

BARTON-UPON-HUMBER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING
held via a ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING on
MONDAY 20 JULY 2020 at 6pm

Councillor K Vickers (Chairman)

Councillors Mrs J Oxley, A Todd and J P Vickers

Also, Councillor J Sanderson, Mrs C Clark (Deputy Town Clerk) and Ms S Richards (Town Clerk)

49. **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor J Evison (on holiday)

50. **Declarations of Interest**

None declared

51. **Minutes of Meeting held on the 27 April 2020**

It was noted that these minutes had been signed as a correct record, for action as necessary, at an ordinary meeting of the town council held on 6 May 2020.

52. **Matters Arising**

(a) **Maintenance Issues at The Assembly Rooms** (*Min Ref: - 331(a)/147 F&GP 27/04/20*)

The Clerk reported the damp-proof work to The Assembly Rooms was still outstanding. She had reminded CHAMP Ltd about this and Mr N Turner stated the contractor was no longer in business.

Resolved this matter be noted.

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

(a) **A Protocol for Obituary Notification** (*Min Ref: 348/160 – BTC 06/05/20*)

This was discussed, agreed and

Resolved

(i) that following the passing of a serving councillor, past councillor, or any other person of note in the town, an announcement will be made at the outset of the next available meeting of the council, with one minutes silence observed. This will be reflected in the meeting minutes. A condolence card will also be sent to the family members of the deceased person from the town council members and staff. This will be the protocol for future obituary notification.

(ii) a list of past Town Mayor's (information taken from the mayoral boards in The Assembly Hall), be placed onto the town council's website.

(b) **Review of the Town Council Office Opening Times**

It was discussed, agreed and

Resolved that the town council office will in future be open for members of the public 10am – noon, each day Monday to Friday.

Minutes of a Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 20 July 2020, cont'd

(c) Review & Update of the Town Council's Asset Register

Review and update of the town council's asset register took place. It was agreed and

Resolved

- (i) 4 protective reception office screens purchased be added to the asset register in the sum of £456.
- (ii) 3 new town council office chairs to be purchased fit for purpose, to replace existing shabby ones.

(d) Re-issue of Cheque Payments

The Clerk reported that Appendix II, for the accounts listing presented at the 1 July 2020 meeting of the town council has had to be amended. There are now three new additional cheque payments for accounts 57a, 57b, and 57c. This is due to the bankers of a town council contractor destroying two cheques previously issued (*cheque numbers 219 and 222 refers*). Also, cheque number 215 was lost by the recipient. This resulted in the re-issue of the three cheques. All of the original cheques issued (219, 222 and 215) have been cancelled by the town council office in consultation with the town council's bank. The original listing showed account 59 to be a donation made to The Ropewalk in the sum of £495. This was agreed at the 3 June 2020 meeting of the town council (*minute reference 21(1)(i)/8 – BTC 3/6/20 refers*). However, this was revoked at the 1 July meeting of the town council, whereby an invoice received from The Ropewalk was paid in the sum of £816 instead. The total summation of the accounts list has now been amended to be in the sum of £10,371.39.

Resolved this be noted.

(e) Review of the Town Council's Standing Orders

Following a review of the town council's standing orders in July 2019 (*min ref: 82(b)/34 – F&GP 29/7/19 refers*), amendments were then made to the model standing orders by NALC. This was also highlighted in the Internal Auditor's report for the financial year 2019/2020 to the town council. Members were furnished with a draft copy of the amended town council standing orders, incorporating the amendments made onto the NALC standing orders template. It was agreed and

Resolved that the amended town council standing orders be accepted.

(f) The Town Council's Risk Assessment – 'Re-opening the Council Office to the Public'

Following a risk assessment undertaken by the Town Clerk early in June for Covid-19 purposes regarding the town council office, an agenda item was placed at the Planning Committee meeting held on 15 June, requiring clarification on the viewing of planning applications by members of the public in the town council reception office. This matter was also discussed at the 1 July meeting of the town council whereby a member felt the risk assessment was required to be published onto the town council's website. The Clerk investigated this matter and could find no trace of other town and parish councils publishing this. Consultation was then made with the Local Council's Association for clarification and the correct procedure for the town council to follow. The council are informed that the risk assessment is an officer function, but responsibility of it lies with the council. Such a risk assessment is only to be published when a business employs 50 or more employees. On 30 June, NALC issued local councils with a risk assessment template for "Re-opening the Council Office to the Public". The original details taken from the risk assessment undertaken by the Town Clerk in early June, together with resolutions from the 1 July meeting of the town council were incorporated onto the NALC template. Although the town council office has remained open and staffed throughout the pandemic, ERNLLCA states the town council has acted correctly in bringing an additional

Minutes of a Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 20 July 2020, cont'd

assessment. A draft copy of the town council's risk assessment for "Re-opening the Council Office to the Public" was perused by members of the committee, who agreed to the content details. It was agreed and

Resolved

- (i) that "Re-opening the Council Office to the Public" risk assessment be accepted and not publicised onto the town council website;
- (ii) that the town council office to fully re-open on Monday 3 August 2020.

(g) The Town Council's Internal Audit for 2020/2021

The town council's Internal Auditor normally undertakes the half financial year, 6 monthly audit during October each year. However, due to the proposed changes in personnel, he has stated he would undertake the audit during September or October this year, should the town council have a preference. It was agreed and

Resolved the town council's half yearly internal audit to take place during September 2020. A mutually convenient date(s) to be agreed with the Internal Auditor and the town council office.

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

The Clerk reported she had submitted the AGAR and supporting documents, to the external auditors on 9 June. Acknowledgement of receipt was received from them on 14 July 2020. The town council are reported to now be in a queuing system with them for the audit to take place.

Resolved that this be noted.

(i) 2020/2021 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 2020, being the first quarter of the financial year 2020/2021. The Clerk reported that expenditure was within the budget line allocations generally, with most spending levels in order. Expenditure had been made from some of the reserves, to support the Barton Foodbank and The Ropewalk 'Meals on Wheels' service, as an emergency measure, in support of the Covid-19 pandemic, with budget set aside for this.

The quarterly VAT return for the period April to June 2020 has been submitted to HMRC for payment and is awaiting payment from them.

54. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from this meeting because publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the following business, concerning personnel and contractual matters, and arising out of the business to be transacted.

Minutes of a Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 20 July 2020, cont'd

55. **Roles/Responsibilities (Letters) – The Bartonian**

The Chairman, Councillor K Vickers, stated that it had come to the attention of the town council that correspondence had been sent out on the town council's letter headed paper, thus by-passing the town council office, whereby a few inaccuracies in the content of the letter had been noted. In future, correspondence bearing the town council's letter-head must be sent out through the town council office. This is the correct procedure for local councils and it also protects the town council as a body, members of the town council and the office of the Town Mayor.

Resolved that this be noted.

The Chairman, Councillor K Vickers closed the meeting at 6.30 pm

.....Chairman

2 September 2020