

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

**Minutes of the Town Council Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on Monday, 11 January 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Ante Room at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors:	Paul Hodgson (Chair)	K Graham
	D Blackburn	G Hill
	I Dixon	C Seymour
	A Forbes	G Smith
	A Gibson	

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

W Pattison, Town Clerk

4 Members of the Public

Mr S Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

### **OPEN SESSION**

Mr B Darling queried the absence of the Finance Officer at Finance meetings

Mrs Janet Clare Dean expressed her concern at the Portas funded Quayside pathway which is due to start in February. Ms Clare Dean thought it was not appropriate and queried the decision making. Cllr Hill agreed with Ms Clare Dean and advised her concern as it was not a town centre project and thought NCC had rushed this through and attempted to attach Berwick Town Council to the decision. Cllr Graham also advised her concern that all the money was going on the Quayside and there was nothing left for the other 2 projects which was 'Make Berwick Beautiful' and empty shop fronts. The Clerk advised there was £5k put aside to buy 10 tiered planters for the town and this was on next week's Environment agenda for approval. Cllr Dixon thought the Portas money has created a lot of problems and caused much dissension in the town. Cllr Seymour advised that the Council were trying to claim EU funding to completely regenerate the whole of the Quayside and the making of a pathway with the Portas funds going down to the Quay on a steep recline with water /drainage issues would be difficult to push prams and wheelchairs back up the hill and felt the decision was not thought out properly and would like it brought back to the table to discuss. Cllr Graham also felt unhappy about it. Cllr Blackburn

though the Quayside Project should be discussed again thoroughly by full Council. Cllr Hill queried why the Clerk and Cllr Bettison had met with Mr Steve Mason and Cllr Grant Davey 15/20 minutes prior to Town Councillors meeting with them at the Town Council Office. Cllr Hodgson advised that the Clerk and Chairman had not met either Cllr Davey and Mr Mason before and wanted to greet them and introduce themselves as the current Chairman and Town Clerk. The Clerk asked for clarification on whether she was to cancel the re-generation of the Quayside due to Cllrs Hill, Graham and Seymour and Ms Clare Dean due to concerns at the decision making and because NCC were due to start the Quayside regeneration work in February and they would need correct and appropriate notice to cancel the project re contractors/workman/purchase of building materials and equipment hire?

**F117/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors H Bettison (personal), G McLean (holiday) and G Roughead.

**F118/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2015 were agreed by all and signed as a correct record.

**F119/15 3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Cllr A Gibson, Item 5.

**F120/15 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**F121/15 5. FLAGSTAFF PARK**

Cllr Hill advised nothing further should be done until a Risk Assessment had taken place and said this was a legal obligation. Cllr Hill also advised that the play equipment quotes should have gone out for tender also advised in the Warren report. Cllr Seymour also expressed her concern at escalating costs in regard to the ongoing expenses and also Scheduled Monument Consent which was adding to play park costs. Cllr Blackburn thought that residents had been patient and waited nearly 2 years for a play park and this project should be allowed to move forward. Cllr Gibson who has worked hard on this project advised this was agreed at full Council to approve Kompan to supply the play equipment and this could not be overturned. Cllr Graham wondered if the equipment already in place could just simply be replaced and not extend the park further.

A vote was then taken whether a Risk Assessment should be done, with 6 Councillors

approving, 1 abstaining and 1 against. A vote to engage Contractor AOC at £2,760 was voted on with 7 for and 2 against. A vote to go ahead pending freehold transfer was voted on with 7 for and 2 against. The Clerk will investigate why the freehold transfer of the land was taking so long.

**RESOLVED: A Risk assessment will be undertaken with advice taken from Mr Stephen Warren. Contractor, AOC will be appointed at a cost of £2,760 and this work will be done pending the freehold transfer of the land. The Clerk will also ascertain why the process is taking so long to complete.**

#### **F122/15 6. AUTHORISATION OF EXPENDITURE AND ORDERS**

A query was raised re invoice 304 and a breakdown of the figures was requested. Cllr Dixon said the Splash Park has been very dirty for 8 weeks before its closure and was only cleaned after the Park had closed for the season.

**RESOLVED: To approve all payments and orders appended to these minutes with a breakdown of the invoice re the cleaning hours of the Spittal Splash Park to be advised.**

#### **F123/15 7. STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS**

**Noted.**

#### **F124/15 8. DRAFT BUDGET/PRECEPT**

The precept will not be raised this year as voted at Council by 11 votes to 2.

Cllr Hill had various enquiries she wished to make and also mentioned the Council's substantial reserves. Cllr Hill thought another brainstorming session needed to be arranged to approve the draft budget and various tweaks were required. Cllr Hill's queries included a lower insurance payment than previous year, Meeting expenses of £500 were agreed to be reduced to £225. The cost of employing the locality officers and high pension requirements was mentioned with Cllr Hodgson advising that Mr Bob Hodgson was attending BTC to discuss in detail on 5<sup>th</sup> February. Further queries were high maintenance of xmas lights compared to last year and the very poor xmas trees, election costs were queried and Cllr Hodgson advised the invoice has been requested for stadium ward. Cllr Hill further advised concern at the high CCTV costs of £15k, and this was also agreed by Cllr Seymour as very high and that the Council may be able to get contributions towards the costs/funding. Extra Staffing was not accepted and advised it was too early in regard to employing an Apprentice or a Tourism Officer. Cllr Gibson advised Council that the Assistant to the Clerk was working long hours and was still not able to get through his work. Queries re website officer, Spittal Splash park

etc were also queried along with others.

**RESOLVED: To arrange a further brainstorming session.**

**F125/15 9. GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION FORM**

Suggestions were made re additions to the new form by Councillor Forbes and they were, support re requesting a grant was given by another person. Feedback on how the money was spent and Cllr Gibson said space on the form should be made so that a diagram could be drawn which would help explain more about the request for the grant in greater detail.

**RESOLVED: To add Feedback, Support by another person and a space for a diagram to the grant funding application form.**

**F126/15 10. HOPPA BUS**

Councillors looked at the figures supplied to keep the Hoppa Bus running for another year. Cllr Dixon and Cllr Forbes advised it was used more by elderly people and by tourists during summer. Cllr Dixon said the bus was never very full except in summertime. Cllr Blackburn though the bus needed better marketing and a query was also raised whether the bus was allowed to stop at service bus stops. The Clerk suggested calling a meeting with ADAPT and Berwick Holiday Centre to discuss marketing the Hoppa bus further.

**RESOLVED: The Clerk will arrange a meeting at BTC with Councillors, ADAPT and Berwick Holiday Centre.**

**F127/15 11. BERWICK TOWN CENTRE CCTV**

Councillor Hodgson advised that supply of CCTV for Berwick Town Centre was going out for tender in order for the Council to obtain best value. It is hoped once all bids are received and a decision is finally made that local businesses may contribute towards the costs and Pubwatch has already offered £1k towards the new cameras.

**RESOLVED: Supply of CCTV for Berwick Town Centre to go out for tender.**

**F128/15 12. FINANCIAL DECISIONS MADE BY OTHER COMMITTEES**

None.

**F129/15 13. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

None.

**F130/15 14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 8th February 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>
260	Floral Displays [labour]	04/11/2015	101234	Watering	Northumberland County Council	2,004.48	400.90	2,405.38
325	By-election Expenses	29/12/2015	101234	By-election cost	Northumberland County Council	162.50	32.50	195.00
326-333	Salaries:	29/12/2015	101234	Salaries:	Northumberland County Council	5,258.79	0.00	5,258.79
334	Salaries: Payroll costs	29/12/2015	101234	PAYroll	Northumberland County Council	2.00	0.40	2.40
335	Stationery & Printing	29/12/2015	101235	Stationery	Viking	42.79	8.56	51.35
336	Equipment & Furniture	29/12/2015	101235	Equipment	Viking	29.99	6.00	35.99
337	Councillor Travel & Subsistence	29/12/2015	101235	Ink cartridges	Viking	37.48	7.49	44.97
338	Bus Shelter Maintenance	29/12/2015	101236	Bus Shelter cleaning	Wheeleigh Clean	241.00	0.00	241.00
339	Dog Fouling (WOOFs)	29/12/2015	101237	Waste bags	Portland polybags	349.02	69.80	418.82
340	SLA routine maintainence	29/12/2015	101234	Spittal Splash Park SLA	Northumberland County Council	7,468.82	1,493.76	8,962.58
341	Photocopies	29/12/2015	101238	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	170.10	34.02	204.12
342	IT Support	29/12/2015	101239	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council  
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>
324	Telecoms	29/12/2015	directdebit	phone	BT	75.55	15.11	90.66

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Notes</b>
260	Revised charge for hanging basket watering, summer 2015
324	Quarterly BT phone bill, primarily line rental
325	Cost of pre-production work for poll cards for Grove Ward previously omitted from invoice
326	December staff salaries
334	Salary payroll cost
335	Stationary supplies
336	Office equipment
337	Printer cartridges for Cllrs
338	Regular bus shelter cleaning
339	Dog waste bags
340	fee for regular maintenance checks, including water quality monitoring, on Spittal Splash Park during summer 2015
341	Monthly charge for photocopies
342	Monthly charge for IT support services