

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Budget and Administration Committee Meeting held on Monday, 02 December 2019 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors: A Forbes (Chair)
A Bowlas
R Bruce
A Gibson
G Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

G Davies, Town Clerk
Cty Cllr G Hill
Cty Cllr C Seymour
3 members of the public

BA087/19 1. OPEN SESSION

Mr Brian Darling asked if it would be possible to also procure a CCTV camera for Spittal, if council could find out the possible costs and whether Spittal could be tagged into this? With regards to financial procedures Mr Darling questioned whether there were ever any circumstances of one or two councillors signing for transactions without supervision.

BA088/19 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs I Dixon and G Roughead.

BA089/19 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

On the motion of Cllr A Gibson seconded by Cllr R Bruce, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12 November 2019 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

- BA090/19** **4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**
There were no disclosures of interests.
- BA091/19** **5. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**
There were no requests for dispensation.
- BA092/19** **6. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL**
Members asked a number of questions concerning individual payments then it was **RESOLVED** without division to note the schedule of payments.
- BA093/19** **7. INDICATIVE TAX BASE 2020-21**
It was **RESOLVED** without dispute to note the report.
- BA094/19** **8. WORKPLACE PENSIONS RE-ENROLMENT**
The Town Clerk having explained the process, it was **RESOLVED** without dispute to note the report.
- BA095/19** **9. CHEQUE SIGNING**
On the motion of Cllr A Forbes, seconded by Cllr A Gibson it was **RESOLVED** that cheque signing should always take place within the Town Council offices to ensure that all the supporting paperwork for transactions was easily available.
- BA096/19** **10. INTERNAL CONTROL**
After the Town Clerk had introduced their report members discussed the ways by which internal controls could be delivered and it was suggested to the Town Clerk that the opportunity for members to conduct Internal Controls should be between five and six pm before committee meetings.
- BA097/19** **11. PROCUREMENT AND FINANCIAL REPORTING**
After the Town Clerk had introduced the topic a full discussion took place, in which some councillors expressed their opinion that councillors need to be told what is going on and need to be told what is happening. The Town Clerk discussed the issue of the resource implications of any change and indicated that they would conduct a review by comparing the existing financial regulations with other peer councils in Northumberland.

BA098/19

12. CROWNING OF THE SALMON QUEEN

During the course of this discussion standing orders were suspended sufficiently to allow County Councillor G Hill to speak. A councillor introduced the proposals that more efforts should be made to make the crowning process gender neutral; this proposal was not welcomed by all councillors. It was agreed without dispute to allow the matter to be deferred to enable further information to be obtained.

BA099/19

13. COMMUNICATIONS

After the Town Clerk had introduced the proposals councillors rejected the costs of a newsletter and expressed their support for the use of social media, video, notice boards and a talking newsletter. Standing Orders were suspended sufficiently to allow a member of the public to speak before the matter was deferred to allow prices to be sought for an 8 page newsletter and guidance was provided to the Town Clerk about the desirability of three infographics being distributed before the end of the financial period.

BA100/19

14. CCTV

After a full discussion committee **RESOLVED** to direct officers to request a quotation for a 2 mp camera to be provided to council.

BA101/19

15. FORWARD PLAN

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Forward Plan.

BA102/19

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday, 14 January 2020 at 6.30 pm.

Committee RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was appropriate to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following business on the basis that public discussion might prejudice the Council's position and staffing issues might be discussed.

At this point the Public withdrew.

BA103/19

17. STAFFING REVIEW

It was **RESOLVED** without dispute to refer the report, without recommendation, to council.