

## **HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**I HEREBY GIVE YOU NOTICE** that a meeting of the Council will be held in the Conference Room, Dene Park House, Corbridge Road, Hexham NE46 1HN on Monday 5 February 2018 at 6.45pm, when the following items will be discussed:

### **A G E N D A**

1. Council to hear questions from Hexham residents regarding matters on the agenda or relating to Hexham.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. To agree minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 8 January 2018, enclosed.
4. Matters arising not on the agenda – for report only, if any.
5. Mayor's announcements.
6. Declarations of interest (see enclosed).
7. To agree accounts for payment (list enclosed).
8. To consider any correspondence received.
9. To receive an update from Inspector Pam Bridges on policing at the new bus station.
10. To approve and adopt a revised Grant Aid Policy and Procedure (see enclosed).
11. To re-adopt the Dispensations Policy (enclosed).
12. To adopt the revised Equal Opportunities Policy (enclosed).
13. To adopt the revised Equality and Diversity Policy (enclosed).
14. To re-adopt the Grievance Policy (enclosed).
15. To approve and adopt a revised Risk Assessment (see enclosed).
16. Any urgent matters at the Chairman of the meeting's discretion.  
*(Matters to be raised under this item should be written out (if possible) and handed to the Chairman of the meeting or the Town Clerk before the meeting begins.)*
17. To agree exclusion of the public during consideration of agenda item 18.
18. To receive nominations and agree the 2017 Honorary Steward and Bailiff of Hexham.

Jane Kevan  
Town Clerk  
30 January 2018

Hexham Town Council  
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St Andrew's Cemetery  
West Road  
Hexham  
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Hagenda0218

## HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2018

7028.	<p><b>PUBLIC QUESTIONS:</b> It was noted that the meeting was being recorded for <a href="http://www.hexhamtv.com">www.hexhamtv.com</a>.</p> <p>A member of the public advised of vandalism and antisocial behaviour from youths at the new bus station. This included a window having to be replaced at a cost of £4000.00. No staff are present between Saturday evening and Monday morning and many elderly people won't use the waiting room as they are intimidated by the teenagers there. It was noted that the Police have been called to attend on several occasions and that Northumberland County Council's Community Safety Officer is working on this issue alongside local services and the bus operator. It was agreed that Councillor Gillanders will write on behalf of the Town Council to the Police about this matter.</p>
7029.	<p><b>JANUARY COUNCIL MEETING:</b> Councillor T G E Gillanders, the Town Mayor, then opened the Council meeting. Present were Councillors R Hull, J Ord, Mrs D Bell, T Pearson, Mrs C R Homer, S Ball, T Cessford, T Dodds, J V R Hare, Mrs C Hanley, J M Graham and D Kennedy.</p>
7030.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> were received from Councillor E Green.</p>
7031.	<p><b>MINUTES:</b> The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4 December 2017, having been circulated, were <b>AGREED</b>, subject to minute 7019 being amended to: Councillor Wearmouth advised Northumberland County Council's economic strategy had seen a lot of change because of Brexit, the change of administration at County Hall, the North of Tyne Devolution Deal and the Borderlands initiative. With a devolution deal for North Tyneside, Newcastle and Northumberland there is an opportunity to relook at the strategic direction of the new authority. The County Council will be looking to the Town Council in the future for ideas for funding and to shape what the County Council is doing in Hexham. He also advised that running alongside this is the opportunity to put new local plans in place that don't strip out the greenbelt and deliver results for areas that residents want. He confirmed a decision had been made to establish a new company to replace Arch and that the new development company will focus on projects that create jobs and that there would be an end to investment outside of the County. He particular wants town centres in Northumberland to be redeveloped, to look at business support and provide access to training. He also advised the delivery of affordable homes will be looked at, together with addressing car parking issues.</p> <p>Minute 7025 was also amended to refer to "greenbelt" instead of "greenfield".</p>
7032.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. <b>HEXHAM BID</b> (minute 7020a refers). It was <b>NOTED</b> that the Board of Directors had resigned, effective on 4 February 2018.</li><li>b. <b>HENRY BELLS HOMES</b> (minute 7023b refers). It was <b>NOTED</b> that Councillor Graham will become a board member.</li><li>c. <b>SPORT TYNEDALE</b> (Accounts for payment refers). It was <b>NOTED</b> that it</li></ol>

	was good to see many people from Hexham and a good age range of people at a recent awards event.
7033.	<p>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS. For information Councillor Gillanders advised the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. HEXHAM BID. He resigned as a Director of Hexham BID on 5 December, with the resignation becoming effective on 4 February.</li> <li>b. CHRISTMAS MARKET. He had attended this excellent event on 8 and 9 December.</li> <li>c. HEXHAM ABBEY CHRISTMAS FAIR. He had attended this on 9 December.</li> <li>d. TYNEDALE AND LOCAL COUNCIL MEETING. On 13 December he had attended this meeting and spoken against the planning application for land west of Heathergate Country Park. The application was refused.</li> <li>e. SANKTA LUCIA AT HEXHAM ABBEY. He had attended this event on 13 December and enjoyed listening to a choir from Sweden and also children from Hexham First School who sang which was very touching.</li> <li>f. RETIREMENT EVENT. With Councillors Cessford and Mrs Homer, he had been to Thelma Brown's retirement event from the Girl Guides and made a short verbal presentation on behalf of Hexham Town Council.</li> </ol>
7034.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: No declarations of interest were made.
7035.	ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT: It was AGREED to authorise payments in accordance with the list that had been circulated and attached to the agenda.
7036.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED. <i>(Note: wherever possible, all communications addressed to the Council are circulated to Councillors for information as and when received.)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. DEVOLUTION FOR NORTH OF TYNE: It was noted that a consultation will close on 5 February 2018 on proposals for changing the way the seven North East Councils work together on economic development, regeneration and transport matters, and for devolving new powers to the North of Tyne (<a href="https://northoftynedevelopment.com/consultation/">https://northoftynedevelopment.com/consultation/</a>).</li> <li>b. ADAPT (NORTH EAST): Councillor Cessford had attended the AGM and a copy of the Annual Report is available in the Town Council office.</li> <li>c. CAR PARKING STUDIES. Councillors had been circulated information that consultants' reports on parking in Alnwick, Berwick, Hexham and Morpeth had been finalised and it was noted that comments are invited by 31 January 2018 to <a href="mailto:parkingstudy@northumberland.gov.uk">parkingstudy@northumberland.gov.uk</a> (the full reports are available on <a href="http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/highways/parking.aspx#parkingstudies">http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/highways/parking.aspx#parkingstudies</a>)</li> </ol>
7037.	PROPOSAL BY COUNCILLOR J M GRAHAM: "Council should agree its 2018/19 budget and the precept of £318000.00 as recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee." A summary of the changes was noted, together with information from Councillor Mrs Homer on the additional services that can be provided by a joint working initiative with the County Council. NCC would be contributing a capital spend of £50000.00 plus running costs for a street cleansing machine for sole use in Hexham. This will be very visible and raise

standards enormously. The proposal was AGREED unanimously by the Councillors present. The 2018/19 budget is as follows:

<b>HTC Budget 2018/19</b>	<b>2018/19 Agreed Budget</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Allotments	5520	4000
Cemetery	85000	4010
Donations/Grants/loans	0	4015
N/Plan Grant	0	4105
Miscellaneous	0	4020
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>90520</b>	

<b>HTC BUDGET 2018/19</b>	<b>2018/19 Agreed Budget</b>	<b>Reference</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Advertising	700	5000
Telephones	1200	5010
Postages	300	5020
Stationery/Copying	650	5030
Office equipment	600	5040
Subscriptions	2000	5050
Bank charges	600	5060
External audit	1400	5070
Mayor's allowance	2100	5080
Elections reserve	4620	5090
Bandstand reserve	0	5110
Partnership working	28000	tba
Contingency	14000	5100
Sele WC	2000	5120
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58170</b>	
<b>TOWN PLAN 2020 COMMITTEE</b>		
Town Plan 2020 Development reserve	20000	5500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20000</b>	
<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE</b>		
Neighbourhood Plan	5000	5600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5000</b>	
<b>FINANCE &amp; GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE</b>		
Internal audit/bookkeeping	3000	6000
Staff welfare	450	6010
Staff salaries	143000	6020
Staff pension contributions	26265	6030
Travelling expenses	300	6035

Grant Aid	74750	6050
Grant Aid under S137	0	6060
HCP longterm S137 grant	0	6062
HYI longterm S137 grant	0	6064
Donations (one time only)	2000	6066
Risk management/H&S	500	6070
Training	1000	6080
Local Council Award Scheme	200	6090
Professional fees	1000	6095
Tourism support fund	10000	6096
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>262465</b>	
<b>PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE</b>		
Personal protective equipment	1700	7300
Machines/equipment – fuel/road tax/insurance	6500	7310
Machines/equipment – renew/replace	20000	7315
Machines/equipment – repair/maintain	5000	7320
Non-specific expenses	4000	7330
Stock – caskets and other	7000	7340
Headstone raft foundations	6000	7350
Debt charges (PWL B)	9905	7360
Heat/light	4000	7370
Premises – repair/maintain	6000	7380
Premises reserve	5000	5092
Water rate/business rate	2200	7390
Trees maintenance	2000	7410
Insurances (not motor)	8500	7420
Floodlights – repair/maintain	7500	7450
Town clock – repair/maintain	250	7460
Dene Park Allotments – maintain	600	7000
Broadway (QB) Allotments – maintain	4000	7020
Wydon Park Allotments – maintain	150	7030
Seats x 57 – repair/maintain/replace	1500	7130
Litter bins x 85 – renew/replace	3000	7100

Bus shelters x 12 – repair/maintain	250	7150
VMS units x 6 – repair/maintain	1000	7160
Street signs x 6 – repair/maintain	3000	7170
Play areas x 6 – repair/maintain	1000	7190
Play areas x 6 – ROSPA inspection	700	7200
Play areas x 6 – vandalism	500	7210
Play areas – reserve	10000	5094
Winter Maintenance	0	7211
Street Lighting	35000	tba
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>156255</b>	
<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>		
Remembrance Day & Armed Forces Day	7500	7800
WW1 Remembrance	2500	7810
War Memorials	0	7820
War Memorial Reserve	3000	5096
Website	3000	7830
Newsletter	1200	7840
BID/Business Forum	0	7860
Town Twinning (Council expenses)	1000	7870
Christmas Lights – Repair/Replace	2000	7040
Christmas Lights – Additional Units	10000	7050
Christmas Lights – Erect, Dismantle, Store, Insure	9500	7060
Christmas Lights Switch On	500	7065
Mayor’s Annual Reception	750	7070
Steward and Bailiff Award	50	7080
Young Employee of the Year Award	300	7090
Hexham/Northumbria in Bloom (Council expenses)	1000	7850
Flower Beds and Tubs – Renew/Replace	500	7110
Flower Beds and Tubs – Planting	6500	7120
Support for Town Events	7000	5130
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>56300</b>	

<b>HTC BUDGET 2018/19</b>		<b>2018/19 Budget</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE SUMMARY</b>		
Administration		58170
Town Plan 2020 Committee		20000
Neighbourhood Plan Committee		5000
Finance and General Purposes		262465
Planning and Infrastructure		156255
Community Engagement		56300
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>558190</b>

With a precept of £318,000.00, and when using the base figure supplied by NCC, the average (Band D) Council Tax payer should pay £74.20 per annum (318000/4286).

7038.	CO-OPTION POLICY: It was AGREED to adopt the Co-option Policy as circulated with the following addition to paragraph 11 – “In the event of a draw between the final two candidates, the candidate selected for co-option for the Council will be decided by the toss of a coin”.
7039.	DISCIPLINARY POLICY, DISPENSATIONS POLICY, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY, GRIEVANCE POLICY: It was AGREED to refer these policies to the relevant Committee.
7040.	ACTION PLAN: Progress on this was NOTED. Councillor Hare noted that the enhanced and improved Christmas lighting did a beautiful town justice and that the Council’s additional spend was worth it. Councillor Mrs Homer outlined plans for the Great Exhibition of the North and the opportunities this could bring for tourism and visitors to Hexham and more widely to Northumberland. More details would follow shortly but it may be that Hexham Town Council may wish to use part of the tourism budget to support an event in Hexham linked to the Great Exhibition of the North over the Exhibition period.
7041.	SELE PLAY PARK AND HEXHAM PARK: Councillor Ball acknowledged the work done in these areas.
7042.	NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Council will be held on 5 February 2018 at 6.45pm at Dene Park House, Corbridge Road, Hexham.

Chairman .....

Signed as a correct record of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2018.

## **HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 3 September 2012 Councillors must declare if they have a disclosable interest in any matters under consideration.

To do so Councillors must use one of the following statements:-

- “I have a disclosable pecuniary interest  
in..... (for example) Agenda item  
3, Planning application number 14/1234”.  
(NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraphs 11&15 apply).
- “I have a disclosable personal interest  
in..... (for example) Agenda item  
4, Grant aid application by Hexham Youth Initiative  
(NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraph 13 applies).

Councillors should familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct regarding the definitions of (A) pecuniary interest and (B) other personal interest and their obligations when declaring any such interests.

To ensure Councillors’ interests are correctly minuted please use one of the above statements when declaring an interest.

NB. Should a Councillor wish to take part in the consideration and voting on a matter or matters in which he/she has a disclosable interest then they may request a dispensation be granted to enable them to take part in the discussion and voting on it but at least 10 days’ notice must be given for any dispensation request.

**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 5 FEBRUARY 2018**

Payments are authorised by LGA 1972 s14, 144, 145, 214 or 215 or PCA 1957

Payee	Detail	Amount	VAT	Net	Cheque number	Ref.
Safe and Secure 24	Alarm systems 24 hour monitoring	15.60	2.60	13.00	DD	7380
HSBC	Bank charges (December)	29.12	0	29.12	DD	5060
Malthurst Ltd	Diesel (January)	98.38	16.40	81.98	Visa	7310
EE & T Mobile	Accounts (January)	43.20	7.20	36.00	DD	5010
Onecom Limited	Phone and broadband (December)	76.04	12.67	63.37	DD	5010
NCC (wages and PAYE)	December	9934.76	0	9934.76	BACS	6020
NCC (pension fund)	December	1771.65	0	1771.65	BACS	6030
NCC (payroll admin fee)	5 payslips @ £4.167 (Dec)	25.01	4.17	20.84	BACS	6020
NCC (wages and PAYE)	January	9934.76	0	9934.76	BACS	6020
NCC (pension fund)	January	1771.65	0	1771.65	BACS	6030
NCC (payroll admin fee)	5 payslips @ £4.167 (Jan)	25.01	4.17	20.84	BACS	6020
A R Owen Insurance Services Ltd	Annual vehicle (Mazda pick-up) insurance	475.90	0	475.90	Visa	7310
Beales	Bandstand keys	10.00	0	10.00	Visa	7065
Extra Energy Limited	Final Abbey Floodlights invoice	386.88	64.48	322.40	DD	7450
Opus Energy Limited	Abbey Floodlights	291.71	48.62	243.09	DD	7450
Tesco	Tea, coffee, sugar	7.69	0	7.69	Visa	6010
Phoenix Eye	Christmas market security	138.60	23.10	115.50	BACS	5130
Hexham Courant	Cemetery Worker (fulltime) advert	277.56	46.26	231.30	Visa	5000
Shaw & Sons Limited	Two grave registers	384.00	64.00	320.00	Visa	7330
NWG	Water rates	655.41	0	655.41	DD	7390

Business						
Alan Neale Electrical	Replace workshop lamp	35.00	0	35.00	108993	7380
Stokoe Rodger	Quarterly bookkeeping fee	432.00	72.00	360.00	108994	6000
Hutchinson Environmental Solutions Ltd	Blower for Cemetery sewage treatment	359.78	59.96	299.82	108995	7380
Sustrans Limited	Second phase of Hexham Market place project	19798.80	3299.80	16499.00	108996	5500
Dell Products	Laptop	946.80	157.80	789.00	Visa	5040
Ponteland Town Council	Subsidy for Bus Service 74	150.00	0	150.00	108997	6066
J P Westall Ltd	Various plumbing work	441.70	73.62	368.08	108998	7380
Top Signs Limited	Skatepark sign	486.00	81.00	405.00	108999	7210
British Gas	Cemetery electricity (20/10/17-10/1/18)	1185.68	197.61	988.07	DD	7370
Dell Products	Dock	217.60	36.27	181.33	DD	5040
The Millennium Quest Limited	Christmas lights switch-on	900.00	150.00	750.00	BACS	7065
The Millennium Quest Limited	Additional Christmas lights and dismantling the 2017 display	4020.00	670.00	3350.00	BACS	7050
The Millennium Quest Limited	Additional Christmas lights and dismantling the 2017 display	4978.80	829.80	4149.00	BACS	5100
Jewson Limited	Heavy duty protective sheet	50.74	8.46	42.28	109000	7330
Lloyd Ltd	Blade, bolt, oil	218.54	36.42	182.12	109001	7320
David Dixon Garden Machinery	Remove old and fit new blades to grasscutter	159.14	26.52	132.62	109002	7320
TOTALS		60733.51	5992.93	54740.58		

**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE – ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 5 FEBRUARY 2018**

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>Cheque number</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
Balance b/f				2247.19		
West Northumberland Food Bank	Two office desks and two chairs for the West Northumberland Food Bank Targeted Support Project	403.20	67.20	336.00	108992	5080
West Northumberland Food Bank	Laptop for the above project	219.00	0	219.00	108992	5080
Balance fwd				1692.19		

**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL – INCOME – JANUARY 2018**

<b>Credit from</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Invoice reference</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
Various	Cemetery charges	589.00	HD2017/96	020118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	184.00	HD2018/01	120118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	740.00	HD2018/02	120118	4010
Hexham BID	Contribution for Christmas lights	7000.00		120118	7050
Various	Cemetery charges	1178.00	HD2018/03	180118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	1890.00	HDW2018/04	220118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	473.00	HD2017/46	220118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	1213.00	HD2018/05	240118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	1129.00	HD2018/06	240118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	302.00	HD2018/08	240118	4010
Various	Cemetery charges	301.00	HD2018/07	260118	4010
G Oloman	Salary overpayment	221.42	GO2017/1212	290118	6020
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15220.42</b>			

## Hexham Neighbourhood Plan 2017/18

(As at 31 January 2018)

Budget	Expense (net)	Detail	Date	Cheque No.	Balance
£7700.00					£7700.00
	£450.00	Sarah Dyer (Heritage Consultant advice)	6/4/17	108822	£7250.00
	£135.00	GIS work	4/17	108823	£7115.00
	£141.67	Hexham Abbey Heritage Trading Ltd (hire of Great Hall for Forum 9)	23/5/17	108842	£6973.33
	£1410.00	Planning Consultant fee	31/3-30/4/17	108843	£5563.33
	£1410.00	Planning Consultant fee	30/4-31/5/17	108863	£4153.33
	£221.40	Courant Forum 9 notices	12 & 19/5/17	108865	£3931.93
	£235.00	Planning Consultant fee	31/5-30/6/17	108893	£3696.93
	£135.00	N'land National Park Authority (maps)	12/7/17	108894	£3561.93
	£167.55	Arc4 presentation 19/10/16	Invoice received 11/8/17	108907	£3394.48
	£470.00	Planning Consultant fee	30/6-30/9/17	108940	£2924.48
	£833.75	Sarah Dyer (Heritage Consultant)	Statement of significance re: Workhouse	108959	£2090.73

**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF GRANT AID POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

The attached revised policy has been agreed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee and is recommended to Full Council for adoption.

Jane Kevan  
Town Clerk  
January 2018

# **GRANT AID POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Hexham Town Council is funded by the residents of Hexham and therefore only has limited funds to assist community organisations located and working in Hexham for the benefit of the community.

Subject to funding being available, Hexham Town Council is committed to providing assistance and support to local community groups which are set up to promote community life for Hexham residents. The Council's financial support is provided by way of grants which are decided against criteria set by, and which may be amended from time to time by, Hexham Town Council.

Hexham Town Council is committed to following best practice in grant giving in order to provide sustainable funding and support to voluntary and community groups, whilst providing value for money for local taxpayers and ensuring that public money is spent in a responsible manner.

So the Council can assess applications rationally and objectively, as many will inevitably be dissimilar in content, it is both necessary and helpful to assess all applications received against a range of criteria. These are designed to be a general indication of need but are not exclusive and can be flexibly applied.

The Town Council's policy on grants is based on the principle of promoting the development of partnerships which encourage and enable local community organisations to deliver local projects to the residents of Hexham. In general, the following principles apply:

- Assistance will be given on the basis of need, merit and contribution to the local community.
- Applicants must clearly show how any assistance given will benefit Hexham residents or the environment of Hexham.
- Any assistance given may be subject to ongoing monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the outcome of the grant.
- Organisations should not make a presumption that funding will continue on a year to year basis.

All successful applicants will be invited to have a table/display stand at the Annual Town Meeting to demonstrate their work/services and the benefit experienced by the grant.

## **2. THE AIMS OF THE COUNCIL'S GRANT AID POLICY**

Hexham Town Council provides grants to support the following aims:

- To enable local people to participate in voluntary groups and activities.
- To help the Town's voluntary groups to improve their effectiveness.

- To ensure the provision of services, needed by the Town's residents, via the voluntary sector.
- To support organisations which meet the needs of people experiencing social and economic difficulties.
- To ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity for all Hexham Town residents to the services it provides and funds.
- To improve or enhance the local environment.
- To achieve value for money.

The Town Council defines a voluntary group as a non-profit making organisation, set up and run by a voluntary, unpaid management committee.

### **3. THE GRANTS PROCESS**

To apply for a Town Council grant you must be a charity, community group or local voluntary organisation with a constitution and dedicated bank account, operating or providing a service to the community in Hexham. All funding requests must use the Council's application form and applicants should provide all information requested. The form can be downloaded from the Council's website or is available from the office.

Applications (in triplicate please) should be posted or hand-delivered to the Town Council office at the address on the application form.

If necessary a completed application may be emailed to meet the closing date but this should be followed by hard copies together with supporting documents.

Applications must be received by 1 September for the next financial year so that provision can be made in the following year's budget.

All valid grant applications will be assessed by the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee in September/October of each year, and be ratified at the January Full Council meeting when the budget is agreed. All applicants will usually be notified of the Council's decision in January.

The F&GP Committee will award a grant at a figure it deems suitable, taking into account this policy, and not necessarily the figure that has been applied for.

Grants will be paid as soon as is practical after 1<sup>st</sup> April (larger grants may be paid in two equal instalments, the second after 1<sup>st</sup> October).

There were 13 applications received in 2017 and a Grant Aid budget of £74750, subject to the overall Council budget, was proposed for 2018/2019.

Hexham Town Council supports a wide variety of grants which have been used to fund both revenue and capital projects, core costs and specific project work. The Council particularly welcomes applications from small or newly formed groups and those that have not applied before.

#### **4. THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA IS USED FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS:**

- Whether the group/project has followed the grants process and meets the Council's requirements and grant giving policy.
- Level of benefit to Hexham and the impact the grant will make.
- Evidence of a well-managed group, including previous experience and track record.
- Financial sustainability and viability of the group and/or project.
- Evidence of partnership working.
- Evidence that funding has been sought from other sources and the level of match funding available.
- Evidence of compliance with previous grant award conditions (if applicable).

#### **5. HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL WILL NOT FUND THE FOLLOWING:**

- Organisations that do not provide a service to the community in Hexham.
- Individuals or appeals supporting an individual.
- General appeals.
- Statutory organisations or the direct replacement of statutory funding.
- Political groups or activities promoting political beliefs.
- Religious groups where funding is to be used to promote religious beliefs.
- Arts and sports projects with no community or charitable element.
- Medical research, equipment or treatment.
- Animal welfare.
- Projects that may take place before an application can be decided.
- Organisations that have a closed or restricted membership.
- Equipment or other costs that have already been purchased or incurred prior to the application being considered.

#### **6. CONDITIONS OF FUNDING**

Grants will be made subject to the following conditions:

- They can only be used for the purpose of the application.
- If the Town Council's grant is part of the overall cost, no monies will be paid until there is evidence that the entire objective is funded.
- No monies should be spent in advance of the application. Evidence of expenditure may be requested.
- Grants will be paid by cheque or bank transfer to an organisation or group.
- The recipient must agree to participate in suitable publicity to note the Town Council's contribution.
- Applicants must submit a copy of the organisation's constitution, latest bank statement and a copy of last year's accounts with their application.
- Organisations are expected to provide the Town Council with written evidence of what the grant has been spent on and the benefit it has brought to Hexham. Such evidence should include copies of invoices and receipts and, where applicable, photos, attendance numbers, press clippings, etc. This information should be submitted within one month of the event/project end or by the end of February each year (whichever is sooner), so that it can be reported at the Annual Town Meeting.

Grants for capital projects will be paid after proof of the project being completed has been received (which must be within the financial year that the grant has been applied for).

Application forms and any information submitted to support an application will be held on file as follows before being destroyed:

Successful applicants: for two years following the year in which the grant was awarded.

Unsuccessful applicants: until the approval of the minutes of the meeting which declined the application.

It is anticipated that some organisations may ask for a guarantee of funding for a number of years. Whilst this is legally possible, it is recommended that no such binding commitments are given. This is because there is the potential for significant changes in the legislative obligations placed on local Councils. It would be possible to give an indicative, but non-legally binding, assurance that a continuation of a grant is likely to be a priority when budgets are set each year.

Amendments to this Policy and Procedure can be made at any time.

February 2018 – Date for Review: February 2021

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**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**5 FEBRUARY 2018**

**REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF DISPENSATIONS POLICY**  
**REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**  
**REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**  
**REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF GRIEVANCE POLICY**

The attached policies were all previously adopted in May 2013 and (with minor amendments and updated to include a reference to the Staff Handbook where appropriate) were considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 24 January 2018. They are all recommended for re-adoption.

Jane Kevan  
Town Clerk  
January 2018

**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**THE GRANTING OF DISPENSATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

NOTE: This document may be revised if and when additional information is received following any legal proceedings or Government clarifications.

1. The Council adopted its Code of Conduct on 3 September 2012 (readopting it on 3 July 2017). Under this code, if Councillors wish to take part in the consideration and voting on a matter or matters in which they have a personal and/or prejudicial disclosable interest then they may request a dispensation be granted to enable them to take part in the discussion and to vote on it. (A Councillor must continue to declare his or her interest, be it personal or personal and prejudicial.)
2. As the Code adopted by the Council is based upon the NALC code of conduct, the Town Clerk is responsible, as the statutory officer, for granting dispensations under the Localism Act 2012 c7 s33.
3. A request for a dispensation must be in writing and provide factual evidence as to why a dispensation is required and to what business it relates to (a planning application, a grant application, etc.)
4. A request for a dispensation should be made at least ten days before a meeting. It is not practical to request a dispensation on receipt of the agenda. It may also be necessary to request further information before a dispensation can be granted.
5. A file will be kept of all relevant paperwork for each Councillor requesting a dispensation. This will be open to public scrutiny.
6. Once all documentation is available then a dispensation may be granted and will only be granted on one of the following basis:
  - a. Without dispensation the Council would be unable to consider, discuss and decide upon an issue as it would not be quorate (LA 2012 c7 s33 (2a)).
  - b. The political balance of the Council would be distorted and this could alter the outcome of the decision (LA 2012 c7 s33 (2b)).
  - c. A dispensation is in the interests of the residents living in the area (LA 2012 c7 s33 (2c)).
  - d. It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation (LA 2012 c7 s33 (2e)).
7. When a dispensation is granted:
  - a. The reason for selecting a specific basis will be recorded in case there are any subsequent challenges, legal or otherwise.
  - b. The date of and the period of the dispensation will be recorded and the dispensation will be minuted.
  - c. The Councillor requesting the dispensation will be advised in writing of the decision and the basis for it.

- d. The Councillor will be advised how long the dispensation will last (the dispensation period will never exceed the term of the Council).  
However, a dispensation will also only be granted for the length of time that the issue, over which the dispensation is being granted, will exist.
- 8. 'Blanket' dispensations will not be granted.
- 9. Councillors should note in particular paragraph 4 above. This period is the minimum and will be adhered to.

February 2018 – Date for Review: February 2020  
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## **HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL** **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

### **THE LEGAL POSITION**

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds which, under the Equality Act 2010, are known as “protected characteristics”: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation.

### **THE PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken). The Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it is direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.

### **THE SCOPE**

All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Council.

### **THE COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT**

Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

The commitment to equal opportunities in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense as it seeks to utilise the talents available from the local community, representing society as a whole.

Breaches of the Council's equal opportunities policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings. Employees are entitled to complain about discrimination or harassment or victimisation through the Council's Grievance procedure.

This policy is fully supported by all members of the Council and adopts the model contract as devised by the employee professional body in the local government sector (the Society of Local Council Clerks).

This policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and at least once every two years. Any other personnel policies will be reviewed against the values stated in this main Equal Opportunities policy to ensure that the Council strives to remain an Equal Opportunities employer.

**(NOTE:** This document is an appendix to the Staff Handbook, given to all employees when commencing employment with the Council.)

February 2018 – Date for Review: February 2021  
[clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

## **HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL** **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

Hexham Town Council recognises that it functions at a fundamental level of democracy and that its services affect, both directly and indirectly, the lives of all those who work for the Council and all those who visit the Council's Cemetery, play areas, allotment sites and elsewhere. It recognises it has a role in the pursuit of access and opportunity for all.

The Council acknowledges that certain groups and individuals within society are discriminated against and wishes to declare its commitment to working towards equality in employment and delivery of its services.

In particular, the Council will work to combat discrimination and to ensure that prospective and present employees and those who may use or wish to use the Council's properties and services are not treated less favourably on the grounds of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, culture, religion or nationality or are disadvantaged by the application of other conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified. In doing so, the Council will work within its resources and the appropriate legislative framework.

In employment the aim is to provide a non-discriminatory working environment where discrimination, harassment or bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Employment policies, procedures and practices will promote equality of opportunity and all decisions regarding recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career management will be based solely on objective and job related requirements.

In access to services at the Cemetery, play areas, allotment sites and elsewhere the aim is to ensure that all those who receive a service from the Council or wish to use a Council service can do so without fear of discrimination or disadvantage.

Translating this policy and ethos into practice is the responsibility of all employees (no matter how employed) and members of the Council.

People are entitled to be treated fairly, in a consistent manner and with dignity and respect.

**(NOTE:** This document is an appendix to the Staff Handbook, given to all employees when commencing employment with the Council.)

**First adopted by Hexham Town Council on 2 March 2009**

February 2018 – Date for Review: February 2021  
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**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. This procedure applies to all employees of the Council.

1.2. The objectives of the procedure are:

- To foster good relationships between the Council and its employees by discouraging the harbouring of grievances;
- To settle grievances as near as possible to their point of origin;
- To ensure the Council treats grievances seriously and resolves them as quickly as possible; and
- To ensure that employees are treated fairly and consistently throughout the Council.

1.3. Matters excluded from this procedure are as follows:

- Appeals against salary or gradings;
- Appeals against disciplinary actions;
- Income tax, national insurance matters, rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level;
- Rules of pension schemes; and
- A grievance about a matter over which the Council has no control.

**2. INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with the Town Clerk with a view to resolving the matter informally if appropriate. If the employee feels that this is not appropriate or he or she wishes to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below.

**STANDARD COUNCIL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

3.1. The employee must set out his/her grievance in writing ("Statement of Grievance") and provide a copy to the Clerk.

3.2. Once the Council has had a reasonable opportunity to consider its response to the information provided in the Statement of Grievance the employee will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss the matter. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. Grievance meetings will normally be convened with 14 days of the Council receiving the Statement of Grievance. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance meeting by a fellow employee, by a Trade Union representative or by a friend. If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or his or her companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

3.3. A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford the Clerk time to consider the decision.

3.4. After the meeting the employee will be informed of the Council's decision within 5 working days (the meeting may be reconvened for this purpose). The Council's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

3.5. If the employee wishes to appeal against the Council's decision he or she must inform the Council within 5 working days of receiving the decision.

3.6. If the employee notifies the Council that they wish to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting before the Council's Staff

Committee. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance appeal meeting by a fellow employee, by a Trade Union representative or friend.

3.7. A grievance appeal meeting will normally be convened within 7 working days of the Council receiving notice that the employee wishes to appeal as outlined in 3.5 above. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or his or her companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.

3.8. After the grievance appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the Council's final decision within 5 working days (the meeting may be reconvened for this purpose). The Council's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

#### **4. A MODIFIED COUNCIL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (FOR FORMER EMPLOYEES)**

4.1. If an ex-employee wishes to raise a grievance, he or she must set out their grievance and the basis for that grievance in writing and provide a copy to the Chairman of the Council's Staff Committee.

4.2. Following receipt of a statement of grievance as in 4.1 above, the Council will either write to the ex-employee inviting him or her to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance or to ask for the ex-employee's agreement to the Council responding to the grievance in writing.

4.2.1. If the ex-employee does not agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence within 7 working days of the Council writing to them as in 4.2 above, steps 3.1 to 3.4 of the standard Council grievance procedure will be followed. The meeting will be conducted by the Council's Staff Committee.

4.2.2. If the ex-employee does agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence, the Council's Staff Committee will consider his or her grievance and will respond to the ex-employee in writing within 14 days of the receipt of such confirmation setting out the basis for the Council's decision.

#### **5. GENERAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION**

5.1. Grievances raised under the standard Council grievance procedure will normally be investigated and any meetings to discuss the grievance will be conducted by the Clerk.

5.2. If an employee's grievance is about the Clerk they should raise the matter with the Chairman of the Council. All investigations and any grievance meeting will be conducted by the Council Staff Committee and any grievance appeal meeting will be conducted by 3 members of the Council who do not sit on the Council's Staff Committee.

5.3. A copy of the Statement of Grievance, a note of the decision taken at the first stage of the procedure, any notice of appeal and appeal decision will be placed on the employee's/ex-employee's personnel file, together with any notes or evidence taken or compiled during the course of the procedure.

**(NOTE:** This document is an appendix to the Staff Handbook, given to all employees when commencing employment with the Council.)

February 2018 – Date for Review: February 2021  
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**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**5 FEBRUARY 2018**

**ADOPTION OF FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT**

Annually the Council (not a Committee) must review and agree a financial risk assessment.

The previous risk assessment had been considered and deemed adequate by the Council external auditors but has been revised to clarify the risk level (usually low, because of procedures in place) and the potential impact. The Finance & General Purposes Committee considered the following revised risk assessment on 24 January 2018 and recommend it for adoption by the Council.

Jane Kevan  
Town Clerk  
January 2018

### FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

AREA	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	RISK LEVEL	POTENTIAL IMPACT	MANAGEMENT/ CONTROL OF RISK	ACTION	AUDIT FREQUENCY (months)
<b>PRECEPT</b>	HTC failure to submit precept requirement by the deadline	Low	High	Minuted	Diary (Clerk)	12
	Precept not paid by NCC	Low	High	Checked, report to Council	Minuted	6
	Was the precept adequate?	Low	High	Finance & General Purposes Committee review and receive reports for budget monitoring at least 3 times per year.	Diary	12
<b>CEMETERY</b>	Allocation of incorrect grave plot	Low	Medium	Burial register is updated for each burial.	RFO verify entry	6
	Are the charges reasonable?	Low	Low	Reviewed annually by the Planning & Infrastructure Committee.	Diary	12
	Incorrect invoice(s) issued	Low	Low	Invoice details are recorded in the burial register and cemetery records database.	RFO verify	12
<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>	Are the rents reasonable?	Low	Low	Reviewed annually by the Planning & Infrastructure Committee.	Diary	12
	Incorrect invoices issued	Low	Low	A copy of each invoice is kept in the allotment register.	Diary	12
	Incorrect income recorded	Low	Low	Details of payment are made on the copy invoice in the register.	RFO verify	12
	Income paid by cash lost/stolen	Low	High	Cash payments are recorded, bank records subsequently checked.	RFO verify	6

AREA	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	RISK LEVEL	POTENTIAL IMPACT	MANAGEMENT/ CONTROL OF RISK	ACTION	AUDIT FREQUENCY (months)
<b>GRANTS via S106</b>	Failure by HTC to submit valid claim	Low	High	NCC instructions must be followed.	Clerk/RFO verify	12
	Non-receipt of grant from NCC when due	Low	High	Check bank records, contact NCC and report to Planning & Infrastructure Committee.	Clerk/RFO verify	6
<b>SALARIES</b>	Paying the wrong salary	Low	High	Check relevant minute/ staff contract and advise NCC.	Member verify	12
	False documents provided by employee	Low	High	Check documents and references.	Member verify	12
	Making incorrect deductions	Low	Medium	Salaries paid via NCC.		
<b>DIRECT COSTS AND EXPENSES AND ALL PAYMENTS MADE</b>	Goods not supplied or received	Low	Medium	Review ordering system if necessary.	RFO verify	12
	Invoice is for incorrect amount	Low	Medium	Sign the invoice and check the total.	Two Members to verify	12
	Cheque made out incorrectly	Low	Medium	Sign the cheque stub and check the invoice total.	Two Members to verify	12
	Cheque made payable to wrong party	Low	Medium	Sign the cheque stub and check the payee.	RFO verify	12
	Cllr overpaid allowance	Low	Medium	Claims must be in writing.	RFO verify	12
<b>GRANT AID</b>	Using the wrong power to pay	Low	Low	Minute the relevant legislation (NB General Power of Competence adopted in 2017).	Member verify	12
	No record of agreement to pay	Low	Medium	All grants agreed to be minuted.	Member verify	12

AREA	RISK(S) IDENTIFIED	RISK LEVEL	POTENTIAL IMPACT	MANAGEMENT/ CONTROL OF RISK	ACTION	AUDIT FREQUENCY (months)
	Agreement of grant conditions (if any)	Low	Medium	Must be reasonable and minuted.	RFO verify	12
	Follow up of grant conditions (if any)	Low	Medium	Minute	RFO confirm	12
<b>ELECTION COSTS</b>	Invoice not at agreed rate	Low	Medium	RFO check and consider budget.	RFO verify	12
<b>VAT RECOVERABLE</b>	Vat analysis incorrect	Low	Medium	Checked when received, approval given monthly for accounts for payment, and by internal audit.	RFO verify	12
	Incorrect VAT charged on purchases	Low	Medium	Check to cash book.	RFO verify	12
	Failing to make claim within time limit	Low	High	Submit a return every 6 months.	RFO verify	12
<b>RESERVES</b>	Not being adequate	Low	High	Consider level when budget setting.	RFO opinion	12
<b>ASSETS</b>	Loss, damages	Medium	Medium	Annually inspect assets. Review insurance cover, and check against asset register.	Diary	12
	Damage to third parties	Low	High	Annually review insurance cover.	Diary	12
<b>STAFF</b>	Loss of personnel	Low	High	Monitor hours, stress, sickness, management training, early departure.	Diary + Staff subcommittee keep under review	12
	Staff fraud, Cash loss	Low	High	Review fidelity insurance cover and any insurer conditions.	Diary	12

<b>AREA</b>	<b>RISK(S) IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>RISK LEVEL</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT/ CONTROL OF RISK</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>AUDIT FREQUENCY (months)</b>
<b>LOSS</b>	Consequential loss due to damage or third party actions	Low	Medium	Review liability insurance cover and any insurer conditions.	Diary	12
<b>BORROWING</b>	Inadequacy of finances to repay loans	Low	Medium	Check against income and outflow.	RFO opinion	12
<b>LEGAL POWERS</b>	Illegal activity or payment	Low	Medium	Town Clerk is CiLCA qualified. General Power of Competence adopted. Use of advice from NALC and SLCC. Members follow the Code of Conduct.	Clerk/RFO verify	12

