

BARTON-UPON-HUMBER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
held on MONDAY 29 JULY 2019 at 7.00 p.m. in
THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, QUEEN STREET, BARTON-UPON-HUMBER

Present Councillor K Vickers (Chairman)
Councillors J Evison, Mrs J Oxley and J P Vickers

Also Present Councillor J Sanderson (ex-officio), Mr N Turner (CHAMP Ltd), 1 member of the public and Ms S Richards (Town Clerk)

Prior to the meeting commencing, Mr N Turner, representing CHAMP Ltd (leaseholders of The Assembly Rooms), spoke about repair work, maintenance and future planning regarding The Assembly Rooms. Copies of the damp proof course report and quotation from the contractor was circulated to members present, together with a revised short term/long term list of issues for The Assembly Rooms, provided by Mr Turner. Mr Turner explained work required to the guttering was excluded and work to the rear fire escape was the responsibility of North Lincolnshire Council. He then gave appraisal of his short term/long term list. An appraisal of the first floor windows was given regarding glazing and replacement of window sashes. He stated that following remedial work, external painting to probably be undertaken during the summer months of 2020. Mr E Rychlak (Conservation Officer) at North Lincolnshire Council has been consulted and it was noted that the work was specialised, with few local companies able to undertake diagnosis, reporting and undertake the work required as a complete package, for a listed building in a conservation area. He concluded that a long term management plan needs to be looked into. The Clerk enquired if the storage cupboard in her office had been included in the dpc survey, as plaster and masonry continues to fall off the external wall. Mr Turner stated that it hadn't. To include this would have to be an additional item to be factored in.

Councillor K Vickers felt that the leaking guttering work needs to be undertaken in the first instance, before additional work could be undertaken to the building. Discussion took place regarding this matter, including an external funding avenue and timeframe to fit in with CHAMP room bookings etc. It was agreed that Mr Turner to provide a revised report of works/costings to incorporate the discussions with the town council and a programme/schedule of works to be provided before the 4 September 2019 town council meeting.

Mr Turner then left the meeting room.

The Clerk opened the meeting, stating that a proposer and seconder was required to nominate a Committee Chairman for the current mayoral year.

75. **Election of Chairman**

Resolved that Councillor K Vickers be elected Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee for the mayoral year 2019/2020. Proposed by Councillor J Evison and seconded by Councillor Mrs J Oxley. All members present agreed to this.

76. **Election of Vice-Chairman**

Resolved that Councillor Mrs J Oxley be elected Vice-Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee for the mayoral year 2019/2020. Proposed by Councillor K Vickers and seconded by Councillor J Evison. All members present agreed to this.

77. **Apologies for Absence**

None

Minutes of a Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 29 July 2019, cont'd

78. **Declarations of Interest**

CHAMP Ltd and Friends of Baysgarth Park – Councillor J P Vickers (Personal Interest)
Friends of Baysgarth Park – Councillor K Vickers (Personal Interest)

79. **Minutes of Meeting held on the 15 April 2019**

It was noted that these minutes had been signed as a correct record, for action as necessary, at a meeting of the town council held on 1 May 2019.

80. **Matters Arising**

(a) **St Mary's Bellringers – Repairs to Church Bells** (*Min Ref: 340(a)/146 – F&GP 15/04/19*)

The Clerk has liaised with the applicant. Advice given that as the church bells form an integral part of the church clock chiming and working as she had pointed out, then the application could be looked at favourably if the application focused on the issues of the bells used for the clock chiming mechanism and operation, rather than the bells in isolation. The applicant declined to further this matter.

Resolved this matter be noted.

81. **The Following Financial Requests Were Considered:**

(a) **Friends of Baysgarth Park – Installation of Additional Footpaths**

Consideration and discussion took place regarding this request. It was agreed and

Resolved a donation of £2,000 be made. In the first instance, a letter of intent be sent to the group informing them of this, pending the external avenues of funding being met for the full costs of the project by them. The £2,000 to be taken from the 2019/2020 earmarked reserves Environment Committee Friends of Baysgarth Park budget. If the project is delayed and rolls into the next financial year 2020/2021, the town council to retain £2,000 in the Environment Committee earmarked reserves for Friends of Baysgarth Park for this project.

(b) **ST-ART – Lantern Making Funding**

Consideration and discussion took place regarding this request. It was agreed and

Resolved that a donation be made of £3,000. To be taken from the 2019/2020 earmarked reserves Community Committee Lantern Parade budget.

82. **The Following Issues Were Considered:**

(a) **The Assembly Rooms**

(i) **Noticeboards** (*Min Ref: 339(b)/145 – F&GP 15/04/19*)

The Clerk gave a progress report. Following contact with several contractors/suppliers and investigation into this matter, it would appear the boards will have to be bespoke. The noticeboards have to be constructed in materials applicable for a listed building in a conservation area. Standard sizes available would mean they would not fit into their current locations and planning permission would have to be sought from the local planning authority for alternatives. Costs and materials were

Minutes of a Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 29 July 2019, cont'd

discussed and photographs of suitable noticeboards were perused by members present, following discussion by the Clerk with the contractor. Following exhaustion of local contractors able to undertake this work, a specialist company had been sought. It was agreed there was some urgency to replace the existing ones, suffering from heat damage from last summer. In light of this, it was agreed and

Resolved that three replacement bespoke wooden noticeboards be purchased - two with header panels and one without, to be supplied and fitted to the Assembly Rooms front external wall. Provided these are within the budget allowance of the town council, the matter to be progressed in liaison with the Committee Chairman and the Clerk to expedite the matter. The budget to be taken from the town council's budget for The Assembly Rooms Repairs/Decorations 2019/2020.

(ii) **External Door Painting** (*Min Ref: 59(21)(ix)/24 – BTC 03/07/19*)

The Clerk stated she had spoken to the contractor regarding this matter. He was currently on holiday but would provide a quotation price upon his return.

Resolved that this be noted.

(iii) **General Maintenance Issues**

Following the report provided and issues raised by Mr N Turner (CHAMP Ltd) earlier in the meeting. General discussion took place regarding maintenance work at The Assembly Rooms, the programme of work, budget available, future planning and timescale. It was agreed and

Resolved that as a matter of urgency, as an emergency repair, a contractor be sought to investigate the guttering problems and undertake the work necessary to guttering at the front elevation of The Assembly Rooms. To expedite the issue, the repairs to be in liaison with the Committee Chairman and the Clerk by devolved power. The budget to be taken from the town council's budget for The Assembly Rooms Repairs/Decorations 2019/2020, and be within justifiable costs. Also, the quotation provided by the damp proof contractor to be accepted in the sum of £4,880 + VAT to be taken from the town council's budget for The Assembly Rooms Repairs/Decorations 2019/2020.

(b) **Review of the Town Council's Standing Orders**

Following query of the Standing Orders 5 - "Ordinary Council Meetings" (j)(xii) regarding the general power of competence, which the town council do not currently have. This matter was looked into with advice sought from ERNLLCA and NALC. It was acknowledged whilst the Clerk held the CiLCA professional qualification she would have to study for the additional general power of competence. Resources for this were discussed. The background to applications for grants made to the town council by outside bodies was looked into, whereby only two applications could recently be found whereby this matter could possibly be questioned regarding the use of the general power of competence. The first was the Barton Area Homeless Project (*Min Ref: 228/99 – BTC 02/01/19*). It was noted this was carefully perused at the time, as there was already two other service providers in existence, namely North Lincolnshire Council and the Barton Foodbank who deal with the homeless locally. Advice for this had at the time been sought from ERNLLCA by the Clerk. The use of the s.137 payment process was duly deemed fit for purpose by the town council to eventually support the Barton Area Homeless Project. The second application for funding was received from the St Mary's Bellringers – Repairs to Church Bells (*Min Ref: 80(a)(32)above refers*). Town and parish councils are not empowered to provide finance to anything relating to worship. However, the applicant had been advised of the best way to approach this issue in order for the town council to review the application in a more favourable way within legislation applicable, but had declined to pursue the matter. In light

Minutes of a Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 29 July 2019, cont'd

of this, it was deemed that the general power of competence was not particularly a matter of high priority by the town council, looking at the needs of the council for this. Also, ERNLLCA had previously advised, town and parish councils have no obligation to support any financial request received for grant funding by outside bodies. This is a matter for the council in question to determine.

It was noted that 26 - 'Standing Orders Generally' (b), needed modification. Following the reduction in Councillors from 22 to 12 at the May election, "written notice by at least twelve...." needs to be modified to "written notice by at least seven....."

Resolved

(i) The town council's Standing Orders not to be modified for 5 - "Ordinary Council Meetings" (j)(xii). It is to remain the same and the general power of competence not to be exercised at the present time;

(ii) The town council's Standing Orders to be modified for 26. 'Standing Orders Generally' (b). Following the reduction in Councillors from 22 to 12 at the May 2019 election, "written notice by at least twelve...." needs to be modified to "written notice by at least seven....."

(c) The Town Council's External Audit for 2019/2020

The Clerk stated the Annual Governance & Accountability Return was submitted to the external auditors the first week in June. Confirmation of receipt has been received, but no further communication to date. It was noted that some other local town councils were charging £10 for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return. The town council needed to review this, as the current charge was £1 and didn't cover the costs applicable. It was decided the cost of this to be £10 in line with other town councils.

Resolved following review of the town council's Annual Governance & Accountability Return, the cost to be increased from £1 to £10 for each copy provided to any person requesting this.

(d) 2019/2020 Budget – Quarterly Summary of Income/Expenditure

Members were furnished with a summary of the council's income/expenditure for the period 1 April to 30 June 2019. The Clerk reported that expenditure was within the budget line allocations generally, with spending levels in order. As previously reported at the Community Committee (*Min Ref: 45/17 – CC 17/06/19*) the budget for the Premises Licence had overspent by £313, due to North Lincolnshire Council Licensing Department requesting additional information to be published on the public notice. The budget for the Website had overspent by £55. At the time the budget for the year was set, no information had been received to determine the exact amount this would be. Due to an on-going issue with npower regarding historical issues of an unmetered supply to the Christmas lighting 2014-2017, additional costs had been implemented going over budget. However, in the previous year a credit had been received from the supplier to off-set this. Additional costs were expected to overspend on the earmarked reserves for Parish Elections. The cost for the May election was due, with another election to be held shortly to fill a vacancy on the town council which would also attract an election fee. The second payment of the annual precept had been received, along with the grant element of the 2019/2020 precept in the sum of £8,163 from the principal authority.

The Chairman, Councillor K Vickers, closed the meeting at 8.05 p.m.