

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

31 OCTOBER 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Cooke (in the Chair); Councillors Harrison, Sutherland (from Minute 36), Kinch, Blissett, Mrs Thompson and Mrs Moorhouse.

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

In attendance: Councillor Mrs Grady; One member of the press.

31. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

None

32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 17(b)/May/16 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.

33. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 5 SEPTEMBER 2016 – MINUTES

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

34. WOODLEIGH WORKING GROUP – 13 OCTOBER 2016 – DRAFT NOTES

It was reported that pursuant to Note 12, an estimate had been received from Atkinsons Joiners Ltd to make a new wooden board in oak, oiled and varnished to match existing boards in Dawson Room, at a cost of £450. Gold leaf lettering work would need to be sourced at an additional cost. At the end of September, the income from Dawson Room hire was £984.

Various recommendations were referred to this Committee for consideration.

Resolved – (a) That the draft notes be received for information;

(b) That the car parking arrangements be monitored and issues dealt with by the office as and when necessary;

(c) That suggested cleaning contacts be approached to gauge interest in Woodleigh cleaning/ caretaking;

(d) That the booking of the Dawson Room as provision for a town council ward surgery, commencing Friday 21 October, be advertised to other relevant councillors;

(e) That Cllrs Peat and Blissett be emergency key holders for Woodleigh and be suitably trained in operating the alarm system;

(f) That estimates be sought for the repair of gutters and flashing to be presented for consideration at a future Resources Committee, with costs reclaimed from DCC;

(g) That the Dawson Room hire charges remain the same for a further 6 months;

(h) That this committee approves the manufacture of an additional wooden board in the Dawson Room, at a cost of £450 out of Dawson Room expenditure budget, offset by Dawson Room hire income; and

(i) That Cllr Mrs Moorhouse contact David Harper regarding replacement tiles for the hallway and that an article appear in the press to source replacement tiles.

Councillor Mrs Moorhouse reported that she had been put in contact with a collector on The Bank who was confident that matching floor tiles could be sourced for Woodleigh hallway.

35. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS

Submitted – A report outlining budget activity for the 2016/17 financial year since the last Resources Committee meeting on 5 September 2016. Budget monitoring information was presented relating to payments and receipts for the period 1 August 2016 to 30 September 2016; and income & expenditure relating to the month end of September 2016 (Month 6, 2016/17).

In line with Section 2(b) of the council's Financial Regulations, reconciliation of the 2016/17 second quarter was carried out by the vice-chair on 25 October 2016.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

36. BUDGET 2017/18 – COST CENTRE REPORT

Following initial consideration of the principles underpinning the 2017/18 budget carried out at Resources Committee meeting on 5 September, a report was received considering individual budgetary headings, including Fees and Charges and proposals received for additional expenditure/new projects including growth items.

Resolved – (a) That the following budgetary allocations for 2017/18 be recommended to full Council.

Item	Budget Heading	Expenditure
1	Mayoral Allowance	£1,200 – no change (Mayor £1,000; Deputy Mayor £200)
2	Training	£750 – increase of £250
3	Audit Fees	£1,460 – no change
4	Bank Charges	£800 – increase of £656
5	Insurance	£2,000 – decrease of £228
6	Society of Local Council Clerks	£226 – decrease of £10
7	Co. Durham Association	Deferred until meeting scheduled for 16 January 2017 when the correct figure was known.
8	Accounts Software Package	£240 – no change
9	Travel Allowance	£300 – no change
10	Chairs of Office	£50 – no change
11-14	Salaries and Wages	£91,003 – increase of £4,153

Item	Budget Heading	Expenditure
15	Local Government Pension	£15,962 – increase of £26
16	Employer On Costs	Deferred until meeting scheduled for 16 January 2017 when the correct figure was known.
17	Office Rental (Woodleigh)	£8,000 – no change This sum was fixed under the terms of the lease until 2020.
18	Business Rates/Water Rates	£4,622 – no change A re-evaluation had been carried out by the Valuations Agency seeking exemption for the area of Woodleigh used by CAB and ATDC as charities. The Council has qualified for 50% small business rate relief in previous years. Confirmation deferred until meeting scheduled for 16 January 2017 when the correct figure was known.
19-24	Office Running Expenditure	£6,155 – decrease of £360 This allocation covered routine general maintenance costs associated with the day to day running of the building and office, including compliance services and cleaning and the planned and preventative maintenance programme for Woodleigh.
25	Electricity & Gas	£5,000 – increase of £1,500
26	Telephone/ Broadband	£924 – no change
27	Office Equipment	£1,575 – no change
28	Stationery & Office Goods	£650 – no change
29	Postage	£450 – no change
30	Books/ Publications	£100 – no change
31	Employee Eye Tests	£25 – no change
32	Communication	£150 – no change
33	Wayfinding Units	£100 – no change
34	Allotments	Expenditure £4,070 – increase of £5 and Income £4,070 – increase of £5 – net position unchanged

Item	Budget Heading	Expenditure
35	Mini Golf	Expenditure £10,000 – no change and Income £10,000 – no change – balanced net position
36	Christmas Lights	£6,500 – no change
37	Play Areas	Expenditure £11,500 – no change and Income £121 – increase of £4
38	Bede Road Bus Shelter	£50 – no change
39	Dog Fouling	£300 – no change
40	Town Mayor's Charity Fund	£500 – no change This sum to be used to cover the cost of civic events hosted by the Town Mayor – allocated to Full Council.
41	Floral and Open Spaces	£13,900 – increase of £4,400 Councillor Kinch called for a named vote: Those in favour: Cllrs Cooke, Mrs Moorhouse, Blissett, Harrison, Sutherland and Mrs Thompson; Those against: Councillor Kinch.
42	Castle & Market Cross Floodlighting	£700 - no change
43	War Memorials	£710 – no change
44	Public Seats	No budgetary allocation required
45	Community Events	£9,000 – increase of £2,000 A one-off growth item of £2,000 was resolved to support an event with The Bowes Museum to commemorate its 125 th anniversary in 2017.
46	Contingencies	Nil – no change General Reserves to be used during the year if necessary.
47	Public Toilets	£4,924 – decrease of £8,000
48	Replacement IT & Software	£850 – no change
49	Miscellaneous Expenditure	£0 – no change

Item	Budget Heading	Expenditure
50	Blue Plaque	Nil – decrease of £350 Item to be deleted
51	Wednesday Market	Expenditure £3,000 – decrease of £2,000 and Income £8,000 – increase of £3,000 Net increase (income) £5,000

Item	Budget Heading	Income
1	Fees and Charges	<p>Play Areas</p> <p>(a) Ten Fields - £100 – no change (b) Gate Licence Fee - £1 – no change</p> <p>Allotments (per plot)</p> <p>(a) 2017/18 – the allotment plot rental had already been determined - £45 – no change. (b) 2018/19 – £47 – increase of £2.</p> <p>Mini Golf – 2017 season</p> <p>(a) £3 per round for all users – increase of £1; (b) £9 group ticket (up to 4 players – saving £3) – increase of £3; (c) £15 loyalty ticket (7 rounds bought in advance) increase of £5; (d) £1 lost ball – increase of £0.50; and (e) £6 damaged club – increase of £1</p> <p>Dawson Room Hire Charges (per hour – min 2 hours)</p> <p>(a) Community – £12.50 – no change (b) Repeat community - £10 – no change (c) Commercial - £20 – no change</p>
2	Woodleigh Operational Income	£13,250 – no change
3	Bank Interest	£800 – decrease of £100
4	Grants	Nil – no change
5	Donations	Nil – no change
6	Sponsorship	Nil – no change
7	Cumulative Fund	Deferred until meeting scheduled for 16 January.
8	Precept	Deferred until meeting scheduled for 16 January.
9	LCTSG	Deferred until meeting scheduled for 16 January.
10	Miscellaneous	Nil – no change

(b) That the following new projects be submitted to full Council on 14 November 2016 for inclusion in the 2017/18 budget:

(A) Youth Council – New Item - £2,000 – allocated to Full Council.

(B) Dementia Friendly Town – New Item - £500 – allocated to Full Council.

(C) Elections – Additional revenue budget item - £5,000 – plus an earmarked reserve of £5,000 funded by a movement from General Reserves, allocated to Resources.

37. EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2015/16

Received – a report submitted for Members to assess the effectiveness of internal controls (risk assessment; control systems; and internal audit) with regard to 2015/16.

Resolved – (a) That the Council's system of internal audit be agreed as effective and;
(b) That the internal audit review forms part of the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

38. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

Submitted – a report setting out terms of reference and seeking nominations to a Task & Finish Group to consider the Town Council's overall constitution, including its policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The review would comprise two phases:

(A) drafting of an overarching statement of the council's constitution for submission to Resources Committee on 16 January 2017; and

(B) review of specific areas within the council's Policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, between 17 January and the meeting of the Resources Committee scheduled for 6 March 2017, together with the drafting of a Policy for Lone Working, pursuant to minute reference [63(iii)(a)/Apr/16].

Resolved – (a) That the terms of reference be approved;
(b) That members of Resources Committee constitute the T&F Group; and
(c) That all members be invited to highlight for review specific areas within the council's policies, standing orders and financial regulations to the Clerk by 9 December 2016.

39. DEFIBRILLATOR UPDATE

Pursuant to Minute 25/Sept/16, the defibrillator had now been installed to the left of the front door of the parish hall fronting Newgate. Weekly checks were carried out by staff as part of the Wednesday Market procedures and would be reported back to NEAS on a monthly basis, as required. Friends of Richardson Hospital were keen to highlight the fact that they contributed to its provision via positive promotion. NEAS offered a free defibrillator familiarisation session for local people, lasting around 2 hours. A training session could be organised at the Parish Hall on a suitable Wednesday morning at a room hire charge of approx. £30.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and
(b) That defibrillator training session be arranged on a suitable Wednesday morning at St. Mary's Parish Hall, Newgate, funded via a donation from The Mayor's Charity.

40. TRAINING

Pursuant to Minute 10/June/16, the Deputy Clerk, Services Officer (Finance) and Cllr Cooke attended County Durham and Cleveland Training Partnership's Finance training on 8 September, facilitated by Steve Parkinson (SLCC Financial Advisor). This highlighted the need for further in depth training on the capacity of Rialtas Business Solutions software, principally for the new Services Officer (Finance) to cover cash book; budgets; journals; VAT; management reports; and year end account preparation in full. A full two day on-site training package would cost £649, plus mileage costs from Cheshire, regardless of number of staff trained. It was prudent that members gave consideration to training on RBS software in this financial year, to maximise effective and efficient operation of the town council's financial management systems.

Resolved – That, pursuant to Financial Regulation 4(d), a two day training course on RBS software for town council staff be approved, at a cost of £649 plus mileage costs out of 2016/17 training and travel and subsistence budgets.

41. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF CONTINUATION OF ITEMS 42. & 43.)

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 42. & 43, below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

42. RISK REGISTER

Submitted – the Risk Register for reviewing, identifying and rating potential risks facing the Town Council, prior to the formulation of the budget.

Resolved – That the revised Risk Register be reviewed by Governance Task & Finish Group prior to being recommended to Full Council for approval and adoption.

43. STAFFING

Received – a report setting out the satisfactory completion of the contractual probationary period by Miss Claire Atkinson, Services Officer (Finance).

Resolved – That this Committee notes the confirmation of Miss Atkinson in the post of Services Officer (Finance).