

Report of the Town Clerk

Development of Strategy and Corporate Plan

Preparation of a Town Plan

Background

1. It is the tenth anniversary of Berwick upon Tweed Town Council being established.
2. The Town Council has had at least one false start at establishing a Town Plan, and currently operates on a day to day basis where staff derive their understanding of the council's priorities from previous decisions.
3. The issue with the lack of a Town Plan is, simply, that your staff have no way of prioritizing their work other than by looking backwards at previous decisions and previous actions. In this regard the Town Plan is different from, but informed by, other plans such as the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the economic plan developed by the Coastal Community Team.
4. It is the Town Clerk's view that this lack of a Town Plan that shapes our work is unhelpful, and that a Town Plan would enable staff to prioritize and plan for the future. This view was broadly endorsed by a previous meeting of the People and Communities Committee, and it is the view of your officers that the People and Communities Committee should be the council body responsible for the development and monitoring of the Town Plan.
5. Broadly, it is proposed that the Town Plan be developed in three phases.
 - a. The Town Clerk lays out, for the Annual Town Meeting, how the Town Council works, the legal background to its work, and the tools at the disposal of your staff, along with an outline of the areas of work currently entered into. This presentation forms the basis of a three week consultation as to whether this is the appropriate basis for developing a plan, taking account of your previous work on hard to reach communities. It is also proposed that, at this meeting, members of the public are invited to consider their priorities for Berwick, and that this also forms part of the consultation.
 - b. The June meeting of the People and Communities committee receives the feedback from the consultation, and the other committees also provide commentary on the Town Clerk's outline of the current areas of work and the priorities that should be assigned to them.
 - c. July council then receives the outputs from all three committees, and provides direction to the Town Clerk as to the areas it wishes the Town Plan to cover, which

is then written up for pre-decision consultation in August and consideration by council in September.

Recommendation

1. That council adopt the proposed scheme of work for the development of the Town Plan.