

MINUTES OF THE ARTS AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 28TH APRIL, 2015

Present: Councillor C Snowball (Chair) and Councillors R Arthur, Mrs M R Baird, E Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn Snr, B Burn Jnr, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster, Miss S Morrison, K Shaw, C Snowball, R Whitehead, K Younger

Apologies: Councillors Mrs J A Bell, Mrs H Cahill, B Taylor

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

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 31ST MARCH, 2015

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. CONFERENCE APPOINTMENTS

RECOMMENDED the list of conference appointments a copy of which had been previously circulated, be approved.

4. CONFERENCES, COURSES AND SEMINARS

4.1 Evaluation Form

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the reports completed by the Council's three delegates who attended the Safeguarding and Preparing for the Care Act Conference, organised by the National Association of Councillors held in Scarborough on 10th to 12th April, 2015.

4.2 NAC Conference Schedule 2015

The Committee considered a schedule of the conferences proposed by the National Association of Councillors for 2015.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported and await further details of each conference in due course.

4.3 Equality Briefing for Town Councillors

The Committee considered the response from NEREO with regard to the provision of Equality and Diversity training to the Town Council. Two options together with associated costs were given along with details of the course content. In discussion it was considered that such training was essential for all Councillors and suggested that the more comprehensive half day course at a cost of £425 plus VAT would be better suited to the Town Council. A letter should be sent to each Councillor to ask for their commitment to attend such a training course which may be held either on a Saturday or an evening to allow more Members to attend. If eight or more Members confirmed their willingness to attend, then the comprehensive training event should be organised with NEREO. It was also suggested that the Town Council should have a personal development plan for each Councillor to detail the training undertaken by each individual and when such training was received.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Town Clerk communicate with individual Councillors in writing to seek their commitment to attend an equality and diversity training session.
- (ii) Subject to a minimum of eight Members confirming their attendance, a half day training session be organised through NEREO on either a Saturday or an evening.
- (iii) The Town Clerk make appropriate arrangements to set up a personal development plan for each Councillor which should record the training they have undertaken to date and going forward.

4.4 Say No.. Mean No – Assertiveness that Works Workshop for Members and Officers

The Committee considered details of a half day workshop being organised by the North East Regional Employers' Organisation on the afternoon of Thursday, 2nd July, 2015 at a venue yet to be decided.

RECOMMENDED the Town Council not be represented at the above workshop on 2nd July, 2015.

4.5 Employment Law Seminar

The Committee considered details of a one day seminar on the above topic organised by the North East Regional Employers' Organisation on Wednesday, 8th July, 2015 at Chester-le-Street.

The Town Clerk suggested the seminar may be beneficial to the Deputy Town Clerk and the Chair of the Establishment Sub-Committee.

RECOMMENDED the Chair of the Establishment Sub-Committee, namely Councillor K Shaw, together with the Deputy Town Clerk be appointed to attend the NEREO Employment Law Seminar on 8th July, 2015, and such attendance rank as an approved duty for payment of appropriate allowances.

4.6 Chairing Skills for Elected Members

The Committee considered details of a half day seminar on the above topic organised by the North East Regional Employers' Organisation on Tuesday, 14th July, 2015 at venue yet to be decided. In discussion the Committee felt that such training would be beneficial for all Councillors, providing an update for longer-standing Members who had previously undertaken such training and providing the necessary skills for newer Members. It was suggested that an approach be made to NEREO to ask whether they could deliver the course to Seaham Town Council in-house at Seaham Town Hall, preferably on a Saturday or on an evening to allow those Members who work during the day to attend.

RECOMMENDED the Town Clerk make appropriate enquiries to ascertain whether NEREO would provide in-house training to the Town Council and at what cost, with a report being brought back to the next meeting of this Committee.

5. NAC NEWSLETTERS

The Committee considered various issues which had been contained in the NAC Equality and Diversity Newsletter dated March, 2015. If any Member has a particular interest in any of the issues detailed and required a paper copy, this could be provided upon request.

RECOMMENDED the Council note that a paper copy of any item of interest would be provided to individual Members upon request.

6. NALC NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING BULLETIN

The Committee considered a communication from the Chief Executive of NALC which highlighted some of the issues discussed at the recent meeting of the National Council.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

7. NALC POLICY CONSULTATION

RECOMMENDED the NALC Policy Consultation entitled 'Local Government Ombudsman and Larger Parish Councils' be noted.

8. EAST DURHAM AAP

RECOMMENDED the notes of the meeting of the East Durham AAP's Children and Young People Priority Group Sub-Group, a copy of which had been previously circulated, and which took place on 13th March, 2015, be noted.

9. SEAHAM DAY CENTRE

The Committee considered a communication from the Hospital of God at Greatham which advised of an open day to be held at the Seaham Day Centre (Bradbury House) on Monday, 18th May, 2015 to highlight Dementia Awareness Week. The invitation to attend was extended to all Members of the Town Council. In discussion it was felt that it may be an appropriate opportunity for the Mayor of Seaham to attend in his official capacity along with any other Member who wished to attend.

RECOMMENDED enquiries be made to ascertain whether they wished to extend an invitation to the Mayor of Seaham to attend in his official capacity, along with other Members of Seaham Town Council who may wish to attend.

10. 'TOMMY' STATUE

10.1 Visitor Enquiry

The Committee considered an e-mail communication received from a gentleman from Lincolnshire in relation to the above statue, a copy of which was circulated. Subsequent to the Town Council's response he had further written to congratulate the Town Council and its residents for the efforts made to retain 'Tommy' in Seaham.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

10.2 Plinth

A Member queried when a plinth was to be put in place on which the statue would stand and the Deputy Town Clerk provided an update on the progress being made on this issue.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) A letter be sent to Mission 1101 to request a response to the Town Council's communications in order to progress the acquisition and erection of the plinth.

- (ii) Clarification be sought from the artist in respect of whether his attendance at the statue's relocation would be at a cost.

11. REQUEST FROM EAST DURHAM HERITAGE GROUP

The Committee was advised that the East Durham Heritage Group had requested the loan of one of the Seaham artefacts that had been on display during the Seaham Town Hall open day recently. The item in question was a printing block of the original design of Seaham Harbour which was donated to the Town Council by Greenwoods on their closure. It was the intention of the East Durham Heritage Group to take the block to Beamish to obtain a print which could subsequently be put on display in their premises. In discussion a Member commented on the potential for misuse in relation to copyright law and it was suggested that legal advice should be sought before drawing up any agreement.

RECOMMENDED the Council seek legal advice on this issue prior to any agreement being given.

12. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED a press release be produced to clarify to residents what action was to be taken with regard to the relocation of the statue and the plinth.