

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 28TH NOVEMBER, 2017

Present: Councillors S Cudlip (Chair) and R Arthur, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace, S P Colborn, D Cummings, Mrs V Cummings, Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton, G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy, D McKenna, K Shaw, A Shepherd, B Taylor, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillors Mrs B E Allen, E Bell, Mrs S Pratt

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 31ST OCTOBER, 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 8 – SEPTEMBER 2017/18

a) Expenditure – November 2017

A Member questioned the payments to Haven Power as it appeared that they had been duplicated. The Finance Officer stated that the payments were not paid on last month's payment run so they were included in this month's schedule so in fact they were not duplicated.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 8 – 2017/18 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, Bacs, Online and Debit Card payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £130,815.97 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; and

- (iii) that the Clerk's Imprest Account be reimbursed the sum of £1,014.64 for Civic Expenditure and authority be granted for this to be signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.

b) Income – November 2017

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

c) Bank Balances – November 2017

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

4. AUDIT ISSUES

a) Internal Audit Report – Risk Management Arrangements

A Member stated that on item 11 of the report the Auditor discusses checks on risks with regard to taking on new capital projects. The risks are to be documented by the Architect. It was agreed that the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Officers should arrange to meet with the Auditor to discuss this matter further.

RECOMMENDED that a meeting is arranged between the Chair, Vice-Chair, Officers and the Auditor.

5. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS

a) Haswell & District Mencap

Members discussed the application from Haswell & District Mencap and noted that there are 71 residents from Seaham who use the service. It was noted that although the Town Council had previously given donations to Haswell & District Mencap they had been very small donations. It was noted that they have also approached other Councils within the area for grant donations. Members agreed this was a worthwhile cause as a lot of the service users would not be able to attend the services they offer if the transport was not available.

RECOMMENDED that a grant of £500 is paid to Haswell & District Mencap towards the transport costs of service users.

b) Great North Air Ambulance

An application was received from the Great North Air Ambulance requesting a grant of £250 towards the running costs of the service which includes medical supplies. Members all agreed that this was a very worthwhile cause and a Member suggested that the donation should be raised to £500 which all Members agreed to.

RECOMMENDED that a grant donation of £500 should be paid to the Great North Air Ambulance.

6. SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS

The Committee considered the schedule of bookings for the Town Hall for November, 2017.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the bookings made at Seaham Town Hall.

7. REVISED BUDGET FOR 2017/18 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2018/19

Members noted that a further meeting of the Budget Sub-Committee has been arranged to take place on Thursday 7th December, 2017.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information.

8. COUNCILLORS POST

A Member stated that the costs for postage was raised at the Budget Sub-Committee whereby it was suggested that Councillors could come into the Town Hall to collect their own post to save on costs. It was noted that this was a discretionary choice that Members could make. A Member suggested that agendas and minutes could be emailed to Councillors to save on costs but it was noted that not all Councillors have email or printers. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to all Councillors for them to decide if they wish to collect their own post or whether they still wish to utilise the Town Council's postal system.

RECOMMENDED that a letter is sent to all Councillors asking them if they wish to collect their own post or still have it delivered via post.

9. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED that the Mayor present the donation cheque to Haswell and District Mencap.