

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
10 AUGUST 2015**

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Moorhouse (Town Mayor) (in the Chair); Harrison, Marshall, Blissett, Deacon, Cooke, Kinch, Hinchcliffe and Peat.

Also in attendance: One member of the public; two members of the press.

Officers: Mr King (Town Clerk), Mrs Woodward (Deputy Clerk)

56. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Yarker and Mrs Grady.

Resolved – That Cllrs Yarker's and Mrs Grady's apologies be accepted.

57. 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, pecuniary or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at that point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need had arisen during discussion.

58. CHRISTMAS LIGHTING 2015/16

Submitted – a report setting out the recommendation of the Christmas Lights Working Group, a sub-committee of Partnership Committee, at its meeting on 27 July, that £1,000 be transferred from the Council's Christmas Lights Support Fund to purchase additional lighting in 2015. It was proposed that the town council purchase Christmas trees for the shops.

Members were reminded of previous Council resolution (Minute 77(ii)/Dec/13 refers) that the Christmas Lighting Contingency Fund be renamed as the Christmas Lighting Support Fund and be used for emergency repairs/maintenance or to improve the existing display should an opportunity arise.

It was confirmed that the town council would buy 50 trees and that they would be town council assets. The shortfall in funding would come from contributions from the towns shops/businesses.

An independent, constitutionally, not-for profit Christmas lights group was not yet established to fundraise and work to enhance the town's Christmas lighting. Until such time, councillors were not obliged to declare an interest. A heated debate ensued between Councillors Kinch and Deacon.

An amended recommendation was proposed, seconded and moved that £1,000 be transferred to supplement £700 previously approved at Partnership Committee (Minute 19/Jul/15 refers).

Resolved – (a) That £1,000 from the Christmas Lights Support Fund be used to supplement the £700 underspend from 2014/15 Christmas Lights budget (total £1,700) to improve the 2015/16 Christmas lighting display for the benefit of the town.

(b) That the Christmas Lights Support Fund be renamed Christmas Display Support Fund.

59. EAST WARD VACANCY

Submitted – a report setting out a process for the advertisement of a vacancy on the Town Council for co-option. It was reported that following the resignation of former councillor Thom Robinson on 6 July 2015, a casual vacancy occurred. The required statutory notice, which marked the period for claiming a poll was displayed in the noticeboard, on the council's website and through the Facebook and Twitter pages from 8-28 July. The Returning Officer did not receive the requisite number of signatories to call an election for vacancy, therefore the town council was able to co-opt via its own procedures.

Resolved – (a) That the town council advertise the vacancy for co-option using the recommended specification published by NALC;
(b) That one (or more) drop-in sessions be held;
(c) That those wishing to express an interest in the vacancy submit a supporting statement to the town council office, by post or email, on one side of A4 by noon on 14 September;
(d) That candidates submitting a statement be invited to attend the council meeting on 21 September and be offered two minutes to state their suitability, in turn.; and
(e) That voting to fill the vacancy be carried out at full council on 21 September.

60. PROPOSED TRIPARTITE MEETING BETWEEN THE GUILD, THE MEET AND THE TOWN COUNCIL

This item was withdrawn as the meeting was no longer on offer. Councillor Peat informed members that the Meet's AGM was on 20 August and that people should attend to give their views.

Resolved – That the information be noted.