

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

10 MARCH 2014

PRESENT:- Councillor Cooke (in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Hinchcliffe, Mrs Moorhouse, Robinson and Watson.

Also in attendance:- Councillor Deacon; 1 member of the press.

Officers:- Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Plant (Assistant Clerk).

41. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Kinch.

Resolved – That Councillor Kinch's apologies be accepted.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 72(a)/Sep/12 refers), Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

43. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 13 JANUARY 2014 – MINUTES

Resolved – That the Minutes be accepted as a correct record.

44. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS

Submitted – A report and associated appendices relating to payments and receipts for the period 7 January to 3 March 2014, income and expenditure relating to the month end of February 2014 (Month 11) and income and expenditure by cost centre.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

45. MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Submitted – A report to consider the pressures affecting the Town Council's income and expenditure over the medium term, the next three years, to establish a broad strategy for the council's financial management which could be used as the context for any future decisions about changes to services through successive budget cycles.

It was noted that the council's internal auditor had recommended that the council took a medium-term planning view on its income and expenditure to assist members in successive budget preparations and to provide a context for decisions about the scope and scale of the town council's services.

Resolved - That the Medium-Term Financial Plan, as submitted, be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March for approval.

46. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

(1) Standing Orders

Submitted – A report outlining proposed revisions to the Town Council's Standing Orders to reflect the model promoted by NALC, as revised in November 2013 following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011, and some procedural simplification to remove ambiguous wording and the number of individual headings from earlier drafts as well as

revising the order in which the sections appeared and adapted to meet the needs of this council.

Discussion ensued and, whilst a number of further changes were suggested, only one amendment was agreed.

Resolved – That the draft Standing Orders, as now amended, be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March (a) for approval and (b) for adoption at the Annual Meeting.

(2) Financial Regulations

Submitted – A report outlining a review of the Town Council's Financial Regulations to ensure that they continued to meet the needs of this council and to take into account recent legislation reforms, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, being formally approved and the subsequent issue of an updated Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - Practitioners' Guide (England).

Discussion ensued and it was acknowledged that references should be made within the regulations to the Financial Donations and Community Events budgetary allowances and associated policies.

Resolved - That, pending the issue of a revision to the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - A Practitioners' Guide and the addition of Financial Donations and Community Events references, the draft Financial Regulations be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March (a) for approval and (b) for adoption at the Annual Meeting.

(3) Scheme of Delegation

Submitted – A report to review the Town Council's Scheme of Delegation for the forthcoming municipal year. It was noted that there were no proposed amendments.

Resolved - That the draft Scheme of Delegation, as submitted, be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March (a) for approval and (b) for adoption at the Annual Meeting.

(4) Calendar of Council Meetings 2014-15

Submitted – A report to consider a proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2014/15 for the council and its committees.

Resolved – That the schedule of meetings for the municipal year 2014/15, as submitted, be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March (a) for approval and (b) for adoption at the Annual Meeting.

(5) Mayoral Seniority 2014-15

Submitted – A report outlining options available to the council, to determine, or not, seniority amongst members to establish a precedence for choosing a town mayor and deputy for 2014-15 and beyond, which included a free vote, structured vote or formal seniority with a confirming vote options. It was stressed that there were no legal limitations on eligibility for the office of Town Mayor (and Deputy) other than (s)he be a member of the council.

Resolved – That, in respect of a process for the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor for 2014-15 and beyond, it be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March that a free vote system be approved.

47. REVIEW OF POLICIES

(1) Community Events – Grants

Submitted – A report outlining a revised policy and procedural framework, including the operating criteria, by which the Partnership Committee could consider applications for support from community organisations for specific events against the Community Events Budget, as part of a review of the Town Council's Community Events Policy. Discussion ensued and further changes were suggested.

Resolved - That the Community Events policy, as now amended, be recommended for approval at the council meeting on 24 March.

48. 2014/15 TRAINING PROGRAMME

Submitted - A report to consider a 2014/15 Training Programme for Members and staff within the agreed 2014/15 Training budget of £750.

Resolved – (a) That the following Training Programme for 2014/15 be approved:-

Delegate	Course
Councillors	Chairmanship Training Planning updates
Councillors (and staff)	Member/officer relationships Online Training (Being a Good Councillor, Planning, etc.)
Clerk	CiLCA (progressing with)
Deputy Clerk	Planning updates
Services Officer (Civic)	Allotment Updates
Services Officer (Finance)	HM Revenue and Customs Training (now online)
Seasonal Staff	Health & Safety, Operational Procedure Training

(b) That a letter be sent to all members stressing the importance of the participation of councillors in respect of training opportunities.

49. REFERRAL FROM SERVICES COMMITTEE – PUBLIC SEATS HOLDING ACCOUNT

It was reported that, at the Services Committee meeting on 24 February 2014, it was brought to members' attention that there remained a small sum of money in the Public Seats 2013/14 budget from a recent memorial bench scheme donation. It was subsequently recommended that this underspend, and future Public Seats underspends, should be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account. This would allow a build up of funds towards public seating repairs and maintenance in the future.

It was consequently resolved that it be recommended to the Resources Committee that the Public Seats 2013/14 under spend, and future Public Seats under spends, be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account.

Resolved – That, it be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March, that the Public Seats 2013/14 under spend, and future Public Seats under spends, be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account.

50. RED WELL OWNERSHIP

Submitted – Pursuant to Minute 30(f)/Nov/13, a report providing information in respect of the ownership status of the Red Well enclosure and sought members' views as to whether that status should be rectified. It was confirmed that enquiries lodged with Land Registry had verified that the area was unregistered and due to the fact that the town council had maintained the land for a number of years, it was possible for the town council to register the land in its name under adverse possession rules.

Resolved – That it be recommended to the council meeting on 24 March, that the Red Well enclosure be registered by the town council.

51. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (in respect of Minute 52 below)

Resolved – That, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 §1(2), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter referred to at Minute 52 below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

52. REPLACEMENT IT AND SOFTWARE

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 78(ii)/Dec/13, a report to consider quotations received to replace the office IT equipment and operating software.

Resolved – That replacement IT equipment be purchased from Dell UK on the terms quoted.