

## BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

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

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	K Graham
	G Hill	G Roughead
	A Gibson	G Smith

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

W Pattison, Town Clerk

Cllr E Goodyer

8 Members of the Public

### **OPEN SESSION**

Mr M Hindhaugh wanted to know why his services/recent invoice in regard to the Wild Salmon Company which was approved by the Portas Management Group had been deferred at the last meeting and advised that the relevant documentation had all been provided to the Town Council. Ms Osborne expressed interest in the AONB Coastal Guide which had been deferred at an earlier meeting.

#### **F098/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors D Blackburn (holiday), A Forbes, G McLean (holiday) and C Seymour (personal), H Bettison, I Dixon.

#### **F099/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 were agreed by all and signed as a correct record.

Cllr Graham also requested that it be minuted that Cllr Hill deserved a vote of thanks for bringing her concerns about the Town Council's former regime to public scrutiny.

#### **F100/15 3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Cllr Gibson, Cllr Hill, Cllr Roughead - West End Residents Association.

**F101/15 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**F102/15 5. APPROVAL OF PORTAS MANAGEMENT GROUP FUNDING**

Cllr Hodgson advised that BTC cannot feel itself to be bound by a decision irregularly made. However, it could determine that it would nevertheless have an obligation to make a payment. The effect of any previous irregularity in the decision-making process means that a court might hold a contract to be unenforceable. But in such circumstances the courts would not hold that a Council can walk away from the contract deriving the benefit for no payment. Cllr Hodgson advised he was happy with the invoices. Cllr Hill advised her concerns that the Portas management group had been unlawful and no minutes had been provided to Councillors of any of the meetings and advised that she would be abstaining in regard to this and other concerns. Cllr Hill also requested that her abstention was minuted and that she also had serious doubts about whether 'Wilson's tales of the Borders' fitted in with the ethos behind Portas. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Cllr Goodyer thought apologies should be given by the Town Council to the people of Berwick for the maladministration of the former regime. **Re-instate Standing Orders** – Cllr Gibson proposed the payments should be made and this was seconded by Cllr Smith and a show of hands was 5 in agreement to pay the invoices with one abstention.

**RESOLVED – Agreed to pay both Portas invoices.**

**F103/15 6. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS**

Cllr Graham was concerned at the disparity between invoices for xmas lights at Prior and Newfields and wondered if it was possibly the fittings which had made a difference in cost and also queried 3 Cittaslow invoices. Cllr Hill mentioned the very small xmas trees which were provided this year by the Town Council. Cllr Roughead requested Portas payments should be detailed separately to Town Council invoices to avoid confusion. Mention was made re digital boards which were not in place as promised in December, the Clerk advised they could not be erected due to the Rotary xmas tree standing in the designated area. Cllrs Hill, Graham, Smith and Roughead wished to abstain from agreeing Portas invoices and Cllr Hodgson agreed to defer payment of Cittaslow invoices and gain further information.

**RESOLVED: To approve all payments and orders appended to these minutes apart from three pertaining to Cittaslow.**

**F104/15 7. STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS**

**Noted.**

**F105/15 8. BUDGET SETTING**

Cllr Hodgson requested a deferral and advised he wished to look at the draft budget in more depth. Cllr Hill also felt a further 'brain storming' meeting would be beneficial and reiterated an earlier decision of the Council that there would be no increase in the precept, this was agreed by Cllr Graham who also requested discussion on how much would be required/taken from the Council's reserves.

**RESOLVED: To look at the budget in more depth before agreement at full Council on December 21<sup>st</sup> and to also look at the necessary amount required from the Council's reserves.**

**F106/15 9. VICTORIAN FOUNTAIN**

Northumbrian Water advised BTC that a tank would be the best way to re-invigorate the fountain. Councillors queried where the tank would be placed and advised a visit from an engineer may be beneficial. The water would not be suitable for drinking and it would be a Council responsibility to ensure the correct notices were displayed to advise of this. A recommendation was also made to colour the water so the public would not be tempted to drink it. Minor repairs would also be required to the fountain and this would be added to the quote provided of £1,060.80 to re-instate the fountain.

**RESOLVED: To defer a decision on this to full Council.**

**F107/15 10. FLORAL DISPLAYS**

**Suspend Standing Orders** – Ms Osborne queried costs re who would be providing the care and maintenance of the floral displays and was advised that NCC/Locality Officers would assist re this. **Re-instate Standing Orders** - Cllr Gibson proposed acceptance of the purchase of plants and this was approved by all.

**RESOLVED: To approve the purchase of summer bedding.**

**F108/15 11. SEATS IN BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**

Cllr Gibson and Mclean have worked hard and looked at every seat/bench in Berwick and have mapped out and advised what is required to repair, remove and paint over 200 seats. A ball park figure of £50 per seat was put forward as an approximate cost which comes to nearly £10k in total. Three quotes for this work will be obtained from local tradesman.

**RESOLVED: To obtain 3 quotes to renovate/paint all seats/benches in Berwick.**

**F109/15**

**12. COMMUNITY RIGHTS PROGRAMME – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING**

**Suspend Standing Orders** - Cllr Goodyer requested approval of acceptance of a grant of £1,500 from Groundwork UK to assist BTC with expenses re the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr Goodyer advised this process MUST be done correctly and that mistakes made in the past are not repeated. A grant holder will need to be nominated (finance officer etc) but they would not have access to the money. The money will be used for a NP website, distribution, flyers, room hire, stationery and consumables. This was agreed. **Re-Instate Standing Orders.**

**RESOLVED: To accept the £1,500 grant and appoint a grant holder.**

**F110/15**

**13. INVESTORS CONFERENCE**

**Suspend Standing Orders** – Cllr Goodyer advised that BTC had initiated and were promoting a Berwick Investors Conference to take place in the Guildhall on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2016. UKTI North East has agreed to support the conference and will provide a £500 grant for a buffet lunch and refreshments. There will be speakers from a wide area and in particular, considerable uptake/interest from Scotland. The afternoon will be taken up with case studies. **Re-instate Standing Orders** - It was agreed to gain quotes for providing the food for delegates

**RESOLVED: To accept a £500 grant from UKTI North East for provision of food.**

**F111/15**

**14. YEARBOOK**

Councillors were shown a small book which contained useful Councillor information from a few years ago and which appeared to be extremely informative. A quote to print 200 was costed at approximately just over a £1 per book. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Ms Osborne thought it was a backward step and that people could simply look online for Council information. **Re-instate Standing orders.** Cllr Roughead thought a minimum amount could be printed and it could also be further developed. Cllr Smith proposed acceptance and Cllr Gibson seconded.

**RESOLVED: To look at developing further.**

**F112/15**

**15. BERWICK TOWN CENTRE CCTV**

Cllr Hodgson advised another contractor had attended the BTC office to discuss CCTV. The contractor was able to get 2 more cameras up and running which will be in place in the town over the xmas period. **Suspend Standing orders** – Mr Darling advised the

contract to supply would have to go out to tender and Mr Spencer Barclay advised that the Council should write their own specifications. **Re-instate Standing Orders.**

**RESOLVED: CCTV cameras will be put out for tender in 2016.**

**F113/15**

**16. AONB FREE HOLIDAY GUIDE**

Cllr Gibson advised this was the fourth time this issue had been discussed by Council and proposed acceptance, this was seconded by Cllr Graham. The Clerk advised there was money in the budget for 3 pages but the extra cost of the Berwick Video would take the budget into deficit. Councillors all agreed the video was a worthwhile expense. Cllr Roughead thought that BTC should take only one page - **Suspend Standing Orders** – Ms Osborne advised that a tracking system could be used to ascertain uptake and a member of the public thought it would be a useful tool at the Investors Conference.

**Reinstate Standing Orders** – Cllr Graham thought one page would probably be enough providing it was punchy and that it showed Berwick at its best. A vote was taken to agree taking one page only and this was carried with one against.

**RESOLVED: To purchase one page in the AONB Coastal Guide.**

**F114/15**

**17. FINANCIAL DECISIONS MADE BY OTHER COMMITTEES**

None.

**F115/15**

**18. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Mr Mike Greener, Spittal Improvement Trust requested 2 separate grants for Winter/Festive lighting and also for the provision of coverings for boarded up windows in Spittal. The West End Residents association also requested a grant towards provision of plants and gardening equipment and provided appropriate estimates.

**Suspend Standing Orders** – Mr Greener explained his proposal for winter lights to be displayed in trees in Spittal and also for coverings for the boarded up windows which detracted from the pleasant aspect of Spittal main street. **Reinstate Standing Orders** – Councillors liked Spittal Improvement Trust ideas but advised there was no money left in the current budget. It was decided to defer the items for the time being and thanked Mr Greener for attending the meeting. Discussion re the West End Resident Association was also decided to be deferred for the time being with comment being made that no person from the West End Resident Association had attended the meeting.

**RESOLVED: To defer a decision until a later date.**

**F116/15**

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 11th January 2016 at 6.00pm.

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

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

<b>Voucher Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
260 Floral Displays [labour]	04/11/2015	101207	Watering	Northumberland County Council	2,004.48	400.90	2,405.38
286 Wilson's Tales	18/11/2015	101208	Portas Grant	Wilson's Tales project	1,600.00	0.00	1,600.00
287 River Tweed Salmon Co.	18/11/2015	101209	Portas Grant	River Tweed Salmon Co.	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
291 Christmas Trees	27/11/2015	101211	Christmas trees	Stichill Forestry	810.90	162.18	973.08
292 Remembrance Day	27/11/2015	101212	Poppy wreaths	A. Alsop	245.00	0.00	245.00
293 Stationery & Printing	27/11/2015	101213	Stationery	Viking	69.69	13.94	83.63
294 Postage	27/11/2015	101213	Stamps	Viking	54.00	0.00	54.00
295 Equipment & Furniture	27/11/2015	101213	Equipment	Viking	134.48	26.89	161.37
307 Stationery & Printing	27/11/2015	101213	Stationery	Viking	19.87	3.97	23.84
296 IT Support	27/11/2015	101214	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00
297 Public Seat Maintenance	27/11/2015	101215	Seat maintenance	Tweed Landscapes	279.70	0.00	279.70
298 Other Events Grants	27/11/2015	101216	Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	365.60	0.00	365.60
299 Lights & Fittings	27/11/2015	101216	Christmas lights [newfields]	G McLean	171.71	0.00	171.71
300 Rent	27/11/2015	101218	Rent	Edwin Thompson	1,650.00	330.00	1,980.00
301 Service Charge	27/11/2015	101218	Service Charge	Edwin Thompson	53.39	10.68	64.07
302 Photocopies	27/11/2015	101218	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	81.96	16.39	98.35
303 Berwick in Bloom [annual]	27/11/2015	101216	Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	200.00	0.00	200.00
304 Remembrance Day	27/11/2015	101220	P A Hire	PFL Audio	300.00	0.00	300.00
305 Boat Trips	27/11/2015	101221	Portas Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	1,005.00	0.00	1,005.00
308 Cleaning	27/11/2015	101221	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	75.00	0.00	75.00
309 Civic expenses	27/11/2015	101222	Shirt	Robertson's	29.95	0.00	29.95
310 Other Events Grants	27/11/2015	101223	Grant	Berwick Literary Festival		0.00	907.04

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

<b>Voucher Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
290 Water [owned]	26/11/2015	directdebit	Water services	Northumbrian Water	47.50	0.00	47.50
306 Public Realm Works	27/11/2015	debitcard	Fee	Northumbrian Water	90.00	18.00	108.00



Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Notes</b>
260	Revised charge for hanging basket watering
286	Part-payment of agreed Portas Grant
287	Payment of agreed Portas Grant
290	Half-yearly charge for water at allotments
291	Payment for ordered Christmas Trees
292	Donation for wreaths for Remembrance Day
293-5; 307	Stationary, stamps & equipment ordered
296	Monthly IT support
297	Seat repair and associated works
298	Grant for Northumbria in Bloom awards ceremony [part payment]
299	Christmas Tree Lights bought for Newfields
300-1	Office Rent & service charge
302	Monthly charge for office photocopies
303	Annual support for Berwick in Bloom [part payment] - competition entry fee
304	PA hire for Remembrance Day
305	Part payment of Portas Grant to support infra-structure provision for boat trips
306	Survey fee for water supply provision to Victoria Fountain
308	Monthly charge for office cleaning
309	New shirt for Halberdier
310	Payment of balance of grant to Berwick Literary Festival [Grant £2500; previous payment 1592.96]