

## **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 2ND MAY, 2017**

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

Apologies: H J Cahill, B Taylor, K Younger.

*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 4TH APRIL, 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 1 - 2017/18**

#### **a) Expenditure**

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 1 – 2017/18 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £76,041.14 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 £1,594.68 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 April, 2017.

6. **CONFERENCES, COURSES AND SEMINARS**

a) **NEREO – Employment Law Update**

The Committee considered details of the NEREO one day seminar of Employment Law Update due to be held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2017 at Durham County Cricket Club and approved the attendance of the Town Clerk as part of his continuing professional development.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk attend the one day seminar on Employment Law Update due to be held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2017.

7. **APPLICATION FOR GRANTS**

a) **Eastlea Community Centre**

Prior to the consideration of this item, Councillor E Bell declared an interest, and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a grant application from Eastlea Community Centre for a grant of £500 towards the redevelopment of the public community garden area. Members agreed that this was a very worthwhile cause.

RECOMMENDED that a grant of £500 be awarded to Eastlea Community Centre.

8. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

Members considered the Annual Governance Statement and agreed that this should be signed by the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

**9. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

RECOMMENDED that the Mayor could present Eastlea Community Centre with the cheque for the redevelopment of the public community garden area.

**10. VAT COMPLIANCE ISSUE – DAWDON PARK**

Members discussed the paper provided by the Finance Officer in relation to the VAT issues at Dawdon Park. Following advice from the Council's VAT Advisor to ensure VAT compliance Officers have amended the agreements for all of the clubs so that any VAT costs incurred at Dawdon Park will be reclaimable.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

**11. 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.

**12. DAWDON BUNGALOW**

Members considered the correspondence from the Town Council's Solicitor.

RECOMMENDED that a valuation is carried out by a Chartered Surveyor and when the details have been received that this is brought back to a future meeting to discuss the matter further.

**13. NEW DRIVE PLAYING FIELDS**

Members discussed the transfer of land at New Drive Playing Fields. It was noted that an independent valuation of the land should be carried out by the Town Council's valuer. Members noted that it had been a long term vision to buy the land so that the land could be preserved as playing fields and could not be sold off for potential housing.

A Member noted that section 106 money may still be available from Durham County Council for improvements to recreational facilities.

Members agreed that if the land is valued correctly then the Town Council should go ahead with the purchase of the New Drive Playing Fields.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That an independent valuation of the New Drive Playing Fields be carried out by the Town Council's valuer.
- (ii) That the purchase of the land be agreed subject to the independent valuation.