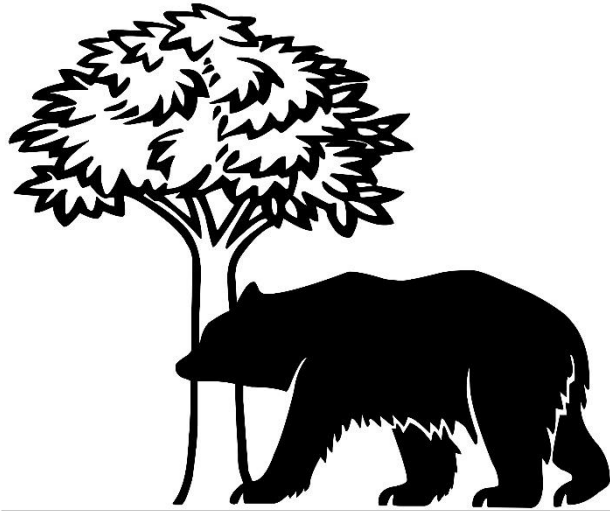


BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



**Berwick-upon-Tweed
Town Council**

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 22 April 2024 at
6.00 pm in The Meeting Room, Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82 –
88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	J Robertson (Chair)	L Hawken
	J Bowden	R Mackenzie
	G Brown	G Smith
	R Driver	J Turton
	M Greener	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gareth Davies, Town Clerk
Stephen Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk
Justine Walker, Administration Assistant
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace
Cty Cllr I Hunter
0 members of the public

MINUTE NO.	TITLE AND DESCRIPTION OF ITEM	Mover	Second r	Decision
C157/23	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	Cllr R Driver raised concerns regarding posts on social media with reference to missing stone wear and kerb stones. Cllr L Hawken raised concerns regarding missing kerb stones at Bankhill. The Mayor reminded the meeting of the website fixmystreet.com whilst the Town Clerk would contact the Highways Manager at Northumberland County Council (NCC).
C158/23	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE			
	To receive apologies for absence.	N/A	N/A	Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs L Stephenson and T Stewart.
C159/23	MINUTES			
	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 22 January 2024.	JT	RD	The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2024, including the amendment to the draft minutes previously circulated by the Town Clerk, were agreed and signed as a correct record.

C160/23	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS			
	<p>(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 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	i. There were no disclosures of interest.
		N/A	N/A	ii. There were no requests for dispensation.

C161/23	TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS			
	To receive announcements from the Town Mayor.	N/A	N/A	The Mayor provided details of events they had attended and been involved in, including the Mayor's Awards Ceremony, the Sashing Ceremony ahead of the Riding of the Bounds, a Freedom Ceremony, the unveiling of wooden statues at Flagstaff Park, the Sheriff's Club Dinner, the opening of the season at the Rowing Club and the Rotary Club's Spirit of Sport event.
C162/23	REVISION TO STANDING ORDERS			
	To consider the proposed revision to Standing Orders.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the item including an update on a new paragraph D(viii). Members asked a number of questions including on the appointment of Chairs at the Annual Meeting and representation at the Chairs / Vice-Chairs meeting. After which, Council RESOLVED to adopt the proposed revision to Standing Order 4.
C163/23	FUTURE OF BERWICK MARKET			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		Members asked a number of questions including on ownership of the land, ownership of the charter and costs to the Town Council.

				<p>After which, Council RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town Clerk write to the leader of NCC, copying the letter to the 3 local County Councils expressing the Town Council's concerns regarding costs, and 2. The item be deferred to a future meeting of the Council.
C164/23	PROTOCOL FOR MEETINGS			
	To consider the proposed revisions to the protocol for meetings, and to append it to the Communications Strategy.	Nem con		<p>Council RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the proposed revisions to the protocol for meetings, and 2. To append it to the Communications Strategy.
C165/23	CHANGE TO ACCOUNTANCY PRACTICES FOR 2024-25			
	To notify members of a change to accountancy practices.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the item, after which, Council RESOLVED to note the change to accountancy practices.
C166/23	PUBLIC ART			
	Jimmy Strength Statue Minute CLS071/23 from Communities & Local Services of 4 March 2024.	Nem con		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Town Clerk updated the meeting of the result of a survey which showed residents were significantly in favour of the statue being located on Marygate.

	<p>“Standing Orders were suspended to allow a representative of the project to provide an update on the handout distributed at the meeting, including that the actual location would be opposite West Street.</p> <p>Members then asked a number of questions including on the location of a plaque, is the work based on the original statue, location of the statue and if there has been a consultation.</p> <p>After which, the Committee RESOLVED that a poll be conducted to gauge the level of support from the public and their preferred location with the result to be reported to April’s meeting of Council so that a decision can be made.”</p>			<p>After which, Council RESOLVED to note that the result would be reported to representatives of the project.</p> <p>2. The Town Clerk reported that the Cultural Creative Zone have approached the Town Council to enquire if a stained-glass window depicting the bridges of Berwick can be hosted at the office. After which, Council RESOLVED to approve the hosting.</p> <p>3. Council RESOLVED to note the update that the Town Council Office would be hosting a display by Berwick Camera Club with the opening ceremony to be held on a Saturday. It was further noted that the possibility of using volunteers for further Saturday opening would be explored.</p>
C167/23	IT EQUIPMENT			
	To consider authorising the spending of up to £1,500 on IT equipment for the Sergeant-at-Mace and Wardens.	Nem con		Council RESOLVED to approve the spending of up to £1,500 on IT equipment for the Sergeant-at-Mace and Wardens.

C168/23	CIVILITY AND RESPECT POLICY			
	To consider adoption of the Civility and Respect Policy.	Nem con		An enquiry was made as to how the policy would relate to Standing Orders. After which, Council RESOLVED to adopt the Civility and Respect Policy.
C169/23	OUTDOOR LEISURE			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		During discussion the importance of calculating what is deliverable and understanding of available funding was noted. After which, Council RESOLVED to form a working group of Cllrs R Driver, M Greener, L Hawken, R Mackenzie and J Robertson to investigate the scoping exercise and to report back to the Communities and Local Services Committee within 6 months of the date of this meeting. Standing Orders were suspended sufficiently to allow Cty Cllr I Hunter to report that NCC are researching funding to deliver a play-zone.
C170/23	SCRUTINY AND SCRUTINY OF COUNCILS ACTIONS			
	To consider the document circulated as a background paper.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the item, and an enquiry was put forward as to how scrutiny is

				<p>made a sustainable structured tool and reference was also made to the proposed Terms of Reference and outside agencies. The Town Clerk then updated Members with options for the way forward.</p> <p>After which, Council RESOLVED that scrutiny of specific topics be investigated by individual Task and Finish Groups, with Officer support, who would report to Council.</p>
C171/23	TRANSFER OF ENGAGEMENTS			
	<p>Following reviews council is recommended to instruct the Town Clerk to:</p> <p>a) Transfer the council's main bank account to Unity Trust, and</p> <p>b) To open a suitable savings account with Unity Trust, and</p> <p>c) To add the existing bank account signatories to the account.</p>	Nem con		<p>Council RESOLVED to instruct the Town Clerk to:</p> <p>a) Transfer the council's main bank account to Unity Trust,</p> <p>b) Open a suitable savings account with Unity Trust, and</p> <p>c) Add the existing bank account signatories to the account.</p>
C172/23	TERMS OF REFERENCE			
	To consider the proposed revised Terms of Reference.	Nem con		Council noted the commendation of Cllr R Driver for those who had worked upon the Terms of Reference.

				After which, Council RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference, which would be confirmed at the Annual Meeting of Council.
C173/23	MUNICIPAL CALENDAR			
	To consider the report.	Nem con		Members noted that the meetings of the Budget and Administration Committee in June and Planning Committee in September and November will take place on a Monday. After which, Council RESOLVED to approve the Municipal Calendar, which would be noted at the Annual Meeting of Council.
C174/23	COMMUNICATION STRATEGY			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To consider the action plan (to follow). ii. To consider arrangements for distribution of Town Council newsletters. 	Nem con		The Town Clerk updated Members of discussions at February's meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee regarding the Town Council's newsletters. These arrangements include 2 leaflet drops to households in the Town Council area, one in February / March and one in September, also there would be fewer residents' newsletters, with a timeframe of every 6 – 8 weeks.

				<p>After which, Council RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposal be incorporated into the Action Plan as part of the Communications Strategy, and 2. The planning for the leaflets / newsletters be deferred to the June meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee.
C175/23	EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY			
	To consider the revised Equality and Diversity Policy.	Nem con		<p>Members provided updates and amendments including for paragraphs 1.1, 2.1 and 2.2 and noted that Cllr R Driver would produce revised data.</p> <p>After which, Council RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To accept the revised Equality and Diversity Policy subject to the amendments mentioned and including any further changes emailed to the Town Clerk, with formal adoption of the policy to take place at the Annual Meeting of Council, and 2. A letter from the Mayor, with advice from the Town Clerk, be sent to the

				Freeman of Berwick-upon-Tweed asking for an update to accessibility plans for the Town Hall.
C176/23	OUTURN / OVERSPENDS			
	To note the report.	Nem con		The Town Clerk introduced the item and updated Members that the year-end would take place in May, a report is required for the internal auditor and that a final report would be brought to a future meeting of Council. Members asked a number of questions including on headings, Legal and Professional Fees, Committed expenditure and Riding of the Bounds. After which, Council RESOLVED to note the report and the update of the Town Clerk.
C177/23	FSCS ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FOR SMALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES			
	To note the correspondence.	Nem con		The Town Clerk updated members that the annual budget is over the figure mentioned meaning the Town Council is not covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme hence the Town Council has invested across different institutions.

				After which, Council RESOLVED to note the update.
C178/23	VIREMENT			
	To consider making a virement of £1,680 from the Seat & Bus Shelter Reserve to budget code 4502 (Bus Shelter Maintenance).	Nem con		The Town Clerk provided updates regarding bus shelters requiring attention on North Road and Castlegate. Also included in the update, the Town Council has permission from NCC to install a bus shelter opposite Asda to be paid for from Reserves in financial year 20024-2025 Cllr J Turton enquired of bus shelters on Cornhill Road previously raised by Cllr L Stephenson which would be discussed at Communities and Local Services. After which, Council RESOLVED to approve a virement of £1,680 from the Seat & Bus Shelter Reserve to budget code 4502 (Bus Shelter Maintenance).
C179/23	ACTION PLAN			
	To receive an update.	Nem con		The Town Clerk provided an explanation that all Action Plans would be reset in May to start the new Civic Year and that all new Committee Chairs and the new Mayor will be invited to collaborate with the Town Clerk. Meetings of

				<p>Chairs / Vice-Chairs will then continue to discuss Action Plans at their meetings.</p> <p>After which, Council RESOLVED to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the quote provided for hire of an additional van, 2. Approve the quote at Option 2 for items at Flagstaff Park to be spent from Reserves. <p>The Town Clerk then updated Members of a pilot scheme for recyclable wheelchair and pushchair accessible street furniture at Spittal Play Area.</p>
At this point it was unanimously RESOLVED , to suspend standing orders sufficiently to allow the meeting to proceed beyond 8pm.				
		Nem con		<p>After which, Council RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve in principle the quotes for purchase and installation of wheelchair / pushchair accessible recyclable street furniture, and 2. To delegate to a small group of Councillors, approval to consider the

				<p>location for the siting of the street furniture.</p> <p>Land ownership issues regarding the locating of seating and tables at Highcliffe were then discussed.</p> <p>After which, Council RESOLVED that a letter be sent to Bernicia and NCC seeking permission to site street furniture.</p>
C180/23	STAFFING AND CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE			
	<p>i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 04 December 2023 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).</p> <p>ii. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 05 February 2024.</p> <p>iii. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 18 March 2024.</p>	<p>JT</p> <p>JT</p> <p>GB</p>	<p>GB</p> <p>GB</p> <p>JT</p>	<p>i. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 04 December 2023 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).</p> <p>ii. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 05 February 2024.</p> <p>iii. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 18 March 2024.</p>

	iv. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 10 April 2024.	JT	GB	iv. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee held on 10 April 2024.
C181/23	COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES COMMITTEE			
	i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 08 January 2024 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).	MG	JT	i. Cllr L Hawken enquired as to when Councillors can ask about action points to be followed up, to which the Town Clerk replied that this could be anytime. After which, it was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 08 January 2024 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).
	ii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 04 March 2024.	JT	GB	ii. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Communities and Local Services Committee held on 04 March 2024.
C182/23	PLANNING COMMITTEE			
	i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 09 January	RD	GS	i. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning

	<p>2024 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).</p> <p>ii. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 12 February 2024.</p> <p>iii. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 08 April 2024.</p>	<p>JR</p> <p>RD</p>	<p>RD</p> <p>JR</p>	<p>Committee held on 09 January 2024 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).</p> <p>ii. Cllr L Hawken enquired of an action point at Minute P067/23 and it was agreed that Minutes be distributed to all Councillors upon completion. After which, it was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 12 February 2024.</p> <p>iii. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 08 April 2024.</p>
C183/23	BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE			
	<p>i. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 15 January 2024 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).</p> <p>ii. To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held</p>	<p>JR</p> <p>RD</p>	<p>MG</p> <p>MG</p>	<p>i. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 15 January 2024 (noted at the meeting of 22 January 2024).</p> <p>ii. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and</p>

	<p>on 26 February 2024</p> <p>iii. Council is invited to consider the following recommendation detailed in minute BA075/23: BA075/23: “The Committee RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the Town Council’s main current account be transferred to Unity Trust Bank with further options to follow regarding savings accounts.”</p> <p>iv. Council is invited to consider the following recommendation detailed in minute BA084/23: BA084/23: “The Committee unanimously RESOLVED to recommend to Council approval of the costings circulated as a background paper for PAYE services.”</p> <p>v. To note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 18 March 2024.</p>	<p>Nem con</p> <p>Nem con</p> <p>MG</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p>RD</p>	<p>Administration Committee held on 26 February 2024</p> <p>iii. Council noted that this item had been dealt with earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>iv. Council RESOLVED to accept the following recommendation detailed in minute BA084/23: BA084/23: “The Committee unanimously RESOLVED to recommend to Council approval of the costings circulated as a background paper for PAYE services.”</p> <p>v. It was RESOLVED to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 18 March 2024.</p>
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C184/23	DATE OF NEXT MEETING			
	The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday, 07 May 2024 at 6 pm.	N/A	N/A	Noted.
	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.			
C185/23	STAFFING REVIEW			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To consider the report of the Chair of Staffing Committee and advice from the HR Consultant. ii. To consider the advice of the Town Clerk. 	Nem con		<p>The Town Clerk updated Members that as a result of the earlier Staffing and Corporate Resources Committee meeting, the 2 points mentioned on the agenda are able to be merged.</p> <p>After which, Council RESOLVED to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retrospectively appoint Cllrs G Brown and L Hawken to undertake a staffing review, 2. Approve their recommendations as a result of the Staffing Review, and 3. Approve the HR advice to Council.