

## Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Meeting held on Wednesday 02 November 2016 at 6.00pm at Seaton Valley Council Offices.

### PRESENT:

Committee members: D Mullen (Chair), B Nixon, S Stanners and K Collier

### IN ATTENDANCE:

S Potts – Clerk

D Freeman – Engagement and Development Officer

No members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.03pm

#### **FGP081/16 1. Apologies for absence**

All members were present. The Chair welcomed two new members of the committee to the meeting - Cllr Stanners and Cllr Collier.

#### **FGP082/16 2. Disclosure of interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **FGP083/16 3. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 24 February 2016 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

#### **FGP084/16 4. Bank Reconciliation as 30 September 2016**

The Committee agreed to receive the report and noted that the balances on the Council's bank accounts had been successfully reconciled to its financial records.

#### **FGP085/16 5. Budgetary Control Update**

The Committee noted that income and expenditure levels are more or less in line with budgets and that where variances do exist, explanations for those variances are readily available. The Clerk said that the Budget Review Working Group would receive updated budgetary control reports in due course together with additional information on estimated reserves and likely savings/cost pressures for 2017/18.

The committee took some time to talk about the Council's failure to agree terms with NCC to enter into an office sharing arrangement with NCC's Customer Services unit and thought it appropriate to ask Seaton Valley's County Councillors to approach NCC one last time to see if an amicable agreement could be reached.

#### **The committee agreed to receive the Clerk's report**

#### **FGP086/16 6. Budget Process 2017/18**

The Clerk presented his report which in essence proposed using a process to develop and agree next year's budget based on last years' experience which had proved successful.

The process is based around re-establishing a Budget Review Working Group made up of members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and holding regular meetings between now and the end of January. The schedule of proposed meetings is reproduced below:

## 2017/18 Budget Process – Work Schedule/Timetable

Date	Group	Purpose
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016 – 6.00pm	Budget Working Group	Review Base Budget
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016 – 6.00pm	Budget Working Group	Review Base Budget
Wed 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2016 – 7.00pm	Full Council	Review Latest Information
Wed 14 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2016 – 6.00pm	Finance and GP Committee	Review Latest Information
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2017 – 6.00pm	Budget Working Group	Finalise Proposals
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2016 – 7.00pm	Full Council	Consider Budget Working Group Proposals and Agree 2016/17 Budget

The Working Group's remit will include considering summary information on the build-up of the Council's base budget, the latest projections of the current year's income and expenditure compared to budgets, the Clerk's latest estimate of the Council's projected level of reserves, growth and savings proposals and recommending the build-up of the Council's 2017/18 budget to Full Council.

Members thought it important to involve other members of the Council in the process and felt that all members of the Council should be invited to attend any meetings of the Budget Review Working Group and/or Finance and General Purpose Committee that take place after Full Council on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

Finally; members asked the Clerk to make arrangements to invite representatives from Active Northumberland and the Youth Service to the Budget Review Working Group on 16<sup>th</sup> November to give an update on the services they have provided in the current year, and on their service proposals for 2017/18.

**The committee RESOLVED to receive the Clerk's report and agree the budget process and timetable outlined above.**

### **FGP087/16 7. Standing Committees – Terms of Reference**

The Clerk's report sought agreement of a set of terms of reference for both this committee and the Planning Committee as such terms of reference had never been formally agreed by Council.

The Clerk explained that the Planning Committee had reviewed its terms of reference and was happy with the terms set out at appendix 5B.

Members of the Finance and General Purposes and Staffing Committee then went through Appendix 5A which set out the proposed terms of reference for its own committee. The Committee were happy to support the terms as written with the exception of item 6 which should be amended to read 'The F&GP&S Committee shall schedule meetings to take place each year in February, June, October and December and the dates of the committee meetings will be published in the Council's Annual Schedule of Meetings. The Committee shall call additional meetings on an as and when basis, if and when an item of urgent business or process needs to be considered.'

**The Committee RESOLVED TO agree to recommend the updated terms of reference to Council for formal adoption.**

**FGP088/16 8. Dates of Future Meetings**

- 24 November 2016 6pm Seaton Valley Council Offices – Planning
- 30 November 2016 7pm Seaton Valley Council Offices – Council
- 14 December 2016 6pm Seaton Valley Council Offices – F&GP (inc. Staffing)
- 22 December 2016 Planning Committee - Please note: This meeting has been cancelled.

The meeting closed at 6.55pm.

Signed by the Chair: .....

Dated: .....