

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Budget and Administration Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 13 June 2023 at 6.00pm in The Meeting Room, Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82 – 88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed.

PRESENT:

Councillors: R Mackenzie (Chair) J Robertson (up to Item 11)
M Greener T Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gareth Davies, Town Clerk
Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk
0 members of the public

BA007/23

1. OPEN SESSION

Cllr J Robertson asked for an update regarding the cleaning of the pavements on Marygate by a local contractor. The Town Clerk provided a response that a decision was made under urgency rules after a meeting with County Councillors and the contractor and that consideration would be given at Council as to future arrangements.

BA008/23

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Driver.

BA009/23

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

On the motion of Cllr T Stewart, seconded by Cllr J Robertson, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 02 May 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

BA010/23

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

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

BA011/23

8. RESERVES

The Town Clerk provided an update including that there will be a recommendation to restore the Operating Reserve to £150k. After which, Councillors **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council:

1. That Earmarked Reserves (EMR) 322 and 338 be transferred to operational reserves,
2. That EMR's 324 and 334 be merged to be £20k with any spare monies transferred to general reserves,
3. That EMR's 325, 329 and 337 be merged.

Furthermore, Councillors expressed their views on whether reserves should be increased, decreased, left at the same level, deleted or merged.

BA012/23

9. FINANCIAL OUTTURN

The Town Clerk reported that the outturn for the financial year 2022/2023 was good and provided an update including on office costs, statutory costs, marketing, public space management, local services and play areas including the splash park. Members asked a number of questions including on festivals, Riding of the Bounds and salaries.

After which, the Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to note the report.

BA013/23

10. AUDIT PROCESS

The Town Clerk introduced the item and gave an update regarding work to the Asset Register.

After which, the Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to note the report.

BA014/23

11. INDUCTION POLICY

Cllr J Robertson introduced the item and suggestions included a section on how to book a course.

After which, the Committee noted that comments be provided to the Town Clerk and that the policy would be considered at the next meeting of Council.

BA015/23

FORWARD PLANNING DOCUMENT

Members asked a number of question on the Suggested Priorities for Forward Planning provided by Cllr R Mackenzie including on wall art, bariatric chairs, a communications policy and potential alterations to the Council office.

Members **RESOLVED** that more chairs with arms were needed and noted the response of the Town Clerk that there would be a submission to Council in the autumn regarding wall art and that Officers were still waiting for quotes for potential alterations to the office.

The Town Clerk then updated the meeting on the elements of a communications policy and Members noted that a draft skeleton policy would be provided in July.

BA016/23 **FORMAT OF MINUTES**

The Town Clerk provided an update on the future layout of minutes which would move to a landscape orientation including minute numbers, titles, actions arising and next steps. Agendas could also use the same format and Minutes may be moved on-block unless there are any requests to discuss items within.

BA017/23 **5. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS**

Due to the pressures of time for remaining Councillors, Members noted the update of the Town Clerk that they are happy to receive questions in writing. The Committee then unanimously **RESOLVED** without division to note the schedule of payments and receipts.

BA018/23 **6. BANK RECONCILIATIONS**

The Town Clerk provided an update on the bank reconciliation process. After which, the Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Chair sign and receive the bank reconciliations for April 2023 and May 2023.

BA019/23 **7. PURCHASE ORDERS**

Members asked a number of questions and the Town Clerk provided an update including on incomplete Purchase Orders and Freedom research, after which, Members unanimously **RESOLVED** to note all active Purchase Orders for the previous time-period.

BA020/23 **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 12 September 2023 at 6.00 pm.