

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8TH SEPTEMBER , 2015**

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

Observers: Councillor R Arthur

*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 30TH JUNE, 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 4 - 2015/2016**

**3.1 Expenditure**

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 4 – 2015/2016 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £261,604.39 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 £2,621.46 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.

### **3.3 Bank Balances**

The Committee considered a statement of Bank Balances held by the Council at the end of July, a copy of which had been previously circulated. The Chair examined statements in respect of the Town Council's three 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.

## **4. PAYSHEET 5 – AUGUST, 2015**

### **4.1 Expenditure**

RECOMMENDED

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 5 – 2015/2016 be approved, it being noted that the BACS, Cheque, Direct Debit, Debit Card and Online Payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £93,017.61 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 £488.60 for Civic Expenditure, and authority be granted for this to be signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.

### **4.2 Income**

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

**4.3 Bank Balances**

The Committee considered a statement of Bank Balances held by the Council at the end of August, 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. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS**

**5.1 Seaham Spiritualist Church**

The Committee considered an application from the Seaham Spiritualist Church who sought a grant towards the cost of a new roof for their Church premises. In discussion Members felt that to grant support to one religious establishment could set a precedent for future requests as there were so many churches in the town. The Committee felt that because of constraints on funding the Council should advise this organisation that unfortunately on this occasion the Council is unable to offer any grant.

RECOMMENDED for the reasons stated the Seaham Spiritualist Church be advised that the Council is unable to offer a donation.

**6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING AND 2016/17 BUDGET SETTING**

The Committee gave consideration to the communication from Mr D McClure, Corporate Director Resources, Durham County Council which provided an update on the future implications of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme on Seaham Town Council's finances. In discussion Members recognised the requirement for further consideration of this matter during the future budget setting process.

RECOMMENDED the information be noted and it be deferred for future consideration during the budget setting process.

**7. AUDIT ISSUES**

**7.1 Internal Audit Report – Civic Expenses Audit – 2015**

The Committee considered the findings of the Internal Auditor in relation to the work undertaken in examining the Town Council's Civic Expenses arrangements, a copy of which had been previously circulated.

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the report.

**7.2 Internal control report – Capital Expenditure**

The Committee considered the findings of the Internal Auditor in relation to the work undertaken in examining the Town Council's Capital Expenditure controls, a copy of which had been previously circulated. In discussion it was stated that the Council had set up a Working Party to look into this issue and a report would be brought to Full Council in due course.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information and await a further report.

**7.3 Internal Control Report – Allotments**

The Committee considered the findings of the Internal Auditor in relation to the work undertaken in examining the Town Council's internal control arrangements in respect of Allotments, a copy of which had been previously circulated.

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the report.

**8. SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS**

**8.1 Income and Expenditure**

The Committee considered schedules which detailed the income and expenditure for the Function Suite and Café for July and August, 2015, copies of which were circulated.

RECOMMENDED the schedules be noted.

**8.2 Bookings**

The Committee considered schedules which detailed the bookings made for use of the Town Hall for July and August, 2015, copies of which were circulated.

RECOMMENDED the schedule be noted.

**9. SLCC PUBLICATION:  
COUNCIL TAX HITS POORER COMMUNITIES THE HARDEST**

The Committee considered an article which had appeared in the SLCC's publication 'The Clerk' dated September, 2015 which gives comparative statistical information on precepts issued by local councils in England.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

**10. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

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