

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 4 April 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Ante Room at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	G Hill
	H Bettison	G McLean
	I Dixon	G Roughead
	A Forbes	C Seymour
	A Gibson	

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Town Clerk

Cllr Gary Smith

6 Members of the public

OPEN SESSION

Mr Spencer Barclay commented on behavioral issues at the Council Meeting and queried CCTV processes and equipment. Mr Spencer Barclay will receive a written response from the Town Clerk. Cllr Bettison advised the Chair that due to Mayoral duties she would have to leave the meeting at 6.40pm.

F163/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillor K Graham

F164/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Councillor Hill felt the minutes were becoming too detailed about what is actually said at meetings, which can lead to increased dispute and requests for changes. Cllr Hill requested, and it was agreed, to make an addition to the end of the last Finance Minutes which had omitted Cllr Hodgson advising that the CCTV successful company would be notified once the unsuccessful companies had also been notified. The minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2016 were then agreed by all and signed as a correct record.

F165/15 3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllrs Hill, Bettison, Seymour and Dixon, Freeman Trustees and Cllr Roughead, Hoppa Bus timetable changes.

F166/15 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

F167/15 5. AUTHORISATION OF EXPENDITURE AND ORDERS

Cllr Hill queried invoices 451, 452, 455 and 456. Cllr Hill also noted that two items were listed to be paid from the schedule III income, she said this income of £115,000 had not been included in the recent budget figures in either the income or reserve figures and queried why it was suddenly being referred to. She said that in recent finance meetings there had not been an agenda item; "statement of expenditure v budget" which had been the case in the past and we needed to have an up to date, accurate statement of the Council's financial position. Cllr Bettison said Mr Warren was still currently still looking at the Council's financial procedures. Cllr Hill said that Councillor expenses had always identified which Councillor they related to. Cllr Hodgson advised 455 and 456 were for ink cartridges for him which were claimed for expenses for printing out Council documents.

RESOLVED: To approve all payments and orders appended to these minutes.

F168/15 6. BEACON/BRAZIER

Three quotes were obtained for repairs to the beacon. Two quotes were given for all the repairs to be made including the stem of the beacon and one quote also advised the stem was probably repairable and could last a couple more years. It was thought advisable that the Beacon was properly repaired re Health and Safety reasons and this was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Dixon. The Clerk advised that it may not be repaired in time for the Queen's Birthday on April 21st and Cllr Roughead and Cllr Hill thought to delegate to the Clerk and see which company could possibly repair within that time frame if possible and keep the costs at around £1,100.00.

RESOLVED: To fully repair the Beacon and to ascertain whether the work could be completed before the Queen's Birthday on April 21st.

F169/15 7. TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

The Clerk advised Councillors that the current Town Council website was dated and lacked functionality. Costs/quotes received to formulate a new website ranged from £1k to £4k. The Clerk advised that the website was large and had a lot of attachments which were probably

unnecessary and they would not all need to be transferred over to a new website. Cllr Hill said that the Website should be improved but needed more details before agreeing anything and felt that the website was not currently a priority. Cllr Roughead thought the current website was not fit for purpose and suggested this item was put on the Council agenda and a sub-committee could be formulated to look at what could be carried over from the current website. Cllr Seymour thought the website could be updated but the Clerk advised that this would be difficult and was not considered advisable.

RESOLVED: The Website be put onto Agenda of next Full Council and Finance Committee make a formal recommendation that a Council Sub Committee be created of Members interested to look into website further'.

F170/15 8. VICTORIAN FOUNTAIN

The Clerk advised that Berwick Preservation Trust were awaiting a quote from Scottish Power re the viability of re-connecting the fountain. Pipe work will also be required, however, the Preservation Trust are fully committed to getting the fountain up and running but everything hinges on the quote from Scottish Power and it is hoped a need to dig up the road would not be required as this would make the initiative expensive / problematic.

RESOLVED: To await quote from Scottish Power.

F171/15 9. LIONS ALLOTMENTS

The ivy on the walls around the allotments has become a concern, Cllr Bettison thought this may reveal damage to the wall once the ivy had been removed. There were also health and safety issues involved and it was decided to get a builder to look at the wall first.

RESOLVED: To engage a builder and obtain an estimate to ascertain what the work would entail.

F172/15 10. HOPPA BUS

Councillor Roughead advised his appreciation of the new Hoppa Bus timetable which was printed by Berwick Holiday Park and the design work paid for by BTC. Cllr Bettison thought congratulations were in order for the success re partnership working between BTC and Berwick Holiday Park. The Clerk advised that the make and model of the Hoppa Bus was required in order to cover the bus with graphics relating to Berwick and it was thought mention should also be made on the bus to say 'Berwick Town Council and Berwick Holiday Park working together'. Cllr Hodgson also mentioned a new four day family and single pass is to be introduced to encourage and assist more passengers.

RESOLVED: To gain quotes for graphics to cover the bus.

F173/15 11. NON DOMESTIC RATES

The Clerk advised that a non-domestic rate bill amounting to nearly £2k in regard to all the Clear Channel bus shelters has now been waived. However, the Town Council cannot advertise in them and this includes any photos of Berwick and also bus timetables. Cllr Roughead thought art work from local schools could be incorporated but was advised by the Clerk that the Council would have to pay non domestic rates for each bus shelter used for this purpose.

Cllr Bettison left the meeting.

Cllr Seymour thought advisable to leave as is at the moment and this was agreed by Councillors.

RESOLVED: To leave the bus shelters as they are at the moment and this could be looked at again in the future.

F174/15 12. NORTHUMBRIAN WATER INVOICES

The Clerk advised that Northumbria Water had written to the Council regarding Blakewell Gardens and advised a fixed water rate at Band 3 will rise to £632.15 by next year. The alternative is to have a water meter installed. Five Arches allotments currently has no water provision and Northumbrian Water Customer Services have been unable to find this allotment on their systems. Councillors thought the allotments were probably included within Seton Hall and the water has been turned off because the Care Home had shut down. Councillor Hill said that the agenda item was only to “receive a report” and that it would have been helpful to have relevant papers circulated before the meeting. After discussion it was decided to install a water meter for 6 months only at Blakewell Gardens and gauge the costs and if proving to be expensive, the water meter would be requested to be removed and a fixed rate charge would be requested.

RESOLVED: To request a water meter for 6 months only at Blakewell Gardens Allotments.

F175/15 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 18th May 2016 at 6.00pm.

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED**

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
447	Photocopies	24/03/2016	101284	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	178.56	35.71	214.27
448	War Memorials: maintenance	24/03/2016	101285	Repairs	Berwick Preservation Trust	2,000.00	400.00	2,400.00
449	Expenses	24/03/2016	101286	Piper	R Bell	50.00	0.00	50.00
450	Expenses	24/03/2016	101287	Catering	Ruth Forrest Catering	1,250.00	0.00	1,250.00
451	Legal & Professional Fees	24/03/2016	101288	Consultancy	S Warren	500.00	0.00	500.00
452	Costs	24/03/2016	101289	Freemen descents	Berwick Record Office	210.00	0.00	210.00
453	Stationery & Printing	24/03/2016	101290	Stationery	Viking	33.41	6.68	40.09
454	Stationery & Printing	24/03/2016	101290	Stationery	Viking	15.33	3.07	18.40
455	Councillor Travel & Subsistence	24/03/2016	101290	Ink Cartridges	Viking	19.96	3.99	23.95
456	Councillor Travel & Subsistence	24/03/2016	101290	Ink Cartridges	Viking	20.83	4.17	25.00
457	Bounds Riding	24/03/2016	101291	Insurance - bounds riding	South Essex Insurance Brokers	376.41	0.00	376.41
458-69	Salaries	24/03/2016	101292	Salaries	Northumberland County Council	5,996.76	0.00	5,996.76

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED**

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	TOTAL
443	Water [owned]	24/03/2016	directdebit	Water services	Northumbrian Water	180.91	0.00	180.91
444	Telecoms	24/03/2016	directdebit	phone	BT	75.35	15.07	90.42
445	Electricity	24/03/2016	directdebit	Electricity	Southern Electric	55.06	2.75	57.81

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
DEBIT CARD PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED**

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

446	Equipment	24/03/2016	debitcard	Screen	Capitalstores	227.09	0.00	227.09
-----	-----------	------------	-----------	--------	---------------	--------	------	--------

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

Voucher	Notes
443	Blakewell Gardens Allotments water supply - charge based on new assessment regime
444	Office phone
445	Office electricity
446	Projector screen purchased for Investors Conference
447	Monthly charge office photocopies
448	Agreed contribution to Berwick Preservation Trust for War Memorial restoration
449-50	Costs associated with Investors Conference
451	Charge for preparing Internal Audit services tender
452	Research associated with Freeman Admission Ceremonies; paid from Schedule III surplus
453-54	Office stationery
455-56	Printer cartridges for Cllrs
457	Insurance cover for Bounds Riding; paid from Schedule III surplus
458-69	March wages