

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 4th APRIL, 2017

Present: S Cudlip (Chair) and B Allen,
Mrs B E Allen, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell,
B Burn, Mrs S Forster, R Meir, Miss S
Morrison, I Paul, C Snowball, K Younger.

Apologies: Mrs G Bleasdale, B Burn (Jnr)
Mrs H J Cahill, 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 7TH MARCH, 2017

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 12 - 2016/17

a) Expenditure

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 11 – 2016/17 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £159,508.02 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 £1,049.49 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. SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS

RECOMMENDED the Council note the bookings made at Seaham Town Hall for March, 2017.

6. MINUTES OF THE TOWN HALL WORKING PARTY HELD ON 31ST JANUARY, 2017

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the report of the Town Hall Working Party.

7. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

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

8. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDED in view of the confidential nature of the item to be discussed, the formal resolution be hereby passed to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1961.

9. POSSIBLE SALE OF PLOTS OF LAND

A Member questioned the land for sale at Park House, Union Street. This is currently two allotment sites which is a large piece of land and the valuation appeared to be quite low for the size of the site especially if it was to be bought by developers to build houses on the land. It was noted by Members that a covenant could be placed on the land that if housing was to be built that the developers would need permission from the Town Council to release the covenant. Further query was raised that there was currently a tenant on the site who pays rent to the Council which would need to be investigated further by the Deputy Town Clerk to clarify if this is the case as the general consensus by Members was that this land was in fact unused.

Members discussed the other 3 proposed plots of land for sale, land adjacent to numbers 1 and 25 Seaham Street and land to the rear of the Lord Byron Pub and agreed that these pieces of land could be put forward for sale subject to the necessary covenants.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That the Deputy Town Clerk further investigates the possibility of a tenant occupying the land at Park House, Union Street.
- (ii) That the plots of land adjacent to 1 and 25 Seaham Street and the land at the rear of the Lord Byron Pub be placed for sale subject to the necessary covenants.

10. LETTER FROM BDO LLP

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information contained in the letter received from BDO with regard to the delay in audit closure occurring outside of the statutory period.