

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Budget and Administration Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 14 February 2023 at 6.00pm in The Meeting Room, Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82 – 88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed.

PRESENT:

Councillors: H Lindsay (Chair)
M Greener
P Jackson

R Mackenzie
A Williams

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gareth Davies, Town Clerk

Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

Graeme Popay, Northumberland Association of Local Councils

0 members of the public.

BA083/22

1. NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC)

Graeme Popey introduced himself and NALC and gave examples of some of the interests the organisation offers including help with legal issues, training courses, year-end audit, e-news and briefings.

Members then asked a number of questions including if courses could be located in the north of the county and on the County Committee meetings.

After which, on the motion of Cllr H Lindsay, seconded by Cllr A Williams, the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council:

1. That the membership of NALC be renewed and the invoice subsequently paid with the following steps being fulfilled as part of the process:
 - a. That the correct procedure be identified by which members get access to legal briefings,
 - b. To identify who represents the Town Council at Town and Parish Liaison Group meetings with Northumberland County Council,
 - c. To identify who represents the Town Council at County Committee meetings, and

- d. To identify who is the contact with NALC should any issues arise between Council and the Town Clerk.

BA084/22

2. OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

BA085/22

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A Forbes and T Stewart.

BA086/22

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

On the motion of Cllr R Mackenzie, seconded by Cllr M Greener, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 17 January 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

BA087/22

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

- i. There were no disclosures of interests.
- ii. There were no requests for dispensation.

BA088/22

6. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

Members asked a number of questions including salary payments refunds, donations, Freedom payments and transfer to an ear-marked reserve, Berwick Literary Festival and payments regarding ladders.

After which, on the motion of Cllr A Williams, seconded by Cllr R Mackenzie, it was **RESOLVED** without division to note the schedule of payments and receipts.

BA089/22

7. BANK RECONCILIATIONS

The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair sign and receive the bank reconciliations for January 2023.

BA090/22

8. PURCHASE ORDERS

Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to note all active Purchase Orders for the previous time-period.

BA091/22

9. EXPENDITURE VS BUDGET IN Q3 AND YEAR TO DATE

The Town Clerk introduced the report and updated the meeting on office software, insurance (general), publicity & communications and allotments. An update was provided that overspends would be met from reserves and Members noted that remaining budgets after underspends could be transferred back into reserves.

Members then asked a number of questions including on litter bins, Berwick Educational Association, service transfer, Spittal Play Park, income over expenditure and noted that a future review of service providers for finance software would be actioned by Officers.

After which, on the motion of Cllr M Greener, seconded by Cllr A Williams, the Committee **RESOLVED** to note the reports.

BA092/22

10. CCTV

The Assistant to the Clerk introduced the item and the future and locations of CCTV was discussed during which Members noted that a future review would be undertaken.

After which, on the motion of Cllr R Mackenzie, seconded by Cllr M Greener, the Committee **RESOLVED** to confirm renewal of the CCTV maintenance contract with 24/7 Business Support.

BA093/22

11. OFFICE IT

Members noted Officers recommendation that the option of an annual contract be chosen for price stability and further noted the issue of whether the Town Council re-tenders for office IT needs to be investigated.

After which, on the motion of Cllr H Lindsay, seconded by Cllr R Mackenzie, the Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to choose the option of an annual contract.

BA094/22

CIVIC CALENDAR 2023-2024

A document providing a first draft of a Civic Calendar for 2023-2024 was distributed to Members of the Committee and introduced by the Town Clerk which included that where there were months with less Committee meetings there would be an expectation of briefings and informal meetings.

After which the Committee noted the draft Civic Calendar for 2023-2024 and further noted that this item would be brought to the meeting of Council in March.

BA095/22

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 6.00 pm.

Committee RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was appropriate to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following business on the basis that public discussion might prejudice the Council's position and staffing issues might be discussed.

BA096/22

13. PENSION ISSUES

It was **RESOLVED** on the motion of Cllr H Lindsay, seconded by Cllr M Greener that an independent investigator should be appointed, that the report of the investigator should be presented to Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee, and that the matter should be fully reported to the next meeting of Council.