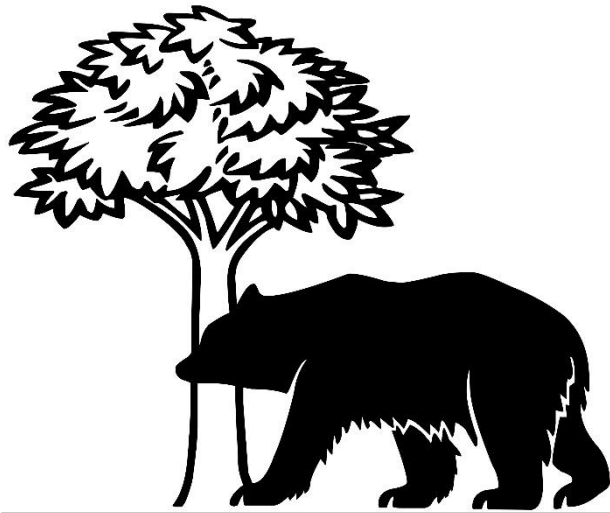


## BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



# Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 27 November  
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)	R Mackenzie
	J Bowden	G Smith
	G Brown	L Stephenson
	R Driver	T Stewart
	L Hawken	J Turton

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Gareth Davies, Town Clerk  
Stephen Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk  
Justine Walker, Administration Assistant  
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace  
Cty Cllr Georgina Hill  
Cty Cllr Isabel Hunter  
Cty Cllr Catherine Seymour  
4 members of the public

<b>MINUTE NO.</b>	<b>TITLE AND DESCRIPTION OF ITEM</b>	<b>Mover</b>	<b>Secunder</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>C095/23</b>	<b>OPEN SESSION</b>			
	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	Thanks were given for the Christmas Lights around the town before concerns and issues were raised regarding the accounts and audit for 2022-2023. The Town Clerk provided a response including that Officers are exploring the possibility of using an external organisation to complete the end-of-year process and AGAR for 2023-2024.
<b>C096/23</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>			
	To receive apologies for absence.	N/A	N/A	Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Greener.
<b>C097/23</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>			
	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 25 September 2023.	Nem con		The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2023, including the amendment to the draft minutes previously circulated by the Town Clerk, were agreed and signed as a correct record.
<b>C098/23</b>	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS</b>			
	(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	i. There were no disclosures of interest.

	<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>	N/A	N/A	ii. There were no requests for dispensation.
<b>C099/23</b>	<b>TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>			
	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.
<b>C100/23</b>	<b>PROJECTED FINANCIAL OUTTURN</b>			
	To note the report.	Nem con		Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the report.
<b>C101/23</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the item and provided Councillors with a presentation which would be filed with the minutes.

				Members then raised a number of queries on the percentage of the precept calculation increase, meeting dates, borrowing, reserves and Schedule 3. After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the report.
<b>C102/23</b>	<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATIONN REQUEST – INTERNAL REVIEW</b>			
	To consider the proposed response of council to the request for an Internal Review of the decision of the Town Clerk concerning a Freedom of Information request.	Nem con		Members raise a number of queries including on salary bands and the Information Commissioner's Office. After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the proposed response circulated with the Council papers.
<b>C103/23</b>	<b>PROPOSALS FOR GROWTH AND SAVINGS</b>			
	Members may wish to consider whether there are any areas of the Council's work where expenditure should grow or where savings can be made.	Nem con		There were no additional proposals for growth and savings.
<b>C104/23</b>	<b>VISITOR SERVICES</b>			
	To receive an update.	Nem con		Councillors requested that more information be sought before a decision could be made. After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to defer the item to the Communities and Local Services Committee.

<b>C105/23</b>	<b>MINUTES PROTOCOL</b>			
	To note the protocol regarding minute taking.	Nem con		Council <b>RESOLVED</b> :  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the protocol regarding minute taking,</li> <li>2. That actions from a meeting to be added to the Strategic Action Plan, and</li> <li>3. A link to the Strategic Action Plan be provided to Councillors via the newsletter.</li> </ol>
<b>C106/23</b>	<b>OFFICE DIGITAL DISPLAY SCREEN</b>			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the purchase of a digital screen and stand for deployment in the Office window.
<b>C107/23</b>	<b>COMMUNITY HOUSING</b>			
	Council is invited to delegate authority to the Planning Committee to initiate discussions around Community Housing within Berwick-upon-Tweed, using the toolkit to be found at <a href="https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/community-led-housing-toolkit">https://www.communityledhomes.org.uk/community-led-housing-toolkit</a> and to direct the Town Clerk to invite potential supporters, partners and advisors to attend Planning Committee.	Nem con		A question was raised regarding the level of Town Council involvement in community housing to which a response was provided.  After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to delegate authority to the Planning Committee to initiate discussions around Community Housing within Berwick-upon-Tweed and to direct the Town Clerk to invite potential supporters, partners and advisors to attend Planning Committee.
<b>C108/23</b>	<b>BANKING ARRANGEMENTS</b>			
	To consider whether the existence of a branch of the council's main banker within Berwick-upon-Tweed is a	Nem con		Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to direct the RFO / Town Clerk to review banking arrangements and that a

	deciding factor in the choice of bankers, and to consider whether to direct the RFO / Town Clerk to review arrangements in the light of the proposed closure of Barclays PLC's office in Berwick-upon-Tweed.			recommendation be brought to the Budget and Administration Committee.
<b>C109/23</b>	<b>ANNOUNCEMENT OF A CASUAL VACANCY</b>			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		It was <b>RESOLVED</b> without dispute, to announce that the casual vacancy had arisen, and to publish the necessary notice.
<b>C110/23</b>	<b>STRATEGIC / ACTION PLAN</b>			
	To receive an update.	Nem con		Members raised a number of queries including on dates in the plan. After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to delegate authority to the Meeting of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to consider the plan. It was then noted that Councillors should put forward any points or queries they have for discussion at that meeting.
<b>C111/23</b>	<b>REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY</b>			
	To note the report.	Nem con		Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the report.
<b>C112/23</b>	<b>PLANTED CHRISTMAS TREES SCHEME</b>			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		Members raised a number of queries including on growth of trees and approval of land owners. After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> :

				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Officers investigate the putting of lights into the existing tree at the Tweedmouth end of the Old Bridge,</li> <li>2. That a meeting be arranged between Councillors and the Projects Officer, and</li> <li>3. To approve the way the project is proceeding.</li> </ol>
<b>C113/23</b>	<b>REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES</b>			
	<p>To consider invitations for representation on outside bodies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees.</li> <li>ii. To consider granting dispensation to those elected as a trustee allowing them to take part in discussions touching on the interests of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees.</li> </ol>	Nem con		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to nominate Cllrs M Greener, R Mackenzie, L Stephenson, T Stewart and J Turton as the Town Council representatives to the Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees.</li> <li>ii. Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to grant dispensation to those elected as a trustee allowing them to take part in discussions touching on the interests of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees.</li> </ol>
<b>C114/23</b>	<b>VIREMENT</b>			
	<p>To consider making a virement of £934 from general reserves to budget code 4058 (office cleaning) due to additional expenditure for work to the front of the Town Council office.</p>	Nem con		<p>The Assistant to the Clerk gave an update regarding extra costs.</p> <p>After which, Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to make a virement of £1,309 from general reserves to budget code 4058 (office cleaning) due to additional</p>

				expenditure for work to the front of the Town Council office.
<b>C115/23</b>	<b>STAFFING AND CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE</b>			
	i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 17 July 2023 (noted at the meeting of 24 July 2023).	JT	TS	i. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 17 July 2023.
	ii. To note the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 02 October 2023.	JT	TS	ii. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 02 October 2023.
<b>C116/23</b>	<b>COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>			
	i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 04 September 2023 (noted at the meeting of 25 September 2023).	JT	GB	i. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 04 September 2023,
	ii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 06 November 2023.	JT	RD	ii. Queries were raised regarding a litter bin for Dock Road and the pocket park at the Greenses. After which, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 06 November 2023,



	<p>iii. Council is invited to consider the following recommendation detailed in minute</p> <p><b>CLS042/23:</b></p> <p><b>CLS042/23:</b> The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the support for the existing system should cease,</li> <li>2. That the existing equipment should be disposed of unless a suitable partner wishes to take on the costs of its maintenance,</li> <li>3. That council should promote the benefits of wider partnership working in the town (to address any new threats from retail theft), and</li> <li>4. That council should seek to support the police and NCC in partnership working to address any identified alcohol related anti-social behaviour, whether arising from off sales or the night-time economy.</li> </ol>	Nem con		<p>iii. Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the following recommendation detailed in minute</p> <p><b>CLS042/23:</b></p> <p><b>CLS042/23:</b> The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the support for the existing system should cease,</li> <li>2. That the existing equipment should be disposed of unless a suitable partner wishes to take on the costs of its maintenance,</li> <li>3. That council should promote the benefits of wider partnership working in the town (to address any new threats from retail theft), and</li> <li>4. That council should seek to support the police and NCC in partnership working to address any identified alcohol related anti-social behaviour, whether arising from off sales or the night-time economy.</li> </ol>
<b>C117/23</b>	<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>			
	<p>i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11 September</p>	TS	JT	<p>i. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held</p>

	<p>2023 (noted at the meeting of 25 September 2023).</p> <p>ii. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9 October 2023.</p> <p>iii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13 November 2023.</p>	<p>RD</p> <p>JT</p>	<p>TS</p> <p>TS</p>	<p>on 11 September 2023.</p> <p>ii. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 9 October 2023.</p> <p>iii. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13 November 2023.</p>
<b>C118/23</b>	<b>BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE</b>			
	<p>i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 12 September 2023 (noted at the meeting of 25 September 2023).</p> <p>ii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 14 November 2023.</p> <p>iii. Council is invited to consider the following recommendation detailed in minute <b>BA037/23</b>: <b>BA037/23</b>: “The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they adopt the Financial Regulations with the appendix and amendment mentioned during the discussion.”</p>	<p>RM</p> <p>RM</p> <p>Nem con</p>	<p>TS</p> <p>LH</p>	<p>i. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 12 September 2023.</p> <p>ii. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 14 November 2023.</p> <p>iii. Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the following recommendation detailed in minute <b>BA037/23</b>: <b>BA037/23</b>: “The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they adopt the Financial Regulations with the appendix and amendment mentioned during the discussion.”</p>

	<p>iv. Council is invited to consider the following recommendation detailed in minute <b>BA038/23</b>: <b>BA038/23</b>: “It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they adopt the Communications Policy with the amendments mentioned during the discussion.”</p> <p>v. Council is invited to consider the following recommendation detailed in minute <b>BA039/23</b>: <b>BA039/23</b>: “The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they delegate consideration regarding pay costs and inflation to the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee.”</p>	Nem con		<p>iv. Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the following recommendation detailed in minute <b>BA038/23</b>: <b>BA038/23</b>: “It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to Council they adopt the Communications Policy with the amendments mentioned during the discussion.”</p> <p>v. The invitation to consider the recommendation detailed in minute <b>BA039/23</b> fell as new Financial Regulations had been approved at point iii of this minute.</p>
<b>C119/23</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>			
	The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday, 18 December 2023 at 6 pm.	N/A	N/A	Noted.
	<b>Council RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was appropriate to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following items of business on the basis that public discussion might prejudice the Council's position and staffing or personal issues might be discussed.</b>			

<b>C120/23</b>	<b>SALARIES DETAILS AND DRIFT FOR 2024</b>			
	To note the report.			Council <b>RESOLVED</b> that the report, along with the amendment, be approved and subsequently signed by the Mayor.