

MADELEY PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, held on Monday December 12th 2005 at Jubilee House, 74 High Street, Madeley, commencing at 6.30pm.

PRESENT: **Councillors: D Davies (Chair), D Edwards, R Evans, G Green, J Jones, C Muddiman, M Swift,**
Clerk, Deputy Clerk
K Mulholland, Borough of Telford & Wrekin

F05/26. Apologies for Absence

Cllr DP Taylor	-	Work commitment	-	Approved
Cllr D Wright	-	Illness	-	Approved

Absent

Cllr A MacKenzie

F05/27. Declarations of Interest

Councillor R Evans declared a non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8.1.1 Grant – Madeley Court School
Permission to speak but not to vote agreed

F05/28. Remarks from the Chair

There were none

F05/29. Public Discussion

There were no members of the public present.

F05/30. Park Lane Centre – Woodside Regeneration

Borough of Telford & Wrekin, Woodside Regeneration Project
K Mulholland – Programme Manager

Forecast completion date for Park Lane Centre was end-February 2006.

Feedback from user groups and funders was positive.

This was the first stage of re-development of the whole of Woodside centre – including the Courts residential area and the Community Centre complex. It was essential for the vitality of the Centre that it was not exclusively local but offered new, extended and improved services and facilities that crossed communities.

Madeley Parish Council nominated representative on the Steering Committee was the Clerk. A minor local authority nominee would be invited to membership of the Park Lane Centre Management Board.

Management Board structure allowed for 16 members representing stakeholders – Child Care, Education, and Local Authority. Residents' forums are keen to see greater involvement in the locality by the Parish Council.

Interviews for Management Officer were scheduled for December 13th 2005 (via internal secondment) and funding was also in place for deputy manager and employee in administration/reception.

Specific contribution from Madeley Parish Council to the building had awaited detailed proposals and needed to be financially appropriate and identifiable.

Options (based on quotations received):

- Reception desk - £7,500 + communication/office equipment
- Café furniture - £5,700
- Community Hall furnishing - £17,000

It was noted that Reserves had not been allocated specifically to Woodside Regeneration although it had been identified for partnership funding. Councillors recognised that this was a large allocation of funding to the regeneration area and may give the appearance of unequal distribution of resources within the civic parish – this was, however, an opportune moment and should be considered balanced against previous expenditure in other wards over a longer period.

Recommended:

that Madeley Parish Council give approval to identifiable expenditure in the purchase of bespoke reception desk and equipment for Park Lane Centre (estimated cost £9,000) from General Fund reserves.

F05/31. Chairmanship Training

Presentation – Councillor D Wright
Postponed due to ill-health

F05/32. Minutes

Resolved:

that the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on July 11th 2005 were confirmed and approved

Resolved:

that the report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on October 24th 2005 be noted as a true record

32.1 Local Works – Campaign for the Sustainable Communities Bill

Local Works is a cross-party campaign for the Sustainable Communities Bill – proposed legislation intended to empower local people to improve their local communities. Minor Local Authority support for the campaign to promote the Bill is sought under the banner of 'Government from the Grass Roots'

Recommendation for support of the campaign had been received from the National Association of Local Councils.

Councillors commented that, in practical terms, Parish Council were often 'powerless'. Local responsibility and local partnerships should be maintained and sustained.

Recommended:

that the Local Works campaign be supported and the motion be presented to Council.

F05/33. Committee Reports
to consider Committee reports

33.1 Leisure and Community Committee

Councillor D Edwards presented the report of the Leisure and Community Committee meeting held on November 14th 2005 for information.

Noted

Christmas Activities

It was confirmed that grant expenditure on Christmas Activities for the elderly in Madeley Parish was £2,870 – benefiting 430 residents.

Individual presentation to community groups was not possible due to time constraints

33.1.1 Madeley Court School

to consider grant application for gardening tools/equipment and glazing for school greenhouse

Councillor R Evans declared a non-prejudicial interest in Madeley Court School through appointment as member of the School Governing body

Councillors expressed surprise at a request to fund pastoral support activities within the curriculum that were properly the responsibility of the School. School Fund levels were noted – although it was acknowledged that these funds were under pressure.

It was considered that Madeley Parish council could not financially support activities of a statutory nature which were properly the responsibility of the Local Authority. It was requested that further enquiries be made for the reason for the approach and the lack of availability of education funding.

33.1.2 Granville Retired Miners Association

to consider grant application for rental of meeting room

Previous grant made to this voluntary group in 2003 for the same purpose.

Resolved:

that Madeley Parish Council grant a sum of £100 to meet rental expenses

33.2 Environment Committee

The report of the Environment Committee meeting held on December 5th 2005 was not available.

To be presented to Full Council meeting scheduled for January 9th 2006

F05/34. Budget & Finance

to effectively monitor and control the council's budget to ensure best value for the community.

Business Plan Report

The Business Plan was presented for Councillors information.

Noted

34.1 Expenditure Approval List

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the Expenditure Transactions Approval List report for period to December 2005

Noted

34.2 Financial Budget Comparison Report

to note actual monies received and spent compared to 2005/06 budget

The Responsible Finance Officer presented the Financial Comparison Report for the period to November 2005.

Noted.

34.3 Finance & General Purposes Draft Budget 2006-07

The Responsible Finance Officer presented draft proposals for the Finance & General Purposes Committee budget 2006-07.

Budget levels accounted for:

- Increased salary to NJC recommendations 2005-06 for proper officers
- Increased liability for repairs to Public Conveniences resulting from vandalism
- Additional liability for NNDR for Public Conveniences 2005-06

The proposed draft revenue/capital Budget 2006-07 totalled £217,340

Noted

34.4 Personnel Draft Budget 2006-07

The Responsible Finance Officer presented draft proposals for the Personnel Committee budget 2006-07

Budget levels accounted for:

- Training programme adoption for Councillors
- Staff stability and personal development

The proposed draft revenue Budget totalled £1,925

Noted

Councillor J Jones left the meeting

34.5 Summary Draft Budgets 2006-07

The Responsible Finance Officer presented a summary of the draft Budget proposals for Full Council, Finance & General Purposes Committee, Environment Committee, Leisure and Community Committee,

(amended to account for expenditure committed in November 2005), Personnel Committee, and an estimate of Income for the 2006-07 financial year.

The preparation of Budget has evolved as Business Plan management principals have been developed. The Strategy Review carried out in 2005 has informed the forward Business Plans of all Committees and provides the basis for the revenue and capital financial assessment.

Draft Budget figures 2006-07:

	Budget	Precept
Full Council	19,355.00	18,380.00
Finance & General Purposes	217,340.00	227,825.00
Environment	41,230.00	35,115.00
Leisure & Community	82,610.00	70,110.00
Personnel	1,925.00	1,295.00
Income	(40,350.00)	(40,350.00)
Total	322,110.00	312,375.00

This would represent an increase in Precept of 21.5% over the previous year.

Committee members considered that this was not acceptable but recognised the need to remain proactive. The Responsible Finance Officer advised that whilst revenue expenditure should be met from precepted funds, the use of Reserves for capital expenditure needed to be judiciously applied.

It was proposed that:

- Balance of Earmarked Reserves to be allocated against Election (FC) and Public Conveniences (F&GP) expenditure in 2005-06 **(-£1,470)**
- Reduce Councillor Expenses (Full Council) due to take-up **(-£200)**
- Delete capital expenditure on Highways projects under Local Transport Plan (Environment) **(-£10,000)**
- Re-allocate Earmarked Reserve for CCTV (£7,500) to Highways
- Reduce capital expenditure on Street Lighting scheme (Environment) to account for partnership funding (s106 Planning Obligations) **(-£7,500)**
- Reduce Environmental Maintenance budget (Environment) due to implementation of '2for1' scheme **(-£500)**
- Reduce budget requirement for Bartlett Gardens/Madeley Community Orchard to account for external finance **(-£2,000)**
- Reduce overall proposed expenditure on Services for Elderly and Youth Services **(-£1,000)**
- Delete capital expenditure on Park Lane Centre due to availability of alternative funding (Finance & General Purposes) **(-£7,750)**
- Delete Contingency funds from budget requirements through creation of an earmarked Contingency Reserve **(-£12,595)**

Councillors rejected proposals to reduce budgets for Conference Fees (Full Council), Election (Full Council), Green Day (Environment), and Staff Training (Personnel).

Recommended:

that Madeley Parish Council considers a Budget and Precept for 2006-07 Financial year based on provisional figures:

	Budget	Precept
Full Council	17,405.00	15,760.00
Finance & General Purposes	205,310.00	214,995.00
Environment	19,300.00	13,185.00
Leisure & Community	77,150.00	64,650.00
Personnel	1,750.00	1,120.00
Income	(40,350.00)	(40,350.00)
Total	280,565.00	269,360.00

(This would mean a 4.8% increase over the precept for the previous year; translating to a 4.5% increase in the Parish Rate due to an increase in the number of Band D equivalent properties)

F05/35. Assets

to continuously improve all Council owned and managed properties and to provide facilities that are safe, well maintained and welcoming. To publicise these facilities effectively and to deliver an efficient, value for money service.

Business Plan Report

The Business Plan was presented for Councillors information.

Noted

F05/36. Partnerships

to develop effective working partnerships with other agencies and organisations to ensure a co-ordinated approach towards the achievement of common goals. To consider and evaluate more major projects requiring funding.

Business Plan Report

The Business Plan was presented for Councillors information.

Noted

F05/37. Correspondence

37.1 Borough of Telford & Wrekin

Invitation to attend Mayor's Charity Ball and to contribute to Mayor's Charity Fund 2005-06 dedicated to the work of the 'Scouts & Guides Associations' and 'Contact the Elderly'

Resolved:

that a donation of £150 be contributed to the Mayoral Fund 2005-06

F05/38. Information
There was none

F05/39. Date of Next Meeting
The next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is scheduled to take place on Monday, February 27th 2006, commencing at 6.30pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed..... Dated.....
(Chair)