

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 29TH NOVEMBER, 2016

Present: Councillor S Cudlip (Chair) and Councillors Mrs M Baird, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn Snr, B Burn (Jnr), Mrs S Forster, R Meir, Miss S Morrison, I Paul, R Whitehead, K Younger.

Apologies: Councillors B Allen, Mrs B E Allen, Mrs H J Cahill, C Snowball, 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 1ST NOVEMBER, 2016

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 - 2016/17

a) Expenditure

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 8 – 2016/17 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £96,152.11 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 £1,208.36 for Civic Expenditure 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.

4. **BANK BALANCES**

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

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS**

a) **Great North Air Ambulance Service**

A Member suggested that the Council make a donation of £250 for this worthwhile charity as this is a service that may be called upon by any members of the public.

RECOMMENDED that the Council make a £250 donation.

6. **REVISED BUDGET FOR 2016/17 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2017/18**

A Member stated that a further meeting of the Budget Sub Committee is due to be held on Wednesday 30th November, 2016 to finalise the budgets. The Sub-Committee will report back to the Finance & General Purposes Committee once this meeting has taken place.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

7. **SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS**

The Committee considered the schedule of bookings for the Town Hall for November, 2016.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the bookings made at Seaham Town Hall for November, 2016.

8. **AUDIT ISSUES**

a) **Internal Audit Report – Debtors Audit 2016/17**

RECOMMENDED that the Council accept the report.

b) **Internal Auditor – Continuing Professional Development**

Mr Gordon Fletcher, Internal Auditor was present at the meeting. A Member congratulated Mr Fletcher on his continued development and thanked him for his continuous good work.

RECOMMENDED that the Council accept the report.

9. NOTIFICATION OF TAX BASE, LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME GRANT ALLOCATIONS AND REQUEST FOR PRECEPT 2017/18

A Member noted that the allocation was a little more than the Town Council was originally notified about but the Town Council would still need to be resourceful for the future years.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

10. THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK FIXED RATE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information and approve the investment of funds.

11. MINUTES OF THE TOWN HALL WORKING PARTY HELD ON 1ST NOVEMBER, 2016

A Member noted that the Town Hall Working Party continue to do good work. Another Member questioned the sale of art works by Ms Catherine Jewitt which had been raised at the Town Hall Working Party. He stated that if an artist is selling artwork from this building then the Council are entitled to take 40% of the sale price.

RECOMMENDED that the sale of the artwork be raised at the next meeting of the Town Hall Working Party.

12. TOWN HALL FLOODING UPDATE

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on the flooding which took place at the Town Hall on Tuesday 22nd November, 2016. The Deputy Town Clerk requested approval to engage a company to investigate whether tanking had been carried out by the original building company. A Member suggested that this should also be carried out for all of the floor areas affected as the problem needs to be rectified.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approves the costs of the lift repair works and investigative works with regards to the tanking for the lift shaft and to the office floors.

13. ADDITIONS TO KEY STRATEGIC RISKS REGISTER

The Town Clerk suggested that two further risks be added to the register in light of the recent flooding of the Town Hall and also the current project taking place at Dawdon Park. A Member questioned whether the Internal Auditor looked at the risk register. Mr Fletcher confirmed that this is looked at and that processes are in place and followed through.

RECOMMENDED that 'Failure to protect the Town Hall from flooding' and Failure to deliver the Dawdon Park project to renovation, the Cricket Club and Football Club and replace the Bowls pavilion' are added to the risk register.

14. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

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