

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 7 September 2015 at 6.00 pm in the Ante Room at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	G Hill (Chair)	A Gibson
	D Blackburn	G McLean
	I Dixon	G Roughead
	A Forbes	C Seymour

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Town Clerk
Cllr G Smith
4 Members of the Public

Cllr Hill welcomed everyone to the meeting and referred to her personal commitment, and the need, to restore public confidence in the Council's finances.

OPEN SESSION

Mr Brian Darling referred to the EGM taking place on Tuesday 8th September and requested a publically named and accountability vote as opposed to a confidential meeting / secret ballot.

F051/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillor H Bettison (no apologies).

F052/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015, Cllr Hill advised the events grant was not approved at this meeting but at a later one, and a typing error with an extra nought on page 2 was corrected and the minutes were then agreed and signed as a correct record.

F053/15

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Cllrs Hill and Roughead declared an interest in Tweedmouth Feast payment, item 173 on payments list, Cllr McLean declared an interest re item on payments list 170, Berwick Deserves Better, and, Cllr Gibson on the cycle route, item 7 and Cllr Blackburn on Cycle Racks at Megs Mount, item 5, due to running a business at that location.

F054/15

4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

F055/15

5. CYCLE RACKS AT MEGS MOUNT

Councillors looked at 3 quotes to provide cycle racks at Megs Mount, Cllr Mclean thought the Sheffield Cycle Racks in black, would compliment the black railings already at Megs Mount. Cllr Seymour thought the cycle racks in situ outside the Advertiser Office could be moved to Megs Mount in order to accommodate the Digital Notice Board and at no extra cost. It was thought those cycle racks were too bulky and would not match Megs Mount surroundings and they could be accommodated elsewhere such as the Chandlery/Harbour Beach. The Clerk also mentioned that former Sheriff, Mr Michael Richardson had agreed to put the cycle racks into place free of charge at Megs Mount.

RESOLVED: To Order Sheffield Cycle Racks in black at a cost of £300 for 4

F056/15

6. CHARTER MARKET VIABILITY

Cllr Dixon advised his concern that he felt BTC were currently not in a position take on the Charter Market at this particular time as too many questions still needed to be answered. Cllr Hill advised this item/pop up stalls would be coming up at full Council to be discussed as a Portas suggestion. Cllr Forbes queried canopies and stalls as being purchased already with Portas funds. **Standing Orders Suspended** – Mr John Haswell asked if Alnwick had been contacted on how they ran their Market? **Standing Orders resumed** – Cllr Seymour advised the market lease had 17 years to run between the Freeman and NCC. To arrange a new lease between the Freeman and BTC may be costly, but in the long term believe it would be financially good for Berwick. Cllr Blackburn advised no documents were provided in order for Councillors to make a proper and informed decision.

RESOLVED: To seek further advice/reports/documents from Mr Bob Hodgson, NCC, Mr Robert Leetham, BTC Finance Officer and also from the Freeman Trustees.

F057/15

7. CYCLE ROUTE SIGNAGE

A millennium cycle route sign post which had lain undiscovered in Mike Lee's workshop for 15 years was recently found by Cllr Alex Gibson and has now been installed at Hud's Head, Spittal by NCC. A mix up regarding permission for NCC to go ahead and install had resulted in a large invoice which was later reduced by half. Cllr Gibson advised Councillors that he had worked very hard to obtain cheaper quotes and expressed his concern that local tradesman had wasted their time in regard to submitting an estimate. Cllr McLean thought that the Council should not be paying for pot holes to be filled in the surrounding area and Cllr Roughead thought the Council should ask NCC to fund the whole project.

Standing Orders suspended. Mr Brian Darling advised of a seat which had been washed away some time ago and had not been replaced - **Standing Orders resumed.** The totem pole will be looked after and cleaned by Sustrans. Cllr Gibson referred to a quote he had obtained to put down paving stones around the area to improve the site's appearance. Cllr Hill advised NCC should be made aware that they cannot do work for BTC without getting proper written permissions.

RESOLVED: To await the invoice from NCC

F058/15

8. BERWICK COAT OF ARMS

Mrs Sheila Budzynski, Berwick Inner Wheel has requested permission to copy the Berwick Coat of Arms (Bear and Tree) and to have a badge made to put onto the presidents chain of office in memory of Mrs Majorie Richardson, whose husband Joe was a former Mayor of Berwick. Cllr Roughead thought a decision should be made at full Council but Cllr Hill thought it was in the remit of Finance and Resources and was then proposed by Cllr Hill to agree the request and was seconded by Cllr Dixon and agreed by all.

RESOLVED: To allow a copy of the Berwick coat of arms to be made into a badge to go onto the Berwick Inner Wheel president's chain of office.

F059/15

9. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

Cllr Seymour queried the invoice re Berwick Deserves Better and felt it needed more clarity. Cllr Hill declared an abstention regarding approval.

Cllr Blackburn referred to the annual payment re the Council's insurers Zurich and advised Councillors and public that the Council were expecting a refund of all costs re employers liability claim and advised he had been informed of this by the Acting Town Clerk. The Clerk advised Cllr Blackburn that she had no recollection of the conversation and Zurich were not refunding any costs to the Council.

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

F060/15

10. APPROVAL OF PLANNED EXPENDITURE

None.

F061/15

11. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Approval was sought for travel expenses of up to £300 for a Planning Consultant (son of the Acting Clerk) to speak to the Steering Group on the way forward for Berwick re the Neighbourhood Plan. This was agreed and proposed by Cllr Seymour and seconded by Cllr Hill.

RESOLVED: To approve travel expenses up to £300 for a Planning Consultant.

F062/15

12. AUDIT AND OTHER WORK

Cllr Hill advised Councillors that unfortunately Price Waterhouse Cooper had had to bow out of doing a general audit re Council's finances due to a conflict of interest with NCC. Costs were approved from 6k to 12k to do this work and the Clerk has delegated authority in regard to the work going ahead. Two companies have declared an interest in taking on the audit work, one of which is a high profile Scottish Accountancy and Audit Company who have no conflict of interest in Northumberland and the other company recommended by Cllr Eric Goodyer are based in the South of England and also have no interests in the Northumberland area.

F063/15

13. FINANCIAL DECISIONS MADE BY OTHER COMMITTEES

None.

F064/15

14. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Chairman advised that the funding application for Berwick and District Youth Activity programme was sent too late to Councillors to lawfully approve expenditure. A vote was taken to defer or informally discuss the item and was voted at 4 to defer and 4 to discuss, the Chair gave a casting vote and the item was then deferred.

RESOLVED: To defer this item until the next meeting

F065/15

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday, 12 October 2015 at 6.00pm.

RESOLVED: To exclude the press and public during discussion of the following Item, which includes issues of a personal and confidential nature.

F066/15

16. SERGEANT-AT-MACE'S SALARY

This item will be discussed at the next Staffing Committee meeting on September 21st 2015.

Finance Resources Committee

Appendix D
Item 9
7th September 2015

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
150	Bus Shelter Purchase	28/08/2015	101146	Bus Shelter purchase	Morethan Shelters	3,172.40	634.48	3,806.88
151	Holiday Guide advert	28/08/2015	101147	Printing	Inhouse design	50.00	0.00	50.00
152	NTA Days Out & Visit Berwick	28/08/2015	101148	Leaflet Distribution - Events	Crescent Information	180.00	36.00	216.00
154	Insurance	28/08/2015	101149	Insurance - general	Zurich Municipal	8,475.89	0.00	8,475.89
155	Professional Services	28/08/2015	101150	Legal services	Collingwood Legal	624.00	124.80	748.80
158	Recruitment Expenses	28/08/2015	101151	Advertisement staff vacancy	Johnston Publishing Ltd	444.17	88.83	533.00
159	Cleaning	28/08/2015	101152	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	45.00	0.00	45.00
160	Cleaning	28/08/2015	101152	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	75.00	0.00	75.00
161	Civic expenses	28/08/2015	101153	Refreshments	SPAR	415.00	0.00	415.00
162	Bus Shelter Maintenance	28/08/2015	101154	Bus Shelter repairs	Bob Lee Welding	122.56	24.51	147.07
163	Rent	28/08/2015	101155	Rent	Edwin Thompson	1,650.00	330.00	1,980.00
164	Service Charge	28/08/2015	101155	Rent	Edwin Thompson	53.39	10.68	64.07
165	Photocopies	28/08/2015	101156	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	111.56	22.31	133.87
166	IT Support	28/08/2015	101157	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00
167	Stationery & Printing	28/08/2015	101158	Stationery	Viking	122.21	24.44	146.65
168	Postage	28/08/2015	101158	Stamps	Viking	63.00	0.00	63.00
169	Equipment & Furniture	28/08/2015	101159	Fire extinguisher service	Firestop Safety	30.00	0.00	30.00
170	Berwick Deserves Better	28/08/2015	101160	Portas grant	Berwick Deserves Better	10,200.00	0.00	10,200.00
171	Tweedmouth Feast	28/08/2015	101161	Grant	Berwick Bounds Riding	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
172	Spittal Seaside Festival	28/08/2015	101162	Grant	Spittal Improvement Trust	3,855.70	0.00	3,855.70
173	Tweedmouth Feast	28/08/2015	101163	Grant	Tweedmouth Feast	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
174-81	Salaries:	28/08/2015	101164	Salaries:	Northumberland County Council	4,496.01	0.40	4,496.41

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

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

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
153	Salaries: Pension	28/08/2015	direct debit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
156	Electricity	28/08/2015	direct debit	Electricity	Southern Electric	44.01	2.20	46.21
157	SSP Electricity	28/08/2015	direct debit	Electricity	British Gas	38.76	1.93	40.69

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

Voucher	Notes
150	New Bus Shelter - cost covered by S106 money transferred from NCC
151	Holiday guide advert set-up cost
152	Distribution of visit Berwick leaflet
154	Annual insurance - covers all assets, regalia etc.
155	Legal advice
158	Advert for Sargent at Mace post
159-60	Office Cleaning
161	Refreshments for Mayor's Sunday and Freedom ceremonies
162	Repairs at Golden Square
163-4	Office rent and service charge
165	office photocopies
166	Monthly IT support
167	Office stationary
168	Stamps
169	Essential service of fire extinguishers
170	Part-payment of Digital Notice boards Portas grant to enable deposit with order to be paid
171	Payment of grant awarded to support Berwick Riding of the Bounds
172	Part-payment of grant awarded to support Spittal Festivals
173	Part-payment of grant awarded to support Tweedmouth Feast
174-81	Staff salaries for August