

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 6TH MAY, 2014

Present: Councillor E Bell, (Chair) and
Councillors Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale,
B Burn Snr, B Burn Jnr, Mrs H Cahill,
R Meir, Miss S Morrison, I Paul, K Shaw,
G A Shepherd, C Snowball, R Whitehead,

Apologies: Councillors R Arthur, S Cudlip,
Mrs S Forster, N Page, K Younger

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Councillor E Bell was appointed to the Chair.

(Councillor E Bell in the Chair)

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 8TH APRIL, 2014

RECOMMENDED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

3. PAYSHEET NUMBER 1 - 2014/2015

a) Expenditure

RECOMMENDED

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 1 – 2014/2015 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £299,758.44 being the total sum authorised under this Paysheet;
- (ii) that the BACS authorisation sheet be signed by three Members and the credit transfers be actioned immediately;
- (iii) that the cheques relating to suppliers not being paid by BACS be signed by three Members and the payments be released immediately; and
- (iv) that the Clerk's Imprest Account be reimbursed the sum of £9,438.24 for Civic Expenditure, and authority be granted for this to be signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.

b) **Income**

RECOMMENDED the summary sheet showing the range of income received by the Council during the current month be accepted.

4. **BANK BALANCES**

RECOMMENDED the report of the Finance Officer, a copy of which was circulated, be approved.

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS**

a) **Seaham Youth Theatre - Production of High School Musical**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Seaham Youth Theatre Group who sought support in the form of the Town Council placing an advertisement in the programme for their August production of High School Musical. Their communication details the costs for full page, half page and quarter page advertisements

RECOMMENDED the Council agree to sponsor a half page advertisement at a cost of £30 in the programme for this Group's next production of High School Musical.

b) **Seaham Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society – Production of The Sound of Music**

The Committee considered correspondence from The Seaham Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society who sought support in the form of the Town Council placing an advertisement in the programme for their next production of The Sound of Music. As stated in their communication, the advertisement is at a cost of £50.

RECOMMENDED the Council agree to sponsor a half page advertisement at a cost of £50 in the programme for this Group's next production of The Sound of Music.

6. **FRAUD RISKS IN PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS**

The Committee considered a communication from CDALC which provided advice for Councillors in relation to fraud risks in Parish and Town Councils.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

7. **CONFERENCES, COURSES AND SEMINARS**

The Committee considered details of a one day seminar entitled Employment Law Update to be held on Wednesday, 2nd July, 2014 at Chester le Street. The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk had indicated their desire to attend this seminar with the suggestion that the Chair of the Establishment Sub-Committee also attend.

RECOMMENDED the Chair of the Establishment Sub-Committee, namely Councillor Miss S Morrison, together with the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk be authorised to attend this event as the Council's representatives, and such attendance rank as an approved duty for payment of appropriate allowances.

8. RETIRING CLERK – SEDGEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

The Committee considered a communication from the retiring Clerk of Sedgefield Town Council, Lesley Swinbank, which thanked everyone she had worked with over past years for their advice and support provided to her.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

9. NORTH EAST WW1 NETWORKING EVENTS

The Committee considered the communication from CDALC which detailed North East WW1 Networking Events which would be taking place during May in various locations. This communication had been brought to the first available meeting for consideration due to the close proximity of the Durham event on 22nd May, 2014.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) Authority be granted for the Deputy Town Clerk to attend this event on 22nd May, 2014, and such attendance rank as an approved duty for payment of appropriate allowances.
- (ii) A report of the event to be brought back to Members at the next appropriate meeting.

10. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDED in view of the confidential nature of the following item, the formal resolution be hereby passed to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1961.

11. SALE OF CIVIC OFFICES

The Committee considered the communication from Mr Bill Kimmitt, the Estate Agents acting for the Town Council in the sale of the current Civic Offices.

RECOMMENDED the Council agree to Option 2 as detailed in Mr Kimmitt's communication of 5th May, 2014.

12. CO-OP BANK

The Committee was advised of the intention of the Town Council's bank to discontinue the BACS system which is currently used for the payment of creditors and salaries.

The alternatives available were detailed by the Town Clerk and Members were advised that the Finance Officer had been provided with an initial overview of the proposed procedure.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

13. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED the Council note that no press opportunities existed from this meeting.