



STANLEY TOWN COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MEETING

I hereby give notice that an Ordinary meeting of the Stanley Town Council will be held on Tuesday, the 27th October 2015 at 6.30pm at Stanley Civic Hall, Front Street, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 0NA.

TO ALL MEMBERS of STANLEY TOWN COUNCIL

J. Nicholson (Chair)	A. Clegg	G. Graham	C. McKee	C. Thompson
W. Nixon (Vice-Chair)	T. Davinson	R. Harrison	D. McMahon	D. Tully
C. Bell	L. Elliott	D. Marshall	D. Mills	D. Walker
J. Charlton	R. Ferris	L. Marshall	B. Nair	M. Wilkinson

You are hereby summoned to attend an **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **Stanley Town Council** to be held in **Stanley Civic Hall, Front Street, Stanley**, on **Tuesday the 27th October 2015 at 18.30** in order to transact the following business:

Yours sincerely,

Alan Shaw
Town Clerk
20th October 2015

Please turn off all mobile phones or set to silent mode
Please refer to the Policy for recording proceedings

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To **RECEIVE** any apologies and reasons for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to **DECLARE** disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests, along with the nature of those interests, in relation to any item on this agenda.

3 PROCEDURAL AND APPROPRIATE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

To **RECEIVE** announcements from the Chair or Town Clerk.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

An adjournment will be allowed at the direction of the Chairman to allow for public comment and response in relation to items on this agenda or to consider written questions from the public submitted in advance of the meeting (*Individuals will be permitted a maximum of three minutes each. Total time for this session is limited to fifteen minutes*).

Mark Patterson will address the meeting at this juncture to provide Members with an update on how the funding provided by Council for the Salvation Army Caritas appeal and the Derwentside Xmas Toy appeal was spent last year and to speak about this year’s appeal.

5 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES (ATTACHMENT A)

To **APPROVE** as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22nd September 2015.

6 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

To receive the Minutes of the following Committee Meetings:

1st September 2015	Personnel	(ATTACHMENT B)
1st September 2015	Planning	(ATTACHMENT C)
2nd September 2015	Crime & Community Safety	(ATTACHMENT D)
8th September 2015	Comms & Events	(ATTACHMENT E)
9th September 2015	Personnel	(ATTACHMENT F)
29th September 2015	Planning	(ATTACHMENT G)
29th September 2015	Comms & Events	(ATTACHMENT H)
6th October 2015	Finance & Gen. Purposes	(ATTACHMENT I)
7th October 2015	Crime & Community Safety	(ATTACHMENT J)
13th October 2015	Comms & Events	(ATTACHMENT K)
14th October 2015	Finance & Gen. Purposes	(ATTACHMENT L)

7 RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS*

The following **RECOMMENDATIONS** of Committee meetings held since the last Ordinary Council meeting require **APPROVAL** by full Council:

(i) PERSONNEL

Members of the Committee **RECOMMEND** that Council should allocate training budgets for both staff and members of Council in 2016/17 and suggests the budgets should be set at the following levels:

- £4000 - Staff (Council)
- £4000 - Staff (Civic Hall)
- £2000 - Members

(ii) CRIME & COMMUNITY SAFETY

Members of the Committee **RECOMMEND** that Council should fund the following projects in 2016/17:

- OTIS
- Youth Council

- Blooming Good Fun
- Police Car Funding
- PACT House

Members **RECOMMEND** that the following projects are not funded in 2016/17

- Pink Poo
- The Word
- Lockable Bin Lids
- High Visibility Clothing
- Wild Flowers

In addition to the specific projects identified above, the Committee **RECOMMENDS** that a further £10,000 budget provision should be set aside to allow the Committee to respond to any new initiatives that may arise over the course of the year.

In relation to the Community Consultation Questionnaire, Committee **RECOMMENDS** that this initiative should be funded through full Council

(iii) **COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS**

Members of the Committee **RECOMMEND** that Council should fund the following events in 2016/17:

- Tea in the Park
- Stanley Fringe
- Entertainment in Old People's homes
- Community Fun Days around Stanley area
- Outdoor Cinema event to be explored (possibly in conjunction with Community fun days.)
- Moria-Con 2
- Christmas Events
- Armed Forces Day (June)
- Community Newsletter
- Brass Festival
- 'Play in the Park' days
- Remembrance Events (significant Anniversaries, e.g. Jutland, the Somme)

Members **RECOMMEND** that funding for the following events is not repeated in 2016/17

- Karaoke
- Pubs & Clubs
- Fireworks
- Large outdoor music event

Members **DEFERRED** consideration of the following proposals:

- Community Radio
- Business Links

*Recommendations from Committees relating to the Community Consultation are in that specific item.

8 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (ATTACHMENT M)

A report from the Town Clerk on current activities and matters of interest to the Council is attached. Members are requested to **NOTE** the report and may ask the Town Clerk for further updates at the meeting.

9 CODE OF CONDUCT (ATTACHMENTS N-Q)

Statutory Basis: Localism Act, ss. 27 & 28

Cllr D Walker has tabled the following motion for discussion by Members:

“In the best interests of the public perception of how Stanley Town Council operates, I propose that the Council extends their policy relating to the declaration of personal interests to include the following: That any Council member who has a close family member (or very close family friend) in a position of control, authority or influence in an organisation that is applying to the Council for funding (or being contracted by the Council to provide a function or service) should declare such an interest whenever it appears on a Council agenda. Once the interest is declared that Council member should not participate in any discussions or decisions relating to the application.”

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** this matter and **DECIDE** what to do.

Background

The Localism Act 2011 requires Parish Councils to adopt a Code of Conduct. It imposes the requirement for Members to declare pecuniary interests and defines the criteria for those interests (**ATTACHMENT N**). It goes on to specify that the Code adopted by a Council must be consistent with the 7 principles of public life, (known as the 'Nolan' principles). (**ATTACHMENT O**). Councils can either implement their own Code of Conduct, or may opt to adopt the Code of Conduct of the Principal Authority (in our case, Durham County Council).

The Town Council has chosen to implement its own Code of Conduct. The current policy is based on a template produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) after the Localism Act came into force and was adopted by Council in September 2012. (**ATTACHMENT P**). The guidance issued by NALC states that:

“the code of conduct adopted by a parish council may include obligations on members to disclose at meetings interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests. It is not a criminal offence for a member to fail to register or disclose interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests even if such obligations are imposed by his/her council's code of conduct. A council may make standing orders which apply when members hold interests which are not disclosable pecuniary interests.” (**ATTACHMENT Q, paragraph 28**)

Implications

The Town Council has the power to require members to disclose non-pecuniary interests by adding additional obligations into the Code of Conduct by resolution. Requiring this additional information to be disclosed does not affect the information that must be declared on a Member's register of interests and it is not a criminal offence to fail to declare a non-pecuniary interest, whether or not the Code of Conduct requires the interest to be declared. The failure to declare a non-pecuniary interest required by a Local Code would be a matter for the Monitoring Officer.

If the above motion were to be adopted by Council, it would require a minor amendment to the Council's Standing Orders and the Council would have to consider what the process would be for members to apply for a Dispensation. There will be circumstances where it will be in the public interest for a member who would otherwise fall under an obligation to declare an interest and withdraw from the meeting under this proposal to take part in discussion and debate.

10 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT FUNDING

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s.145 (i) &

(i) Oxhill Youth Club

(ATTACHMENT R)

The attached request has been received by the Town Clerk. The request does not follow the process; i.e. no accounts have been provided and the application form has not been completed. However, it has come to light that this letter was actually sent to the Town Council in June and was not put forward to Council for consideration. Therefore it is included on this agenda for consideration. Members should note that Oxhill Youth Club already receives a preferential hire rate for its events at the Civic Hall, however the 50th Anniversary does provide a good illustration of the continuity in provision for the arts that saving the Civic Hall provided so could be a good opportunity to promote a positive message.

(ii) Twizell Burn

(ATTACHMENTS S-W)

A request for funding has been received from the Greening Twizell Partnership. Details are attached. There is currently an unallocated budget for environmental initiatives which stands at around £89,000.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** these matters and **DECIDE** what to do.

11 COUNCIL LAPTOPS - SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS

The Town Clerk has received enquiries relating to the laptops that were previously issued to members. Council has previously **RESOLVED** that these laptops can be disposed of either by donation to a charitable concern or sold to offset costs for the replacement equipment.

The Town Clerk has carried out some research into the resale price of the Council laptops, which are Samsung R540 laptops. The selling prices for this model of laptop online range from £120 - £180, depending on source, spec and condition. £150 is a representative price.

In order to sell one of these laptops on the second-hand market, the Council would need to have them wiped/ reset to factory defaults and would need to market them/ pay for postage and packaging. The costs of this are estimated at between £60-£80. Therefore, a fair price for resale of these laptops should be in the range of £80 - £100 to the original end user, or £150- £180 on the resale market.

Council is **REQUESTED** to consider this matter and **DECIDE** what to do.

12 CIVIC HALL PARKING

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25th August 2015, it was **RESOLVED** that:

“Council will provide a single drop off bay at the Louisa Centre end of the parking bays and the rest will be labelled marked and signed as disabled bays (for Civic Hall use only.) Authority is delegated to the Town Clerk to incur expenditure to move this matter forward.”

This item requires further consideration by Council for the following reasons:

- (i) **Council to provide a Single Drop Off Bay** - This is in breach of the terms of the Council’s lease of the Civic Hall. The Town Clerk has made enquiries with Durham County Council about waiving the conditions of the lease in line with the resolution made by Council and the County Council have not shown a willingness to waive this condition. The lease is only a year old and we have supplied no evidence that drop off bays are no longer required. Two bays are currently marked out in accordance with the lease.
- (ii) **Disabled Bays** - When the contractors arrived to re-mark the remainder of the bays, they advised the Clerk that it was impossible to fit disabled parking bays in the current end-on configuration that would comply with the standards for disabled bays. A standard disabled bay is 4.8m long, whereas the bays as marked at present are slightly less than 4m long. To paint compliant bays in the current configuration would make the access road effectively impassable. There are a number of options available to progress this matter:
 - (a) Mark the existing bays as disabled. These bays do not meet the current standard and the Council could be liable for any issues or complaints which would arise from that;
 - (b) As above but put extra lateral space into the bays;
 - (c) Revert the bays to side-on instead of end on bays and mark them in accordance with the British Standard. This will incur additional costs and reduce the total number of bays to a maximum of 4;

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) The conditions of the lease should be complied with. If members wish, the Clerk can negotiate with the County Council further to attempt to reduce the requirement to one drop off bay, however it is the case that many residents do use the Civic Hall access road to pick up and drop off from the Louisa Centre. In the Clerk’s observations, since the bays have been marked ‘Drop Off’ they have been left vacant more than was previously the case.
- (ii) I would recommend trying option (a). The bays as marked are quite wide if not as wide as the British Standard specifies, however the standard is not mandatory. Council needs to accept liability for any issues that might arise from marking a bay as disabled that does not meet the standard. It is difficult to envisage what those issues might be, however.

13 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE (ATTACHMENT X)

A draft has been prepared for a Community Consultation questionnaire. The draft is attached. A webpage has been prepared and the survey has been set up on SurveyMonkey.

The original consultation that was prepared in 2007 was used to set objectives for service delivery. There were issues with the original survey. Issues and options were identified from a table top study of existing evidence gathered from a number of sources. From these sources, a survey was prepared. The sources used were primarily Crime studies, Environmental surveys and highways and transport data. It is the opinion of the Town Clerk

that the sources used in the tabletop study skewed the issues and options that were put forward to residents. The survey was therefore leading residents to identify priorities based on crime and environment issues and as a result was biased.

The proposed approach to obtain truly representative data from residents is to ask a smaller number of very open questions to find out what people are actually concerned about and what they want to see provided in their communities. To try and get the best data possible, a number of matters we cannot get involved with are identified upfront.

This information should be gathered from a number of sources. The usual channels of social media, website and physical advertising should be used. In addition to this, there are a number of other options available to try and capture information from the widest possible cross-section of our residents, like:

- (a) Focus groups at Village Halls, Community Centres, to be facilitated by officers and ward members.
- (b) Mailshots
- (c) Placement at community venues
- (d) Door knocking
- (e) Other media channels (DCC magazine, bus stop advertising, roadside banners)
- (f) STC stand on Stanley Market
- (g) Engagement through secondary schools in Stanley with students who will reach the age of majority in the lifetime of the plan that will be produced.

All of these methods have cost implications. Once the data from the first stage is gathered, issues and options should be identified and a second consultation should be prepared which should be the one used to build a medium term plan. Similar methods will need to be employed at both stages.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** the attached draft questionnaire and above information and **DECIDE**:

- (i) If the they agree with the general approach laid out above;
- (ii) If the questions proposed in the first stage of consultation are the right ones to be asked;
- (iii) To consider the options and cost implications of the various methods of consultation and make **DECIDE** how to take this matter forward.

***RECOMMENDATIONS**

(i) Communications & Events Committee: The proposed approach should be taken forward and all the engagement methods proposed used and funded.

(ii) Finance Committee: The proposed approach is acceptable. A budget sufficient to conduct a valid and statistically significant survey should be allocated. Members and officers should not get involved with any door-knocking exercise to ensure impartiality.

14 SLCC MEMBERSHIP

The Society of Local Council Clerks is a professional body for Town Clerks. There are a number of benefits to the Town Council in Corporate Membership. The Council receives discounts on Training (including CiLCA), publications and seminars by having membership. There is also access to a free source of legal advice on matters relating to

Local Council Administration. Membership costs £120 per year. The Town Clerk is requesting that the Council funds his membership of the Society. The membership remains in the ownership of the Council in the event of the Town Clerk leaving the Council and can be transferred.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** this matter and **DECIDE** what to do.

15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC §

§ Any members recording the proceedings must stop at this point.

To **RESOLVE** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

16 APPOINTMENT OF EVENTS MANAGER (ATTACHMENT Y)

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s.112

Interview were held for the Events Manager post on 20th October 2015. A brief report is attached detailing the recruitment process.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** the report and **DECIDE** what to do.

17 PACT HOUSE (ATTACHMENT Y)

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, ss.124 & 133

An update report is attached for consideration by Council.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** the report and **DECIDE** what to do.

18 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 24th November 2015, 18.30 at the Civic Hall

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press are welcome to attend the meeting. Members of the public will only be permitted to speak at the beginning of the meeting during Public Question Time.