



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Governance Committee held **via ZOOM** on Tuesday 5 January 2021

Present:

Councillors: J R Potts (Chair), W Taylor (Vice-Chair), A Cartie, K Nisbet, A Parsons, J Reid, M Richardson, S Stanger

Officers:

J Hughes, Town Clerk
M Wilkinson, Deputy Town Clerk
Maureen Hawthorne, Committee Clerk
A McCabe, Office Manager

Other Attendees: - 0

Members of the Public – 0

Minute No	
1	Apologies for Absence There were no apologies.
2	Disclosure Interests and Grant of Dispensations None
3	Minutes of the Governance Committee held on Tuesday 29 September 2020 The minutes were noted as a true record.
4	Actions Arising from Previous Minutes
4.1	Blue Plaque – Blyth Battery – awaiting additional information from Historic England. No further information has been received from Nigel Walsh regarding licencing costs.
4.2	External Auditors Report and Internal Auditors Interim Report

	Both of the above reports were accepted by Full Council (Achieved).
5	<p>Governance Committee:</p> <p>1. Budget Monitoring Statement</p> <p>The Chair referred to the budgetary control statement circulated to members. The following matters were raised:</p> <p>Governance budget</p> <p>200 Office Costs – the Chair queried the services charges given that the office has been empty for some months. However as the building has remained open there will be no reduction in this financial year.</p> <p>300 Fees & Charges -303 Election Expenses – as there are no by-elections no money will be spent this financial year from the budget.</p> <p>Community Development budget</p> <p>1026 Festive Lighting - the Chair referred to the comments from residents that the lights in the market place have not always been on. This is an ongoing issue as the electricity cables are underground and when there is flooding the lights go off. NCC did indicate the issue would be resolved by putting the electricity on poles but to date this has not happened.</p> <p>2. Bank Reconciliation</p> <p>The contents were noted and no comments made.</p>
6	<p>Decision Report - Budget 2021/2022</p> <p>The Town Clerk commented that the report outlines the recommendation to RESOLVE to agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governance Committee budget for 2021/22 and the probably outturn for 2020/21 • The Environment and Community Development budgets for 2021/22 and the probable for 2020/21 • The budget for all Committees for 2021/22 and Precept for Council to approve. • The Interim Internal Auditor’s Report.

It was noted that £65,142 would need to be taken from reserves and the balance would be £617,830 at the end of 2021/22. The proposal is to keep the precept the same as last year - £127.65 for band D.

A discussion took place on the information contained on the individual budget review sheets, with regard to the following headings:

Governance budget

- 200 Office Costs
- 306 IT Software
- 330 Election Expenses
- 312 Publicity

Environment budget

- 696 - Allotments Planned Maintenance Programme
- 9003 - income from allotment rents
- 7107 – water feature at Ridley Park
- 714/2 – deployable cameras
- 7106 -Additional seasonal worker

Community Development budget

Due to Covid 19 there have been very few events in Blyth although some of the budget has been spent on other things. The Town Clerk confirmed the underspend will go into reserves. He reminded members that BTC will organise a celebratory event at some point in the future and a report will be prepared for Committee at the appropriate time.

A lengthy discussion took place around Councillor Reid's suggestion that BTC identify a budget to assist with issues arising from Covid 19. It was agreed that we would carry on as we have during this financial year and consider requests for assistance by Committee as they are received.

The Chair said that if any member wished to pursue this, or other matters regarding the budget, further it would have to be discussed at Full Council on 14 January 2021 where the budget will be set.

Having discussed all of the above Governance Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend the budget to Full Council for approval.

	Members accepted the Interim Report and RESOLVED to recommend it to Full Council for approval.
7	Information Report (not for discussion at Committee) Members noted the information contained in the report: 1. Investments 2. Annual Leave Carry Over 3. Freedom of Information Requests
8	Delegated Actions There were no delegated actions to report.
9	Any Other Business There was no other business to consider.
10	Date & Time of Next Meeting The next meeting of the Governance Committee on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 2.00 pm. If current restrictions continue this will be an electronic meeting.
11	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. There were no Part II items.

Members of the Governance Committee

J R Potts (Chair)	J Reid
W Taylor (Vice-Chair)	M Richardson
A Cartie	L Rickerby
K Nisbet	S Stanger
A Parsons	G Thompson
	G Webb