

## **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 27th APRIL, 2021**

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

Officers: P Fletcher (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Mrs J Knight (Finance Officer),  
Miss A Rountree (Minute Taker).

*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.*

### **F41/21      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. Such interests must be submitted to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

### **F42/21      ACCEPTANCE OF AMENDMENT**

RECOMMENDED that Members accept the amendment to the standing orders to incorporate the new regulations from the Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, to conduct virtual Council meetings.

### **F43/21      MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021**

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the last meeting were agreed at the last Full Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2021 and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

### **F44/21      PAYSHEET NUMBER 12 – MARCH 2021**

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) Paysheet 12-March 21 the expenditure being £98,030.62 was noted and Members endorsed the action taken.
- (ii) Members note the income received into the Councils bank account.
- (iii) Members note the information provided regarding the bank balances held by the Council at the month end.

F45/21

**GRANT APPLICATIONS**

**a) Seaham Red Star Football Club**

Members discussed a grant application received from Seaham Red Star Football Club of £800.00 towards the cost of purchasing new goals and nets.

RECOMMENDED that a grant of £800.00 be awarded to Seaham Red Star Football Club towards the cost of purchasing new goals and nets.

**b) Seaham Park Cricket Club**

Members discussed a grant application received from Seaham Park Cricket Club of £1000 towards the cost of providing additional coaching equipment and coaching courses for the Junior Section as well as a seating area for the parents.

RECOMMENDED that a grant of £1000 be awarded to Seaham Park Cricket Club towards the cost of providing additional coaching equipment and coaching courses for the Junior Section as well as a seating area for the parents.

F46/21

**WORKS DEPOT RENTAL**

The Acting Town Clerk informed Members that a request had been received from Scott's Memorials to rent space at the works depot for storage purposes. The Finance Officer had suggested a rent of £240 per month.

Members discussed this item and agreed that risk assessments would need to be provided by Scott's Memorials as well as Seaham Town Council. Members also agreed that a contract should be drawn up by the Town Councils Solicitor with Scott's Memorials paying the legal fees. The Finance Officer also noted that Scott's Memorials had their own insurance cover.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) Members approve the rental of the works depot at a cost of £240 per Month.
- (ii) A contract be drawn up by the Town Councils Solicitor for a year by year lease with Scott's Memorials paying the Councils legal costs.
- (iii) Risk assessments to be provided by both the Town Council and Scott's Memorials.

F47/21

**EVENTS**

It was noted that this item had been deferred from a previous Parks and Events Committee meeting.

The Acting Town Clerk was seeking approval from Members to organise this years events with a proviso that if events need to be postponed due to further restrictions due to Covid that the events could be moved to a later date.

The Acting Town Clerk also informed Members that a further request had been received to hold a 'Mini Miners Gala' on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2021 on the Terrace Green. The costs for this event would be met by Durham Miners Association.

Members agreed that the Acting Town Clerk could start to organise events but these should only be promoted by the Town Council after the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. It was also noted that the public should be notified in the publicity advertising that there is no guarantee that the events will go ahead if there is any further outbreaks of the pandemic.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the Acting Town Clerk starts to organise events and these should only be promoted by the Town Council after the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and not be promoted by individual Councillors.

**F48/21**

### **IN PERSON COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The Acting Town Clerk informed Members that currently the Government is insisting that all Council meetings must be in person after the elections on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. There are various organisations campaigning to keep virtual Council meetings running after this date but as yet the Government has not agreed to this.

The Acting Town Clerk questioned Members as to their preferences whether this be virtual meetings, in person meetings or alternatively hybrid meetings with some Councillors on zoom and some in person.

It was noted that this could be decided by Government and the Council would not have a discretion on this matter. It was noted that there expected to be a court hearing on this issue shortly.

Members noted that there would have to be a risk assessment carried out for Members to return to in person meetings at the Town Hall to ensure that social distancing was adhered to.

Members discussed the right of the public to attend meetings, and this would also need to be addressed regarding restricting numbers.

Members agreed that this would need to be agreed by the new Council following the 6<sup>th</sup> May elections.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the information provided.

**F49/21**      **PRESS OPPORTUNITIES**

RECOMMENDED that there were no press opportunities arising from this meeting.

The meeting was then closed by the Chair.