

COUNCIL MEETING – 7 OCTOBER 2014

REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

16 September 2014

Present: Councillors Bell (Chairman), Hollyman (Vice-Chairman), Carr, Dholakia, Graves, Griffiths, Harrington, Henley, Morrall, Scarborough, Ward and M Waters.

Also present: Mr J T Campbell, Chief Executive, Mr G Hollands, Solicitor, Mrs L Elliott, Head of Finance, Mrs B Lawrence, Head of Resources, Miss J Thomas, Interim Head of Planning and Local Development and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillors Beirne, Elliott, G Lawman, L Lawman, B Patel, Simmons and Watts attended as observers.)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to note that apologies were received from Councillors Allebone, Emerson and Partridge-Underwood,

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2014 be confirmed and signed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the under-mentioned councillors declared an interest in the following items:

Councillor	Minute no.	Report Title	Reason
Carr	9	Urgent action taken	Personal – has been made a member of the Royal British Legion
Harrington	9	Urgent action taken	Personal – is a member of the Royal British Legion

4. GLAMIS HALL

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Resources was received on the options for the future of Glamis Hall and the services it provides.

Councillor Bell proposed that the decision to close Glamis Hall taken at Resources Committee on 25 June 2014 be set aside. This was seconded by Councillor Hollyman.

Councillor Scarborough requested an amendment to this as follows:

That the decision to close Glamis Hall taken at Resources Committee on 25 June 2014 be set aside until at least November 2015. This was seconded by Councillor Dholakia.

The amendment was put to the vote with three votes in favour and seven against and declared lost.

The substantive motion was put to the meeting and declared carried.

The following members of the public addressed the meeting:

Heather Saunders, Anthony Page, Graham Campbell, Betty Ashton, Diana Clayton and Rosie Newbigging.

The key points raised by the speakers are summarised below:

There was an opportunity to work together to refurbish the building and to continue to provide a day care service for the current users of the hall and other future users. The petition of 10,000 signatures indicated that the people of Wellingborough wished for Glamis Hall to remain open. The campaigners were aware of the challenges of the building and considered that if the council transferred the building to a community group they would be able, with some short term financial assistance from the council, to continue to provide a service. Work would be undertaken with volunteers to fund raise and to apply for grant funding. The charges for the service would also need to be reviewed to a more realistic figure. The vision for the future would be to change the layout of the building and to refurbish it. Local trades people had already come forward to offer their services.

The day care services provided were deemed to be a lifeline for many of the users. The condition of the building and particularly the toilets, which had been raised as being poor at a previous meeting, was of no real concern to the users. They considered the lounge area to be clean, warm and cosy with the provision of social interaction, a hot meal and bathing facilities.

Campaigners were aware that the hall was also used for sporting facilities and the changing rooms had been noted as being the best in the Sunday football league. Since the campaign two running groups had come forward to express interest in using the facilities.

A survey of a cross-section of 65 adults over 18 living in Wellingborough, carried out by the campaigners, indicated that there was a desire for Glamis Hall to remain open as a community centre and be refurbished to provide day care services, as well as services for all age groups. This would create a

significant source of income for the council. Many people did not know that the hall existed and that it was available for hire; more publicity about the availability would create more revenue.

The Chief Executive of Health Watch Northamptonshire, Rosie Newbigging, explained that Health Watch Northamptonshire was a statutory organisation to speak and champion the needs of the population of Northamptonshire in relation to health and social care.

She referred to a House of Lords finding in 2013 which concluded that the country is under-prepared for the increase of people over the age of 65 in the county and that the number of those over 85 was set to increase significantly.

Her view was that wherever reasonable older people needed to remain in their own homes, with as much support as possible. This would mean the need for more, not less, day care centres. The aim was for the older population to remain healthier, happier and live longer, without the fear of isolation and loneliness which could lead to depression.

The chairman thanked the speakers for their comments and asked the Head of Resources if she wished to add anything further to her report.

The Head of Resources addressed the meeting.

She firstly made reference to the independent inspection report, details of which had been summarised in Appendix 7 to the report to committee. The clinicians' report had been received in draft and circulated to members of the committee on the previous Friday. The final report had been received on that day, but with only minor changes to the summary, and identification of the most urgent issues.

This review was carried out in accordance with the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) personal care standards, adapted for use for a day care centre by the inspectors. Whilst it was acknowledged that day care centres are not regulated by the CQC, it was considered that Glamis Hall should be providing care that it is consistent with CQC standards. Based on the findings of the review, the conclusion was that the day centre staff were dedicated and providing an excellent service, but that changes were required in order to meet CQC personal care standards.

The Head of Resources referred to the key points recommended for urgent action as follows:

- Bathing facilities should be withdrawn until health and safety issues relating to resourcing levels and the physical environment had been addressed;
- A deep clean and de-clutter of the whole building;
- Archiving of records;
- All documentation to be reviewed in the light of Care Quality Commission standards;

- Additional training for staff, particularly in relation to safeguarding.

She also informed the committee that she had arranged for a valuation to be carried out of Glamis Hall and the car park so that members had as much relevant information as possible. Due to commercial sensitivity she was unable to inform the committee of the valuations in the open part of the meeting.

Comparison valuations had been requested for a:

- going concern, but figures could not be provided as the service ran at a loss;
- sale or transfer to provide community or care facilities; or
- sale on the open market.

She informed members that if the hall was sold to provide care or community facilities it would realise approximately half the amount it would achieve if it was sold for housing or other purposes. Proceeds of any sale could, however, be ploughed back into the community to provide care and support.

The chairman thanked the Head of Resources for the updated information and a lengthy debate ensued.

The officer was thanked for the very detailed report, which members had found to be very useful, containing all the information that they considered they needed to make a decision.

The Leader of the Opposition thanked the speakers for their input and expressed his desire that the proposal of the Save Glamis Hall for All Committee (SGHAC) be explored further. Significantly more information had been made available since the original meeting in June. Whilst appreciating that Glamis Hall was an old building, he believed that money could be found to make improvements and a different, but perhaps better, service could be provided by working with the community.

Members referred to the report, with a number expressing grave concern about the findings in the clinicians' report and the need for some of the points to be actioned urgently, particularly around the staffing levels, the need for a bathing hoist and the deep clean and replacement of flooring for infection control. Other less urgent issues had also been raised, but it was clear that the building was still considered to be unfit for use as a day centre.

There was also concern about where the users would relocate to on a temporary basis while remedial works were carried out. Members had received an estimate of how long the building would be closed for, but did not know for certain. Whilst the council could not force anyone to go elsewhere, the report outlined a number of other potential providers.

Some members asked for clarification on the direct consequences of the decision making process, particularly regarding the resolution made to set aside the original decision of 25 June 2014. They asked what this meant for the operation of the service; the staff at the hall who had been issued with “at risk” notices; and whether new referrals would be taken.

The Leader confirmed that the resolution to set aside the decision made to close the building and the service on 25 June had been made, but any further recommendation about the building and its services would be considered at the Council meeting on 7 October 2014 so there would be no more referrals accepted at this stage.

Members also asked about the valuations of the land and buildings and why they were not available. The Head of Resources confirmed that she had the valuations and could make them available; should members wish to discuss these the meeting could move into confidential session due to the commercial sensitivity involved.

A desire was expressed for discussions to take place with the Save Glamis Hall for All Committee and any other organisations who had expressed an interest in taking over the building and the service.

A member reminded colleagues that they had been informed of the considerable financial pressures facing the council more than two years ago, and all members were aware that difficult decisions would need to be made. Consideration had to be given to all tax payers of the borough, not just the users of the hall. The care of the elderly was a county council function which needed to be addressed by that authority. Provision of day care facilities in the hall was no longer a viable option and better, more suitable, care provision could be provided elsewhere.

With regard to the petition received at the extraordinary council meeting on 2 September 2014 with 10,000 signatures, questions were raised about whether the public had realised what they were actually signing. Councillors had witnessed the public signing the petition and believed that some had been confused about what the petition actually referred to.

It was concluded that there were three decisions that the committee needed to decide on: the future of the building; the day care service; and the other uses of the building. Members of the committee dealt with each issue separately as detailed below.

(a) The Glamis Hall building

Councillor Hollyman proposed the following:

that the Council close the building and cease day care facilities at Glamis Hall with effect from 31 December 2014. This was seconded by Councillor Griffiths.

Councillor Henley and three others requested a recorded vote under clause 4.2.13(d) of the constitution ahead of the vote on the proposal above. The following votes were cast:

For: Councillors Bell, Hollyman, Carr, Graves, Griffiths, Harrington, Morrall, Ward and Waters (9)

Against: Councillors Dholakia, Henley and Scarborough (3)

The proposal was declared carried with nine votes in favour and three against.

(b) The provision of day care services

Councillor Graves proposed the following:

that clients be helped to find suitable alternative services should Glamis Hall close either permanently or temporarily whilst repairs are undertaken;

Councillor Hollyman proposed that the following be added to Councillor Graves' proposal:

that the council enters into discussions, with immediate effect, with any interested parties who wished to run the day care services

This was seconded by Councillor Waters.

The following motion was therefore put to the meeting:

- (i) that clients be helped to find suitable alternative services should Glamis Hall close either permanently or temporarily whilst repairs are undertaken;
- (ii) that the council enter into discussions, with immediate effect, with any interested parties who wished to run the day care services.

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried with seven votes in favour, three against and one abstention.

(Councillors Dholakia, Henley and Scarborough asked for their votes against this to be recorded.)

(c) The use of Glamis Hall for sports/leisure and other uses

Councillor Hollyman proposed that as Glamis Hall was to close from 31 December 2014, the users of the sports/leisure and other facilities work with officers to find other suitable accommodation elsewhere in the borough.

This was seconded by Councillor Waters.

The motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED that the decision to close Glamis Hall taken by the Resources Committee on 25 June 2014 be set aside;

R1 RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the Borough Council of Wellingborough closes the building and ceases day care facilities at Glamis Hall with effect from 31 December 2014.
- (ii) (a) clients be helped to find suitable alternative services when Glamis Hall closes permanently on 31 December or, if it closes temporarily whilst repairs are carried out;
(b) officers enter into discussions with any interested parties who wish to run day care services, with immediate effect.
- (iii) the users of the sports/leisure and other facilities work with officers to find suitable alternative accommodation in the borough.

The meeting was adjourned for five minutes to enable those who wished to do so to leave the room.

The meeting reconvened at 9pm.

5. FINANCIAL MONITORING AND POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2014-15

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to update members on the monitoring position for both revenue and capital expenditure to enable members to have a total view and understanding of the financial position.

This was the first monitoring report of the financial year and would be used as the baseline to compare future revenue and capital forecasts.

The report detailed the current budget. Appended to the report were the following documents:

Revenue monitoring position to 31 July 2014
Capital Monitoring position to 31 July 2014
Capital Programme funding position
Capital Virement request.

Members asked questions for the purpose of clarity to which the Head of Finance responded.

RESOLVED that the:

- (i) position on the revenue monitoring and the reasons for the variances be noted;
- (ii) position on the capital programme be noted;
- (iii) position on the funding of the capital programme be noted;
- (iv) capital virement request of £5,000 as detailed be approved.

6. CAPITAL REVIEW PROGRESS UPDATE

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to update members on the progress of the capital programme review, outlining further actions needed to complete the full review.

Appended to the report was the process flow chart, the high level timeline and the new reporting style for monitoring of the capital programme.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the progress to date on the review and the key tasks to be undertaken as part of the full review process be noted;
- (ii) that proposed process, reporting template and timeline as outlined in the appendices to the report be agreed;
- (iii) the inclusion of a recommendation in the draft capital programme report be agreed.

7. CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY

The annexed circulated report of the Chief Executive was received on a proposal to reconvene a Constitution Working Party.

A number of constitutional matters needed to be reviewed and the normal practice was for this to be done by a working party. Appended to the report was the proposed terms of reference for such a working party.

R2 RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) a Constitution Working Party consisting of seven members of the council be established;
- (ii) the terms of reference for the Constitution Working Party be as appended to the report;
- (iv) such Constitution Working Party be in place until 31 March 2015.

8. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT ACTION: INTERIM HEAD OF PLANNING AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

The annexed circulated report of the Chief Executive was received to inform the committee of the urgent action taken in relation to the extension of the temporary employment contract for the Interim Head of Planning and Local Development to 31 March 2015.

RESOLVED that the urgent action taken be noted.

9. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT ACTIONS

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received on three urgent action requests.

A request to address the committee had been received from Mr Garvie and the chairman allowed him to speak.

Mr Garvie referred to the use of an urgent action for additional capital funding for the crematorium scheme and considered that this should have been discussed in public at a committee meeting.

Members asked the Head of Finance for an update on the crematorium project.

The Head of Finance informed the committee that the Crematorium Advisory Group had been working on a design for the crematorium and that a planning application would be submitted on 1 October 2014 which would be heard by the Planning Committee on 3 December 2014.

Members asked why there had been the need for the urgent action to be taken rather than this being progressed through the normal committee.

The Head of Finance responded stating that, in her judgement as the council's Section 151 officer, it had been necessary to secure the additional funding to ensure that the project could progress in order to meet the build deadline of November 2015.

RESOLVED that the urgent actions taken in relation to the Crematorium, Royal British legion grant and food festival market stall fees be noted.

(Councillors Dholakia and Henley asked that their vote against the urgent action on the crematorium be noted.)

Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

