

## **BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 8 February 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Town Council Office, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	K Graham
	D Blackburn	G Hill
	I Dixon	G Mclean
	A Gibson	C Seymour
	E Goodyer	

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

W Pattison, Town Clerk

A Pre-meeting was held at the Town Council Office at 5.15pm to discuss the revised copy of the 2016/17 Draft Budget.

**Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 8 February 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Ante Room at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	K Graham
	H Bettison	G Hill
	I Dixon	G Mclean
	A Forbes	C Seymour
	A Gibson	

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

W Pattison, Town Clerk

Cllr Blackburn

Cllr Smith

## OPEN SESSION

Cllr Hodgson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mr Darling advised he had not had any response to a previous query on procedures/protocols and the absence of the Finance Officer, Cllr Hodgson advised this was a subject for Staffing Committee and was not up for discussion. Mr Waugh queried lack of clarity re Draft Budget figures and the Clerk will advise the Finance Officer's contact details in order for Mr Waugh to gain an answer to his queries. Mrs Osborne had a problem downloading an agenda from the Council website. Mr Spencer Barclay mentioned his concern regarding item 5 on the last full Council agenda. Cllr Bettison gave apologies if she inadvertently upset anyone.

Cllr Hodgson then advised that the Finance meeting would be held showing respect to everyone and with everyone following the Code of Conduct principles.

### **F131/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors Lang and Roughead.

### **F132/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2016 were queried by Cllr Graham who advised she didn't say she wanted the proposed work to make a disabled pathway through the cobbles on the Quayside stopped and Cllrs Hill and Seymour advised that they had not said this either, the wording was then agreed to be changed to 'due to concerns'. The minutes were then proposed by Cllr Graham and seconded by Cllr Dixon and agreed by all and signed as a correct record.

### **F133/15 3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Cllrs McLean and Gibson items 10 and 12.

### **F134/15 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

### **F135/15 5. AUTHORISATION OF EXPENDITURE AND ORDERS**

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

### **F136/15 6. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT BUDGET**

Cllr Hill expressed her concern at the possibility of raising the Precept after the decision had already been agreed in November to NOT raise it. Cllr Hill felt it was a breach of trust and

queried why the precept request had not been sent into NCC before now. Cllr Hill said that she had received advice that a decision could not be reversed but ordinarily 6 Councillor signatures would be required to overturn a Council decision or a recommendation by a committee and suggested that, those who wanted this, could propose this recommendation is made by the finance committee to the full council. The Clerk advised in the unlikely event that the Council did not return their precept request to NCC, the same payment as last year would then be paid automatically to the Council. Cllr Hill queried the efficiency of certain items in the budget, referring to the cost of the handyperson with around half going on other costs and the vast majority of spend on Christmas lights and trees going on installation and maintenance. Cllr Graham queried the point Cllr Hill made about costly xmas trees and advised that amount was for mostly xmas light fittings and not actual trees. Cllr Mclean thought the Council should listen to Mr Warren, external auditor and also the Clerk in regard to not agreeing a precept before agreeing on a finalised budget and that the Town needed to have some money spending on it. Cllr Hodgson advised that BTC had not gone through the correct process in deciding on a precept for 2016/17 before properly agreeing a finalised budget and it may be that the precept request would not be changed at Council meeting, but, this decision would be properly agreed at full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and not before. A vote was then taken with 5 votes agreeing to wait to finalise the budget until full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February with 3 votes against, Cllr Hill being one of those voting against.

**RESOLVED: To recommend the draft budget to the full Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.**

**F137/15 7. LOCAL COUNCILS: FUTURE AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillors noted the changes.

**RESOLVED: Changes noted.**

**F138/15 8. VISIT BERWICK LEAFLET 2016**

Councillors discussed and agreed that Mr Jim Herbert should design the leaflet and Fantasy Print would print the leaflets. Comment was made that in future Councillors must be allowed to see the design before approving the costs and they must be given more time to look at this and to decide.

**RESOLVED: Approved - Design and printing costs for Visit Berwick leaflet. Mr Jim Herbert, Design and Fantasy Print to do printing.**

**F139/15 9. TEENAGE MARKET**

The Clerk advised that the Teenage Market could be promoted/licensed by the founders of the

Teenage Market brand for £700 for a year, or, NCC could buy the licence on the Town Councils behalf and charge BTC £200 and they could then also use the licence to promote this in other market towns in Northumberland. **Suspend Standing Orders** Mrs Osborne thought it was a good idea but thought too ambitious and too large a commitment at this particular time. **Re-instate Standing Orders.** Cllr Graham thought it was a good idea and would fully support the market, this was also supported by Cllr Mclean, Cllr Gibson and Cllr Seymour. This was then agreed unanimously by all Councillors.

**RESOLVED: To hold a Teenage Market in 2016.**

**F140/15 10. ESTIMATES / VALUATION OF PLAY PARK LAND**

The Clerk advised that the BTC Solicitor has now received a valuation figure from NCC for the Highcliffe Play Park land and it is hoped the rest of the Play Parks will also be valued in the same way.

**F141/15 11. TWEEDMOUTH WAR MEMORIAL**

Berwick Preservation Trust will pay half of the cost of the repairs to the Tweedmouth War memorial and County Councillor Jim Smith will pay the other half out of his County Council budget. Thanks were given to both Cllr Smith and the Berwick Preservation Trust on behalf of the Council.

**RESOLVED: Repairs to restore the Tweedmouth War Memorial which will be paid for by Berwick Preservation Trust and Cllr Jim Smith and was approved unanimously by all Councillors.**

**F142/15 12. VICTORIAN FOUNTAIN**

Cllr McLean, Cllr Seymour, Cllr Graham and Cllr Gibson all met with Northumbria Water to look at what would be required to put the fountain back into working order. Cllr Mclean advised this was a costly exercise and would require cobbles and slabs to be removed, pipe work, electricity supply, a pump and a tank to hold the water which would be visible outside on the street. Cllr Mclean also met with a contractor to gain an estimate for the work which would be done in conjunction with Northumbria Water. Cllr Seymour advised knowledge of a member of the public who had expressed concern at the use of coloured water in order to stop the public drinking it and which Cllr Seymour also personally agreed with and further advised that the fountain would benefit from cleaning up and moss etc removed and also had concern that the water colouring would damage the marble. Cllr McLean also advised the Lions Heads would also need to be tested. The Clerk advised that Berwick Preservation Trust would

provide £5k towards the costs of putting the fountain back into good order. It was agreed to defer any decision until a quote by the contractor had been received.

**RESOLVED: To defer a decision until the contractor had given an estimate for the work.**

**F143/15 13. SEATS IN BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**

The Clerk advised that nearly 300 seats needed painting, varnishing or repairing in Berwick. £10k has been allocated in the 2016/17 budget for this work to be done. Cllr Mclean and Cllr Gibson have made an itemised list of the seats and exact locations and they both advised a proper and considered programme of work was required before immediately engaging an appropriate tradesman. Cllr Gibson thought painting could start reasonably quickly and a tradesman was decided on to start once the agreed programme had been discussed.

**RESOLVED: A considered programme of work will be decided on and a tradesman will start the painting/varnishing of seats once this has been decided.**

**F144/15 14. COUNCILLOR TRAINING**

Cllr Hill advised Councillors that Mr David Francis, NALC would undertake Councillor Training on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February in the Guildhall. The cost will be £250 plus VAT. The starting time will be clarified.

**RESOLVED: Approval of Councillor Training to take place at the Guildhall on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016.**

**F145/15 15. SLCC**

Approval for BTC to approve payment of SLCC contributions was requested for BTC Staff, Mr Steven Cozens and Mr Robert Leetham. Councillors thought more clarification was needed re what had happened in previous years and this item was deferred until further information had been provided.

**RESOLVED: Deferred until Councillors have more information.**

**F146/15 16. BERWICK TOWN CENTRE CCTV**

Cllr Hodgson advised 3 expressions of interest had been received although one tender did not provide any costs. The tenders will be looked at and considered very shortly. A request by Cllr Hill at the last Council meeting directed to the Police Crime Commissioner, Vera Baird to provide funding for Berwick's CCTV was refused.

**RESOLVED: To look at the tenders and discuss in detail.**

**F147/15 17. RIDING OF THE BOUNDS**

This item was brought forward to the beginning of the meeting and Cllr Bettison left the

meeting at this point due to becoming unwell.

Mr Swales advised that the 500 year tradition of Riding the Bounds had been supported by NCC on a sliding scale for some years but had now ceased and the Riding of the Bounds Group required £3,500 to keep up this tradition and highlighted, St John's Ambulance, Insurance, Portaloos and NCC Council services as their biggest expenses. The rosettes are paid for out of the Mayor's civic budget. Mr Swales also requested that the Town Council took on the 'Bounds' under their umbrella/auspices and this would be a large saving regarding insurance and other costs. The Chief Marshall also has a lot of extra expenses which needed major funding. Cllr Gibson asked whether they had asked for funding from anyone else and Mr Swales advised they were hoping to get a major sponsor to assist. Cllr Graham thought it was an honour for the Council to take the 'Bounds' on and Cllr Seymour also agreed. Cllr Mclean and Cllr Dixon also agreed with Cllr Mclean advising the Council's support figure would reduce over time. Mr Swales also advised the date has always been 1<sup>st</sup> May and this had been up for debate re moving to a Saturday. Cllr Hill asked if the Council would need to provide more than just financial assistance and said that a number of residents in the town feel very strongly about the traditional 1<sup>st</sup> May date, Mr Swales thought the Council would need to meet after the 1<sup>st</sup> May and discuss the date and other matters in regard to working together.

It was then agreed unanimously to support and to grant fund Riding of the Bounds.

**RESOLVED: To fully support and grant £3,500 to Riding of the Bounds.**

#### **F148/15 18. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

This item was also brought forward to the beginning of the meeting.

56 degrees North is a community led social enterprise Arts Group based in Berwick which supplies work space for local artists and Councillors were advised of the aims of the Group by Ms Jo Hart. Ms Hart was requesting £931.00 to fund tables/furniture, daylight light bulbs and basic art materials. The other half of the money has been requested from the NCC Community Chest. Asked what would happen if NCC would not fund the other half, Cllr Mclean advised Ms Hart to contact the Berwick Community Trust. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Cllr Blackburn spoke of his full support and endorsement to the group – **Reinstate Standing Orders**. It was then proposed by Cllr Dixon and seconded by Cllr Gibson to agree to approve a grant of £931 and this was agreed by all Councillors with one abstention.

**RESOLVED: To grant fund up to £931 for 56 Degrees North.**

**F149/15 19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 7th March 2016 at 6.00pm.

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

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
368	Stationery & Printing	29/01/2016	101249	Stationery	Viking	78.88	15.78	94.66
369	Stationary & Equipment	29/01/2016	101249	Stationery	Viking	107.37	21.47	128.84
370	Stationary & Equipment	29/01/2016	101249	Stationery	Viking	62.52	12.50	75.02
371	Stationery & Printing	29/01/2016	101249	Stationery	Viking	51.42	10.29	61.71
372	Legal & Professional Fees	29/01/2016	101250	Data Protection Act	Information Commissioner	35.00	0.00	35.00
373	Photocopies	29/01/2016	101251	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	49.40	9.88	59.28
374-81	Salaries:	29/01/2016	101252	Salaries:	Northumberland County Council	5,223.69	0.40	5,223.69
382	Promotion	29/01/2016	101252	Banner installation	Northumberland County Council	95.48	19.10	114.58
383	Cleaning	29/01/2016	101253	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	45.00	0.00	45.00
384	Cleaning	29/01/2016	101253	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	60.00	0.00	60.00
385	Stationary & Equipment	29/01/2016	101254	Website design	Peritus	412.50	82.50	495.00
386	Other Marketing	29/01/2016	101255	Exhibition costs	Border Events	30.00	6.00	36.00
387	IT Support	29/01/2016	101256	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00
388	Councillor Travel & Subsistence	29/01/2016	101257	Mileage	P Hodgson	41.40	0.00	41.40



**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council  
PAYMENTS MADE: TO BE NOTED**

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
389	IT Equipment	29/01/2016	debitcard	IT Equipment	Argos	44.99	0.00	44.99

**DIRECT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED**

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
390	Salaries: Pension	29/01/2016	directdebit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
391	Telecoms	29/01/2016	directdebit	phone	BT	63.25	12.65	75.90
392	Telecoms	29/01/2016	directdebit	Internet services	BT	95.25	19.05	114.30
393	Electricity	29/01/2016	directdebit	Electricity	Southern Electric	46.99	2.34	49.33
394	Gas	29/01/2016	directdebit	Gas	Southern Electric	74.18	3.70	77.88

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Notes</b>
368	Office Stationary
369	Neighbourhood plan Stationary
370	Neighbourhood plan Stationary
371	Office Stationary
372	Annual registration - Data Protection
373	Office photocopies
374-381	January salaries
382	Cost of putting up and taking down Autumn Festival banners
383-384	Office Cleaning
385	Neighbourhood plan website
386	Cost of attending Borders visitor fair
387	Monthly IT support charge
388	Cllr travel cost - Berwick task force meeting, Morpeth
389	Purchase of replacement removable hard drive for office
390	January Pension payment
391	phone charge
392	internet charge
393	Office gas charge
394	Office electricity charge