

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

25 APRIL 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Cooke (in the Chair); Councillors Harrison, Sutherland, Kinch, Blissett (from Minute 89.), and Mrs Moorhouse.

Officers: Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Woodward (Deputy Clerk).

In attendance: One member of the press.

79. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Thompson.

Resolved – That Councillor Mrs Thompson's apologies be accepted.

80. 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.

81. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 7 MARCH 2016 – MINUTES

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

82. CASUAL VACANCY – WEST WARD

An election was to be held on Thursday 5 May, between the hours of 7am and 10pm, in the Methodist Church Hall. There were two candidates: George Hallimond and Emma Louise Rowell. The poll would be taken together with the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner for the Durham area.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

83. WOODLEIGH

(i) Woodleigh Working Group – 22 March 2016 – notes

(ii) Woodleigh Working Group – 14 April 2016 – draft notes

Resolved – That the notes and information be received.

(iii) Dawson Room Hire Arrangements

An enquiry was received from Councillor Mrs Grady to hire the Dawson Room and/or hallway to display the Meet photos and vintage displays 27 to 30 May. She also asked, via a meeting of the 1940s Event Task & Finish Group on 19 April, if the hire charge could be relaxed. There was no official request from the Meet. Members were reminded that matters relating to Woodleigh were delegated to Woodleigh Working Group and overseen by Resources Committee.

The community rate charge was set at £12.50 per hour and discounted community rate £10 per hour. The Fire Safety Officer at CDDFRS had recommended that the hallway was kept clear as the principal means of escape. Woodleigh would need to be opened and

locked up again during the period 27 to 30 May. Dickens in Teesdale panels had recently been installed on the hall wall opposite the staircase, together with a painted mural. Members did not want to set a precedent for a reduced hire rate.

Resolved – (a) That there should be no reduced rate of hire for the Dawson room;
(b) That, in principle, Woodleigh hallway was not to be used, in line with Fire Safety Officer advice; and
(c) That a formal request, for use of the Dawson Room, be otherwise deferred to a future meeting of the Woodleigh Working Group.

(iv) Income/ Expenditure to date

Received - Woodleigh income and expenditure to date; operational costs offset against income; and rental income.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted;
(b) That thanks be given to staff for preparing figures; and
(c) That a full Woodleigh budget breakdown, with commitments and expenditure so far, be presented at next Resources Committee on 13 June.

84. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS

Submitted – A report outlining budget activity since the start of the 2015/16 financial year; associated appendices relating to payments and receipts for the period 29 February 2016 to 31 March 2016; and income & expenditure relating to the month end of February 2016 (Month 11).

Resolved – (a) That the information be received and noted;
(b) That a breakdown of '10 x painting' areas in Woodleigh be clarified and;
(c) That thanks be given to staff for preparing budget reports.

85. DEFIBRILLATOR UPDATE

The location and siting of the cabinet was now confirmed to be acceptable on planning grounds and within the terms of the town council's permitted development rights. Confirmation that the cabinet would not obstruct the highway was awaited from county council conservation and highways officers.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

86. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS FOR 2016/17

(i) Governance Task & Finish Group – 22 March – draft notes

Resolved – That the notes and information be received.

(ii) Draft Code of Conduct

Received - a revised draft Code of Conduct for consideration. It was previously adopted in September 2012. A note of the investigation process undertaken by the county council was also circulated.

Resolved – (a) That members comments be received and;
(b) That a draft Code of Conduct be presented at full Council for approval and adoption on 9 May.

(iii) Lone Working / Cash Handling Policy

Following the Town Council's relocation to Woodleigh, together with the large amounts of cash handled by staff and additional duties, members considered a Lone Working Policy. An office mobile phone (pay as you go) for incoming calls, texts and emergency calls only was also discussed, to aid staff working alone, as well as providing Wednesday market traders and event participants with an out of office number to contact. Walkie-talkie devices were also discussed as a potential option, to aid mini-golf attendants in case of emergencies.

Resolved – (a) That a draft Lone Working Policy be delegated to Governance Task & Finish Group to be drawn up; and

(b) That approval be given to the purchase of a cheap mobile phone or other telecommunication equipment as deemed appropriate.

(iv) Calendar of Council meetings 2016/17

Received – a report proposing a calendar of meetings for 2016/17 municipal year.

Resolved – That the schedule of Council and Committee meetings be recommended to the council for approval and adoption at the Annual Meeting on 9 May 2016.

87. TRAINING PROGRAMME 2016/17

Received – a report considering a 2016/17 Training Programme for members and staff.

It was reported that the training budget was £500 and a suggested programme was submitted for consideration. It was further acknowledged that a significant amount of training could now be done on-line for free or reduced cost. There was a need for headphones to minimise disturbance in the office. Members noted that now the Town Council managed Woodleigh and acted as landlord, there was a requirement for the Clerk and other staff to cover a number of 'responsible person' roles.

Resolved – (a) That the 2016/17 training programme, as submitted, be approved;

(b) That a set of headphones for online webinars be purchased out of the 2016/17 training budget;

(c) That Councillors who haven't undergone Chairmanship training, undertake training at a cost of £50 per delegate;

(d) That the Deputy Clerk commence the revised CiLCA qualification at a cost of £250.

(e) That a nominated fire warden at Woodleigh attend Fire Warden training at an approximate cost of £100;

(f) That a nominated first aider at Woodleigh attend First Aid Training at an approximate cost of £100;

(g) That, where possible, training sessions be held at Woodleigh, to encourage smaller parish councils to attend;

(h) That a letter be sent to all councillors explaining training opportunities available and benefits of attending training; and

(i) That an awareness event be held at Woodleigh on new and changes to existing Town Council governance documents.

88. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 89. 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 matters referred to at item 89, below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

89. ASSET TRANSFERS

Submitted – a report setting out due diligence information received from Durham County Council (DCC) to support the transfer of a member of their staff to the town council in connection with the freehold transfer of public toilets in the Market Place and off Galgate. Members were reminded that for a number of years, the town council had covered half the cost of operating the Market Place public toilets. In 2015/16 the budget was £4,661. As part of the budget preparations for 2016/17, in anticipation of the transfer, the town council approved an increase in this budget, to £12,924.

As a result of the due diligence information received from DCC, it was noted that, including staffing costs, planned preventative maintenance, water, electricity and business rates, the annual expenditure for both toilets was approximately £24,000, including assumed refitting costs, and would require an increase in the budget, from 2017/18, of approximately £9,000.

Resolved – That, in light of the due diligence information received, the town council does not proceed with the freehold transfer of the public toilets and proposed TUPE transfer on these terms.