



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held at Arms Everytne House on Thursday 9 March 2017 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillors: K Ellis (Chair), J R Potts (Vice-Chair), B Elliott, A Gibbs-Barton, K Nisbet, O Potts, J Reid

Also Present: Councillors: M Parker, R Parker

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

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None
2	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS & THE GRANT OF ANY DISPENSATIONS None.
3	MINUTES FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2017 The Committee agreed to ADOPT the minutes.
3.1	MATTERS ARISING No matters arising.
4	ACCOUNTS 2016/2017 Committee noted the information circulated. There were no queries arising.

5	BROADBAND AND TELEPHONE LINE RENTAL Committee discussed the report circulated by the Deputy Town Clerk with regard to assisting Councillors with their broadband and telephone rental payments, from the start of the new Council in May 2017. It was noted that the contribution from the Council would be to a maximum of £25.00 per month, on the production of invoices from Councillors. Committee agreed to use the budget provision of £4,800 (code 403) and a timescale of 6 months will be set in order for Councillors to take up this offer.
6	INSURANCE COVER The Deputy Town Clerk referred to the report which contains information regarding the current insurance arrangements for BTC and highlighted that a saving of £2,120 has been made on the previous year's insurance payment. The Deputy Town Clerk said that the Valuer made a second visit to the office on 8 March 2017 to look at the individual items and specific collections which were recommended for valuation and it is hoped that a report will be available in the next two weeks. He added that the Valuer did comment that it may not be worth insuring some things, such as the porcelain items, as individually their value may range from £25-£50 and the excess on individual items could be £250. The Committee accepted the report and the costings outlined within it to come out of the existing budget of £6,500 (code 213) .
7	PURCHASE OF IT EQUIPMENT FOR COUNCILLORS A detailed discussion took place around the recommendation outlined in the Deputy Town Clerk's report, that Councillors are provided with particular technology to assist them in carrying out their Council business by purchasing iPads with effect from the start of the new Council in May 2017.

	<p>Committee agreed to this with the proviso that anyone wishing to take up this offer must do so within 6 months of the new Council being appointed in May. It was further agreed to check whether the iPad Air 2 is 4g or Wi-Fi and whether there are free software packages available instead of purchasing Microsoft Office.</p> <p>This will be covered by the £1,000 (code 404) within the Members Expenses budget as well as a contingency amount of £10,000 (code 1199).</p>
8	<p>REMEMBRANCE SERVICE BUDGET</p> <p>The Committee considered the recommendation outlined in the Town Clerk's report and agreed to split the budget of £250 between the Elswick (Blyth) All Arms Association and the 203 (Elswick) Battery RA Volunteers. Committee also discussed the possibility of purchasing a PA system which could be used for future events. It was agreed that the Town Clerk will explore this further with the Events Co-ordinator and feedback to a future Committee.</p> <p>Total proposed budget 2017/18 is £1,500 (budget code 503).</p>
9	<p>TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk asked the Committee to consider his proposal to purchase some editor software at a cost of £630 plus a yearly licence fee of £70. This would improve the appearance of the BTC website and give a greater degree of flexibility. During discussion Councillors asked that time is allocated on a weekly basis to allow Officers to maintain the website and also that training is put in place for those who will be using the new software.</p> <p>Committee agreed to the expenditure for software (£630) and the yearly licence fee of £70 (budget code 1121).</p>
10	<p>RISK ASSESSMENTS</p> <p>The Town Clerk explained the detail of the risk assessments and how the play areas and allotments differ from the first 10.</p>

	He added that this is an annual exercise in order to minimise risk and change control measures as we progress. It was noted "red" denotes high risk, however, the Town Clerk said that control measures have reduced these.
11	ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND URGENT BUSINESS None.
12	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be held on Thursday 20 April 2017 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber.

MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Councillors

K Ellis (Chair)
J R Potts (Vice –Chair)
B Elliott
A Gibbs-Barton
G T Knox
K Nisbet
O Potts
J Reid
D Rutter

ACTIONS FROM COMMITTEE

Minute No	Action	Responsible Officer	Comments	Date Action Completed
9/3/17 5	Broadband and telephone line rental for councillors – consult with new Council in May 2017 (6 month restriction on take up)	Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk		
9/3/17 7	Purchase of IT equipment for Councillors – consult with new Council in May 2017 (6 month restriction on take-up)	Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk		
9/3/17 8	Purchase/hire of PA system – explore options with Events Co-ordinator	Town Clerk		
9/3/17 9	Purchase of editor software for BTC website	Deputy Town Clerk		

Final
Subject to Ratification