



BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

Mr W Austin BA (Hons)
Town Clerk



QUALITY
TOWN
COUNCIL

BARUM HOUSE
THE SQUARE
BARNSTAPLE
DEVON EX32 8LS

Telephone: (01271) 373311
Fax: (01271) 321987

E.Mail: admin@barnstapletowncouncil.co.uk
www.barnstapletowncouncil.co.uk

There will be a meeting of the **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** on **MONDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2017 at 7.00PM** in the **THE GUILDHALL, BUTCHERS ROW, BARNSTAPLE** to which you are summoned for the transaction of the under mentioned business

W Austin
Town Clerk
9th October 2017

Members of the Committee:

Chairman: Cllr S Upcott

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

Public Participation In accordance with Standing Order 84 a period not exceeding 15 minutes will be set aside immediately prior to the start of the meeting for members of the public to ask a question of the chairman, providing the notice of such question has been given to the Town Clerk by 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

Recording, photographs and filming. *In accordance with the Council's Protocol for the Recording or Reporting of Council and Committee Meetings, the press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such, members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting. Anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting must notify the Town Clerk before the commencement of the meeting.*

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of interest and dispensations received.

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 4th September 2017 (attached).
4. To receive and approve financial statements and budget monitoring reports, and to agree any actions arising.
 - a) Budget Variance Report
 - b) Bank Transactions Report
 - c) Business Direct Reserve Account and petty cash account for Barum House
 - d) Aged Debtors and Aged Creditors Analyses, and Nominal Balances
 - e) Direct Debit and Credit Card Reports
5. Corporate Governance Working Party – to receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk on the meeting held on 16th October 2017, and to adopt any recommendations made by the Working Party.
6. Annual Return – to receive and consider the External Auditor’s year-end report (attached).
7. NALC Larger Local Councils Conference 2017: Making Local Economic Growth Work (London, 13 December 2017) – to agree any nominations for attendance (attached).
8. Ad Hoc Funding Requests – to consider the attached requests for funding.
9. Christmas Lights 2017 – to consider the Town Council’s requirements.

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held on MONDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 2017 at 7.00pm in the GUILDHALL, BUTCHERS ROW, BARNSTAPLE.

Present: Cllr S Upcott (Chairman)
Cllrs: Mrs V Monk, F Vernon, A Windsor, Mrs S Haywood, Mrs J Hunt (Mayor ex officio), J Carter, Mrs J Wilsher, Ms N Haywood, M Kennaugh, I Williams and Mrs L York.

Also present: W Austin (Town Clerk).

FG23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs V Elkins, I Roome and J Phillips.

FG24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS RECEIVED.

Cllrs Mrs S Haywood and Mrs J Hunt, as members of North Devon District Council, have dispensation to discuss and vote on all items on the agenda unless the item refers to a financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

FG25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH JULY 2017.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(11, 1abs)

FG26 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

Cllr Ms N Haywood declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in transaction 59117 in respect of an expenses payment made to her.

Cllr Mrs L York declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in transaction 59116 in respect of an expenses payment made to her.

The Town Clerk advised that he would provide a breakdown of transaction 58913 to members by email.

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

Following a query from a councillor, the Clerk undertook to provide an explanation by email of all debts shown in the column headed "Older".

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)

FG27 ANNUAL RETURN – REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

The Town Clerk reported that no report had yet been received from the external auditor.

RESOLVED: That consideration of the external auditor's report on the Annual Return be deferred.

(NC)

FG28 BUDGET 2018-2019

Members considered a report circulated by the Town Clerk, as shown at Appendix 1 to these minutes. Comments highlighted the following particular issues for consideration in the budget setting process:

- Consideration of increasing the budget for Council grants, and some opposing such an increase;
- Pressure to make improvements to Rock Park;

- The need to re-build the elections reserve as a result of two by-elections in 2017;
- Pressures on staff; and
- The need to keep any precept increase to a minimum.

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

(NC)

Meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Chairman.

Signed

Dated

Budget and Precept 2018/19

A summary of the current budget is as follows:

Committee Totals	2015-16	2016-17	2016-17	2016-17	2017-2018			Earmarked	Total
	Actual	Anticipated	Budget	Earmarked	Expenditure	Income	Net		
Finance & GP	527141	482977	500568	41400	627945	81250	546695.00	58250	604945
Heritage, Culture & Com	17559	46814	56505	4600	31150	10000	21150.00	4400	25550
Planning									
Environment	6853	16765	10644	24125	62660	34500	28160.00	27350	55510
Staff	17241	9638	11460	335	7210		7210.00	1000	8210
Buildings Review					37500		37500.00		
Rock Park	8007	31420		23500	72090	72090		28000	28000
Precept									
Government grant									
	576801	587614	579177	93960	838555	197840	640715.00	119000	759715
							10.62%		
							£94.57		
							6774.69		

Although the budget rose by 10.62% last year, the Band D precept rise was slightly less at 9.11% due to a rise in the tax base (the number of households eligible to pay Council Tax). The budget increase was in the main due to a contingency of £50,000 set aside for:

- Support for new responsibilities or service reductions by principal authorities;
- Provision for certain Corporate Plan objectives, such as the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Additional funding for costs arising from the Buildings Review Committee;
- Increasing employee costs, e.g. pension, living wage; and
- Increased general reserves to underpin any increase in expenditure.

Without this contingency the budget increase would have been 1.99%, just above the prevailing rate of inflation (both CPI and RPI) of 1.8% as at January 2017.

Issues for 2017/18

A number of early issues have been identified for 2018/19:

- Reducing grant income, e.g. for support for verge maintenance and Council Tax Support.
- Grass cutting – the budgeted six-cut regime has just about sufficed this year, but additional cuts and associated weeding works may be proposed by the Environment Committee.
- Members may wish to consider increasing the small grants fund from the longstanding annual figure of £17,500. In addition, Go North Devon have asked whether the Council will consider a standing annual contribution to replace their annual grant application.
- Rent income – a lease is about to be agreed for the Portcullis Suite at the Castle Centre, which should result in a modest increase in income.
- Although the Council has allocated significant funding - £60,000 to date – to the Buildings Review Committee, further funding may be considered in order to meet costs and demonstrate significant match funding for any grant application.
- The elections reserve has been significantly ‘hit’ by the cost of two by-elections in 2017. The Council will want to ensure that adequate provision is being made for the next full election in May 2019.
- Rock Park Trust is considering how improvements can be made to the park, with potential, for example, for significant refurbishment costs for Rock Park Lodge, and investment in new equipment.

Every £1 increase in the Band D precept raises approximately £6,775 in revenue. Every 1% increase in Band D precept raises approximately £6,407. Every £10,000 increase in the total budget/precept adds £1.48 or 1.56% to the Band D precept. Inflation as at July 2017 stands at 2.6% (CPI) or 3.6% (RPI).

Members are asked to consider issues and priorities for setting a budget/precept, and to recommend a ‘guideline’ level of precept to assist in the drafting of the budget.