



HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I GIVE NOTICE that an online meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be held on 23 February 2021 at 6.30pm, when the following items will be discussed:

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To receive minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 19 January 2021, enclosed.
3. Matters arising, if any.
4. Declarations of interest (see enclosed).
5. To receive bank reconciliation and budget income and expenditure report to 31 January 2021 (attached).
6. To review and adopt the Health and Safety Policy (see enclosed).
7. To review and adopt the Standing Orders (see enclosed and attached).
8. To review and adopt the Financial Regulations (see enclosed and attached).
9. To consider a Hexham Visitor Survey (information sent to Committee members on 17 February).
10. To agree exclusion of the public during consideration of agenda item 11.
11. To consider funding applications received.
12. To agree a date for the next meeting of the Committee.
13. 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 given to the Chairman of the meeting or the Clerk before the meeting begins.*)

Jane Kevan
Town Clerk
17 February 2021

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H agenda 0221 FandGPCCommittee

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE ONLINE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2021

772.	PRESENT: Councillors R Hull, S Ball, T G E Gillanders, T Cessford, T Dodds, J M Graham, C R Homer, T Pearson and L Panesh.
773.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillor Ord.
774.	MINUTES of the meeting held on 8 December 2020, having been circulated, were AGREED.
775.	<p>MATTERS ARISING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) MARKET STALLS (minute 766 and action log refers). Initial research was noted and it was AGREED to refer this to the Community Engagement Committee and to also check interest from regular stallholders.b) SEATING (minute 766 and action log refers). It was noted that Councillor Graham has contacted Sam Talbot at NCC about this. He would follow up with the Admin Officer and come forward with a proposal for the next Community Engagement Committee.c) SKATEPARK (minute 766 and action log refers). It was noted that costs and available S106 funding has been researched. Other possible funding is being researched and it was AGREED to further contact NCC's Sport Development Manager and for Councillors Ball and Panesh to have a site visit with the aim to prepare a proposal for consideration by the Community Engagement Committee as soon as possible.d) 2021/22 BUDGET (minute 769 and action log refers). It was noted this had been referred to, and agreed by, Full Council.e) FUNDING (minute and confidential note 770 and action log refers). It was noted that the agreed payments had all been made.f) PLANNING ADVICE (minute/confidential note 758 and action log refers). Advice received was noted and action as in confidential note 775 AGREED.
776.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were no declarations of interest.
777.	FINANCIAL REPORT: The bank statement and account reconciliation together with the 2020/21 budget report to 31 December 2020 were received and accepted. Copies are attached to the minutes. Additional spending this financial year was again considered as it had been at the last meeting. A range of quotes for a piece of play equipment to replace the broken piece at the Sele play area was considered and it was AGREED to pay for a rocker rotator out of Contingency but refer this matter back to the Planning & Infrastructure Committee.
778.	APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR: Subject to checking there is no legal requirement for this to go out to tender, it was AGREED to appoint

	Stokoe Rodger LLP as internal auditor for 2020/21.
779.	SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY: It was AGREED to seek advice from NCC Legal Services on whether anything should be added to the policy regarding recording Council meetings.
780.	SPEAKERS AT FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS: Possible future speakers were considered, noting Purdah will start on 26 March. It was AGREED to invite Inspector Garry Neill to submit a Powerpoint presentation to the February Full Council meeting.
781.	DRAFT COMMITTEE MINUTES: It was AGREED that the Chair of each Committee will highlight three subjects from each meeting to the subsequent Full Council meeting. It was further AGREED that, if the Chair is not available, they will arrange for a substitute to speak on their behalf.
782.	NEXT MEETING: It was AGREED that the next Committee meeting will be held online at 6.30pm on Tuesday 23 February 2021.

Action Log

Market Stalls: further research costs, check interest and refer to the CE Committee (confidential note 775a)	Admin Officer/Clerk
Skatepark: further research funding, contact Kathy Keadie again and have a site meeting (minute 775c)	Councillors Ball and Panesh
Pursue, taking legal advice (confidential note 775)	Clerk
Sele Play Area: refer this to the P&I Committee (minute 777)	Clerk
Check any legal requirement to tender for the internal auditor (minute 778)	Clerk
Contact NCC for advice on the social media policy (minute 779)	Clerk
Invite Inspector Neill to the February Full Council meeting (minute 780)	Clerk

Chairman

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

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:

1. "I have a disclosable pecuniary interest
in..... (for example) Agenda item 3,
Planning application number 13/1234".
(NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraphs 11&15 apply).

2. "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 interest.

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
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
23 FEBRUARY 2021
REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Committee is requested to consider and recommend the following Health and Safety Policy to Full Council. It was last reviewed in February 2020 and no required changes have been identified.

Hexham Town Council		has overall and final responsibility for health and safety	
The Clerk		has day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice	
Statement of general policy	Responsibility of:	Action/Arrangements (What are you going to do?)	
Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health by managing the health and safety risks in the workplace	Operations Manager	Relevant risk assessments completed and actions arising out of those assessments implemented. (Risk assessments reviewed every year, or earlier if working habits or conditions change.)	
Provide clear instructions and information, and adequate training, to ensure employees are competent to do their work	Operations Manager	All Staff given health and safety training as appropriate; and provided with the necessary training in order to protect themselves and others Ensure that all staff and volunteers are provided with copies of all relevant policies and procedures.	
Engage and consult with employees on day-to-day health and safety conditions	Operations Manager	Staff will be consulted on health and safety matters as new procedures, equipment and techniques are introduced.	
Implement emergency procedures – evacuation in case of fire or other significant incident.	Operations Manager	Escape routes are well signed and kept clear at all times. Evacuation plans are tested from time to time and updated as necessary.	
Maintain safe and healthy working conditions, provide and maintain plant, equipment and machinery, and ensure safe storage/use of substances.	Operations Manager	Ensure that all staff are provided with copies of all relevant policies and procedures Toilets, washing facilities and drinking water provided. System in place for routine inspections and testing of equipment	
Signed:	Appointment:	Date:	
Health and safety law poster is displayed at (location)	In the Cemetery Workshop		
First-aid box is located:	In the Cemetery Office		
Accident book is located:	In the Cemetery Office		

Date of risk assessment:

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Slips, trips and falls	Staff and visitors may be injured if they trip on uneven pathways; protruding tree roots, etc.	Staff are instructed to keep pathways clear, as far as is possible, and to warn unsuspecting visitors of wet/slippery areas. Cables in the offices are properly routed or taped down.	Constant vigilance to be encouraged.	All staff	From now on	Ongoing
Manual Handling	Staff who need to move equipment, material, parts and tools could be subject to sprains, strains and other musculoskeletal disorders.	No person is to move anything greater than their ability to do so. If in doubt, assistance should be sought. All staff are trained in the basics of manual handling.	Ensure that large items are broken down into smaller components to aid movement. Refresher training to be introduced.	Overall control of Operations Manager	From now on	Ongoing
Grave digging and back filling	Staff involved with either of these tasks; members of the public; funeral directors; and Members of the Clergy. Injury may occur from unstable ground, malfunction of the excavator; tripping on grave covers; falling into the grave; or/and grave collapse.	The procedures laid down by NCC in their publication "Grave digging Operational Procedure" are followed (current at 08/11). Where specific advice is required the recommendations of the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration publication "Code of Safe Working Practice for Cemeteries" is consulted.	Before any interment the Operations Manager outlines the procedures to be followed to involved staff.	Operations Manager	From now on	Ongoing
Landscaping	The Kubota operator or others nearby if the machine overturns or goes out of control.	Only trained and certificated staff are permitted to use the Kubota.	Checks to be made on current certification and records maintained.	Clerk	From August 2015	Done/ ongoing
Grass cutting	Members of the public; staff through hearing damage; and machine malfunction causing lacerations. Biological damage due to the ingestion of animal faeces. Skin damage due to contact with photo-toxic plants.	All staff are trained on the use of pedestrian mowers and are provided with hearing protection, gloves and respiratory protection. Training on the use of ride-on mowers is given internally.	Training records to be kept.	Clerk	From August 2015	Done/ ongoing

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Edge strimming	Staff from hard material being thrown up causing contusions. Hearing damage from noise. Musculoskeletal problems from the weight of the strimmer. Burns from hot engines.	All staff are provided with helmets, face guards, gloves and hearing protection. Harnesses to carry the strimmer are also used. Instruction in the operation of the strimmer is given internally.	Training records to be maintained	Clerk	From August 2015	Done/ ongoing
Hedge Cutting	Staff who may fall from a height. Lacerations from the hedge cutters. Hearing damage from noise. Burns from hot engines.	Small scaffold is used to provide a stable platform. Hearing protection is provided. Gloves and eye protection is provided.	Staff member(s) to be trained in scaffold erection. Records of such training are to be maintained.	Operations Manager to organise the training. Clerk to maintain the records.	From August 2015	Training record done
Application of Chemicals	Staff who handle the chemicals; members of the public who are near.	Protective clothing, chemical gloves and respiratory protection is provided. No application takes place if any unprotected person is nearby. All excess chemicals are stored in a secure cupboard. Only minimal amounts of hazardous chemicals are purchased at a time.	Applicators are to be trained and hold valid authorisation certificates. Training records are to be maintained.	Operations Manager to organise the training. Clerk to maintain the records.	From August 2015	Training record done
Use of ladders to gain access	Staff falling off ladders; ladders being damaged and breaking when in use.	Ladders are inspected before use for signs of damage. Staff are instructed in "three point climbing"	Ladders are to be individually numbered and a ladder register is to be opened and maintained.	Operations Manager and Clerk.	From August 2015	Ongoing
Use of a gantry with block and tackle	Employees and headstone erectors may get crushed if a gantry fails or chains break.	Gantry is inspected for signs of damage before use. Only those trained in the use of the gantry are permitted to operate the system.	Chains and block(s) are to be examined by a qualified engineer and records maintained.	Operations Manager and Clerk	From August 2015	Ongoing
Storage of fuel	Fire and possible fatalities	Petrol is stored in two 20l Jerry Cans in a fire proof chest. White diesel is also stored in two 20l jerry cans in the same location. Red diesel is stored in an external tank.	Checks are to be made to prevent fuel being left outside the storage chest for long periods of time.	Operations Manager	From August 2015	Ongoing

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
Maintenance checks including inspection of cable, blades, tyres, etc. Also includes cleaning and washing.	Staff exposed to sharp blades, fuels, oils; etc which could cause lacerations or exacerbate skin conditions. Use of the jet wash could cause spray bounce-back into the eyes and face.	All staff supplied with hand protection and eye protection.	Staff are to be told to report any lacerations or skin damage to their manager. Where possible, any checks should be completed before leaving the storage shed so as to avoid the need for lone working.	Operations Manager	From August 2015	Ongoing
Use of the Tractors to pull the water bowser; the gritter or to push the snow plough.	Only the Tractor registered for use on the highway may be used on the public highway. Staff may be injured through a road traffic accident or malfunction of the plant.	Only trained drivers are to operate the tractors either on the road or within the cemetery. Regular servicing is undertaken and records kept.	Tractors not compliant with current legislation are to be taken out of service. Tractors are to be assessed in accordance with the "Farm Vehicle Health Check Scheme", run by NFU. All operators are to be certificated. The HSE advice leaflet "Using tractors safely" is to be provided to all users.	Operations Manager and Clerk	From August 2015	Ongoing
Use of chain saws	Staff exposed to noise and sharp blades causing cuts – possibly severe.	Only trained staff to use the saws. Protective clothing, face and eye protection is provided. Gloves are worn when operating the saws but removed when blade sharpening.	Only certificated staff are to use the chain saws. All certificates are to be checked for validity.	Operations Manager and Clerk	From August 2015	Ongoing
Use of back-mounted leaf blowers and hand-held portable leaf suckers.	Staff exposed to noise and musculoskeletal disorders. Burns from hot engines.	Staff are to be warned of the risks.	Any instances of sprains and strains are to be reported.	Operations Manager	From August 2015	Ongoing

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done
The use of a generator, a petrol driven cement mixer, and a petrol driven grave pump,	Staff exposed to Carbon Monoxide poisoning from exhaust fumes. Burns from hot engines and strains and sprains when moving the equipment into location. Fire.	No equipment is to be used in an enclosed space. Hearing and hand protection is provided. Filling of the tanks is carried out using a funnel and small cans.	All staff to be made aware of the risks.	Operations Manager	From August 2015	Ongoing
The use of the pick-up	Staff involved with a road traffic accident.	Only staff with an appropriate licence are to drive the pick-up. The vehicle is regularly serviced and records are kept.	The validity of licences are to be checked on an annual basis and photocopies retained for recording purposes.	Clerk	From August 2015	Done/ ongoing
Inspection of Allotments and Play Parks	Play parks are inspected early in the morning and often necessitate lone working. This exposes staff members to risk of attack.	Staff keep in touch with each other by the use of personal mobile phones.	Staff to be made aware of the potential risks.	Operations Manager	From August 2015	Ongoing
Use of small portable tools.	All small electrical items are subject to PAT testing.	Before use staff give all tools a brief visual examination.	Staff to be made aware of the risk.	Operations Manager	From August 2015	Ongoing
Use of computers	Musculoskeletal disorders; eye strain	None at present.	All work stations are to be assessed for risk and identified users to be offered eye tests and given advice, if necessary, on posture. Staff to be made aware of the risks	Clerk	From August 2015	Ongoing
The use of ground based hand tools	Trivial risks only from the use of forks, shovels, picks, hoes, etc.	None at present	None necessary			

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

February 2020 – Date for Review: February 2021
clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
23 FEBRUARY 2021
REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

All Local Councils have to keep their Standing Orders and Financial Regulations under review and should usually carry out a review at least every four years to coincide with normal election periods.

Standing Orders are to help the Council run its business smoothly and, apart from any rules laid down by legislation, are chosen by the Council. Financial Regulations are effectively Standing Orders which just cover financial matters.

External auditors recommend Councils use the model Standing Orders issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) with amendments to fit local preferences. The current Hexham Town Council Standing Orders were adopted in 2013 and last revised in 2018 for minor amendments because of the number of Councillors that Council had agreed would serve on Standing Committees.

NALC notes:

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

Standing Orders **in bold** cannot be changed or deleted.

The Committee is requested to consider the attached Standing Orders (based on the NALC model updated in 2020, added to/changed from the Council's current Standing Orders where highlighted) and Financial Regulations (based on the NALC model updated in 2019, added to/changed from the Council's current Financial Regulations where highlighted) and recommend them to Full Council.

Jane Kevan
Town Clerk
February 2021