

**RICHMOND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
Held 7.00 p.m. 21st February 2011 in the Mayor's Parlour, Richmond Town Hall**

PRESENT: Councillors: D. Johnson (Chair)
J. Robinson
R. Holmes
B. Heap
R. White
E. Hignett
J. Harris
M. McGarry

In attendance: Town Clerk - Miles Templeton
Joyce Chaudri (Allotments Representative)
Geoff Lloyd (Cycling Club)
Fred Wood (Civic Society)
Frank Stockton (Richmond Meet and Duck Club)
Sheila Pearson (TRY)
Rev. Keith Hall (Kings Church)
Paul Spencer (Round Table)
Simon Fletcher (RDC)
Carol Dew (RDC)

1. Apologies

Councillor C World

2. Public Open Session

There were no questions raised by the members of the public in attendance

3. Declarations of Interest

As and when

4. Chairman's comments

The Chairman remarked that agenda item 13 should refer to the laying up of the Colours and not to the Standard.

5. Town Clerk's update

The Town Clerk updated the meeting on all actions arising from the January meeting. All of these had been carried out.

10. Fireworks

This item was brought forward as Councillor Robinson had another commitment and would leave the meeting once he had presented. Councillor Robinson stated that Paine's fireworks had asked the Council if the 2011 event could be moved from Saturday November 5th to Friday November 4th and that should this request be acceded to then they would offer a discounted rate. Councillor Robinson recommended that the date remain the same.

Proposed: Councillor Robinson

Seconded: Councillor Heap

RESOLVED: To hold the 2011 Firework event on November 5th as planned.

Proposed: Councillor Harris

Seconded: Councillor Heap

Councillor Robinson informed the meeting that he would not be seeking to continue organising the Firework event in future.

RESOLVED: That a vote of thanks be given to Councillor Robinson for all of the hard work he has put into making the Firework night a success for so many years.

6. Tourist Information Centre.

Councillor Harris declared an interest and stated that he would not seek to take part in any vote that might result from the discussion but that he would provide information which would help to inform the discussion if he felt it was relevant. Simon Fletcher provided an overview of the existing situation. He stated that RDC has taken a decision to alter the existing arrangements for the provision of Tourist Information in Richmond and Leyburn and that this would lead to a saving of £130k per annum. He was now consulting with potential providers of a new service and he would prepare a report by March 2nd which would assist the District Councillors in selecting the preferred partner(s). In response to a question from Councillor Hignett, Mr Fletcher confirmed that there would be no ongoing support, either in staff or grants, for the provision of this service. There would be some monitoring of the service by RDC once the preferred partner was in operation. Councillor Holmes asked if the service might be provided across a range of sites within the town and Mr Fletcher stated that this may be the case. Councillor White said that the current location of the TIC is ideal and he wondered if the existing TIC could be retained but with some further retail provision from the same location. Mr Fletcher responded by saying that although this had not yet come forward as an option it would be considered if it did. Mr White asked why it was that all of the £130k needed to be saved, could the TIC not close for some of the time thereby reducing costs and further savings be made elsewhere. Mr Fletcher stated that these options could have been considered by RDC but had not been and Councillor Harris then suggested that Councillor White attend the RDC meeting scheduled for Feb 22nd to bring these points up. It was recognised that wherever the TIP (Tourist Information Point) was located it would need to be appropriately way-marked and that this could be confusing if the service was provided at more than one location. Councillor Heap asked if any

consideration had been given to the likely cost of converting the toilets next to the Market Hall to a TIP location. Mr Fletcher answered by saying that a rough estimate of £10k had been made for this. Mr Spencer said that ideally one TIP is all that is required as the central focus would be lost if there were TIPs scattered around the town. Mr Stockton pointed out that a large part of the existing TIC workload related to dealing with the very many telephone calls that are made from potential visitors to the town and that, if the TIP was to be run as part of a retail business then these calls may not be the top priority. Mr Fletcher stated that volunteers may be required to run a TIP and that these volunteers would probably need to be dedicated to the TIP and not to the business.

Councillor Heap stated that the decision to close the TIC was an appalling one and that it would be bound to impact upon the viability of the town as a tourist centre. Tourism is a huge contributor to the economic viability of the town and Richmond would be the poorer for the loss of its TIC.

Proposed: Councillor White

Seconded: Councillor Heap

RESOLVED : That the Town Council express the view that there should only be one location in Richmond delivering tourist information.

Proposed: Councillor Johnson

Seconded: Councillor White

That the Town Council express an interest in taking over the responsibility for the provision of tourist information.

The vote was 3-3 and the Chairman then made a casting vote Against the proposal.

7. Transition in Yorkshire (TRY)

Councillor Harris declared an interest. Mrs Pearson notified those present that an Eco Week was planned to run in Richmond between 26 March and 3 April. There would be a number of events at the Station, including an Energy Day and a Ceilidh. There would also be tours to local eco-friendly locations, an event on the curtilage and links to local schools. Councillor Harris asked Mrs Russell to provide a copy of the program to the Town Clerk. A discussion took place about a request from TRY for the Town Council to fund and distribute copies of the TRY newsletter (produced three times per year) to allotment holders and those on the waiting list. This would be a single A4 sheet and for willing recipients it could be emailed rather than sent hard-copy through the post. It was agreed that this matter be discussed at the next meeting of the Resources Committee. The Town Clerk agreed to supply costings on the practicality of acceding to this request.

8. Allotments

The Town Clerk reported that he had instructed the mole catcher to return to Westfields to alleviate the current problems and that he was providing detailed costings (from the quotes received) on the fence repairs to the next meeting of the Resources Committee.

Councillor Harris commented that although the idea of forming separate trusts to run each of the three allotment sites was theoretically a good one, he felt that it would be more suitable to introduce this approach for the Coffin Field when, and if, this site became available. It was agreed to discuss this matter again at the next meeting.

9. Floral Decorations.

Councillor Hignett reported that she had been discussing the Open Gardens and the competition with Anna Jackson and as a result she may wish to propose that the Caravan garden competition be merged with the small gardens competition to allow a category for a children's garden to be introduced. It was agreed that the term 'small garden' needed to be more clearly defined and Councillor Hignett agreed to address this for the next meeting. It was recognised that there may be a problem in identifying someone to hang the flower baskets around the town in June. Last year this had been done by the Town Clerk and Charlie Wells, a member of the Town Hall staff. If this were found to be a problem (due to Health and Safety legislation) then the work may need to be carried out by Councillors willing to act as volunteers. Councillor Hignett had received a reasonable quote for the provision of Town Council logos on the Green tubs.

Proposed: Councillor Hignett

Seconded: Councillor White

RESOLVED : To take the quote for the provision of Town Council logos on the Green tubs to the March meeting of Resources Committee.

10. Christmas Lights.

Councillor Johnson stated that the minutes of the January meeting need to be amended to make clear that it was the cost of the electricity, and not the insurance, that was to be met by the Town Council for the Christmas lights in the Friary Gardens.

12. Community Events - Cycling

Mr Lloyd thanked the Town Council for the allocation of a grant, via the 2011/12 precept, to support the cycling events. He confirmed that the 2011 events were all being planned satisfactorily

Mr Spencer stated that, under the agenda item 'Community Event' he wished to comment on the arrangements for the siting of the Christmas tree on the curtilage by the Round Table. He was aware that the fencing around the tree was unsightly but unfortunately, due to the need to protect the electrical equipment located behind the tree, it was necessary. He agreed to provide a report to the Town Clerk for the 2011 event which investigated the feasibility of using alternative fencing or the relocation of the electrical equipment into a safe area. It was noted that the involvement of an electrician to evaluate options was a vital part of this process. Mr Spencer also agreed to write to the Town Clerk for permission to use the Town Hall for the 2011 Round Table Santa event.

13. Forthcoming Civic Events

The Town Clerk gave a further update on the planning for the 2011 Boundary Riding. He stated that Carol Ord, the Assistant Town Clerk, was working hard on the detailed planning for this but that she would require some support from April onwards. In particular a committee needed to be formed to take responsibility for the planning. Councillor Heap volunteered his services and he asked if other Councillors who wished to assist could notify the Town Clerk as quickly as possible. It was agreed to place this matter on the agenda for Full Council in March. Rev. Hall commented that some consideration would need to be given to the filming of Mayor Making so that it could be seen by those guests seated in the Hall. Ordinarily this would have been organised by Ted Wray. He further stated that Ted, who had died in December 2010, had provided invaluable service to the Town Council over many years and he will be greatly missed. He wondered if there was anything the Town Councillors could do to honour his memory.

Proposed: Councillor Hignett

Seconded: Councillor Heap

RESOLVED : To request Resources Committee to consider the purchase of a banner to commemorate the forthcoming Royal Wedding.

Councillor Heap suggested that the organisers of the coffee morning on April 23rd be approached to see if they would be amenable to combining their event with a St George's day event. Councillor White agreed to attend to this.

14. Publicity.

Councillor Hignett stated that she had received some material on the Boundary Riding and would seek to construct some publicity for publication in the press during the next month.

15. Dates for 2011/12

Councillor Johnson asked if any further dates for inclusion on the events list be passed to the Town Clerk.

Councillor Johnson wished Mrs Chaudhary well for her forthcoming hospitalisation and hoped that she would be able to return to her allotment in June fit and well.

The meeting closed at 8.28pm