

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON
2ND JUNE, 2015**

Present: Councillors B Allen, Mrs B E Allen,
Mrs M R Baird, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell,
Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn Snr, B Burn Jnr,
Mrs H J Cahill, S Cudlip, Mrs S Forster,
R Meir, N R Page, I Paul, K Shaw, C
Snowball, B Taylor, R Whitehead,
K Younger

Apologies: Councillor Miss S Morrison

**1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

RECOMMENDED Councillor S Cudlip be appointed as Chair of this Committee for the ensuing year.

(Councillor S Cudlip in the Chair)

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.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES
COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

RECOMMENDED Councillor Mrs S Forster be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee for the ensuing year.

3. 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.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 5TH MAY, 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.

5. PAYSHEET NUMBER 2 - 2015/2016

a) Expenditure

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 2 – 2015/2016 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £202,048.98 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 £2,898.03 for Civic Expenditure which includes the sum of £329.98 for petty cash, 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.

6. BANK BALANCES

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

7. SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS

The Committee considered the schedule of bookings for the Town Hall for the period March to May, 2015.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the bookings made at Seaham Town Hall for the period March to May, 2015.

8. REPORT OF THE TOWN HALL WORKING PARTY

The Committee considered, on a page by page basis, the report of the quarterly meeting with Oldfields which had taken place on 14th May, 2015.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That the Council agree recommendations:

- 3.3(i), (ii) and (iii).
 - 3.5(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), and (v).
 - 3.7(i) and (ii).
 - 4.2(i).
 - 4.3(i), subject to the concessionary rate only applying the first time such speculative promotional events occur. Once the event is established and taking place on a regular basis the full rate is to apply.
 - 4.14(i), (ii) and (iii).
- (ii) That with regard to recommendation 4.8(i) and (iii) that the full rate apply with respect to a Sunday lunch carvery and Christmas parties.
- (iii) That with regard to recommendation 4.8(ii) that the issue of cleaning charges for events where no room hire fee or a concessionary hire fee has been charged be discussed by the working party with Oldfields at the next meeting in September 2015.

The Chair commended the working party for its amount of excellent work and the quality of the report provided to the Committee.

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the report of the Seaham Town Hall Working Party meeting which took place on 14th May, 2015, subject to the stipulations as noted.

9. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2015

The Committee considered the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2015 (Not subject to Audit).

RECOMMENDED the Council formally approve the Final Statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2015 (Not subject to Audit).

10. ANNUAL RETURN – FINANCIAL YEAR 2014/15

The Committee was advised that under the Limited Assurance Audit Regime the Council's statutory accounts be produced in the form of an Annual Return which must be approved prior to the end of the month of June following the financial year to which it relates. The Committee considered a copy of the completed Annual Return which reflects the information contained in the Financial Statements for the financial year ended 31st March 2015 (Not subject to Audit). Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return which reflects the information contained in the Financial Statements were considered for official approval and signing.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That the Council formally approve Section 1, Accounting Statements for Seaham Town Council, of the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31st March 2015.

- (ii) That the Council formally approve Section 2, Annual Governance Statement, of the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31st March 2015.

11. CONFERENCES, COURSES AND SEMINARS

a) NAC Councillors' Conference

The Committee considered details of the National Association of Councillors' Conference entitled 'Devolving Powers to the Regions' to be held in Lytham St Annes on 26th to 30th June, 2015. In accordance with Members' prior instructions the details of this conference have been previously circulated to all Councillors and the next two Councillors on the rota (Councillors Mrs G Bleasdale and B Burn (Jnr)) had both indicated that they wish to attend in addition to the standing representative.

RECOMMENDED the next two Councillors from the appropriate rota together with the standing representative be authorised to attend this event as the Council's representatives, and such attendance rank as an approved duty for payment of appropriate allowances.

b) Equality Briefing for Town Councillors

The Committee considered possible dates for the equality briefing training event to be arranged to take place at the Town Hall. In discussion, Members' agreed Thursday 18th June to be the best date for the training to take place and 13 Members indicated they were able to attend.

RECOMMENDED the Equality Briefing training event be approved and arranged to take place at Seaham Town Hall on Thursday 18th June from 5pm to 8.30pm.

c) Chairing Skills for Elected Members

The Committee considered possible dates for the chairing skills training event to be arranged to take place at the Town Hall. In discussion, Members' agreed Thursday 2nd July to be the best date for the training to take place.

RECOMMENDED the Chairing Skills training event be approved and arranged to take place at Seaham Town Hall on Thursday 2nd July from 5pm to 8.30pm.

12. SEAHAM TOWN GUIDE

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

13. COUNTY DURHAM NEWS

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

14. LETTER OF THANKS

RECOMMENDED the letter of thanks received from the Great North Air Ambulance, a copy of which was circulated, in relation to the Town Council's donation of £400 from the Mayor's Charity Fund, be noted.

15. PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT – KUBOTA TRACTOR AND AERATOR

The Committee considered the report from the Deputy Town Clerk providing details of two items of equipment which are required by the Parks Department. The report detailed the associated costs and requisite quotations obtained (where possible) in line with Council Standing Orders and also that the amounts can be met from the earmarked plant and machinery replacement reserves.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) Authority be granted for the expenditure of £16,500 in respect of the purchase of the ex-demonstrator Kubota STV40 Tractor with additional parts from Lloyds Ltd of Newcastle and that the Town Councils Kubota STV32 Tractor be traded in as part of this transaction.
- (ii) Authority be granted for the expenditure of £6,500 in respect of the purchase of the ex-demonstrator Toro SR48 Aerator from Lloyds Ltd of Newcastle.

16. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

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