

# High Wycombe Town Committee Minutes

Date: 5 November 2013

Time: 6.30 - 9.05 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor A R Green  
(in the Chair)

Councillors M Hussain JP, K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, I Bates, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, R B Colomb, C A Ditta, R Farmer, S Graham, M Hanif, A E Hill, M Hussain, M E Knight, Ms R Knight, Miss S Manir, B E Pearce, C Shafique MBE, T Snaith and Ms J D Wassell,

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Hussain JP, Ms P L Lee and S F Parker

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Philippa Sawyer	Wycombe Sound
Malcolm Glenn	Wycombe Sound

Cllr Paul Turner

## 18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013 be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 20 WYCOMBE SOUND - COMMUNITY RADIO FOR WYCOMBE

Mrs Philippa Sawyer, Director at Wycombe Community Radio CIC Ltd (Wycombe Sound) and Mr Malcolm Glenn gave a presentation to the Committee on the Wycombe Sound Community Radio project.

They outlined that Wycombe Sound was an exciting new project which aimed to bring Community Radio to those who live, work, study or spend leisure time in High Wycombe. It was emphasized that Wycombe Sound were a Community Interest Company which meant they were a not for profit company.

Members noted that the radio station had been granted a restricted license from 9 December 2013 to 5 January 2014 from Ofcom with the objective of obtaining a 5 year license in the future.

Mrs Sawyer informed the Committee that her role included writing license applications, talking to sponsors, advertisers and connecting with local groups to find out what the people of Wycombe wanted to hear and talk about.

She mentioned that Wycombe had many clubs, societies, community groups, quirky businesses, a successful theatre and great shopping. All of which would want to connect with local listeners.

It was noted that Wycombe Sound would play music but also wanted to foster lively discussion about the things that matter in Wycombe.

Various queries were raised by Members regarding the coverage and frequency of the project. Many Members raised concerns regarding the viability of the project.

Mrs Sawyer responded that the frequency and coverage was still to be confirmed and that research had been carried out with regard to the viability of the project.

She concluded that there were plenty of ways to get involved with the radio station, both presenting and behind the scenes. The station would be based in the Eden Centre and people would be welcome to come along and volunteer.

The Chairman thanked the Wycombe Sound representatives for coming to the meeting.

## **21 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING**

Members had requested at the last High Wycombe Town Committee meeting that further detailed information on the proposed projects be provided to the Committee before a decision could be reached.

The Committee considered a report on the potential infrastructure projects that could be funded by the 15% local allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy received from developments in the unparished area. The Town Committee's recommendation would inform a draft 2014/15 funding programme for public consultation, prior to a decision in February by Cabinet.

The Head of Community briefed the Committee on the projects included in the report. She commented that reports on a new Cemetery and the De la Rue Site would be presented to a future meeting when a decision about funding could be made. The two remaining funding requests before the Committee were the Bellfield House and Pastures Church (feasibility study) Members were informed that it was not current policy to fund single faith building projects.

Some Members stated that the Pastures application was in fact for the whole community and not for a particular faith group or section of the community.

Members queried if the land at St Marks had been given or sold to a single faith group and requested clarification on this matter. Officers' from Community Services commented that they would obtain the information and respond to Members.

A Member put forward a recommendation to support the Pastures project and to allocate funds when available to the Bellfield Community facility. The recommendation was carried.

- RESOLVED:** That the Committee recommend to Cabinet that
- (i) £15,000 contribution towards the feasibility study and development of architectural plans to rebuild the Pastures Church with flexible spaces for community use be awarded; and
  - (ii) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Sustainability in consultation with the Chairman of the High Wycombe Town Committee to allocate funds to the Bellfield Community House when available (anticipated by Summer 2014).

## **22 IMPACT OF THE NEW GREEN SPACES CONTRACT ON HIGH WYCOMBE CEMETERY FEES AND CHARGES**

Following a pricing review of the Cemetery fees and charges, the report before the Committee updated Members on the progress of the pricing review. Members views were sought on the issues and options that they felt should be included in the final report that would be presented to the next High Wycombe Town Committee meeting.

The Committee considered the report proposing fees and charges for burials, interments and other cemetery related charges to be applicable for 2014/15. It was noted that the Green Spaces contract had commenced with a different pricing structure for works undertaken in the Cemetery and therefore a review of charges for the Cemetery was required.

Members raised concerns regarding the Cemetery budget which highlighted that the Cemetery was operating at a deficit each year and Members commented that the Cemetery should at least break even. It was noted that details of the decisions taken to operate the Cemetery over the past 5 years would be included in the next report to the Committee, to establish the reason for the deficit.

During discussions, it was agreed that the report back to the Committee in January would include a comparison of other authorities' charges and details of reducing the ground maintenance costs.

- RESOLVED:** That, a comprehensive report be presented to the next meeting with details of previous decisions taken regarding the Cemetery's expenditure, cost comparisons for other authorities charges and details of reducing expenditure on ground maintenance.

## **23 ANNUAL FEES AND CHARGES - ALLOTMENT CHARGES**

The Committee considered the report which proposed charges for allotment plot rents from 1 January 2015. Members noted that the recommendation was for prices to increase on average by 2.7%, aligning with Consumer Price Index, in view of the

Council changing to metric measurements rather than the pole pricing structure, as required by law.

Some Members requested that the report to the Committee in January include information on price increases to reduce the current deficit, price comparisons with other authorities and the possibility of looking into proposals for a pet cemetery.

**RESOLVED:** That, a report be presented to the next meeting including details on price increases to reduce the current deficit, price comparisons for other authorities and the possibility of looking into proposals for a pet cemetery.

## 24 MUSLIM BURIAL VAULTS

Members were reminded that in 2011, the Committee had resolved to fund the installation of concrete burial chambers, following requests from Muslim community representatives. The chambers were identified by the Muslim representatives as more suitable for Islamic burial practices than the metal frames supplied by the Council.

It was noted that the project was completed and the chambers offered for sale. However, it had become apparent that, as installed, they did not meet the requirements of Wycombe's Muslim population and a change to the layout had been requested.

The report considered by the Committee sought approval to enable the burial vaults to be made use of by Wycombe's Muslim community by allocating funds to respace the vaults.

Some Members expressed their disappointment that the spacing of the vaults had not been addressed initially and sought assurances that measures had been put in place to prevent problems reoccurring with future projects.

The Head of Community confirmed that public consultation and project management documentation would be produced for all Community projects in future.

A Member proposed that High Wycombe Town Committee should not be financially liable for the misunderstanding and that Wycombe District Council should facilitate the work. The recommendation went to a vote and fell.

The Committee then voted in favour of option four of the report, to respace the vaults and bring them into use.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee recommend to Cabinet that

- (i) £57,605 from the Special Expenses Account be approved for the project, as option four was selected; and
- (ii) Delegated authority be given to the Head of Community, in consultation with the Chairman of the High Wycombe Town Committee,

to make amendments to fees and charges relating to new concrete chambers for Muslim burials.

**25 INFORMATION SHEET**

**RESOLVED:** That the list of Information Sheet issued since the previous meeting be noted.

**26 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE - FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED:** That the Work Programme be noted.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Miss C MacKenzie	Principal Democratic Services Officer
Mr D Ruddock	District Solicitor
Mr J Callaghan	Team Leader (Transport and Environment)
Mr G Coll	Developer Contributions Officer
Ms E Jewell	Head of Community
Ms S Randall	Community Commissioning Manager