

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**24 APRIL 2017**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Cooke (in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Kinch, Mrs Moorhouse and Sutherland.

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

**In attendance:** One member of the press.

The Chairman reminded members of the Committee that, as it was within the pre-election period ('purdah'), the town council must comply with restrictions outlined in Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986.

**70. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Harrison and Mrs Thompson for personal reasons.

**Resolved** – That the apologies be accepted.

**71. 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.

**72. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING – 6 MARCH 2017 – MINUTES**

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

**73. ELECTIONS**

It had been confirmed that there would be an uncontested election in the East Ward of Barnard Castle Parish, with five town councillors elected unopposed and one vacancy. There would be an election in the West Ward of Barnard Castle Parish on 4 May, with eight candidates nominated. A count would be held on Saturday 6 May. The election results would be known by 8 May. At the first meeting of the incoming council, on 15 May, the eleven newly elected members could choose to fill the vacancy in the East Ward by co-option (without the need to advertise the vacancy). Any co-option must happen within 35 working days of the election i.e. by 23 June. There was likely to be another meeting of Full Council before this deadline, on 19 June, which would allow Council on 15 May to establish a process by which it would fill the vacancy.

The following Councillors were not re-standing at this election and would cease to be town councillors from 8 May:

Cllr John Hinchcliffe,  
Cllr John Yarker,  
Cllr Angela Grady,  
Cllr Tony Cooke,  
Cllr David Kinch.

Those elected unopposed to the East Ward, with effect from 4 May 2017 were:  
George Hallimond,  
Frank Harrison,  
Sandra Moorhouse,  
Judi Sutherland,  
Mark Wilkes.

Each would be confirmed as a councillor, following submission of a completed declaration of acceptance of office, after 4 May 2017.

A notice of election had been posted for the West Ward, by the returning officer. Those candidates identified as standing for the six vacancies were (as published):

BLISSETT Kelly Ann Marie	Independent,
BLISSETT Luther	Independent,
CHATTERJEE Rima	Independent,
CHILD Richard	The Conservative Party Candidate,
EVANS Ros	Labour Party,
PEAT Roger Allan	Independent,
ROWELL Emma Louise	Labour Party,
THOMPSON Belinda	Independent.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Blissett, drew members' attention to the significant service to the town which had been given by the five councillors who were stepping down in May. He proposed that members of this committee acknowledged the tremendous service that all five had given the town between them:

Councillor Kinch had served four years since the 2013 election; Councillor Mrs Grady had served for five years; Councillor Cooke had served for twelve years and was a former Town Mayor; Councillor Yarker had served for eighteen years and was also a former Town Mayor; and Councillor Hinchcliffe had served the town as a councillor and Town Mayor for forty three and a half years, since the very first meeting of 'Barnard Castle Parish Council' in October 1973, at which the council resolved to adopt the title 'Town Council'.

Councillor Cooke praised members of the Resources Committee, detailed work of working groups, Town Clerk and staff and thanked Mrs Moorhouse as Vice Chair. Councillor Mrs Moorhouse gave thanks to Councillor Cooke in his role as Chair of this Committee.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted;

(b) That the process for filling the vacancy on the East Ward be considered at the Annual Council meeting on 15 May; and

(c) That thanks and acknowledgement be given to Councillors Hinchcliffe, Yarker, Cooke, Kinch and Mrs Grady, for their service and contribution to the town.

#### **74. BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS**

Submitted– a report outlining budget activity for the 2016/17 financial year since the last Resources Committee meeting on 6 March 2017. Budget monitoring information was presented relating to payments and receipts for the period 1 February to 28 February 2017 and income & expenditure relating to the month end of February 2017 (Month 11, 2016/17).

Councillor Kinch queried whether the town council's contribution to the elections in May was known yet. The Town Clerk confirmed that the election costs had not been determined and an invoice was unlikely to be received until sometime after the elections in May.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be received and noted;  
(b) That thanks be given to Services Officer (Finance) in preparing clear and detailed financial reports; and  
(c) That it be delegated to the Clerk to write to Smaller Local Councils Forum to request election costs and prompt invoicing for elections to ensure prudent budgeting.

#### **75. DISPOSAL OF ASSETS**

At its meeting on 3 April 2017, Partnership Committee considered the 45 motifs, which formed part of the town's Christmas lighting display prior to 2015. These motifs were now surplus to requirements and taking up valuable storage space. The asset valuation for these items was £12,333, which was the original market value. It was recommended by the Partnership Committee that these motifs were disposed of, at their scrap value, and that their value was written off the asset register.

**Resolved** – (a) That those Christmas motifs which were surplus to requirements be disposed of, at their scrap value, and removed from the Council's asset register; and  
(b) That any income received be allocated to the General Reserve.

#### **76. CALENDAR OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2017/18**

Submitted – a report proposing a calendar of meetings for the forthcoming year.

**Resolved** – That the Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings for 2017/18 municipal year be recommended for approval to Council on 15 May 2017.

#### **77. TRAINING PROGRAMME 2017/18**

Received – a report considering a 2017/18 training programme for both 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 following the elections on 4 May 2017, there would be a major change in council composition. All members required either initial or refresher training. The County Durham and Cleveland County Training partnership intended to hold a full day session on Councillor training. For those members who chaired (or aspired to chair) meetings, there would also be a full day training session on Chairmanship. Both training sessions were planned to be held in late July/ early August in Woodleigh for members of parish and town councils in the west of County Durham.

**Resolved** – That the 2017/18 training programme, as submitted, be approved.

#### **78. PROCESS FOR THE NOMINATION OF COMMITTEE PLACES 2017/18**

Received – a report setting out proposals for the nomination of committee places to take place at the Annual Council Meeting on 15 May 2017. Committee places would need to be reassigned following the outcome of the elections on 4 May. An appropriate ballot system based on that used in 2013 was proposed to achieve this in advance of the meeting. Preferences would be requested to be returned by 10.00am on Friday 12 May, with the draw taking place at noon, in the presence of any member who wished to

attend. After this initial allocation, preferences could be reviewed, but might need to be reconsidered once the vacancy on the East Ward had been filled.

**Resolved** – That the procedure agreed by Full Council in 2013, as submitted, be used for nomination to committees at the Annual Council Meeting on 15 May 2017.

## **79. WOODLEIGH**

### **(i) Woodleigh Working Group – 9 March 2017 – draft notes**

It was reported that on 23 March, one of the town council office sash window frames collapsed as the wood had completely rotted away. Durham County Council (DCC) was responsible for the windows under the terms of the lease agreement. The entire window unit was removed and a joiner from DCC boarded up the window to make it safe. A new wooden sash unit had been made and fitted with new 6mm glass laminate. The vinyls on the windows could not be reapplied. The costs of resupplying the vinyls from William Smith, Barnard Castle, from where the original vinyls were purchased, would cost £170, including fitting, excluding VAT.

DCC's Clerk of Works had assessed the condition of all the windows on 10 April. He was concerned about the extent of rot in the south facing elevation. He was expected to make a report, which would be requested from the county council's property help desk. DCC Conservation was informed, with advice that the replacement sash ought to be an exact match, otherwise planning permission would need to be applied for. The replacement window was an exact match.

Office roller blinds had now been fitted to all downstairs windows (with the exception of a blind to the recently replaced sash window, which would be fitted at a later date) and new vertical blinds had been fitted to the Dawson Room.

### **(ii) Business Rates**

It was confirmed that for 2017/18 the town council was eligible for full small business rate relief, with a net charge of £0.00; a saving of £2,330.

### **(ii) Gas Supply**

It was reported that on 10 April, an invoice was received for £1,964.17, being the reconciled charges for December 2016 to March 2017.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information and draft notes be received for information; and (b) That two window vinyls be purchased for the replacement sash window from William Smith at the cost of £170 excluding VAT.

## **80. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF THE CONTINUATION OF ITEM 79. 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 the continuation of item 79(iv) below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

## **79. WOODLEIGH (CONTINUATION)**

### **(iv) Rental Agreement – Association of Teesdale Day Clubs (ATDC)**

**Resolved** – That £177.23 be netted off next ATDC invoice for rent.