

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING held on 13TH FEBRUARY 2017 at 7.00pm in the GUILDHALL, BUTCHERS ROW BARNSTAPLE.

Present: Cllr S Upcott (Chairman).

Councillors: Mrs V Monk, Mrs V Elkins, F Vernon, A Windsor, Mrs S Haywood, , Mrs J Hunt (Mayor ex-officio), J Phillips, Ms N Haywood, I Williams, and G Langford.

Also in attendance: W Austin (Town Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

FG47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs I Roome, J Carter, Mrs J Wilsher (indisposed) and M Kennaugh.

The Clerk reported that Cllr I Roome had advised that he would join the meeting late due to his attendance at a Town Centre Management meeting as the Town Council's representative.

FG48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS RECEIVED

Cllrs Mrs S Haywood and Mrs J Hunt, as members of North Devon District Council, have a dispensation under Standing Order 64 to discuss and vote on all items on the agenda except where the item is a matter of financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities. Cllr A Windsor, as a relative of the supplier PJ Plumbing & Heating has a dispensation under Standing Order 64 to discuss and vote on any financial reporting, excluding approval of payments or contracts, which may include transactions with that supplier.

FG49 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH JANUARY 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(8, 2abs)

FG50 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The financial statements and budget monitoring reports were circulated prior to the meeting.

a) Budget Variance Report

RESOLVED: That the Budget Variance Report be received and approved.

(NC)

b) Bank Transactions

RESOLVED: That the Bank Transactions report be received and approved.

(NC)

c) Direct Reserve Account and Petty Cash Account for Barum House

RESOLVED: That the Direct Reserve Account and petty cash account for Barum House be received and approved.

(NC)

d) Aged Debtors and Aged Creditors Analyses, and Nominal Balances

RESOLVED: That the Aged Debtors Analysis, Aged Creditors Analysis and Nominal Balances reports be received and approved.

(NC)

e) Direct Debit and Credit Card Reports

RESOLVED: That the Direct Debit and Credit Card Reports be received and approved.

(NC)

FG51 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE WORKING PARTY

The Town Clerk gave a verbal summary of the Corporate Governance Working Party meetings held on 16th January 2017 and 13th February 2017, the notes of which are shown at Appendices 1 and 2 to these minutes.

RESOLVED: That the reports of the Corporate Governance Working Party meetings held on 16th January 2017 and 13th February 2017 be received, and the recommendations therein be approved.

(NC)

FG52 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

The Clerk presented a review of current fees and charges. After discussion it was

RESOLVED: That no changes be made to fees and charges for 2017-2018.

(NC)

FG53 TOWN TWINNING

Councillors considered an invitation from the town of Stadt Uelzen for the Mayor and Consort to attend an event there, possibly in September or October 2017, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the twinning of Barnstaple and Stadt Uelzen.

RESOLVED: That subject to the Mayoral election in May 2017 and subsequent Mayoral agreement, the invitation be accepted.

(NC)

FG54 QUEEN'S SAPPHIRE JUBILEE

Councillors considered a request to provide a civic procession to open the Queen's Sapphire Jubilee Picnic in the Park, organised by the Barnstaple Lions Club at a date to be confirmed.

RESOLVED: That the Council provide a civic procession to open the Queen's Sapphire Jubilee Picnic in the Park.

(NC)

FG55 DEVONSHIRE AND DORSET REGIMENTAL CHARITIES

Councillors considered a request for a financial contribution towards the establishment of a memorial to the Devonshire and Dorset Regiments at the National Memorial Arboretum.

RESOLVED: That a contribution of £500 be made towards the establishment of a memorial to the Devonshire and Dorset Regiments at the National Memorial Arboretum.

(NC)

FG56 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the following matters to be taken in the absence of press and public, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, as the item contains exempt information as defined by Standing Order 81(c, d and f).

(NC)

FG57 BARNSTAPLE FAIR

Cllrs Mrs J Hunt, Mrs S Haywood and Ms N Haywood declared personal interests in this item as relatives of an honorary member of the Showmen's Guild.

Members considered a long-term arrangement for the provision of a funfair at Barnstaple Fair, expressing their happiness with the current arrangements with the Showmen's Guild, and the mutual interest of both parties in establishing a long-term contract.

RESOLVED: That subject to any legal constraints, a long-term agreement with the Showmen's Guild to provide the funfair element of Barnstaple Fair be agreed in principle.

(NC)

Meeting closed at 8.39pm.

Chairman.

Signed

Dated

**Notes of Corporate Governance Working Party held on 16 January 2017 at
6.30pm in the Guildhall, Butchers Row, Barnstaple.**

Present: Cllr A Windsor (Chairman) and Cllr Mrs S Haywood.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs I Roome and M Kennaugh.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs S Haywood, as a member of North Devon District Council, has dispensation under S.O. 66 to discuss and vote on all items on the agenda except where the item is a matter of financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14TH MARCH 2016

RESOLVED: That subject to amending a sentence the notes of the meeting held on 14th March 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
(1, 1 abs)

REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROL – COUNCIL POLICY REVIEWS

The Clerk summarised the following current policy documents that had been circulated for consideration prior to the meeting:

- Financial Regulations, as shown at Appendix 1 to these notes
- Standing Orders, as shown at Appendix 2 to these notes

The Clerk also circulated a draft Recording of Delegated Decisions Policy, as shown at Appendix 3 to these notes.

The Clerk advised that the Financial Regulations had been drafted from the NALC model regulations, adapted for the Council's use. He further advised that the Standing Orders tabled contained no changes from those currently in use. The Recording of Delegated Decisions Policy had been tabled to ensure that the Council accords with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED: That the Financial Regulations as drafted be recommended to Finance and General Purposes Committee.
(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That the Standing Orders as tabled be recommended to Full Council.
(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That the Recording of Delegated Decisions Policy be recommended to Finance and General Purposes Committee as drafted, subject to

the removal of “c. To allocate burial plots;” from the section titled “Examples of Decisions not to be Recorded”.

(NC)

Meeting closed at 6.45pm.

Chairman.

Signed.....

Dated.....

Notes of Corporate Governance Working Party held on 13 February 2017 at 6.00pm in the Guildhall, Butchers Row, Barnstaple.

Present: Cllrs A Windsor (Chairman), Mrs V Elkins, Mrs S Haywood, and J Phillips.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs I Roome and M Kennaugh.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs S Haywood, as a member of North Devon District Council, has dispensation under S.O. 66 to discuss and vote on all items on the agenda except where the item is a matter of financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

NOTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16TH JANUARY 2017

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting held on 16th January 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(NC)

REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The Clerk presented a report on the approach to future reviews of internal control policies as shown at Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDED: That the approach to future policy reviews be approved as detailed in the report.

(NC)

Members then reviewed the following policy documents:

- Business Continuity Plan 2015-2020
- Disclosure Security Policy
- General & Financial Risk Assessment
- Health & Safety Policy
- Management of Internal Control Systems Policy
- Protection of Children Policy
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Risk Management Policy

After discussion it was

RECOMMENDED: That no changes be made to the Business Continuity Plan 2015-2020.

(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That no changes be made to the Disclosure Security Policy.

(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That the General and Financial Risk Assessment be amended to remove a reference to the Heritage Centre.
(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That paragraph 1(h) of the Health and Safety Policy be amended to allow the serving of alcohol at civic events.
(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That no changes be made to the Management of Internal Control Systems Policy.
(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That no changes be made to the Protection of Children Policy.
(NC)

The Town Clerk agreed that he would consult with the Council's employment law advisers regarding suspension in the case of alleged abuse.

RECOMMENDED: That no changes be made to the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy.
(NC)

The Town Clerk agreed that he would consult with the Council's employment law advisers regarding suspension in the case of alleged abuse.

RECOMMENDED: That no changes be made to the Risk Management Policy.
(NC)

REVIEW OF INSURANCE

The Clerk presented a review of insurance setting out the cover in place and the changes made during the previous 12 months. The review explained that the Council's current three-year arrangement expired in 2018.

RECOMMENDED: That the Clerk checks that legal expenses cover is in place.
(NC)

RECOMMENDED: That the review of insurance be approved.
(NC)

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Clerk presented a corporate risk assessment comprising:

- A detailed assessment of all known risks
- A summary report of risks
- An action plan for risks which required action or mitigation

RECOMMENDED: That the corporate risk assessment be approved as satisfactory.
(NC)

ANNUAL REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL MANAGEMENT

The Clerk presented a draft report from the Chairman on internal control management activity undertaken during the municipal year, as shown at Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDED: That the Annual Report on Internal Control Management be agreed as tabled.

(NC)

Meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Chairman.

Signed.....

Dated.....

Corporate Governance Working Party

13 February 2017

Review of Internal Control

Following the Working Party's review of all policies, the Town Clerk agreed to rationalise and categorise them in a way that facilitate future reviews. The policy documents have been considered, and although most still need to be kept as separate documents, all have been brought together in four different categories as shown in the table below. A suggested review frequency for each policy is also shown.

Policy Category	Policies Contained	Review Frequency	Last Reviewed	Next Review by
Risk Management	Business Continuity Plan	Annual	Jan 2016	March 2017
	Disclosure Security Policy	Annual	Nov 2015	March 2017
	General & Financial Risk Assessment	Annual	Jan 2016	March 2017
	Health & Safety Policy	Annual	Jan 2016	March 2017
	Management of Internal Control Systems Policy	Annual	Jan 2016	March 2017
	Protection of Children Policy	Annual	Nov 2015	March 2017
	Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy	Annual	Nov 2015	March 2017
	Risk Management Policy	Annual	Jan 2016	March 2017
	Councillor/Employee Conduct	Acceptable Behaviour Protocol	Every three years	Jan 2016
Equal Opportunities Policy		Every three years	Nov 2015	March 2019
Lone Working Policy		Every three years	Mar 2016	March 2019
Media & Communications Policy		Every three years	Oct 2015	March 2019
Members' Code Of Conduct		Every three years	Jan 2016	March 2019

Policy Category	Policies Contained	Review Frequency	Last Reviewed	Next Review by
	Whistleblowing Policy	Every three years	Nov 2015	March 2019
Administration & Finance	Anti-Fraud Policy	Every two years	Feb 2016	March 2018
	Community Engagement Strategy	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Complaints Procedure	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Data Protection Policy	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Freedom of Information Publication Scheme	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Investment Policy	Every two years	Mar 2016	March 2018
	Protocol for the Recording or Reporting of Council and Committee Meetings	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Protocol for Town Council Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Recording of Delegated Decisions Policy	Every two years	Jan 2017	March 2018
Information Technology	IT and Internet Usage Policy	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018
	Social Media Policy	Every two years	Jan 2016	March 2018

The following documents are not included:

- Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (these have already been reviewed this year, and should be reviewed separately annually anyway)
- Staff Handbook and Training Strategy (overseen by Staff Committee)

CGWP is asked to approve this approach to future reviews.

Will Austin
Town Clerk

Corporate Governance Working Party

Review of Internal Control – Report of the Working Party Chairman

In the course of the year 2016/17, Corporate Governance Working Party has reviewed its arrangements for reviewing internal control policies, to provide a schedule for frequency of review based on need rather than any arbitrary time period.

As a result of this work, the Working Party has reviewed the following documents in 2016/17:

- Business Continuity Plan 2015-2020
- Disclosure Security Policy
- General & Financial Risk Assessment
- Health & Safety Policy
- Management of Internal Control Systems Policy
- Protection of Children Policy
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Risk Management Policy

Separately, the Working Party has reviewed the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and insurance requirements.

I should note here that there was a delay in the consideration of the Financial Regulations as a result of time taken for the external auditor to provide detailed guidance. The auditor accepted in writing that this delay was caused by them.

The Working Party has also considered a detailed analysis of risks carried out by the Town Clerk.

My thanks go to Working Party members for their considerable effort in looking at the detail of each policy document. I am particularly grateful for their work on the Financial Regulations, which have been adapted to follow NALC's model financial regulations as recommended by the external auditor.

**Cllr A Windsor, Chairman of Corporate Governance Working Party
February 2017**