

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL  
Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.00pm  
By Video Conference Call.

Present: Councillors:

Cllr J Phillips (Chair), V Monk, V Elkins, J Hunt, J Carter, A Rennles, L York, A Shah, J Coates, V Nel & G Marchewka.

In attendance:

Mr Robert Ward (Town Clerk),

S Petters (Assistant Town Clerk)

R Richardson (Events & Communications Officer)

Members of the Public:0

**68. Apologies for absence**

Apologies and reasons for absence were received and approved from Councillors I Roome (election duties) J Wilsher (health), and J Orange (IT Issues) (NC).

**69. Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Cllrs J Hunt, J Phillips and L York as members of North Devon District Council, have a dispensation under SO66 to discuss and vote on any item on the agenda unless the item refers to a financial or legal agreement or dispute between the two authorities.

**70. Minutes of the last meeting**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (NC)

**71. Budget Monitoring Report and Finance Reports**

The Town Clerk provided an explanation of the year-end budget monitoring report, in particular the surplus in the budget for 2020-21, the main reason for the surplus is because of activities that were unable to take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Most of the surplus is being allocated to earmarked reserves to enable a modest increase in the precept for 2021-22.

**RESOLVED:** To approve and note the budget monitoring and Finance Reports (NC).

**72. Internal Audit Report dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

The Internal Auditor made the following recommendation:

- The de-minimis for inclusion of items on the Asset Register be reduced to £2,000, to incorporate Assets acquired for grounds maintenance.
- To recommend the Council Check Credit rating of CCLA – a check has been undertaken and the current rating is AAA.

**RESOLVED:** to adopt the following recommendations from the Internal Auditor (NC).

**73. Proposed amendments to Town Council Financial Regulations.**

- a. Amend Job titles to reflect current staffing structure throughout document.
  - i. Deputy Town Clerk to Assistant Town Clerk.
  - ii. Amenities & Properties Manager to Estates Manager.
  - iii. Civic & Ceremonial Manager to Events & Communications Officer.
- b. (Financial Regulations Item 6.16) To add the Estates Manager and Administration Manager to the list of officers with permission to hold a Town Council credit card.

**RESOLVED:** To approve the amendments as presented (NC).

**74. To add a public Wi-Fi system to the Castle Centre that will be accessible within the main hall and meeting room, at a cost of £1,500 to come from NC 9025 IT Support and Upgrades.**

**RESOLVED:** To approve the addition of Wi-Fi to the Castle Centre. (NC)

**75. To consider a proposal to contribute up to £7,500 to the project jointly funded with North Devon Council and Torridge District Council to develop proposals for developing plans for walking and cycling across Barnstaple, Bideford and Northam. To be funded from NC9039 Contingency (NC).**

**76. To consider a request from Age Concern Barnstaple & District for £7,500 to support their operations for the year 2021-22.**

**RESOLVED:** To write to Age Concern suggesting that the Town Council would consider a request for funds at the September Finance & General Purposes meeting following discussions about Town Councillor representation on the trustees, support from NDVS and support on working on a business plan (7 For: 3 Abs).

**77. Absence of press and public**

**RESOLVED:** That the following matter shall be taken in the absence of the press and public, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as the item contains exempt information as defined by Standing Order 82a. (NC)

**78. To consider a proposal to provide computer hardware and IT support for councillors.**

Councillors considered the needs of councillors for ICT support; it was felt that individual needs should be considered as not all councillors would need a Town Council provided device. It was also mentioned that policy would need to be developed to cover the provision of devices and the accessing of council data on privately owned devices, for councillors and staff.

**RESOLVED:** to note the proposal and a report to be brought to a future meeting for consideration. (NC)

**79. To consider proposals for the provision of vehicles for the Estates Team**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the following:

- a. To approve the outright purchase of the current Mitsubishi L200 pickup at the end of the current lease period, for a sum up to the value of £11,000 (NC).
- b. To approve the hire of a small electric van for a period of up to 9 months, for a sum up to the value of £6,000 (NC).

Meeting closed at 8.43pm.

Chairman.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

