

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee
Monday 12th July 2021 at 7.00pm
The Guildhall, Butchers Row, Barnstaple

Present: Councillors:

V Monk, J Hunt (Chair), J Carter, A Rennles, J Wilsher, L York, J Coates,
J Orange & G Marchewka.

In attendance:

Mr Robert Ward (Town Clerk),

Cllr A Windsor

Members of the Public:0

12. Election of Chairperson

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair Cllr J Hunt was nominated and seconded to be the chairperson for this meeting (NC).

13. Apologies for absence

Apologies and reasons for absence were received and approved from Councillors V Elkins (family), I Roome (health), J Phillips (health), A Shah (family) & V Nel (health) (NC).

14. Dispensations and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Cllrs J Hunt, L York and J Orange 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.

15. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2021, are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (NC)

16. Budget Monitoring Report and Finance Reports

RESOLVED: To approve and note the Budget Monitoring and Finance Reports (NC).

17. Update on the works to the St John's Hall and current bookings.

The Town Clerk informed the committee that the roof is now watertight, fire doors have been repaired, kitchen floor replaced, all electrical repairs have been completed including upgrading the emergency lighting and the fire alarm panel and other general repairs. New signage on the outside of the building has also been installed.

More minor repairs and decoration are still needed but the building is now safe to use.

From May user groups started to use the building again and we are beginning to take casual bookings.

RESOLVED: to note the report from the Town Clerk (NC).

18. Report on the future of the annual community grants programme.

Councillors considered the report and approved the following recommendations:

To approve a three tiered approach to grant applications which better matches the considered financial investment of the council and increases evidence of accountability and transparency overall.

- Small Grants up to £1000 available 3 times per year to be considered May, October and February (Only one award per organisation per year, which must be spent within 12 months).
- Annual Grants between £1000 - £5000 (This grant must also be spent within 12 months).
- Annual Strategic Grant between £5000 - £8000 which can be subject to multiple year agreements.
- To approve the dissolution of Standing Grants.

RESOLVED: To approve the above recommendations (NC)

19. 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).

20. Tenancy of The Guildhall café

The Town Clerk reported that the tenant from the Guildhall Café is not in the position to continue trading and will be vacating the building at the end of July.

Councillors discussed potential options for the future use of the café and how it may be useful to not immediately take on a new tenant, short-term / pop up type activities could be considered.

RESOLVED: to note the report from the Town Clerk (NC).

21. Request to sell / donate past years Barnstaple Shillings.

A request has been received from a local person to buy / have donated the surplus, previous years Shillings, of which there are currently about 1,000 from years going back to 1993.

RESOLVED: to not sell / donate the surplus Barnstaple Shillings at this point because there may be a future opportunity for the Town Council to make use of them (NC).

Meeting closed at 7.57pm.

Chairman.

Signed:

Dated: