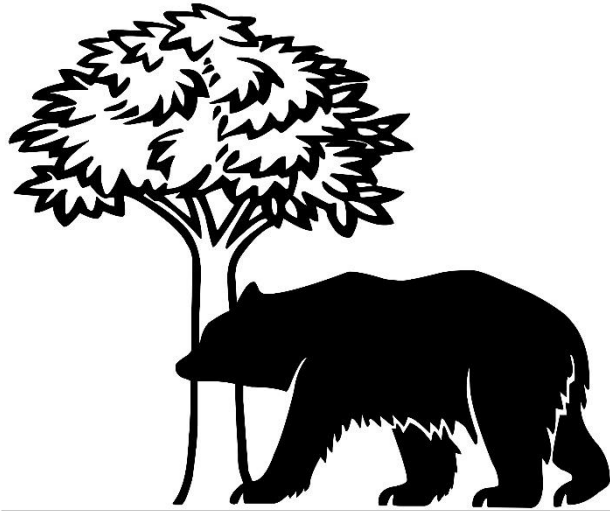


BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 26 June 2023 at
6.00 pm in The Meeting Room, Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82 –
88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	J Robertson (Chair)	G Smith
	R Driver	L Stephenson
	M Greener	T Stewart
	P Jackson	J Turton
	R Mackenzie	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gareth Davies, Town Clerk
Stephen Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace
Justine Walker, Administration Assistant
5 members of the public

MINUTE NO.	TITLE AND DESCRIPTION OF ITEM	Mover	Seconder	Decision
C030/23	OPEN SESSION			
	Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. This is for a period of 15 minutes overall and is limited to 3 minutes per person.	N/A	N/A	A member of the public raised issues and concerns regarding Newfields Play Area and DDA compliance, as to which the Town Clerk provided a response as the way forward.
C031/23	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE			
	To receive apologies for absence.	N/A	N/A	Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J Bowden, G Brown, P Jackson for his lateness and H Lindsay.
C032/23	MINUTES			
	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 02 May 2023.	MG	TS	As the appointments to outside bodies required an amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on the 02 May 2023 would be brought to the next meeting of Council.
C033/23	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS			
	(i) Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items	N/A	N/A	Cllr T Stewart declared an interest in Item 12 and left the meeting for consideration of that item.

	<p>included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 9 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.</p> <p>(ii) To receive and consider requests from members who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any items on the agenda an application for dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to enable members to participate in discussions and voting.</p>			There were no requests for dispensation.
C034/23	TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS			
	To receive announcements from the Town Mayor.	N/A	N/A	The Town Mayor provided hard copies outlining details of events they had attended and been involved in.
C035/23	ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT			
	To consider the Council's response to the individual statements contained in the Annual Governance Statement section of the AGAR and to authorize the Mayor to sign the Annual Governance statement.	Mayor	MG	<p>Council considered each of the questions asked by the Annual Governance Statements in turn, and</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 1,</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 2,</p>

				<p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 3,</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 4,</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 5,</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 6,</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 7, and</p> <p>To unanimously answer in the affirmative to question 8.</p>
C036/23	ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS			
	To approve the Accounting Statements for the year 2022-23.	Mayor	MG	The Town Clerk provided an update including on variances, after which, Council unanimously RESOLVED to accept the accounting statements.
C037/23	PUBLICISING THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)			
	To consider the report.	Mayor	MG	It was unanimously RESOLVED , to complete and publish the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
C038/23	INTERNAL AUDIT			
	To note the successful conclusion of the internal audit and to refer any issues raised to the Budget and Administration Committee.	Mayor	MG	The Town Clerk provided an update on issues with the Assets Register. After which, it was unanimously RESOLVED to adopt the report and

				to refer issues, including the issue of the Assets Register, to the Budget and Administration Committee.
C039/23	INTERNAL AUDITOR			
	To consider the appointment of internal auditors for the Town Council.	Mayor	MG	Council unanimously RESOLVED to appoint Account-Ant as the internal auditor for the Town Council.
C040/23	BUDGET VIREMENTS			
	To consider the report.	Mayor	MG	Council RESOLVED to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the virements detailed in the report, and 2. Delegate to the Budget and Administration Committee the authority to review the electricity costs at its meeting in September and to make recommendations to Council as to the virement required.
C041/23	CCTV			
	To provide guidance as to the scope of a review of CCTV around the town.	Mayor	PJ	Cllr T Stewart left the meeting for consideration of this item. The Town Clerk introduced the item. After which, Council RESOLVED : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To remove CCTV as requested to enable the refurbishment of the specified building, 2. To instruct the Town Clerk to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to ask why

				<p>the Town Council is required to pay for CCTV,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To instruct the Town Clerk to write to Northumbria Police asking for evidence as to the efficacy of the CCTV, and 4. To instruct the Town Clerk to investigate statistics regarding reported crime.
C042/23	STAFFING REVIEW			
	To consider appointing an external advisor to undertake a staffing review.	Mayor	JT	Council RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to appoint an external consultant.
C043/23	STREET CLEANING			
	<p>To consider Minute Number BA007/23 of the Budget and Administration Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13 June 2023:</p> <p>Cllr J Robertson asked for an update regarding the cleaning of the pavements on Marygate by a local contractor. The Town Clerk provided a response that a decision was made under urgency rules after a meeting with County Councillors and the contractor and that consideration would be given at Council as to future arrangements.</p>	Mayor	JT	Council RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to negotiate with suppliers over a suitable package of equipment and to bring the issue to the next meeting of Council.
C044/23	RESERVES			
	<p>To consider Minute Number BA011/23 of the Budget and Administration Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13 June 2023:</p> <p>The Town Clerk provided an update including that there</p>	Mayor	JT	Two background papers were distributed to Members and the Town Clerk introduced the reports. After which, Council RESOLVED :

	<p>will be a recommendation to restore the Operating Reserve to £150k. After which, Councillors RESOLVED to recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Earmarked Reserves (EMR) 322 and 338 be transferred to operational reserves, 2. That EMR's 324 and 334 be merged to be £20k with any spare monies transferred to general reserves, 3. That EMR's 325, 329 and 337 be merged. <p>Furthermore, Councillors expressed their views on whether reserves should be increased, decreased, left at the same level, deleted or merged.</p>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To amend reserves as stated in the report, 2. To further amend reserves as directed by Members, 3. To authorise the Town Clerk to implement the replacement of the existing van with an electric vehicle as per the tabled quote, the purchase to be paid from reserves, and 4. To authorise the Town Clerk to spend £4850 from EMR 326 to create private working space on first floor.
C045/23	INDUCTION POLICY			
	<p>To consider Minute Number BA014/23 of the Budget and Administration Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13 June 2023:</p> <p>Cllr J Robertson introduced the item and suggestions included a section on how to book a course.</p> <p>After which, the Committee noted that comments be provided to the Town Clerk and that the policy would be considered at the next meeting of Council.</p>	RM	Mayor	<p>Cllr J Robertson introduced the item. After which, Council RESOLVED to adopt the induction policy subject to the amendments discussed by Members.</p>
C046/23	A1 DUALLING – LETTER TO AMT			
	<p>To consider correspondence received from the Mayor of Alnwick Town Council.</p>	JR	JT	<p>Council RESOLVED to bring a draft letter to next council encompassing statistics as to usage of charitable hospital transport, other data, including</p>

				accident data, and an update on the Union Connectivity review.
C047/23	CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS			
	To co-opt Members to the vacant seats at Magdalene Ward, St Boisil Ward x 2 and Upper Spittal Ward.	Mayor	MG	Council unanimously RESOLVED that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms L Hawken be duly co-opted as a member of the Council for Upper Spittal Ward, and 2. Cllr P Jackson act as their buddy for the initial period.
C048/23	LAND AT RAMPARTS			
	To approve the signing of a Licence Agreement for land at the Ramparts.	Mayor	JT	Council RESOLVED that the Town Clerk sign the Licence Agreement and that the Town Council occupy the land as soon as possible.
C049/23	THE MARKET CHARTER/ LICENCE			
	To provide guidance to the Town Clerk and Officers on the matter of the Market.	Mayor	LS	Council RESOLVED to instruct the Town Clerk to write to the parties involved making clear the Town Council's wish to bring the market under local control.
C050/23	CHRISTMAS LIGHTS			
	To receive a verbal update.	NA	NA	Members provided guidance to the Town Clerk, which included the use of permanent trees on housing estates with lights added, more lights in trees, lighting features on existing street trees and additional lights on West Street

C051/23	PLANNING COMMITTEE			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 02 May 2023. ii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 May 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TS JT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JR RD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. It was RESOLVED on the motion to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 02 May 2023. ii. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 May 2023.
C052/23	COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES COMMITTEE			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 02 May 2023. ii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 05 June 2023 (to follow). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MG JR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JT JT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 02 May 2023. ii. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 05 June 2023.
<p>At this point it was RESOLVED on the motion of the mayor, seconded by Cllr Turton, to suspend standing orders sufficiently to allow the meeting to proceed beyond 8pm.</p>				
C053/23	BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 02 May 2023. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 02 May 2023.

	ii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 13 June 2023.	TS	MG	ii. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 13 June 2023.
C054/23	STAFFING AND CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE			
	i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 02 May 2023.	JT	RM	i. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 02 May 2023.
	ii. To note the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 31 May 2023.	JT	RM	ii. It was RESOLVED to note the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 31 May 2023.
C055/23	DATE OF NEXT MEETING			
	The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday, 24 July 2023 at 6 pm.	N/A	N/A	
The Council RESOLVED under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following business on the basis that public discussion may prejudice the Council's position and/or staffing issues may be discussed on the motion of the Mayor seconded by Cllr M Greener.				
C056/23	STAFFING ISSUES			
	To consider the reports.			

	Appendix M	TS	RD	Council RESOLVED to approve a request from a member of staff for a permanent variation of their contract, with continuity of employment.
	Appendix N	RM	TS	Council RESOLVED to approve the proposed changes to staffing arrangements for a period of no more than 13 weeks, amounting to 16 hours in total per week.
	Appendix O	JR	JT	Council RESOLVED that a disciplinary panel be convened comprising Cllrs R Mackenzie, J Robertson and T Stewart with Cllr G Brown acting as reserve.
C057/23	DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-27			
	To consider the draft Strategic Plan 2023-27.	Nem con		Council RESOLVED to approve the draft Strategic Plan 2023-27 as a working document.