

RECREATION & WORKS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF MEETING HELD ON 22ND NOVEMBER 2006

PRESENT Councillor Mrs Cruse – in the Chair

Councillors Mrs Bickley, J H Clark, J S Clark, Gething, Howells, Mrs Mason, A McMurray, Miers*, Walters

Mrs P Rendle – Clerk of the Council

*Joined the meeting at 7.55pm during consideration of Minute No. 706

APOLOGIES Councillors Johnston, Mrs Lord, Pasley

RW705 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration by members who serve on both the Town Council and District Council

Councillors J H Clark, Gething and Walters stated that any views they expressed on matters to also be considered at North Somerset Council would be provisional and based on the facts known. They would be exercising their rights to reconsider the matter afresh when the matter went before North Somerset Council.

RW706 TRINITY VA PRIMARY SCHOOL – COMMUNITY FACILITY

In attendance for this item were –

Andrew Owen – Chair of Governors, Trinity VA Primary School
Tess Robinson – School Development Officer, Diocese of Bath & Wells
Jim Corrigan – Quantity Surveyor, Hookway Partnership
Philip Price – Quantity Surveyor, Hookway Partnership
Mark Brierley – Architect, NVB Partnership
Maureen Bollard – Director of Education (Acting), Diocese of Bath & Wells

The Chairman reminded those present that the representatives of the new school had been invited to attend the meeting primarily to explain why the projected costs of the community facility had increased considerably from the initial forecast of £160,000.

Arising from the discussion the school representatives confirmed that –

- The space available for the community hall on the first floor had increased from the initial 120sq metres to 138 sq metres because the Church Room had been repositioned on the first floor. A dividing screen could be used to give a flexible use of the space and to enable the room to be divided into two rooms, one of approximately 46 square metres and one of approximately 92 square metres.
- The space required for the kitchen, separate toilets and circulation on the first floor had now been included in the calculations.

- The total space available for 'Community Areas' had been identified as 183 square metres, but there was some confusion about how this had been calculated. This included 16 square metres for the Church Room.
- The Church Room was being funded separately by local church communities.
- The design now included a staircase and lift which could be used independently of the school.
- The building cost of the 'Community Areas' (not including the Church Room) was now £342,992. This had been calculated on a pro-rata basis using a % of the total building cost. A budget costing plan was circulated which showed a building cost of £2.7M but the Quantity Surveyor indicated that he anticipated this rising to in excess of £3M because of the cost of 'abnormals' (piling, inclusion of sprinklers) and the provision of stairs and lift to the first floor.
- It was anticipated that building would commence in July 2007 to enable the school to open in September 2008.
- The building contract would be on a fixed-price tender basis.
- Funding the community facility could be spread over two years 2007/2008 and 2008/2009.

A full and frank exchange of views followed. Councillors were generally critical of the lack of information that had been forthcoming from the school representatives, expressing their frustration in particular that they had not been kept informed of changes to the school design, the change in the method of calculating the cost of the community facility and the resulting increased costs. Councillors also commented that –

- The Town Council are not responsible for the costs associated with the building of the school.
- If the Town Council decided not to proceed with the community hall all the costs associated with the school building (apart from the Church Room) would need to be met by the development group.
- The Town Council should only be responsible for costs associated with the community facility.
- The costs should not be based on a % or pro-rata basis.
- The Town Council re-built the North Weston Village Hall for much less. This could turn out to be Portishead's 'Bath Spa'.
- A proper costing should have been provided in the beginning. The Clerk reminded the architect of a letter he had sent to the Town Council in July 2006 clearly estimating the cost as being £160,000, including toilets, stairs and lift.
- The Town Council might not necessarily require the larger space now proposed.
- The Town Council need to be provided with costings in a different format and a "shopping list" of development options for various levels of funding ie what can be provided for £160,000, £200,000, £250,000, £300,000 and £350,000. The Quantity Surveyor indicated that he would be able to provide this information within a few weeks.

Councillors also questioned whether additional S106 funding was available for the project from North Somerset Council. The District Councillors were asked to investigate this as a matter of urgency.

RECOMMENDED that

1. The Town Council notes the revised plans and figures and will consider their response when further information on the development options for various levels of funding and details of other potential sources of financial support come forward.
2. A special meeting of the Committee be held to consider this information as soon as possible.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of the school development group for attending the meeting.

RW707 PORTISHEAD LAKESIDE GOLF CLUB

Members were informed that a group of golfers, with the support of the Lakegrounds Concessionaire, were proposing to form the Portishead Lakeside Golf Club at the pitch and putt course on the Lake Grounds. A copy of the proposed rules of the Club were circulated from which it was noted that members would pay a membership fee which would give them free access to the course throughout the year but they would be expected to assist the concessionaire with maintenance and upkeep. It was also noted that the general public would still have access to the course and members of the club would be discouraged from playing if the course was busy with paying customers.

RECOMMENDED that

The Town Council support and welcome the proposal to establish the Portishead Lakeside Golf Club subject to continued public availability.

RW708 NORTH WESTON ZEBRA CROSSING

Further to Minute No. RW689 the Clerk reported that, despite two reminders, she had still not received a reply to her letter to the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport. She also reported that she had been unable to obtain confirmation about the costs of the scheme from the Project Engineer who had only provided an approximate cost of £15,000. It was unclear if this included the cost of publishing the original, aborted, scheme.

Members expressed their wish for the scheme to proceed as soon as possible and whilst they accepted the costs of £15,000 for the agreed scheme confirmed they would not pay towards the cost of the original, aborted, scheme.

RECOMMENDED that

A formal complaint about the lack of response from both the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport and the Project Engineer be forwarded to the Chief Executive.

RW709 BRISTOL ROAD PLAYING FIELD – LEASE TO PORTISHEAD AFC

Further to Minute Nos. RW699 and 1390 members now received a copy of the Football Club's audited accounts for the two years 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 and details of a basic Service Level Agreement for inclusion in the lease.

After receiving clarification on a few points it was

RECOMMENDED that

The Town Council continues to agree a 25 year lease for the Town sports field on the original terms proposed and a substantial rebate up to 90% will be offered providing the following levels of youth involvement in sport are met –

Based on the fact that there are a minimum of 2 permanent pitches available to boys and girls Junior teams on Saturday and Sunday and there are approximately 26 weekends (excluding term breaks) during the football season the Football Club undertake to host and manage a minimum of 104 matches of organised (planned, managed and refereed) Junior Football.

(Clerk's Note – after seeking clarification from the Football Club it was discovered that it would not be appropriate to use "11 aside" as a bench-mark for the 104 matches of Junior Football as suggested at the R&W Meeting as the younger teams do not play in teams of 11. The words "organised (planned, managed and refereed)" have therefore been inserted as a means of specifying actual matches, not informal "kick-about" sessions).

Councillor Gething also reminded the Committee that it would be necessary to ensure that the lease to the Football Club allowed for the Town Council to occupy part of the land if it was required for the skateboard park.

In addition, a number of councillors expressed concern about comments they had received regarding the non-use of the new pitches at Clapton Lane because they were too far away from changing facilities. The Clerk was asked to seek clarification on this matter.

RW710 SKATEPARK WORKING PARTY

Members received an update report from the Skatepark Working Party. Arising from the report it was noted that the consultation process had commenced and it was also hoped to launch a website. Investigation into possible sites was continuing, however approaches to possible sources of funding had established that many funding organisations would not provide financial support to local authorities and other statutory bodies. The working party had therefore looked into the possibility of establishing themselves as a separate group.

RECOMMENDED that

1. The Skatepark Working Party be dissolved and in its place the “Portishead Skatepark Project” be established.
2. The Town Council supports this venture and makes a grant of £200 for initial expenses.

Councillor Clark confirmed that a Constitution had been drawn up and a copy would be provided to the Clerk.

RW711 ST MARY’S ROAD

Further to Minute No. RW577 members were informed that now that the Gordano School Travel Plan had been completed the NSC New Works Manager had again looked at the traffic problems in the lower St Mary’s Road area, particularly in the vicinity of Gordano School.

Councillor Gething confirmed whilst there were no proposals for works to upper St Mary’s Road it was important that improvements were made to lower St Mary’s Road because of the difficulties being faced by residents of that road. Members noted the works proposed by the New Works Manager and

RECOMMENDED that

The Town Council support the proposal as put forward by the New Works Manager –

Narrowing St Mary’s Road in the vicinity of the school exit and the junction with High Street so as to provide a wide footway on the northern side, together with a raised table to the west of the vehicle exit so that students can cross safely without conflict with vehicles leaving the site. The raised table may include a zebra crossing but this will need further evaluation. In addition, school keep clear markings and zig-zag markings will be installed to prevent parking in the vicinity of the access.

An additional suggestion that parking restrictions be introduced was not supported.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25pm