

Morpeth Town Council
Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
Wednesday 6th November 2019 at 6:30pm
in the Chambers at the Town Hall, Morpeth

Present: **Councillors:** D Bawn - Chairman
 N Best
 L Cassie
 D Herne
 K Holmes
 R Hogg
 A Tebbutt (arriving at 6:47pm)
 R Wearmouth

Clerks: Mrs T Bell
 Miss K Carter
 Miss C Rowell
 Miss L Roberts

Absent Councillors: Cllr A Byard - Personal
 Cllr R Thompson - Business

2 members of the public and 1 member of the press were also in attendance.

151/19 Committee Chairman’s Announcements

- Members were advised of the usual rules about the recording of meetings.
- Members were reminded that mobile phones should be turned on to silent and should not be used during the meeting.

152/19 Mayoral Announcements

- The 1920’s themed Mayor’s Ball will take place on Saturday 14th December 2019. Tickets are now sold out.
- The annual Remembrance Parade and Two Minutes Silence will take place on Sunday 10th November and Monday 11th November 2019 respectively.
- The Mistletoe Fair and Christmas Lights Switch On event takes place on Saturday 16th November 2019. The Clerk asked for volunteers to steward the event and to help collect for the Mayor’s charity.

1 member of the press arrived at 6:34pm.

153/19 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman received no declarations of interest on this occasion.

Public Participation Time

Joe Nugent addressed members regarding his concerns about the demolition of Storey Park community centre.

Mr Nugent has been a resident of Kirkhill for sixteen years and has concerns regarding the proposal to demolish the building as he believes that any public consultations were not well advertised and documents were not readily available. He requested that a representative of Morpeth Town Council attend a public meeting to discuss the proposal.

Cllr Bawn informed him that the discussion of the future of Storey Park has been ongoing for more than ten years now and that every avenue to save the centre had been explored. However, due to lack of upkeep from Northumberland County Council (NCC) the building has fallen into disrepair. An independent Quantity Surveyor carried out a survey and found that repairs to the building to bring it up to a modern standard would cost over £800,000, and to rebuild the centre would cost £1,200,000. Morpeth Town Council and NCC have been working on a strategy to increase the community space in Morpeth, NCC have agreed to a Community Asset Transfer of Storey Park, St James and the Pavilion, also with a grant of £350,000. This money will contribute to the refurbishment of St James and the Pavilion.

Cllr Bawn also informed members that five Morpeth Forum drop-in sessions had taken place where the proposals have been presented over the past two years to the public, these have been extremely successful, with up to 2,000 residents attending each event.

Cllr Wearmouth advised members that the last Morpeth Forum drop-in session had been advertised through leaflets to residents' homes, online, in the newspaper and Inside Morpeth magazine.

Cllr Holmes enquired whether once the building was demolished could the land be leased? Cllr Bawn informed her that the land could be leased, but only for community use.

Cllr Tebbutt informed members that although the building had been surveyed many times before, the floor had never been surveyed. There has been reports of sulfuric acid in the foundations of buildings in Kirkhill that mean that structures are unsound. Cllr Tebbutt suspects this would be the case with Storey Park community centre.

Cllr Wearmouth suggested that the plans and a suggestion box be placed in the Buttermarket for residents to comment. The Clerk also advised that the documents are advertised on the Town Council website, however, a link will be placed on the front page.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

- (ii) To advertise the plans in the Buttermarket.
- (iii) To put a link on the front page of the website.

Cllr Tebbutt arrived at 6:47pm

2 members of the public, 1 member of the press and Cllr Holmes left the meeting at 7pm. Cllr Holmes and 1 member of the press returned to the meeting at 7:07pm.

155/19 **Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9th October 2019**

The minutes of the above meetings were approved as a true record.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be approved, and signed as a correct record by the chair.

156/19 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising on this occasion.

157/19 **Authorisation of Payments**

The payment list for November 2019 were circulated for consideration.

RESOLVED

- (i) That members agreed the payment lists for November 2019, totalling £49,196.60.

158/19 **Updates from Working Groups**

Members were provided with a report on progress to date.

a. Parish Boundary Working Group

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

b. In Bloom Working Group

The Clerk informed members that Morpeth had again won Gold in the Town category.

The Clerk advised that Morpeth would not be taking part in the National In Bloom competition next year, but would instead focus on the Regional competition, due to several large projects commencing next year.

Friday 29th November 2019 will be the Community Allotment Fruit and Nut Tree Planting event at Middle Greens Allotments site. The Clerk asked for Councillor volunteers to help plant the 400 trees that Morpeth Town Council were successful in receiving from the Woodland Trust.

Cllr Tebbutt informed members that he will be attending a Three Rivers Trust meeting next week and would ask for children to participate in the planting of the trees.

The Clerk will invite the schools who took part in the Climate Change Day.

The Clerk also informed members that flowers from the bypass roundabout had been relocated to the flowerbed at Lancaster Park. NCC will be replanting the roundabout with wild flowers.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.
- (ii) Cllr Tebbutt to invite the Three River Trust.

c. Morpeth Partnership Group (formally the Town Team)

The Clerk asked for volunteers to steward at the Christmas Light Switch On and collect donations for the Mayor's charity on Saturday 16th November 2019.

The Clerk advised that the Christmas tree would be installed in front of the clock tower on Saturday 9th November 2019.

The Clerk also informed members that she had been in contact with Joel Plumley, manager of Sanderson Arcade. Sponsorship for the Switch On event has fallen short by £4,500. The Clerk advised that Sanderson Arcade had requested that the Council cover half of this costs. This will be brought to the next Finance & General Purposes committee on the 4th December 2019.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.
- (ii) Members to email the Clerk if they wish to volunteer at the Christmas Light Switch On.

d. Morpeth Forum

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

e. Community Building Working Group

Cllr Hogg enquired how the community space at Goosehill First School could be booked. Cllr Wearmouth informed her that the school would handle the bookings directly.

RESOLVED

(i) Information duly noted.

159/19 Wansbeck Valley Food Bank

Members were provided for information with a letter received from Wansbeck Valley Food Bank.

Cllr Tebbutt advised members that they have been experiencing increased demand for this services.

The Clerk informed members that the Council's Grants and Subsidy Policy clearly states that no increase can be made to a subsidy once it has been agreed.

Cllr Best advised that the subsidy had been increased as it was anticipated that demand would rise. He suggested that Morpeth Town Council should encourage residents to donate non-perishable food at the collection point in the Town Hall Buttermarket. This should be done especially over the Christmas period as the months following can be difficult.

RESOLVED

(i) Information duly noted.

160/19 Budget 2020/21

Members were provided for information with the second quarter Budget Statement 2019/20.

The Clerk advised members that spend was on track and that any discrepancies were due to bills that had not yet been collected by service providers.

Members were also provided for consideration with the first draft budget for 2020/21.

The Clerk informed members that there is a new Pavilion budget heading. All budget heads have been scrutinised, funds have been realigned with the Pavilion heading. The Clerk advised that the running costs of the Pavilion are unknown at present and that there would most likely be a shortfall in the first year.

Members were asked to consider the following future growth items:

- Conservation Area boundary review.

Cllr Best advised that this review would cost £11,560 and is essential to ensure that the Conservation Area is kept up to date.

Cllr Herne queried why alcoholic drinks were no longer provided in the Corn Exchange on Remembrance Sunday. The Clerk advised that this would be inappropriate as this area is full of children who have marched in the parade and it would be more difficult to ensure that anyone underage would not drink alcohol. Hot and cold drinks along with food is provided to those who attend. Formal invites are extended to appropriate organisations to attend a small reception, hosted by the Mayor, which is now held in the Ballroom instead of the Parlour. This has increased the number of those who can attend, however, it is invitation only due to room capacity.

Cllr Herne also advised members that it will be the 75th anniversary of VE Day. He enquired if any activities have been planned. The Clerk advised that the Deputy Clerk had attended a meeting with Sanderson Arcade to begin discussions on what events may take place next year.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

161/19

Local Council Issues

Cllr Best advised members that NCC's Climate Change Action Plan would be presented on Monday 11th November 2019.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted.

There was no other business to discuss and the meeting concluded at 7:35pm with Councillors D Bawn, N Best, L Cassie, D Herne, R Hogg, K Holmes, A Tebbutt and R Wearmouth present.

Morpeth Town Council
Authorisation of Payments - November 2019

Date Processed	Supplier	Cheque No.	Description	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount
08/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Seat Maintenance	25.08	5.02	30.10
08/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Bin Maintenance	10.38	2.08	12.46
08/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Skate Park Maintenance	15.90	3.18	19.08
08/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	SJCC Repairs	14.29	2.86	17.15
08/10/2019	Initial	BACS	Bus Station Toilets	46.80	9.36	56.16
08/10/2019	Northumberland County Council	BACS	Morpeth in Bloom Basket Installation	2,996.00	599.20	3,595.20
08/10/2019	Institute of Swimming	BACS	Paddling Pool Training	270.00	0.00	270.00
11/10/2019	Joanne Wilson	BACS	Travel & Subsistence Expenses	46.19	0.00	46.19
11/10/2019	Tracey Bell	BACS	Travel & Subsistence Expenses	277.39	0.00	277.39
11/10/2019	Andersons Bakery	BACS	Civic Event - Meet the Mayor	24.80	0.00	24.80
11/10/2019	Northumberland Cleaning co	BACS	Toilets and Community Centre Caretaker	1,598.00	0.00	1,598.00
11/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	General Maintenance	29.41	5.88	35.29
11/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Skate Park Maintenance	9.98	2.00	11.98
11/10/2019	The Festive Lighting Co	BACS	Christmas Lights	2,870.00	622.00	3,492.00
11/10/2019	Northumberland County Council	BACS	Premise Licence	180.00	0.00	180.00
11/10/2019	Gordon Carr Newsagents	BACS	Newspapers	43.20	0.00	43.20
14/10/2019	Falon Nameplates LTD	BACS	Dedicated Seat Plaque	88.90	17.78	106.68
14/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Seat Maintenance	13.10	2.62	15.72
14/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Seat Maintenance	7.87	1.57	9.44
14/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Sign Maintenance	15.23	3.05	18.28
14/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Allotments	7.85	1.57	9.42
14/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Allotments	76.36	15.27	91.63
14/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Skate Park Maintenance	9.98	2.00	11.98
14/10/2019	SEE SWALEC	BACS	SJCC Electricity 02/09/19-01/10/19	39.04	1.95	40.99
14/10/2019	SEE SWALEC	BACS	SJCC Electricity 02/08/19-01/09/19	32.12	1.60	33.72
14/10/2019	NCC	BACS	Town Hall Rent	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00
17/10/2019	SLCC	BACS	SLCC National Conference 2019	495.00	61.00	556.00
17/10/2019	SLCC	BACS	SLCC National Conference 2019	375.00	61.00	436.00
17/10/2019	NCC	BACS	October 19 Payroll	14,671.79	4.10	14,675.89
17/10/2019	Thomas Owen	BACS	Bus Station Cleaning Materials	181.49	36.30	217.79
18/10/2019	ABS	BACS	Office Supplies	19.62	3.92	23.54
18/10/2019	Annondata	BACS	Photocopying 26/06/19-23/09/19	80.63	16.13	96.76
18/10/2019	Marshall's Tree Surgeons	BACS	Christmas Lights Installation	300.00	60.00	360.00
23/10/2019	SLCC	BACS	Staff Training	83.50	0.00	83.50
23/10/2019	Soil Environment Services	BACS	Carlisle Park equipment	445.00	89.00	534.00
23/10/2019	F H Hardy	BACS	Collingwood	20.83	4.17	25.00
23/10/2019	Morrisons Glazing Services	BACS	Signs	16.36	3.27	19.63
23/10/2019	Sanderson Arcade	BACS	Bus Station Contractor	4,817.25	963.45	5,780.70
23/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Street Bins	11.25	2.25	13.50
23/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Street Furniture	15.19	3.04	18.23
23/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Flower Baskets	6.28	1.26	7.54
23/10/2019	Jewson	BACS	Hanging Baskets	23.94	4.79	28.73
29/10/2019	D.O.H construction	BACS	Building Investigation	292.55	58.51	351.06
29/10/2019	Crawford Higgings Associates	BACS	Building Survey	1,545.00	309.00	1,854.00
29/10/2019	Jewsons	BACS	Bollards	63.71	12.74	76.45
29/10/2019	Jewsons	BACS	Allotment Maintenance	2.46	0.49	2.95
29/10/2019	Jewsons	BACS	General Maintenance	11.45	2.29	13.74
29/10/2019	Jewsons	BACS	Carlisle Park Maintenance	12.45	2.49	14.94
29/10/2019	Jewsons	BACS	Allotment Maintenance	8.66	1.73	10.39
29/10/2019	Falon Nameplates Limited	BACS	Dedicated Seat Plaque	88.90	17.78	106.68
30/10/2019	T Bell	BACS	Travel and Subsistence	103.56	0.00	103.56
30/10/2019	Pool Tech Services	BACS	Paddling Pool Equipment Upgrade	4,288.89	857.78	5,146.67
				42,728.63	3,875.48	46,604.11

Direct Debits Paid September 2019

01/10/2019	Gaffey Technical	DD	Hyprolyser Rental fee	300.90	60.18	361.08
01/10/2019	Team Valley Web Design	"	Website Hosting Oct 2019	41.67	8.33	50.00
10/10/2019	EE	"	MTC Office Mobile	48.74	9.75	58.49
15/10/2019	Bankline	"	Online Banking Charges	32.90	0.00	32.90
17/10/2019	Gazprom	"	SPCC Gas 01-30/09/19	179.63	8.98	188.61
17/10/2019	Gazprom	"	SIJCC Gas 01-30/09/19	105.09	5.25	110.34
18/10/2019	Worldpay	"	Subscription Fees Oct 19	7.50	1.50	9.00
21/09/2019	Anglian Water	"	California Gardens Allotments 15/6-14/9/19	164.15	0.00	164.15
22/10/2019	Corona Energy	"	SPCC Electric 1-30/09/19	14.78	0.74	15.52
22/10/2019	Worldpay	"	Transaction Charges Sept 19	19.28	0.86	20.14
23/10/2019	BT	"	MTC Telephone Charges	303.95	60.79	364.74
Sub Total Direct Debit Payments				£1,218.59	£156.38	£1,374.97

Petty Cash October 2019

08/10/2019	Yorkshire Trading	4784	Office Supplies	1.66	0.33	1.99
09/10/2019	Iceland	"	Corporate Refreshments	4.16	0.84	5.00
11/10/2019	Iceland	"	Mayors Parlour Visit	7.50	1.50	9.00
14/10/2019	Iceland	"	Corporate Refreshments	9.08	1.82	10.90
17/10/2019	Timpson	"	New Keys - Various Locations	47.92	9.58	57.50
21/10/2019	Morrisons	"	Collingwood Event	2.50	0.50	3.00
22/10/2019	David Tomlin	"	Mayors Ball	12.00	0.00	12.00
Sub Total Petty Cash Payments				£84.82	£14.57	£99.39

Credit Card September 2019

04/09/2019	Dutch Bulbs	DD	In Bloom Planting	92.64	0.00	92.64
10/09/2019	Dobbies	"	In Bloom Prize	52.00	0.00	52.00
10/09/2019	Dobbies	"	In Bloom Prize	12.00	0.00	12.00
10/09/2019	Marvellous Disco	"	Deposit for Mayors Ball	50.00	0.00	50.00
10/09/2019	Amazon	"	Office Furniture	76.20	15.24	91.44
13/09/2019	Ryman Business	"	Stationery	38.85	7.77	46.62
17/09/2019	Trophy Store	"	In Bloom Award	10.24	2.05	12.29
19/09/2019	Trainline	"	Travel to London	578.25	0.00	578.25
23/09/2019	Syntego Ltd	"	Stationery	6.57	1.32	7.89
25/09/2019	Lady Haig Poppy Factory	"	Wreaths	175.00	0.00	175.00
Sub Total Credit Card Payments				£1,091.75	£26.38	£1,118.13

Total Payments F&GP Committee 6th November 2019

£45,123.79	£4,072.81	£49,196.60
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