



Stanley Town Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

I hereby give notice that a Finance and Governance Committee meeting of Stanley Town Council will be held on Wednesday, the 15th November 2017 at 6.00pm at Annfield Plain Community Centre, 23 Front Street, Annfield Plain DH9 7SY.

TO ALL MEMBERS of the STANLEY TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

| | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| J Stephenson (Chair) | M Davinson | L Christie | D Marshall | D Carmichael |
| J Pallas | J Kane | H Clark | J Nicholson | D Tully |
| B Nair* | A Clegg* | | | |

*ex-officio

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Finance and Governance Committee of Stanley Town Council** to be held at **Annfield Plain Community Centre** on **Wednesday 15th November 2017 at 18.00** in order to transact the following business:

Yours sincerely,

Alan Shaw
Town Clerk
9th November 2017

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** any 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*).

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (ATTACHMENT A)

To **APPROVE** as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee Meeting held on the 11th October 2017.

6 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT AND BANK RECONCILIATION

Statutory Basis: Accounts & Audit (England) Regulations 2011

September 2017

| | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Schedule of Payments | (ATTACHMENT B) |
| Schedule of Receipts | (ATTACHMENT C) |
| Bank Reconciliation | (ATTACHMENT D) |
| Bank Balances | (ATTACHMENT E) |
| Trial Balance | (ATTACHMENT F) |

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** the attached information and:

- (i) **APPROVE** the payment of accounts for October 2017; and
- (ii) **NOTE** the Bank Reconciliations for October 2017.

7 CODE OF CONDUCT (ATTACHMENT G)

The Town Council's Code of Conduct was adopted in November 2015. It is based on a Code of Conduct used by Epping Forest District Council with some local additions relating to the declaration of non-pecuniary or 'personal' interests.

The County Durham Association of Local Councils Executive has produced a new standard Code of Conduct for Town & Parish Councils (updated to include provision for bringing Councils into 'disrepute') and has **RECOMMENDED** that all Town & Parish Councils in the County adopt the new Code. A copy of the new Code is attached.

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

8 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (ATTACHMENTS H/I)

A copy of the budget with year to date expenditure and year end projections is attached. A report has been prepared to highlight significant variances with explanations for Committee's information.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** the report and **DECIDE** if any action is required at this stage.

9 MEDIUM TERM PLAN TIMELINE**(ATTACHMENT J)**

The Town Clerk has updated the Medium Term plan adopted by Council with a suggested delivery timeline. The Clerk will present his report to Committee.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** the proposed timeline and make **RECOMMENDATIONS** for consideration by the Full Council in respect of:

- (i) Projects to be delivered in 2018/19 and subsequent years;
- (ii) Estimated budgets required for delivery;
- (iii) To decide if any working groups are required at this stage to prepare for delivery of initiatives for 2018/19.

10 BUDGET SETTING - SECOND DRAFT BUDGET**(ATTACHMENT K)****Final Tax Base****(ATTACHMENT H)****Second Draft Budget***

Following on from Item 9 above, a revised budget estimate has been prepared which takes into account those matters suggested for delivery in 2018/19. The Finance & Governance Committee has the lead responsibility for taking into account the wishes of the Full Council and Projects & Initiatives Committee and producing a balanced budget for the forthcoming financial year.

It is a statutory requirement that the Council approves a budget and issues a precept demand to the principal authority in January 2018. A timeline is provided in the table below. Committee should seek to use this initial phase to quickly strike out budgets they do not wish to make provision for next year and add in the budget headings for new initiatives for next year, with indicative costings, to be looked at in more detail through the process.

| Timeline | Action Required |
|-------------------------------|--|
| November (Committees) | Second Draft presented to Committee for further work |
| November - Public | Public Consultation after second draft |
| December (Committees) | Third Draft Budget presented to Committees, RECOMMENDATIONS made to Full Council for January |
| January (Full Council) | Budget Approved and precept demand signed by Town Mayor |

*The Draft budget is the same attachment presented for the budget monitoring

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** the attached documents and **DECIDE** what to do.

11 BACS PAYMENTS & E-BANKING

Currently the Town Council has not authorised staff to settle accounts using direct bank transfer (BACS) payments. The vast majority of accounts which are currently paid by cheque could be paid more efficiently from an administrative point of view and quicker from the point of view of the recipient of the payment by using BACS. The Town Council also incurs bank charges for settling accounts by cheque under its current mixed payments bank account. If the Town Council opened an additional current account for electronic payments only, all electronic transactions do not incur bank charges which would reduce banking fees significantly over the course of the year.

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

RECOMMENDATION: Committee should **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that:

- (i) Settlement of accounts by BACS be authorised;
- (ii) A second current account for electronic payments be authorised to reduce the Council's bank charges; and
- (iii) BACS Payments are reported to the Committee on a monthly basis (as at present) but a Schedule of BACS payments is presented to authorised signatories on a weekly basis with the cheques for signature for checking and signature.

12 DYING TO WORK

(ATTACHMENT L)

The Labour Group is proposing that Stanley Town Council becomes a signatory of the TUC Initiative "Dying to Work". The initiative is designed to give members of staff who are unfortunately diagnosed with terminal illnesses better support and the ability to make decisions about accessing their pensions early or leaving a legacy to dependents without having to go through a difficult and stressful sickness procedure. A document explaining what the policy means is attached for consideration by members.

The policy itself is cost neutral to the Council because it is about how cases of terminal illness are handled by the Councils HR processes not about making additional pension contributions.

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

13 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Finance and Governance Committee, 6.00pm, 13th December 2017

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.