

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 1ST DECEMBER, 2015

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

Apologies: Councillors B Allen, Mrs B E Allen,
B Burn Jnr, Mrs H Cahill, Miss S Morrison,
I Paul

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 3RD NOVEMBER, 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 8 - 2015/2016

3.1 Expenditure

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 8 – 2015/2016 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £139,719.40 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 £1,124.85 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 month end, 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. AUDIT ISSUES

4.1 Seaham Town Council – Oldfields (Follow-up)

The Committee considered the report which detailed the findings of the Internal Auditor in relation to the follow up work in respect of the Oldfields' operation.

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the report and note the action plan to be implemented by Officers.

5. APPLICATION FOR GRANT

5.1 Great North Air Ambulance Service

The Committee considered an application from the Great North Air Ambulance Service who sought a grant towards their continuing costs in the operation of this very important service.

RECOMMENDED that a donation of £200 be given to this organisation in recognition of the work the organisation carries out.

6. SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS

RECOMMENDED the schedule which detailed the bookings made in respect of the Town Hall for November, 2015, together with Income and Expenditure be noted.

7. STANDING ORDERS FOR BUSINESS AND PROCEEDINGS - REVISION

The Committee considered a revision to the Business and Proceedings section of the Town Council's Standing Orders which clarified the Council's stance on public participation at meetings of the Full Council.

RECOMMENDED the Council approve the proposed revision to the Standing Orders as detailed.

8. ADVICE FROM EAST DURHAM CREATES / ARC

Pursuant to discussion at a previous meeting of this Committee when it was suggested that EDC/ARC may be able to provide advice on funding opportunities to improve the Town Hall audio/visual equipment, information had subsequently been received which indicated their intention to run a grant funding workshop in the near future which may be of benefit to the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information and await further details.

9. REVISED BUDGET FOR 2015/16 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2016/17

The Committee considered the estimates for finance and general purposes, a copy of which had been previously circulated. These outlined revised budgets for the current financial year and the proposed estimates for the next financial year covering all income and expenditure issues. Members agreed to accept the proposed estimates pending any revisions as a result of consideration at the next Budget Sub-Committee meeting to take place on Wednesday 2nd December 2015.

RECOMMENDED the estimates be provisionally approved, subject to review at the at the next Budget Sub-Committee meeting on Wednesday 2nd December 2015, with the intention of the Council setting its precept at the January Full Council meeting.

10. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

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

11. UPGRADE OF COUNCIL WEBSITE

Pursuant to initial consideration of this item at the October meeting of this Committee, Members were advised that subsequent to a request for additional aspects to enhance the website, the estimated cost for provision of the new site had increased from £750 to £975.

RECOMMENDED the Council approve the proposed additional cost for provision of a new enhanced website.