

**Morpeth Town Council**  
**Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee**  
**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 at 6:30pm**  
**via Zoom**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** D Bawn - Chairman  
N Best  
A Byard  
L Cassie  
R Hogg  
A Tebbutt  
R Wearmouth

**Clerks:**

Mrs T Bell  
Miss K Carter

**Absent Councillors:**

Cllr K Holmes - Personal  
Cllr D Herne - No apologies received  
Cllr R Thompson - No apologies received

**Open Session**

There were no members of the public present who wished to ask a question on this occasion.

**105/20 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.

**106/20 Mayoral Announcements**

- All mayoral activities have been suspended due to the new government restrictions.
- Beginning on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 an online fundraiser will take place, called The Twelve Days of Christmas, to raise funds for the Mayor's charity. The Mayor will make a Facebook post each day; members of the public can enter by liking and sharing the post and donating £1 or more to Contact Morpeth Mental Health Group's JustGiving page. Each prize will be themed to the song the Twelve Days

of Christmas. On the final day of the fundraiser all the people who have entered will be entered into a big draw to win a big prize.

**107/20 Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman received no declarations of interest on this occasion.

**108/20 Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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.

**109/20 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising on this occasion.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) Information duly noted.

**110/20 Authorisation of Payments**

The payment list for December 2020 was circulated for consideration.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That members agreed the payment lists for December 2020, totalling £168,274.84.

**111/20 Update from Working Group**

Members were provided for information with a report.

The Clerk advised that all the Morpeth Forum projects are still progressing.

She also advised that the Subsidy Working Group met on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Each application has been scrutinised and the Clerk has chased several groups for further information or clarification. Once this information has been received the Working Group will meet again to further discuss the applications. The recommendations will then go to the Finance and General Purposes meeting for approval.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) Information duly noted.

### **112/20 Update on the Community Asset Transfer Project**

Members were provided for information with a report.

The Clerk advised that there will be an open afternoon Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 at 2pm for any members to have a look at the refurbishments of St James community centre. The centre is now open for groups legally allowed to meet under social distancing guidelines.

The first booking at the newly refurbished St James community centre took place this afternoon, feedback will be sought.

The Deputy Clerk has met with a large group to discuss arrangements in the new centre ahead of their first booking at the weekend.

Cllr Cassie congratulated the Clerk and the Town Council staff for their hard work in completing this project and for the ongoing work at the Pavilion.

The Clerk informed members that the tennis court nets have now been removed and the bushes at the front of the site have been cut down. This provides a lovely view of the Pavilion from Elliott Bridge. A detailed budget meeting will take place next week as some additional ground works need to be done to the outside of the building.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) Information duly noted.

### **113/20 Budget 2021/22**

Members were provided for consideration with the second draft budget for 2021/22.

The Clerk advised that the budget is still not finalised. Subsidies are still grouped within one budget heading, until the working group forward their recommendations to committee for approval.

A nominal figure has been included in the budget for the Pavilion staffing costs next year, however true costs wouldn't be known until the café is operational.

The final budget will be ready for the Finance and General Purposes meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Cllr Best enquired what the Economic Development funding is identified for.

The Clerk advised that the Morpeth Market is currently the only applicant for this funding. A detailed financial proposal on the current and future spend is being sought.

Funding for the Christmas Lights and the Food and Drink Festival will remain ringfenced for the events next year.

Cllr A Tebbutt enquired whether Northumberland County Council (NCC) would be looking to transfer any additional services to Morpeth Town Council in the coming year.

Cllr R Wearmouth advised that currently there was no plan to transfer any services.

Cllr D Bawn advised that the toilets at the Terrace car park will be closed to the public in the new year as part of the new leisure centre redevelopment, this will produce a budget saving.

The Clerk also advised that she has been in contact with Dransfield regarding the proposed renovation of the bus station toilets. The toilet area may be reduced to make room for a larger concession area if an interested party can be found. If this is the case Sanderson Arcade will take back the management of the toilets. Works were due to begin at the start of the year but were unable to go ahead due to the outbreak of Coronavirus.

Cllr R Wearmouth enquired how much money is in the reserves.

The Clerk advised that the majority of the reserves are earmarked, the £300,000 invested in CCLA is classed as the council's reserves. The Clerk will produce a simplified breakdown of the budget for the Finance and General Purposes meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) Information duly noted.
- (ii) The Clerk to produce a simplified breakdown of the budget for the Finance and General Purposes meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### **114/20 Interim Internal Audit 2020/21**

Members were provided for information with a letter from the internal auditor following completion of the interim internal audit for 2020/21.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) Information duly noted.

**115/20**

### **Allotment Charges 2020/21**

The Clerk advised members that allotment holders are required to receive a year's notice of the proposed allotment charges; therefore, members were asked to approve the allotment charges for 2022/23 of an additional 2% increase per year.

The Clerk advised members that the allotments will be plotted accurately using mapping software, allowing Morpeth Town Council to potentially charge per square metre in 2022/23.

Cllr Best suggested that allotment holders be given more than one year's notice of the charges being calculated per square metre.

The Clerk informed members that allotment holders would be advised of the new area charges in the letter she will send out advising of the charges for 2022/23.

The Clerk also informed members that the water bill for the allotments had been extremely high in the last quarter. All of the allotment holders have been advised that if the water is misused each plot holder will be charged pro rata.

Cllr Cassie enquired if there had been any update on the proposed roundabout next to Tommy's Field allotments.

The Clerk advised that there had been no update as yet.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) Information duly noted.
- (ii) That the bills be increased by 2% per annum.
- (iii) To give allotment holders advanced notice of the potential charge per square metre.

**116/20**

### **Local Council Issues**

Cllr Bawn advised that there is a planning only meeting on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Cllr Cassie advised that Planning Officers will most likely recommend approval of the application of the Headmasters lawn at Kind Edward's High School, Cottingwood Lane

## **RESOLVED**

(i) Information duly noted.

There was no other business to discuss and the meeting concluded at 7:01pm with Councillors D Bawn, N Best, A Byard, L Cassie, R Hogg, A Tebbutt and R Wearmouth present.

**Morpeth Town Council**  
**Authorisation of Payments - 2nd December 2020**

Date Processed	Supplier	Cheque No.	Description	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount
04/11/2020	Falon Nameplates	BACS	Dedicated Seat Plaques	181.70	36.34	218.04
04/11/2020	Terry Garnick	BACS	Travel	14.40	0.00	14.40
04/11/2020	NCS	BACS	Telephones	37.31	7.46	44.77
04/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	Maintenance - Bowls Shed	113.74	22.75	136.49
04/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	Maintenance - Bowls Shed	27.18	5.44	32.62
04/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	Maintenance - Terrace Toilets	10.06	2.01	12.07
04/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	General Use	12.78	2.56	15.34
04/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	Maintenance - Bowls Shed	46.64	9.33	55.97
04/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	Maintenance - Allotments	10.80	2.16	12.96
04/11/2020	GOPAK	BACS	St James' Furniture	2,953.43	590.69	3,544.12
04/11/2020	Rialtas	BACS	Annual Subscription - Data Bank	240.00	48.00	288.00
11/11/2020	Datim	BACS	Carlisle Park Refurbishment	73,745.69	14,749.14	88,494.83
16/11/2020	Pegswood Accountancy	BACS	Audit Fees	120.00	24.00	144.00
16/11/2020	Eclipse Digital Media	BACS	Annual License	185.50	37.10	222.60
16/11/2020	Marmax	BACS	Dedicated seats	297.00	59.40	356.40
16/11/2020	Sanders Plant & Waste Management	BACS	Christmas Tree	240.00	48.00	288.00
16/11/2020	Wicksteed	BACS	Play Equipment	1,674.75	334.95	2,009.70
16/11/2020	Crawford Higgins	BACS	Carlisle Park Refurbishment	1,795.00	359.00	2,154.00
16/11/2020	Crawford Higgins	BACS	St James' Refurbishment	1,202.50	240.50	1,443.00
20/11/2020	Datim	BACS	St James Refurbishment	54,690.61	10,938.12	65,628.73
20/11/2020	NCC	BACS	St James Refurbishment	308.00	61.60	369.60
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	General Use	10.33	2.07	12.40
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	General Use	47.06	9.41	56.47
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	General Use	22.11	4.42	26.53
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James Refurbishment	28.81	5.76	34.57
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James Refurbishment	80.40	16.08	96.48
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James Refurbishment	14.64	2.93	17.57
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James Refurbishment	143.75	28.75	172.50
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James Refurbishment	35.74	7.15	42.89
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	St James Refurbishment	20.78	4.16	24.94
25/11/2020	Jewson	BACS	General Use	4.95	0.99	5.94
				<b>138,315.66</b>	<b>27,660.27</b>	<b>165,975.93</b>
<b>Direct Debits Paid November 2020</b>						
02/11/2020	Gaffey Technical	DD	Hyprolyser Rental Fee	306.92	61.38	368.30
02/11/2020	Team Valley Web Design	"	Website Hosting Nov 20	41.67	8.33	50.00
10/11/2020	EE	"	MTC Office Mobile	61.66	12.33	73.99
13/11/2020	BNP Paribas	"	Copier Rental 13/11/20-12/02/21	1,131.49	226.30	1,357.79
13/11/2020	EDF Energy	"	SPCC Electric 29/9-28/10/20	15.85	0.79	16.64
16/11/2020	Bankline	"	Online Banking Charges	28.10	0.00	28.10
16/11/2020	Crown Gas & Power	"	SPCC Gas 30/9-31/10/20	242.57	48.52	291.09
16/11/2020	Crown Gas & Power	"	SJCC Gas 30/9-31/10/2	146.25	7.31	153.56
19/11/2020	Worldpay	"	Transaction Charges Oct 20	29.00	2.80	31.80
19/11/2020	Worldpay	"	Subscription Fees Nov 20	9.95	1.99	11.94
20/11/2020	EDF Energy	"	SJCC Electric 29/9-28/10/20	23.81	1.19	25.00
	<b>Sub Total Direct Debit Payments</b>			<b>2,037.27</b>	<b>370.94</b>	<b>2,408.21</b>
<b>Petty Cash November 2020</b>						
02/11/2020	Yorkshire Trading Co.	4798	Office Maintenance	4.16	0.83	4.99
18/11/2020	Home Bargains	"	Office Cleaning Supplies	23.61	4.72	28.33
25/11/2020	Home Bargains	"	Stationery	7.44	1.49	8.93
	<b>Sub Total Petty Cash Payments</b>			<b>35.21</b>	<b>7.04</b>	<b>42.25</b>
<b>Credit Card October 2020</b>						
30/09/2020	Amazon	CC	Laptop Desk	32.49	6.50	38.99
05/10/2020	Amazon	"	Refund for returned items	-261.54	0.00	-261.54
28/10/2020	Ikea	"	Storage Solutions	59.17	11.83	71.00
				<b>-169.88</b>	<b>18.33</b>	<b>-151.55</b>
<b>Total Payments F&amp;GP Committee December 2020</b>				<b>140,218.26</b>	<b>28,056.58</b>	<b>168,274.84</b>