

Review of Governance

Background

1. Hoey Ainscough Associates were invited by NCC to undertake a review of Berwick upon Tweed Borough Council. The review report is published along with this report.
2. The review produced a list of recommendations.
3. This report will not precis the Hoey Ainscough report, but members are urged to read that report before considering the issues laid out below. This report lists the recommendations from the Hoey Ainscough report, numbered as they were in the original report, and below each provides a response or proposal which council will be invited to approve.

Summary list of recommendations

R1 All councillors should give an individual signed undertaking to treat fellow councillors and officers with respect and not to make personal attacks on individuals either in public or in private. Until such respect is shown the council cannot move forward.

Response: Council is invited to adopt the recommendation as its policy, to invite all sitting councillors to sign the form [below](#), and to ask all newly elected and re-elected councillors to sign a similar form in May 2017.

R2 All councillors should undertake that, where they have concerns about the way a decision has been made or a procedure followed they should discuss this with the clerk and the clerk should be allowed to give a ruling with reasons as to whether or not the concern is legitimate. Where the concern is legitimate such a ruling should include the steps needed either to rectify the matter or the changes needed to prevent the matter re-occurring.

Response: Council is recommended to resolve

1. That it [adopts the policy set out below](#) on Proper Officer's rulings,
2. That it resolves to amend its standing orders to reflect the draft standing orders within the policy and
3. That it further resolves to publish both the process for requesting a Proper Officer's ruling and the outcome of requests for rulings on its website.

R3 The council should allocate official email accounts to councillors to be used when communicating on council matters or when councillors communicate with residents about council matters.

Response: That council resolves to instruct the Interim Town Clerk to begin the process of procuring appropriate email providers, and that a report be brought to Town Council.

R4 The town council should collectively agree a social media policy which makes clear that, while social media can and should be used by individuals to promote policy debate and communicate with the public, attacks on the integrity of individuals are not appropriate.

Response: Council notes that it already has a social media policy, published on its website. Council is therefore recommended to resolve to add, to its social media policy, a preface that states

‘All members of Berwick upon Tweed Town Council are asked to sign an undertaking to treat fellow councillors and officers with respect and not to make personal attacks on individuals either in public or in private. Social media activity of any kind is covered by that undertaking, and breach of the undertaking may bring Berwick upon Tweed Town Council into disrepute.’

R5 The council needs to consider progress so far in implementing the Warren Report and agree an action plan to complete its implementation where appropriate.

Response: Council is recommended to resolve to receive a further report from the Interim Town Clerk, before the end of January 2017, as to the progress with implementing the Warren Report.

R6 The council needs a clear process for setting agenda which is understood by all officers and members. Agendas should set out clearly what the item is about and should normally have reports to support the agenda items.

Response: Council notes that a Forward Plan of decisions has already been introduced, and that the Interim Town Clerk had already indicated plans to revise the process, and is therefore recommended to resolve to adopt the [Agenda Setting and Forward Plan](#) procedure set out below, and further to resolve that the process be added as an appendix to the Financial Procedure manual.

R7 The council needs to agree a consistent approach to minute-taking and minutes need to record clearly what has been decided.

Response: Council is recommended to resolve to add [the document below, headed minute taking](#), to the Financial Procedure manual.

R8 The council needs to review its scheme of delegation and ensure that all officers and members understand what has been delegated to whom.

Response: Council notes both the implications of this recommendation, and recommendation 9, and is recommended to resolve to hold a training day in February 2017 for both existing councillors and would-be councillors on the administrative processes and structures of parish and town councils, and further resolves to seek NALC’s help with this. Council is further recommended to resolve to adopt a revised scheme of delegation by 15th February 2017.

R9 All members need to be familiar with standing orders. The council needs to ensure meetings are run more effectively and efficiently by methods such as enforcing a ‘3 minute’ speaking rule and effective use of motions to move to next business. A chair needs to be seen as impartial and to be supported by members in applying rules effectively and equitably.

Response: Council notes that much of this recommendation is covered by Standing Order 1 of the existing standing orders. Council also notes that standing orders can only work if members agree to

be bound by them, and agree to refrain from such practices as heckling, or failing to address their remarks through the chair. Council notes that such behaviour is disrespectful and therefore a breach of the undertaking members are being asked to give. Council also notes that the use of rights of reply and personal explanations can amount to an abuse, since it prevents debate from flowing in an orderly fashion, and hinders the chair of the meeting in their task of ensuring members only speak on the general topic once. Council is therefore recommended to resolve to amend Standing Order 1.(p) to read

'During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.' And further council is recommended to resolve to amend Standing Order 1(o) to read

Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
- ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
- iii. to make a point of order;
- iv. to give a personal explanation that relates directly to new information concerning the member that was introduced during the debate, in which case they shall with the chair's consent offer their explanation after all other members who wish to do so have spoken, or
- v. in exercise of a right of reply as the mover of the motion before a vote.

Council is further recommended to resolve to instruct the Town Clerk to include the text of standing orders 1(o), 1(p) and 1(t) at the head of each agenda for council.

Council also notes that members of the public taking part in the fifteen minutes set aside for public participation appear unaware of the limits set on their participation; public participation should, according to existing standing orders, be restricted to items of business on the agenda for the meeting. If members of the public wish to engage with the council on any business which is not included in the agenda for a meeting, they can bring it to the council's attention in alternative ways e.g. by written correspondence, attending councillors' surgeries, by convening and attending a parish or community meeting. Standing Order 3(e) refers to this, but appears to be unclear, not least because it states that members of the public may answer questions when it appears clear it should allow them to ask questions; it is therefore recommended that council resolve to amend Standing Order 3(e) to read

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. Council is further recommended to resolve to amend the standard wording of its agenda to reflect standing order 3(e) and to publicize the use of its website and email as a means of addressing written questions to the council.

Council notes, further, that the management of written correspondence is a matter of concern for any local council, and that elected members should be made aware of written correspondence

received of any significance. Council is therefore recommended to resolve to adopt [the policy below, headed 'Written Correspondence'](#) and to add it as an appendix to the Financial Procedures Manual.

R10 The council should work to put in place a methodology to allow an incoming council to develop a strategic plan for its term of office, to be agreed by the council collectively.

Response: Council is recommended to resolve to form a Task and Finish work group of seven members to report to council, by March 15, on the methodology and tools required for the new council to develop its strategic plan.

R11 The council should review its communication strategy in conjunction with the public to evaluate its effectiveness and ensure that the public understands the work of the town council, is engaged in developing a vision for Berwick and is able to participate more fully in local decision making.

Response: Council notes that its current communications strategy is non-existent. Neither does council have a communications plan. Council further notes its previous decision to invest in polling software and better management of its existing social media investments and to develop a library of images to enable promotion of Berwick TC via social media, which constitutes the embryonic form of an engagement and communications strategy. Council also notes that the resource implications of a communications strategy may be beyond its reach unless it can develop partnerships with other trusted voices in the community and use their audiences as levers to project its voice. Council therefore is recommended to resolve to receive a further report from the Interim Town Clerk before March 2017

R12 The council chair and clerk should look to learn from and share best practice with outstanding local councils

Response: Council is recommended to resolve to invite NALC to recommend suitable partners and opportunities for CPD for the Proper Officer and Chair.

R13 The council should develop a comprehensive and ongoing training and development strategy.

Response: As members of NALC and NEREO council have significant access to expert help for both staff development and member development, but council needs no reminding of the significant travelling distances involved in some of the face to face training on offer. Council is therefore recommended to resolve to adopt the recommendation, but with a specific instruction to the ITC that they should explore online training opportunities / providers for all mandatory and health and safety training.

R14 The council should develop an agreed understanding of the role and expectations for individual councillors when they are acting as full council, as committee members, as ward representatives and as representatives of the council externally.

Response: Council notes that job and role descriptions for parish and town councillors are readily available, and that it has been hampered by the lack of induction training for councillors who have joined the council midterm, as well as the lack of refresher training for existing councillors. Council is recommended to resolve to adopt a role definition for councillors by March 15 2017 in order to enable it to plan its induction programme for 2017-18.

R15 The council needs as a matter of priority to decide what role it wants for its clerk and what skills are essential and should undertake a thorough recruitment exercise with support where appropriate to ensure it identifies the best candidate.

Response: Council is invited to note the views of Staffing Committee, who recommend that NEREO be adopted as recruitment partner for the post of Town Clerk, and to note the report of the Interim Town Clerk, below, on [the skill set required for the Town Clerk](#), and is recommended to resolve to invite NEREO to aid the Interim Town Clerk, in consultation with the Staffing Committee to prepare a Job Description for the post of Town Clerk, and to receive a further report at its next meeting on the Job Description, person specification and likely salary required to attract suitable candidates.

R16 The council needs to review its staffing structure to ensure that it is fit for purpose and allows it to deliver on its key priorities and that the clerk is supported in fulfilling their role.

Response: Council notes the view of the Staffing Committee that any staffing review should seek to maximize the potential of its existing staff, notes the paper below from the [Interim Town Clerk on Capacity / Skills Gaps](#), and is recommended to resolve to delegate to the Staffing Committee the power to instruct the Interim Town Clerk to prepare a programme for a staffing review, and to approve that programme..

R17 The council should ensure job descriptions and objectives are kept up to date and there is a proper performance appraisal system.

Response: Job descriptions and objectives will be re-issued after any review and appropriate consultation, and checking their currency and appropriateness should be an annual task for Staffing Committee. Council is recommended to resolve to instruct Staffing Committee to conduct a review of job descriptions and appraisals at its first meeting of each civic year.

R18 The council should agree a system to regulate members' time in the office during working hours to ensure an appropriate balance between an individual councillor being able to carry out their role effectively and officers being able to carry out their duties within working hours.

Response: Councillors need to be able to access officers and consult with them. Currently councillors have no certainty as to when officers will be available, and risk being unable to see officers because of prior engagements. Council is therefore recommended to resolve to have set office hours when councillors may call in for administrative reasons (e.g. to collect papers) and to instruct the Town Clerk to make available three hours per week for half hourly appointments with councillors.

R19 Where Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council needs to use external support to comply with these recommendations, they should consult with Northumberland County Council before agreeing such support to ensure they have considered all the options and are obtaining expert advice at value for money.

Response: Council is recommended to resolve that it welcomes the willingness of Northumberland County Council to provide the support it has already given, and will draw upon that support whenever it feels it needs to do so.

R20 Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council should report on its progress in implementing this action plan to the monitoring officer of Northumberland County Council in 6 months and again in 12 months after the date of this report.

Response: Council is recommended to resolve to provide a copy of its progress reports on this matter to the Monitoring Officer of Northumberland County Council, and to publish them on its own website.

Undertaking to be given by Councillors

1. I understand my duty not to bring the council into disrepute.
2. I have read and understand the report produced by Hoey Ainscough Associates, and its recommendations.
3. I hereby undertake to treat fellow councillors and officers with respect and not to make personal attacks on individuals either in public or in private.
4. I understand that a failure to honour this undertaking will bring the council into disrepute.
5. I understand and accept that this undertaking applies to social media activity and other forms of communication.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Received on behalf of Berwick upon Tweed Town Council:

Proper Officer's Rulings

1. The role of the clerk includes providing council with expert advice on the process by which it reaches decisions.
2. In order for members and residents of the council area to have confidence in the clerk's rulings those rulings need to be clear, and available to all.
3. A process for obtaining and publicizing a ruling of the clerk to the council is not a substitute for the remedies available via other avenues; in practice however, should the clerk ever rule that a decision is unreasonable in the way unreasonableness is defined in this policy, council may wish to consider seeking a remedy by agreement.
4. Members should always consider whether it is possible for them to seek a ruling in advance of a meeting in order to clarify the position before a decision is made.

New Standing Order 25

- a. Where an elected member is concerned that a decision of council, or a decision of a committee, or a decision delegated to an officer of the council
 - i. Has not been properly made in accordance with the council's constitution or standing orders, or
 - ii. Has been made without all the evidence required to make a decision, or
 - iii. Is unreasonable to such an extent that no reasonable person, acting reasonably, could have made it,the elected member may ask for the Proper Officer's Ruling as to whether the decision was well made and within the council's powers and the scope of any relevant delegations.
- b. A member stating their concerns must state which of the three grounds they are raising their concern under, and the reasons why they have cause for concern.
- c. The Proper Officer shall provide the elected member, within five working days, a ruling laying out a response to the members concerns. Where the member's concerns are upheld, or there is otherwise cause for concern, the ruling shall lay out the steps taken to prevent a recurrence of the concern.
- d. Where an elected member is concerned that a decision of council, or a decision of a committee, or a decision delegated to an officer of the council, which has not yet been made, either
 - i. May not be properly made in accordance with the council's constitution or standing orders, or
 - ii. May be made without all the evidence required to make a decisionthe elected member may ask for the Proper Officer's Ruling as to whether the proposed decision is within the council's powers and the scope of any relevant delegations, and sufficiently evidenced.
- e. Where a member requests a ruling under para. d, above, the clerk shall report the ruling to the meeting in question before debate commences on the topic in question, in addition to publishing their ruling, as soon as is practicable, on the council website.
- f. Where a member objects to the clerk's ruling in response to their concerns under either para a or para d (above) they may make one three minute speech on the topic

to the next available council meeting; the clerk in turn will explain their ruling, at which point council will proceed to the next business without further debate.

- g. All concerns expressed, and the rulings arising from them, except those concerned with confidential business of council or its committees, shall be published, including the name of the member expressing the concern.
- h. A member may not express a concern regarding either staffing matters, decisions of the Town Clerk as the head of the council's staff, or decisions, such as those concerning Freedom of Information requests, where other routes of internal review are available.

Agenda Setting and Forward Plan Procedure

Council notes that it is both good practice, and confirmed by the Standing Orders of Berwick upon Tweed Town Council, that the Proper Officer is the final arbiter of what may or may not appear on an agenda.

Council also notes that the Proper Officer is required to ensure that, so far as is practical, decisions are taken on the basis of evidence, and that the matter under discussion at any meeting is made clear on the agenda, unless it is a matter likely to be deemed confidential.

The decision whether a matter is likely to be capable of being deemed confidential, and therefore withheld from the public agenda, is for the Town Clerk alone, although they should consult the Mayor/Deputy Mayor where possible.

In order to enable members to play a full role in setting the agenda for council, the following procedure is proposed. Two routes will be available to elected members; resolution and request for a report.

Resolution

Any member may give notice of their intention to propose a resolution at the next council meeting, in accordance with the time limits set out in the existing standing orders. The Proper Officer will then rule as to whether the matter in question is intra vires, and the resolution sufficiently clear and well evidenced to enable a lawful decision to be made. If that is the case, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. If that is not the case, the Proper Officer's ruling, and the reasons for it, will be published on the town council website and sent to the member concerned.

Request for a report

Requests for a report must be made before the council meeting, to the same timetable as proposals for motions. The request will be reported to the meeting in question, as part of the Forward Plan item on the agenda, when the Town Clerk will advise council as to whether the matter is intra vires, and whether the Council has the staffing capacity to prepare the report, and the likely timescale involved, Council will then vote as to whether to include the matter on the Forward Plan, and indicate the timescale within which they expect the report to be received by council.

Minute taking

Council notes that minutes are a record of what was decided at a meeting, and not therefore, a record of the whole meeting. As a minimum minutes should record what was decided, and why it was decided. In cases where a formal report has been tabled on a matter, and the report makes recommendations, the minutes should indicate either that the decision adopted the reasoning of the report, or the reason why it was rejected. Where new evidence is introduced at a meeting that is not contained within the report or the agenda the minutes should indicate this, and seek to precis the new evidence.

In procedural matters it is not required to explain why a decision was made; it is redundant for instance to minute that members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting were a true record, because they believed them to be a true record. On the other hand, the minutes of a planning meeting are not useful if they merely record that members objected to a planning application; the objection will have no force unless the minutes also record why members objected, and identify suitable planning grounds. There is therefore a need for the minute taker to be aware of the context of each decision, and to seek to balance brevity and clarity to produce minutes that are useful.

It's generally argued that minutes should be self contained; that is to say, that the minute should make clear what is decided without reference to other sources. However, the practice of filing the agenda for a meeting, and all the related reports, with the minutes, should enable relatively brief but self contained minutes to be produced.

It is appropriate to record if a debate took place on any matter, but the practice of qualifying such a statement with adjectives such as 'lengthy' or 'heated' should always be avoided. The opinion of the minute taker is of no interest to the reader. Similarly, there is a lengthy tradition of individual members requesting that either their objection to a proposal, or their abstention be recorded in the minutes. Neither is acceptable, and the law is quite clear on recorded votes; the tally of those voting for and those voting against will be recorded. Generally speaking, the only members names that need to be recorded in the minutes of a debate are those of the members proposing and seconding the motion and any amendments.

The use of latin tags or cliches should be avoided; minutes should be as jargon free as possible and designed to be readable by the general public.

Where public participation is allowed, the contributions of members of the public should not be minuted unless they offer evidence not previously adduced concerning matters on the agenda which is required to enable members of the public to understand any subsequent decision.

Written Correspondence

The receipt of correspondence, and its management, is an essential part of any local council's work.

All correspondence addressed to the Town Council, or one of its officers, should be recorded in a log created for that purpose. This should include emails received from individuals who are addressing the council as either residents, or as partners. Routine correspondence via email with existing partners should be excluded from the correspondence log; the decision as to what should be included or excluded is delegated to the Proper Officer, who shall provide guidance to officers.

The log, including notes as to the disposal or outcome of any correspondence received, should be emailed to members each week on Friday. Where it is possible, it is acceptable to send members a link to any updated version of the log stored on line.

The Proper Officer shall decide, in advance of each council meeting, which correspondence shall be reported to council, and which shall be excluded. The Proper Officer will bear in mind the council's duties under the Data Protection Act, and the option of anonymizing or redacting correspondence where possible.

Town Clerk's Skillset

1. The Town Clerk of Berwick upon Tweed is Chief Officer of an organization with a budget of approximately £350,000. Even if the role of Responsible Financial Officer is separated from the Proper Officer role in future, the Town Clerk will still be line manager for the RFO, and as such, must be capable of supervising the budget and financial processes. The Town Clerk must therefore be capable of evidencing significant budgetary skills and experience of budgetary accountability.
2. BTC is a local council operating in a very specific legal environment; potential Town Clerks must be able to evidence an awareness of that legal environment, the skills to research and analyse relevant legal issues, and the ability to make quasi-judicial decisions on the basis of evidence and reasoning. Experience alone is unlikely to be sufficient evidence of these skills. The person appointed should either hold CILCA, or be capable of achieving it within a realistic timeframe.
3. BTC operates in a unique environment defined by its geography, the relationship of the town to its heritage and environment, the complex partnerships created by statute and custom, and its needs as a community. Potential Town Clerks need to evidence an understanding of these relationships, and the skills to navigate the complex relationships involved.
4. The Town Clerk is accountable to council, and needs to evidence a clear and detailed understanding of the role of councillors, their duties and responsibilities, and the skills required to manage the relationship between council and its staff, and individual councillors and themselves.
5. The Town Clerk is line manager for staff, and for staff who supervise or instruct others. Potential Town Clerks therefore need to evidence an understanding of line management, of Human Relationship management and the legal and health and safety environment within which the Town Council must operate.
6. Policy is decided by the Town Council, but potential Town Clerks will need to evidence an understanding of modern policy making processes, including research and consultation. Since the council is committed to promoting the economic development of Berwick and its tourism industry, knowledge of best practice in these areas would be helpful.
7. As a local council, BTC is likely to change its priorities in accordance with the wishes of the electorate. Potential Town Clerks need to evidence significant skills in business process design or change management, as well as the routine business improvement skills required to deliver efficiencies and best value.
8. The Town Clerk is responsible for the Town Council's commitment to engage with its community and partners, and potential Town Clerks need to evidence an understanding of best practice in communications and engagement and the skills required.
9. A significant proportion of the Town Council's budget is currently spent on play areas and environmental works; a knowledge of those areas, and appropriate project management / project sponsorship skills are essential.

Capacity /Skills Gaps

1. It is important to make clear where there are skills gaps, as in a lack of knowledge how to do things, capacity gaps, as in a lack of time to do things we know how to do, and also under utilization, where individuals may be performing tasks that could be delegated if there was more capacity or better systems to enable delegation.
2. Assuming that council adopts the proposed role definition laid out in the Town Clerks Skillset paper, above, the largest and clearest skill gap is in financial planning and management. Existing staff are capable of maintaining an accurate record of income and expenditure, and a town clerk with the skillset laid out above is likely to have some idea of key issues around financial planning and risk management, but the Town Council requires a financial manager who is able to bring a structured approach to risk management, reserves and treasury management and the planning of income and expenditure, by profiling both and managing cash flow.
3. It would be desirable to have a second member of staff who has managerial skills and the ability to make appropriate decisions in the absence of the clerk. If this person was the RFO, with the skills identified above, they would provide a degree of cover in the absence of the Town Clerk. It would be desirable for this person, also, to work towards obtaining CILCA.
4. The other significant skills gap is in the area of asset management and site maintenance. By far the largest area of the council's work is its large stock of street furniture and litter bins and its playparks. This is a gap that could, feasibly, be filled by development of existing staff. RoSPA and other providers deliver a range of courses aimed not just at those inspecting play areas but also those managing them, and where staff might acquire analogous skills to enable them to manage other public realm assets.
5. The council has no specialist allotment officer, and lacks formal skills in areas such as the management and maintenance of existing allotments. We regularly receive invitations to send officers on specialist courses in topics such as the handling of vermin treatments. Council may wish to consider whether this should be added to an existing role, or whether it might wish to seek to retain a subject matter expert from another authority to provide advice as and when necessary.
6. The provision of additional licences for the new accounting software means that the work of inputting financial records and producing reports can be shared between staff, creating capacity to allocate work time to asset management and maintenance and project management from existing roles.
7. Existing staff have considerable informal project management experience, but no agreed methodology to work to. Adoption of a formal methodology like PRINCE II would be disproportionate, but council needs to agree a formal scheme for managing projects and a suite of tools, such as easy to use GANTT charts and project definition documents that enable project sponsors and project managers to understand their roles. Level 3 Project Management courses are available from providers, and would form a suitable part of the training programme for staff expected to take on project management roles.
8. Existing staff deliver an excellent civic service, but council needs to take note that it needs to make provision for refresher and updating the skills of staff involved in this work; currently there appears to be no capacity planned to enable the relevant staff to engage with the National Association of Civic Officers, who would provide support and knowledge to staff, for instance.



Council
Item 12
Appendix D
Monday, 9 January 2017

Date	What decision is requested	Why does this decision need to be made	Who requested it?	When does it need to be made?	Outcome
24/10/16	Whether to consider proposals to fund a music event in Berwick in 2017	Inquiry from Berwick residents and others	TC / NCC / Berwick residents	7/11/2016	Council to receive a presentation
2/11/2016	Whether to support the provision of yacht mooring facilities on the quayside – to fund scoping reports and to further fund construction	To support economic regeneration and tourism	Request from Cllr D Blackburn	29/11/2016	
30/10/2016	Approve MTFP	Financial regs	TC	November 2016	
2/11/2016	Tourism review – to review provision of management information, resources available for tourism promotion and support for social media activity.	In order to make better use of council resources and promote tourism as a driver of regeneration	TC	November 2016	
30/10/2016	As part of budget, to approve budget allocations for clerk and deputy town clerk as full time employees	Councillor proposal	E Goodyer	December 2016	
07/11/2016	Document retention policy and procedure note	As part of risk appraisal / management	TC	December 2016	
07/11/2016	Lone worker policy	As part of risk appraisal / management	TC	December 2016	
30/10/2016	Approve budget	Financial regs	TC	December 2016	
25/11/2016	Playground maintenance	To manage risk	TC	19 December 2016	
25/11/2016	Lions allotments	Negotiations Update (Confidential)	TC	19December 2016	
28/11/2016	FoI	Legal compliance	TC	19 December 2016	
30/11/2016	Whether the Town Council wishes to be used as a pilot.	Councillor proposal (Confidential)	E Goodyer	19 December 2016	

24/10/2016	Playground inspection regime 2017	Safety of playground users / risk management	TC	Jan 2017	
25/11/2016	To review allotment provision	Legislative compliance	TC	Jan 2017	
24/10/2016	Approve Risk Management Register	To comply with Financial Regs	TC	Jan 2017	
24/10/2016	Approve Asset Register	To Comply with Financial Regs	TC	Jan 2017	
7/11/2016	Pensions policy	Legislative change	TC	Jan 2017	
25/11/2016	Reserves policy	Best practice to review reserve provision	TC	Jan 2017	
19/12/2016	Heritage Lamp Stands	Councillor proposal	NCC / Councillors	Jan 2017	
2/11/2016	To approve an investment strategy and list of counterparties	Financial regs	TC	Feb 2017	
25/11/2016	Growths and savings 2018/19	Best practice	TC	Sept 2017	

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 22 November 2016 at 6.30pm in the Ante-Room, Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors: G Roughead (Chair)
I Dixon
G Hill
C Seymour

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk
3 member of the public

OPEN SESSION

Concerns were raised about the amount of large vehicles in the town which effectively made some roads one lane at a time. The Assistant to the Clerk was asked to enquire if there were any stipulations for delivery lorries on Marygate, for example, time restrictions.

P044/16 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors A Forbes and G Smith.

P045/16 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 18 October 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

P046/16 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Cllr G Hill declared personal and pecuniary interest in Item 6, Application 16/03939/VARYCO (Former Kwik Save, Walkergate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland. TD15 1DJ).

P047/16 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

P048/16

5. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

There has been on-going reports from the Working Groups. The next meeting of the Steering Group will be held on Friday, 25 November 2016 when consultations and filming will be discussed.

P049/16

6. APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

16/02793/FUL

Change of use from abandoned fishing shiel to cafe and bunk house and alterations and refurbishment to Listed Building to provide W.C.

The Fishermans Shiel, Sandstell Road, Spittal. TD15 1RE

Members were supportive of this application.

16/03903/PRUTPO

Tree preservation order application for 3 x Sycamore Trees, Tree 1 Crown 10m Crown reduction. Tree 2, Crown reduction 3 metres, and reshape. Tree 3, Crown reduction 3 metres and reshape.

2 The Elms, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland. TD15 1NL

No objections.

16/03939/VARYCO

Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) pursuant to planning application 14/03206/FUL to allow a minor material amendment to the external appearance and roof plan for the demolition of the existing building and structures and the erection of a new B1 office building and associated structures, car parking, access, landscaping and engineering works.

Former Kwik Save, Walkergate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland.

TD15 1DJ

[NOTE: Councillor G Hill, having declared a personal and pecuniary interest, left the meeting during consideration of this item].

Members were concerned that the 4 air con/vent units are likely to cause noise as they are mechanically operated. One of the purposes of the vents is to remove odours and CO₂ is mentioned, Members felt that more details are required. Also, Members would agree with comments made by the Conservation Officer.

16/03131/ADE

Advertisement consent for new retail signage comprising 7 fascia signs, 1 x set of 4 poster frames, 3 x sets of window vinyls and 1 x deliveries panel. Dp Furniture Express (Berwick), Prince Edward Road, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland. TD15 2EX

Members objected due to the effect of lights on surrounding residential properties, especially overnight. There was also the feeling among Members that there was possibly a lack of consultation with residents.

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7. PLANNING APPLICATION DECISION LIST

The decisions provided in the attachment were noted.

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8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be Tuesday, 13 December 2016 at 6.30 pm.