



Ashington Town Council
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ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 6:00pm on Tuesday 19 June 2018, at the Council Chambers, Town Hall, Station Road, Ashington.

PRESENT:

Councillors: Pauline Thompson (Deputy Chair) Victor Bridges
Marjorie Chambers Avril Chisholm
Matthew Cuthbert Stephen Fenwick
Brian Gallacher Lynne Grimshaw
Lawrence Henderson Jim Lang
Kris Lavery Tom Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mike Slaughter – Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Members of the Public – 1

C18/773 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Eleanor Armstrong, Nicola Chambers, Liam Lavery, Ken Parry, Mark Purvis and Bob Walkinshaw.

C18/774 2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS.

There were no disclosures of interest from members present.

C18/775 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS.

The minutes of the meetings held on the 6 March 2018 and 8 May 2018, were agreed and signed as a true record.

C18/776 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

C18/760 Town Twinning Partnership – Invitation to Remscheid

The Town Clerk informed members that the arrangements for the visit had been finalised and that, as resolved, the Town Council would be formally represented by the Civic Head and Cllr. Avril Chisholm.

C18/777 5. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT.

The Town Clerk referred members to the full 2017/18 report of the Internal Auditor and Internal Control Assessment previously circulated for consideration and review.

Members welcomed the detail and coverage of the report, carried out in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the Audit Commission and noted the Internal Auditor was satisfied that a robust system of financial and administrative management continued to operate effectively and efficiently and provided a sound audit trail.

The Town Clerk reported that the Internal Auditor had also concluded his verification work in relation to the review of the Asset Register as at 31 March 2018 and have signed off the full Internal Audit report as part of the Accounting and Governance Return.

Members noted that the Internal Auditor had also completed the 2017/18 audit of the annual accounts and associated notes prepared by the Town Clerk in his role as the Responsible Financial Officer. Members formally noted the opinion of the Internal Auditor that further to examination of the evidence and working documents, in his view the summary accounts and notes were free from material misstatement.

Resolved:

That:

- (i) The Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year 2017/18 be formally accepted and approved; and that**
- (ii) The services of Mr Peter Basnett as the Town Council's Internal Auditor be retained for the financial year 2018/19.**

C18/778 6. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2017/18.

The Town Clerk presented in detail the Final Accounts and Governance Statement for the Financial Year ended 31 March 2018. Members commented on the range of 2017/18 projects and schemes that had been successfully delivered and managed within budget including the Mining Wheel Project, the implementation of the Town Centre CCTV provision and the acquisition of the Interactive Speed Signs.

Members thanked the Town Clerk for the presentation and information provided and also for the clarity of the regular financial reporting throughout the year. The Town Clerk outlined to members the proposed and planned use of the General Reserve balance as at 31 March 2018 and stressed the importance of recognising the need for the retention of an adequate working balance for major forthcoming projects in 2018, including the People's Park Pay Area and the Allotments Capital Programme.

Members were informed that the projected General Reserve Provision, after the planned use of the reserves, was expected to be in the region of £196,500 representing 26.7% of the current 2018/19 precept level.

Resolved:

That:

- (i) The Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18 (Section 1 of the Annual Return) be formally approved,**
- (ii) The Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2018 (Section 2 of the Annual Return) be formally approved; and that**
- (iii) The use of the Town Council's General Reserve Balance as at 31 March 2018, be agreed as follows:**

Elections Provision (Main Elections 2021)	£ 2,500
Provision for Christmas Features	£ 10,000
Office IT Replacement Programme	£ 20,000
Play Area Development – People's Park	£ 50,000
Town Hall Service Charge – Provision	£ 10,000
Allotments Capital Programme	£ 30,000
Bus Shelter Replacement Programme	£ 14,500
Hirst Park Renewal Project	£ 13,800
Environmental Enforcement Officer SLA	£ 9,680
Town Wide Survey 2018	£ 33,000
General Reserve Provision	£196,488
<u>Reserves Balance as at 1 April 2018</u>	<u>£389,968</u>

C18/779 7. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 3 July 2018, in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, 65 Station Road, Ashington NE63 8RX.

The Town Clerk advised members that the date of the meeting may need to be revised to accommodate a presentation on the findings of the 2018 Town-Wide Survey that was expected in early July.

The meeting closed at 7-15pm.