane	527.86

## **6. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **(a) ALCA**

- (i) Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2007 had been circulated with the agenda and the information noted.
- (ii) Copies of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2008 had been circulated with the agenda and the information noted.
- (iii) Copies of the Minutes of the South Gloucestershire Area Group Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008 had been circulated with the agenda. The information was received and noted.

### **(b) NALC – Election Day – Weekend Voting**

Copies of the consultation document had been circulated with the agenda for members' information. Views were sought on the merits or otherwise of moving the election day to a weekend.

Members were aware that the cost to Council of the last election had escalated to almost £14,000 and it was anticipated that a weekend election would be even more costly. It was felt that the present system did not debar anyone from voting and there was no benefit in moving the day.

### **(c) South Gloucestershire Council – Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy**

Copies of the Strategy had been circulated to members, via e-mail, prior to the meeting. Members agreed with the aims of the Strategy and had no comments to convey to South Gloucestershire Council on the document at this time.

(d) Parish Charter Working Group

Copies of the report of the meeting of the group held on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and been circulated, via e-mail, to members prior to the meeting. Members did not wish to raise any matters on the report and the information was received and noted.

(e) South Gloucestershire Council – Variation of Premises Licence – Barrel Inn

Details of the application made by the Barrel Inn to vary the conditions of its premises licence had been received from South Gloucestershire Council. Members had no objection to the variations.

**7. SCHEDULE OF PUBLICATIONS**

The schedule of publications received had been circulated with the agenda and was noted for information.