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# Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

Minutes of the Town Council Budget and Administration Committee  
Meeting held on Tuesday, 14 November 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)  
M Greener  
L Hawken  
T Stewart

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

<b>MINUTE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE AND DESCRIPTION OF ITEM</b>	<b>Mover</b>	<b>Seconded</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>BA033/23</b>	<b>OPEN SESSION</b>			
	Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. This is for a period of 15 minutes overall and is limited to 3 minutes per person.	N/A	N/A	Cllr R Mackenzie update the meeting that the training received through the Co Durham and Cleveland Partnership had been very useful.
<b>BA034/23</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>			
	To receive apologies for absence.	N/A	N/A	Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Driver and J Robertson.
<b>BA035/23</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>			
	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Budget and Administration Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 12 September 2023.	TS	MG	The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12 September 2023 were agreed and signed as a correct record.
<b>BA036/23</b>	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS</b>			
	(i) Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in	N/A	N/A	i. There were no disclosures of interests.

	<p>accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 9 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.</p> <p>(ii) To receive and consider requests from members who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any items on the agenda an application for dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to enable members to participate in discussions and voting.</p>	N/A	N/A	<p>ii. There were no requests for dispensation.</p>
<b>BA037/23</b>	<b>FINANCIAL REGULATIONS</b>			
	To recommend the draft regulations to council.	Nem con		<p>The Town Clerk introduced the item which included an update on levels for quotes, estimates and tenders and that an appendix which will be a procedural note will be attached to the draft regulations for recommendation to Council.</p> <p>Members then raised a number of queries on the regulations including accounting and the audit, the precept, unspent provisions, internal controls / spot checks, the appendix regarding quotes, estimates and tenders</p>

				being added to the contents and budgetary control and authority to spend. After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they adopt the Financial Regulations with the appendix and amendment mentioned during the discussion.
<b>BA038/23</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS POLICY</b>			
	To recommend the draft policy to council.	Nem con		Cllr R Mackenzie introduced the item which included a note on working groups. The Committee then <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Complaints Procedure, included as an appendix, should also be listed separately on the Town Council website. Councillors then raised a number of queries, after which, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they adopt the Communications Policy with the amendments mentioned during the discussion.
<b>BA039/23</b>	<b>PAY STATEMENT</b>			
	To consider the report.			The Town Clerk introduced the item.
	<b>The 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 items of business on the grounds that public discussion may prejudice the Council's position and/or staffing issues may be discussed.</b>			

		RM	TS	A pay statement was distributed to Members who discussed and noted its contents along with the staffing review and likely increase in wage costs in 2024-25. After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they delegate consideration regarding pay costs and inflation to the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee.
	<b>The Committee RESOLVED to reopen the meeting to the media and public.</b>			
<b>BA040/23</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE VS BUDGET YEAR TO DATE</b>			
	To note the report.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the report and provided Members with an update regarding a dispute with the electricity provider for the Town Council office. Members then asked a number of questions including on electricity for the depot, play area maintenance and specifically the safety surface. After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the report.

<b>BA041/23</b>	<b>PROPOSALS FOR GROWTH AND SAVINGS</b>			
	<p>Members may wish to consider whether there are any areas of the committees work where expenditure should grow or where savings can be made. Pay settlement and salaries.</p>	Nem con		<p>The Town Clerk introduced the item, and the committee indicated their proposals that growth items include the market, town centre improvements, a display for the office window and the strategic plan. Items for savings included funding of the Hoppa Bus and Visitor Services, CCTV and Christmas Lights. The reuse of buildings was discussed, and Members agreed the Town Clerk provide a report to Council.</p>
<b>BA042/23</b>	<b>NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS</b>			
	<p>To note payments and receipts in September and October.</p>	Nem con		<p>The Town Clerk introduced the item and Members asked a number of questions including on payments for salaries, pensions and grants. Outgoing payments to the Mayor's Charities were noted and thanks was expressed to Cllr M Greener for his efforts. The Committee then unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> without division to note the schedule of payments and receipts.</p>

<b>BA043/23</b>	<b>BANK RECONCILIATIONS</b>			
	To note the bank reconciliation processes for September and October.	Nem con		The Committee unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Chair sign and receive the bank reconciliations for September and October 2023.
<b>BA044/23</b>	<b>PURCHASE ORDERS</b>			
	To note the purchase orders raised.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the item including that in future reports would be sorted by value. Members asked a number of questions including on the PA System for Remembrance Sunday, toner cartridges for the photocopier and IT equipment. After which, Members unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> to note all active Purchase Orders for the previous time-period.
<b>BA045/23</b>	<b>BUDGET VIREMENTS</b>			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		The Committee unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the virements detailed in the report.
<b>BA046/23</b>	<b>STRATEGIC / ACTION PLAN</b>			
	To receive an update.	Nem con		Members asked a number of questions including on the festival projector, community database and Christmas Lights Working Group meeting.

				The Committee then unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the updates provided by the Town Clerk.
<b>BA047/23</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>			
	The date of the next meeting will be Monday 15 January 2024 at 6.00 pm.	N/A	N/A	Noted.