

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

12TH JANUARY, 2009

PRESENT:- Councillor Mrs Hamilton (Deputy Mayor)(in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Dixon, Harrison, Hinchcliffe (Minutes 154 to156 (part but not including the resolution)), Peat, Watson and Wood (Minutes 154 to156 (part but not including the resolution)).

155A. APOLOGIES:- Councillors Yarker (Town Mayor); Councillors Blissett and Wheeler.

155B. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with standard local government procedures, 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.

156. PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2009/10

Submitted – A report summarising the deliberations of the Finance Committee on a prospective budget for 2009/10 and incorporating the Committee's recommendations in respect of the rental and charging arrangements, the use of the Cumulative Fund (based on the Council's anticipated reserves at 31st March, 2009) and the capital allocations situation. The report concluded with recommendations in respect if the Precept and the overall 2009/10 budget.

Background details for each budgetary item were provided and the budgetary figures for 2008/09 were included for comparative purposes, together with details of expenditure to date and forecast 'end-of-year' figures for that year. Specific references were made to the proposed new budgets for a travel allowance and 'Libel and Slander' insurance cover. Overriding factors taken into consideration included the repercussions of local government restructuring (and the use of Contingencies), the Committee's original intentions regarding the Precept and the need to determine a budget which would meet the challenges ahead.

It was confirmed that the Option One Precept increase of £15,466 would result in an additional annual payment per household in a Band D property of approximately £8.02, i.e. approximately 15p per week, 14.4 per cent and Option Two of £14,466 would result in an additional annual payment of approximately £7.50, i.e. approximately 14p per week, 13.5 per cent.

Specific discussions took place at the meeting on floral displays, the size of the Newsletter and the need for expressions of interest in respect of asset transfers from Teesdale District Council being submitted as a matter of urgency.

Resolved - (a) That the following specific courses of action be undertaken/information be noted:-

- (i) that a report be submitted to Council in due course on the replacement arrangements for the honorarium for the Mini Golf Senior Attendant;

- (ii) that it be noted that, in respect of future major improvements to the Mini Golf facility, it is anticipated that the course will be included in the Barnard Castle Vision's Town Park project;
- (iii) that, as soon as practical, a reduction in the size of the Newsletter be considered;
- (iv) that professional advice be sought as to revised proposals for the floral displays in the Town;
- (v) that a full review of the lease for the rental of Ten Fields to Barnard Castle Football Club be undertaken; and
- (vi) that the ring-fenced allocation for the Bouch Way play area be additionally used for the costs arising from official inspections.

(b) That the following budgetary recommendations of the Finance Committee be approved:-

(i) that the following rental and charges be agreed;

(A) Ten Fields (Barnard Castle Football Club Rental)
 notified - £60 in 2009/10 (previously determined);
 (Note – there is no decision, as yet on the 2010/11 rental (to be one year in advance), pending renewal of the lease in March 2009 which will incorporate a review of the rental figure).

(B) Allotments (per plot)
 - £30 in 2009/10 (previously determined); and
 - £40 in 2010/11 with further incremental rises, if necessary, to accord with the national average (previously determined); and

(C) Mini Golf
 - Per round - £1.00 for all users (no change);
 - Lost ball – 50p (no change); and
 - Broken club - £5.00 (no change).

(ii) that the capital allocation commitments and overall scenario be confirmed;

(iii) that the ring-fencing of 2008/09 underspends on Allotments, Christmas Festival, Newsletter and Public Seats expenditure items be agreed;

(iv) that a 2009/10 Precept of £122,520 be served on Durham County Council; and

(v) that the detailed revenue budget for 2009/10 be as shown on the next page.

(Note – Councillors Mrs Dixon and Harrison declared interests in respect of the Allotments budgetary item and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon. Councillor Mrs Dixon declared an interest in respect of the War Memorials budgetary item and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.)

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	2009/10	<u>INCOME</u>	2009/10
	(£)		(£)
1 Allotments	2280	1 Allotments	2280
2 Mini Golf	4300	2 Mini Golf	4300
3 Christmas Festival	6740	3 Christmas Festival	0
4 Play Areas	5000	4 Bank Interest	3500
5 Ten Fields	50	5 Rent (Ten Fields)	60
6 Donations	3000	6 Grants	0
7 Floral Displays	5000	7 HMRC	0
8 Castle Floodlights	1500	8 Castle Floodlights	0
9 Flatts Woods Improvements	100	9 Cumulative Fund	3000
10 War Memorials	150	10 Precept	122520
11 Red Well	60		
12 Bede Road Bus Shelter	50	TOTAL INCOME	135660
13 Events*	4000		
14 Presentational Gifts	200		
15 Newsletter	4000		
16 Mayoral Allowance (700/200)	900		
17 Training	1500		
18 Audit Fees	1450		
19 Insurance	1150		
20 Advertising	150		
21 Co. Durham Association	540		
22 Society of Local Council Clerks	180		
23 Civic Matters	70		
24 Office Rental	3600		
25 Council Tax/Water Rates	800		
26 Electricity	1250		
27 Office Maintenance	175		
28 Office Equipment	1150		
29 Telephone	500		
30 Stationery	850		
31 Postage	800		
32 Books & Publications	100		
33 Clerk	22305		
34 Services Administrator	12175		
35 Second Services Administrator	11320		
36 Assistant Town Clerk	21885		
37 Staffing On-costs	5450		
38 Accounts Software Package	200		
39 Public Seats	0		
40 Public Noticeboard	180		
41 Contingencies	10,000		
42 Travel Allowance	500		
43 'Libel & Slander' Insurance	50		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	135660		

* To include Floral Competition, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Festival