

# Workington Town Council

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## Minutes of the Finance, Property and Employment Committee Meeting on Monday 20 March 2017, at 6pm in Workington Town Hall

A Lawson Chair	Present
M Bainbridge	Apologies
K Hansen	Absent
H Harrington	Present
M Heaslip	Apologies
A McGuckin	Present
P McHarry	Present
B Miskelly	Present
J Osborn	Present
B Reville	Absent
M Rollo	Apologies
N Schofield	Apologies

In attendance: Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk

### **F16.77 Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs M Bainbridge, M Heaslip, M Rollo and N Schofield.

### **F16.78 Declarations of Interest**

No further declarations were noted.

### **F16.79 Exclusion of Press and Public**

No issues were noted.

### **F16.80 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 17 January 2017 were received and affirmed as a true record.

### **F16.81 Apprenticeship Programme**

The committee agreed to move the Apprenticeship Programme to the beginning of the agenda to allow all members to participate in the discussion. The Assistant Town Clerk reported on the progress made confirming that the Apprentice Programme would deliver a Horticulture Apprenticeship. Newton Rigg College has been approached for its specialism in this area, with Apprenticeship courses beginning in the academic year. It was proposed to start the recruitment process in summer to support this. The clerk highlighted that the programme would be largely dependent on the transfer of Vulcan Park from Allerdale Borough Council, and that any delay could postpone the process.

A number of councillors raised concerns about the Town Council's capacity to offer permanent employment at the end of the Apprenticeship and how it could be reviewed and assessed over the 2 year period. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the committee would receive a comprehensive list of the course modules and a costed proposal for delivery.

**Resolved:** For Officers to produce a costed proposal of the programme.

#### **F16.82          Schedule of Payments**

The committee considered the Schedule of Payments 1 January 2017 - 28 February 2017.

**Resolved:** To note the schedule.

#### **F16.83          Bank Reconciliation Statement**

The committee considered the Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 28 February 2017

**Resolved:** To note the statement.

#### **F16.84          Budget Monitoring Statement**

The committee considered the Budget Monitoring Statement for 2016–2017 to 28 February 2017. A councillor raised a query about the expenditure of the festivals budget. The clerk highlighted that there are a number of commitments in this budget that are being carried over to the next financial year. The clerk also noted that the Council is continuing to improve its presentation of finances to make income and expenditure clearer.

**Resolved:** To note the statement.

#### **F16.85          Virement**

The Committee discussed the requirement to carry out a number of transfers within the budget. Councillors queried the budget line for the payment of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and whether it was appropriate. The clerk highlighted that it is currently paid for using the 'Office General' budget line as all members of staff who work outside the office have some form of PPE. A councillor proposed that the 'Office General' budget disaggregates from the PPE and that this element of spending should have a separate budget line. The committee voted on the proposal.

**Resolved:** To breakdown the spending of PPE equipment from the 'Office General' budget to create a 'PPE' budget line.

**Resolved:** To make the required transfers from the 'Website' budget to lift the 'Office General' budget by £750 and the 'Civic Functions' budget by £1000 in this financial year and the next.

#### **F16.86          Website**

The clerk reported that following the success of the Visit Workington website, the Events Assistant has been working on improvements to the Town Council's website. The committee was provided with a demonstration of the website and the clerk confirmed that the estimated go live date was the end of April. The website will have to facility for the community to view

and contact their local Councillors with concerns and questions; this will require photographs and contact information from councillors.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

#### **F16.87 Living Wage Employer**

The committee reviewed the living wage details. A number of councillors questioned whether the living wage would apply to the employment of Apprentices, the chair confirmed that this was the case and this practise currently operates within Allerdale Borough Council. There was some discussion about the current structure of Town Council employees and how a member of staff, employed on the living wage, would be situated in relation to Supervisors. The clerk confirmed that all employees are paid higher than the current living wage rate and that there would be a significant distinction between an employee on the living wage and the member of staff providing their supervision. There was a brief discussion about wage differences when employing someone under the age of 18. The clerk agreed that this would have to be considered and investigated as a part of the Apprentice Programme. The committee held a vote to whether the Town Council should become a recognised Living Wage Employer.

**Resolved:** That Workington Town Council takes the necessary steps to be recognised as a Living Wage Employer.

Councillor P McHarry left the meeting at 18:53

#### **F16.88 Sickness and Absence Policy**

Councillors considered the Draft Sickness and Absence Policy. There was a discussion about the procedure of notifying absence to supervisors, with consideration of the appropriate time and person to do so. It was highlighted that in emergency circumstances that supplying a definitive time may not be appropriate. It was proposed to include an item in the policy that would allow the Town Clerk or Supervisor to contact the employee if they were concerned of their absence and had not received notification that they would not be at work.

**Resolved:** To adopt the Draft Sickness and Absence policy with the proposed amendment.

#### **F16.89 Other Employment Issues**

The clerk had no further employment issues to report. A councillor requested to raise employment concerns; these included the Town Council's current position on providing pensions and Union support. The clerk confirmed that all employees were members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and that there are currently two Unions operating within the Town Council.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

#### **F16.90 Property Report**

The clerk confirmed that he has been in continued talk with Allerdale Borough Council about the availability of the accommodation at the Town Hall and the transfer of Vulcan Park. He highlighted concerns about the boundaries of the Mountain View and Northside Allotment sites and that these were also being negotiated with the district council.

**Resolved:** To note the report.

The meeting closed at 19.11