

## BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held on 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016 at 7.00pm in the GUILDHALL, BUTCHERS ROW BARNSTAPLE.

Present: Cllr S Upcott (Chairman).

Councillors: Mrs V Monk, Mrs V Elkins, F Vernon, A Windsor, Mrs S Haywood, I Roome, Mrs J Hunt (Mayor ex-officio), J Carter, Mrs J Wilsher, Ms N Haywood, M Kennaugh, and G Langford.

Also in attendance: W Austin (Town Clerk).

### FG35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Phillips and I Williams.

The Clerk reported that this would be the third consecutive meeting for which Cllr Phillips had sent apologies. This was due to evening work commitments.

RESOLVED: That a dispensation be granted to Cllr J Phillips to remain a committee member following three absences due to work commitments.

(NC)

### FG36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS RECEIVED

Cllrs Mrs S Haywood, I Roome and Mrs J Hunt, as members of North Devon District Council, have dispensation under S.O. 66 to discuss and vote on all items on the agenda except where the item is a matter of financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

Cllr Mrs S Haywood declared a personal interest in Omega PAT Testing, as a family friend of the company owner.

### FG37 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2016

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(10, 2abs)

### FG38 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The financial statements and budget monitoring reports were circulated prior to the meeting.

- a) Budget Variance Report

RESOLVED: That the Budget Variance Report be received and approved. (NC)

b) Bank Transactions

RESOLVED: That the Bank Transactions report be received and approved. (NC)

c) Direct Reserve Account and Petty Cash Account for Barum House

RESOLVED: That the Direct Reserve Account and petty cash account for Barum House be received and approved. (NC)

d) Aged Debtors and Aged Creditors Analyses, and Nominal Balances

RESOLVED: That the Aged Debtors Analysis, Aged Creditors Analysis and Nominal Balances reports be received and approved. (NC)

e) Direct Debit and Credit Card Reports

RESOLVED: That the Direct Debit and Credit Card Reports be received and approved. (NC)

FG39 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2017-2018

Members considered a draft budget and precept request for the committee for 2017-2018, circulated with the agenda. In addition to inflationary pressures and the availability of earmarked reserves, the following were highlighted as significant changes compared with 2016-2017:

- Card transaction charges. The budget for the two credit card machines in use had been consolidated under this committee.
- Salaries. Salaries had been consolidated under this committee following the Staff Review and closure of the Heritage Centre.
- North Devon Record Office. An additional £5,000 had been allowed as contingency against any unexpected further loss of funding.
- Wedding Hirings. This budget had been moved to the Heritage, Culture & Community Committee.
- Castle Centre Upgrading. Works to the exterior of the building were not carried out in 2016/17 as planned, and the budget had been allocated to an earmarked reserve. No revenue budget was required.

The overall effect of the changes was a reduction from £500,568 to £494,195 compared with the 2016/17 budget.

RESOLVED: That the 2017-2018 budget and precept request of £494,195 for the Finance and General Purposes Committee be approved as tabled.

(NC)

Members went on to consider a draft Council budget and precept for the Town Council, taking account of individual requests submitted by committees. This indicated a revenue budget increase from £579,177 to £590,715, or 1.99%, for 2017-2018. The precepted amount would also be £590,715. These calculations acknowledged the current Government consultation on proposals for a referendum in cases of excessive Council Tax rises.

RESOLVED: That the budget and precept of £590,715 for 2017-18 be approved, subject to a final discussion at the next committee meeting should the referendum principles not be adopted.

(NC)

#### FG40 FUTURE SITING OF BARNSTAPLE FAIR

Cllrs Mrs S Haywood and Mrs J Hunt declared personal interests in this item as relatives of an honorary member of the Showmen's Guild.

Members considered a report from the Town Clerk in respect of the future siting of the funfair element of Barnstaple Fair. The report anticipated the possible loss of the current Seven Brethren site in 2018, explained details of the licence arrangements with North Devon District Council, and set out the District Council's current position. The report also noted the Chairman's request to the Clerk that an application be drafted to nominate the Seven Brethren site as an asset of community value.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Town Clerk be received and noted.

(NC)

RESOLVED: That an application to nominate the land comprising the site of the funfair element of Barnstaple Fair at Seven Brethren Bank be drafted and sent by the Town Clerk.

(NC)

#### FG41 NALC ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016

Members considered a written report on the NALC Annual Conference 2016 submitted by Cllr Phillips, and verbal feedback from Cllrs Upcott and Windsor. All viewed the conference as disappointing in terms of organisation and content compared with previous years.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk write to NALC setting out concerns about the 2016 NALC Annual Conference, and that attendance in 2017 be considered when the agenda becomes available.

(NC)

Meeting closed at 8.06pm.

Chairman.

Signed .....

Dated .....