



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Governance Committee held at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 11 January 2022 in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House, Quay Road, Blyth. NE24 2AS

Present:

Councillors: J R Potts (Chair), W Taylor (Vice Chair), D Carr, B Erskine, C Jones, K Nisbet, J Reid, M Richardson, S Stanger, A Watson

Officers: J Hughes, Town Clerk, M Wilkinson, Deputy Town Clerk, M Hawthorne, Committee Clerk

Other Attendees: 0

Members of the Public 0

Minute No	
1	Apologies for Absence Councillors: A Cartie
2	Disclosure of Interests and Grant of Dispensations None.
3	Minutes of the Governance Committee held on Thursday 30 September 2021 The minutes were accepted as a true record.
4	Actions arising from the Previous Minutes
4.1	Agenda Item 4 – 2547 extending publicity to a wider audience – Officers continue to work on this.
4.2	600 Allotments - changing land back to allotments. The GSO has clarified that the land could revert back to allotments subject to certain issues being resolved e.g. accessibility, public footpath, water system and fencing all of which will incur costs estimated at around £100,000.

<p>5</p>	<p>Budget Monitoring – All Committees</p> <p>1. <u>Budget Monitoring Statement</u></p> <p>The Chair went through each section of the budget monitoring statement. There were some minor queries detailed below:</p> <p>253 – clarified the subscriptions are for NALC and SLCC</p> <p>Members expenses – costs were for online training delivered by NALC. Councillor Reid suggested that some training is put in place, particularly for new Councillors. Agreed Officers will do some work on this</p> <p>Councillors Small Schemes – Councillor Reid proposed that for one year only members are allowed to carry forward their allowance. This motion was carried.</p> <p>Remembrance Day – the Submariners have extended thanks to BTC for the donation. The Town Clerk confirmed he will be meeting with the RBL in the near future to discuss future remembrance day parades and has invited the Chair of Governance to participate.</p> <p><u>Environment Committee</u></p> <p>Partnership – Environmental Enforcement Officer. Noted that this salary comes out of the Environmental Committee budget and not staff salaries.</p> <p><u>Community Development Committee</u></p> <p>Community Grants – a working group has been convened for 3 February 2021 to look at the proposed changes to the policy. All members are invited to the working group.</p> <p>2. Bank Reconciliation</p> <p>Members noted the information in the bank reconciliation document and had no comment to make.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Presentation re Balances</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk delivered a presentation outlining where the Council get reserves from and how they are used. Tables were used to show the projected level of</p>

	<p>spending over the next 4-5 years and what the reserves may look like if expenditure continues at the same rate.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Decision Report 1 – Budget 2022/2023</p> <p>Budget Decision Report</p> <p>Members RESOLVED to agree the Governance Committee budget for 2022/23 and the probable outturn for 2021/22.</p> <p>Members RESOLVED to agree the Environment, and Community Development Committees budgets for 2022/23 and the probable for 2021/2022, subject to £5,000 being added to Community Development budget as detailed below.</p> <p>Members RESOLVED to recommend the budget for all Committees for 2022/23, and Precept, to Council for approval.</p> <p>Some queries were raised and these are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Appendix 1 – budget sheets – Governance</u> <p>Salaries – budget takes into account some staff will receive increments and allowance has been made for a potential annual pay award of 3%.</p> <p>Office costs – there has been no rent increase but allowance has been made for one.</p> <p>Services charges – covers utility bills, cleaning etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 2 – budget sheets – (a) Environment and (b) Community Development Committees <p>(a) <u>Environment</u></p> <p>Allotments – clarified allowance has been made for an increase in water rates.</p> <p>Bus Shelters – Councillor Carr asked if the maintenance budget for bus shelters could be increased as a lot of them are in need of repair. Agreed the GSO will be asked to investigate and prepare a report for the next Environment Services Committee, together with costs. Councillor Carr also asked for a regular review of bus shelters to be reported to Environment Committee.</p> <p>Action: GSO to carry out a review of all Bus Shelters and report back to the next Environment Committee.</p>

	<p>(b) <u>Community Development</u></p> <p>Easter Event, Ridley Park – agreed to add £5,000 into the budget so the water feature will be switched on at Easter. Concern was expressed that BTC have to meet the costs and NCC Councillors agreed to raise this matter at a meeting on 12 February.</p> <p>Fireworks – Agreed to explore whether “quiet” fireworks could be used as part of the next fireworks display. Officers will explore this further and see if it would incur additional costs.</p> <p>Festive Lighting – it is not yet clear how much damage has been caused to the festive lighting. If there is a need to increase the budget it will be brought back to Committee.</p> <p>Publicity – agreed to look at how the work of the new Communication and Administrative Assistant will link with the PR the Council currently pay for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 3 – Internal Audit Interim Report <p>The Governance Committee RESOLVED to recommend the report be accepted by the next Council Meeting.</p>
8	<p>Information Report</p> <p>Members noted the information contained regarding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investments 2. Freedom of Information Requests
9	<p>Delegated Actions</p> <p>There are no delegated actions to report.</p>
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
11	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Governance Committee on Thursday 28 April 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House.</p>

12	Part II Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960; that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw. Communications and Admin post job evaluation
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Members of the Governance Committee

J R Potts (Chair)
W Taylor (Vice Chair)
D Carr
A Cartie G Davey
S Davey
B Erskine
C Jones
K Nisbet
J Reid
M Richardson
S Stanger
A Watson