

BARTON-UPON-HUMBER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
held on MONDAY 18 JANUARY 2016 at 7.00 p.m. in
THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, QUEEN STREET, BARTON-UPON-HUMBER

Present Councillor K Vickers (Chairman)

Councillors F Coulsey, Mrs J Oxley, Mr J Oxley, J P Vickers and Mrs W Witter

Also Present Councillors N Jacques, J Sanderson, and A Todd. Also, 1 member of the public, Mrs C Clark (Deputy Town Clerk) and Ms S Richards (Town Clerk).

235. **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor J Evison (work commitments).

236. **Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

237. **Minutes of Meeting held on the 19 October 2015**

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 4 November 2015.

238. **Matters Arising**

(a) **The Town Council Bank Accounts** (*Min Ref: 160(b)/64 – F&GP 19/10/15*)

Councillor K Vickers reported that he and the Town Clerk's had met with a representative from the Unity Trust Bank on 12 January to discuss the town council's banking arrangements and requirements. This bank mainly undertakes banking for town and parish councils, not personal banking. It was stated the town council's bank accounts would attract a monthly fee of £5 to include free internet and telephone banking with them. A nominated bank would have to be made for 'counter' service arrangements and this was suggested to be the town council's current bankers – Barclays Bank Plc. This service may attract a small counter service fee. Councillor K Vickers commented that after investigation, he felt confident that this bank was suitable for the needs of the town council. It was proposed by Councillor Mr J Oxley, seconded by Councillor Mrs J Oxley, agreed and

Resolved that an application be made to the Unity Trust Bank for the town council's bank accounts and banking arrangements to be made through them.

239. **Requests for Financial Assistance**

Members considered the following received request for financial support:

(a) **Barton Living Memorial Trust – Oak Tree Purchase in Memory of the Great War 1914-18**

Consideration and discussion took place regarding this request and an appraisal of the application was discussed. It was agreed and

Resolved that a donation of £57 be made to the group. The budget to be taken from 'Community – Donations/Grants (s.137)' 2015/2016. Also, if something could be attached to or near the trees indicating what the trees commemorate and why they are being planted.

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

(a) **'Friends of Baysgarth Park' Budget Provision** (*Min Ref:226(ii)/91 – BTC 06/01/16*)

Councillor J P Vickers provided all in attendance with the North Lincolnshire Council 'Strategy for Baysgarth Park 2016/2017', to gain Green Flag status. Discussion took place regarding this matter. It was stated that two town councillors had been nominated to represent the town council on this group at the last meeting of the town council held on 6 January and it was debated whether North Lincolnshire Council or the town council would be the lead group to drive the strategy forward. Councillor K Vickers felt that in the first instance the town council should call a meeting, with interested groups in attendance to discuss this matter (Barton Civic Society, Lions, Rotary, Tourism etc). It was agreed and

Resolved that a working party meeting be arranged to discuss the 'Friends of Baysgarth Park' group. To be held on Monday 15 February 2016, 7pm at The Assembly Rooms. Also, interested groups to be invited (Barton Civic Society, Lions, Rotary and Tourism etc). Councillor J P Vickers to inform representatives of North Lincolnshire Council for guidance and further information.

(b) **Budget for a Dedicated Town Council Website** (*Min Ref: 228(ii)/92 – BTC 06/01/16*)

Councillor N Jacques felt the town council should have a stand-alone website and cited the Brigg Town Council website as a good example. The information on it he stated should have contact details for the town councillors, opening hours of the town council office, meeting minutes etc. and that earmarked reserves of £1,500 should be set aside for this. Councillor J P Vickers commented that the town council website pages, housed under the Barton Tourism website worked well showing most of these details about the town council and also events and information about the town under one website as opposed to two separate ones which save the town council money by doing this. The Clerk commented that for a stand-alone website, the town council would have to engage a third party to run and update it as no manpower resource was available in the town council office. This matter was discussed further and a vote taken whether to have a stand-alone town council website or have a separate one. It was proposed, seconded, agreed and

Resolved to continue with the town council's website pages to be incorporated with the Barton Tourism Group website.

(c) **Audit Provision of the Town Council**

The Clerk gave appraisal of the internal interim audit recently undertaken and the comments made by the Auditor. The audit system of the town council is for the Internal Auditor to undertake an interim 6 monthly audit, followed by an end of year audit. The accounts software company undertakes an end of year close-down audit and PKF Littlejohn LLP undertakes an external audit at the year end. The Clerk stated that audit of the town council was very comprehensive and includes practices and procedures and general administration, as well as budgetary control and accounts.

Resolved thanks were given to the Town Clerk's for their diligence to ensure the town council complied with legislation and the audit arrangements of the town council continue as stated.

(d) **Disposal of Equipment from the Town Council's Inventory List**

The Clerk commented that the office shredding machine had broken down, requiring a new one to be purchased. It was agreed and

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Resolved that the broken shredding machine to be disposed of and removed from the town council's inventory list, with the new one added to the list.

(e) **Update of the Risk Assessment**

The Clerk stated that the town council's risk assessment had been updated and reviewed. A copy was presented at the meeting.

Resolved that following review of the town council risk assessment the new 2016 version be adopted.

(f) **The Town Council's Precept Leaflet 2016/2017**

Following discussion, it was agreed and

Resolved that the town council will not issue paper copies of the required precept leaflet to be sent out with the council tax demands to local residents. This would save money on printing and delivery costs. The information to be available on the North Lincolnshire Council website, the Barton Tourism website (the town council section) and also be printed in the April 2016 'Bartonian' magazine that is delivered to each household in the town. This is the same system adopted by the town council in the current financial year.

(g) **2015/2016 Budget** – Quarterly Summary of Income/Expenditure

The Clerk commented that the quarterly summary for October to December 2015 was within most budget line allocations and that income/expenditure levels were mainly in line with those planned for the current year.

(h) **2016/2017 Budget/Precept**

Members were presented with copies of the town council draft 2016/2017 budget, precept, grant, earmarked reserves and a comparison table of previous year's precept/grant/council tax for perusal and comment. Incorporated into the draft budget are the budget proposals from the Environment Working Party meeting held on 23 November 2015 and the Community Working Party meeting held on 14 December 2015. Both of these were agreed at the town council meetings held 2 December 2015 and 6 January 2016 respectively.

The Town Clerk reported that although limitations were placed on town /parish councils regarding the precept. The suggestions put forward were inside the guidelines, therefore, the grant element of the precept would be granted on this occasion by North Lincolnshire Council. In future years, this may or not be available therefore the town council had to be mindful of this. The earmarked reserves and general reserves are in permitted levels, with savings anticipated in the current financial year. The draft budget was based upon the format adopted by the town council for the last two financial years.

Members discussed and debated the 2016/2017 proposals, to put forward to the next extra-ordinary meeting of the town council to be held on Monday 25 January 2016. The result of the proposals, is that the town council request total funding (precept + grant) of £165,765. This comprises of precept £144,347 and a grant of £21,418. Due to an increase in the council tax base of 3256.2, this will result in a Band D property council charge of £44.33. A tax freeze on the current year's council tax charge. It was agreed and

Resolved

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- (i) an addition of £4,738 be added to the Environment budget 2016/2017 for “Friends of Baysgarth Park”;
- (ii) an earmarked reserve of £3,000 be added to the Community Working Party section for “Fleetgate Christmas lighting” in the 2016/2017 earmarked reserves;
- (iii) the sum of £4,000 be retained in earmarked reserves as provisional funding for ‘Parish Elections’;
- (iv) the sum of £5,000 be retained in ear marked reserves as provisional funding for ‘Repairs/Decoration’ to The Assembly Rooms;
- (v) that the 2016/2017 proposals to be checked, presented and approved at the next meeting of the town council to be held on Monday 25 January 2016, to allow the Clerk to levy the precept and grant funding from North Lincolnshire Council in the sum of £165,765;
- (vi) a review of all budgets be undertaken by the town council during the next financial year.

The Chairman, Councillor K Vickers, closed the meeting at 7.55 p.m.

..... Chairman 3 February 2016