

## **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 5TH MAY, 2015**

Present: Councillor Mrs S Forster (Chair) and Councillors E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn Snr, B Burn Jnr, S Cudlip, R Meir, Miss S Morrison, N R Page, I Paul, K Shaw, C Snowball, B Taylor, R Whitehead, K Younger

Apologies: Councillors B Allen, Mrs B E Allen, Mrs H J Cahill

*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 7TH APRIL, 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. PAYSHEET NUMBER 1 - 2015/2016**

#### **3.1 Expenditure**

RECOMMENDED

- (i) all payments in Paysheet Number 1 – 2015/2016 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £124,288.73 being the total sum authorised under this Paysheet;
- (ii) the BACS authorisation sheet be signed by three Members and the credit transfers be actioned immediately;
- (iii) the cheques relating to suppliers not being paid by BACS be signed by three Members and the payments be released immediately; and
- (iv) the Clerk's Imprest Account be reimbursed the sum of £4,587.79 for Civic Expenditure and authority be granted for this to be signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.

**3.2 Income**

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

**4. BANK BALANCES**

The Committee considered a statement of Bank Balances held by the Council at the last month end, a copy of which had been previously circulated. The Chair examined statements in respect of the Town Council's 3 bank accounts which were made available to view and the Finance Officer responded to queries raised.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information and approve the Finance Officer's report.

**5. KEY STRATEGIC RISKS**

A list of the current key strategic risks had been previously submitted to Members for consideration prior to incorporation into the Annual Report and Council Plan for 2015. The Committee was advised that these risks would be reviewed on an annual basis with a report being submitted to the Clerk's Advisory Sub-Committee.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

**6. SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS**

The Committee considered the schedule of bookings for the Town Hall for the period March to May, 2015. The Committee was advised that the scheduled quarterly meeting with Oldfields was to take place on 14th May, 2015.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) The Council note the bookings made at Seaham Town Hall for the period March to May, 2015.
- (ii) The Council note the next scheduled meeting with Oldfields would take place on Thursday, 14th May, 2015

**7. SEAHAM TOWN GUIDE**

The Committee was advised that the current Seaham Town Guide publication expired during the current year and views were sought on whether to publish a new version of the Guide. The publisher of the current Guide, Plus Publishing, had now gone out of business but a proposal had been received from SB Publishing, the company which had taken over some of the Plus Publishing contracts. The Town Clerk elaborated on the proposal and the associated costs and advised that an approach had also been made by another Guide publisher who provided a similar service. In discussion Members considered the Guide to be a valuable publication for both residents and visitors alike.

Members were advised that the editorial was provided by the Town Council and the publishers sought revenue from the sale of advertising space to local businesses. In discussion it was commented that Seaham was very rarely included within Durham County Council publications which promoted the County and it was suggested that an enquiry be made to ascertain costs for such inclusion. A Member stated that Durham County Council also produced a quarterly newsletter which detailed a diary of events and Seaham's events could also be included in this publication.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (i) The Council agree to the publication of a new Seaham Town Guide at a cost of £460 plus VAT with SB Publishing.
- (ii) The editorial for the Town Guide be updated to take account of the recent additions to and future proposals for the town.
- (iii) The Committee have sight of the content for the Guide prior to publication.
- (iv) Costs for inclusion in the Durham County Council publication be sought and advised to Members at the next meeting of this Committee.
- (v) Enquiries be made to ascertain whether Seaham Town Council's events could be included within Durham County Council's quarterly newsletter and whether a cost would be involved and be advised to Members at the next meeting of this Committee.

**8. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

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