

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

9 MARCH 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Cooke (in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Mrs Moorhouse, Deacon, Kinch and Robinson (from item 53).

Officers: Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Jane Woodward (Deputy Clerk) until item 53.

In attendance: Two members of the press.

45. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

None were received.

Councillor Cooke extended his thanks to Councillor Mrs Moorhouse for chairing meetings in his absence and to the commitment of the committee.

46. 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.

47. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 12 JANUARY 2015 – MINUTES

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

48. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS

Submitted – A report and associated appendices relating to payments and receipts for the period 30 December 2014 to 2 March 2015 and income & expenditure relating to the month end of February 2015 (Month 11).

Resolved – (a) That the information be received and noted and;

(b) That a breakdown of Christmas Firework Event (£4,790) from 2014/15 Autumn Winter Events budget be circulated to Councillors.

49. DEFIBRILLATORS

It was reported that following full Council's decision to remove an allocation for the purchase of a defibrillator from 2015/16 budget (Minute 99(b)/Jan/15 refers), funding had been offered by the Friends of the Richardson Hospital and assistance in kind offered by the parish hall committee of St. Mary's and by Morrison's supermarket. It was also reported that Barnard Castle Cricket Club was proceeding with the purchase and installation of a defibrillator at the club. It was further noted that Startforth School was purchasing a defibrillator.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted.

(b) That the British Heart Foundation be contacted for additional funding.

(c) That further work be carried out with the North East Ambulance Service to access the best procurement route for suitable equipment (including paediatric use) and;

(d) That a report on progress be submitted to the next Resources Committee on 27 April.

50. WOODLEIGH

It was reported that a draft lease had been prepared by solicitors for the county council and had been commented on by the town council's solicitor. A final draft lease was expected by end March 2015.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted and;
(b) That the Woodleigh Working Group be convened once the final draft lease was prepared.

51. EMPLOYEE CHILDCARE VOUCHER SCHEME

Received – a report recommending the town council adopted a childcare voucher scheme, providing benefits for eligible staff to support childcare costs at no additional cost to the town council as employer. It was reported that the service charge for the town council would be 10%, which would be covered by the employer NI contribution savings of 13.8%, which would save the town council 3.8% on sacrificed payroll costs.

Resolved – That the town council enrol in the childcare voucher scheme operated by Computershare Voucher Services Ltd.

52. TRANSPARENCY CODE

It was reported that The Department for Communities and Local Government had published a new transparency code for local authorities on 27 February 2015, which related to financial performance and financial data, which must be published electronically.

Members noted that 'Data' meant the objective, factual data, on which policy decisions were based and on which public services were assessed, or which was collected or generated in the course of public service delivery. This should be the basis for publication of information on the discharge of local authority functions.

It was further noted that this code applied to parish and town councils with gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeding £200,000. The government had also published (17 December 2014) a separate code for small parish councils, i.e. those with a gross income or expenditure below £25,000.

The code did not, therefore apply, currently, to this council but would do so in the future.

It was recommended that the town council be prudent to examine both codes and interpolate good practice for adoption by this council.

Resolved – That the Clerk prepare a suitable 'transparency policy' based on best practice common to the published codes for future consideration by this committee.

53. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 54. 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 in Minute 54 below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted: in that it involves details of an individual employee.

54. STAFFING MATTER

Received – a report setting out the satisfactory completion of the contractual probationary period and subsequent confirmation in post of Mrs Jane Woodward, Deputy Clerk.

Resolved – That the information be noted.