

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 10 October 2016 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Councillors:	G Roughead (Deputy Town Mayor)	G Hill
	H Bettison	P Hodgson
	A Forbes	J Lang
	A Gibson	G McLean
	E Goodyer	B Parkin
	K Graham	C Seymour

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gareth Davies, Interim Town Clerk

Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace

Brian Douglas, Sheriff

20 members of the public approximately

Inspector Liz Hall of Northumbria Police

Councillor G Roughead introduced Mr Gareth Davies to the meeting.

OPEN SESSION

A number of members of the public spoke on issues of local interest.

C126/16 1. INTERIM TOWN CLERK / RFO COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the sub committee to, within existing budgets, invite Gareth Davies to act as Interim Town Clerk.

C127/16 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received on behalf of The Mayor, Cllr I Dixon, Cllrs D Blackburn, T Forrester and G Smith.

C128/16 3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 5 September 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

C129/16 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor E Goodyer declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 13 (Visit Berwick Leaflet 2017);

Councillor G Roughead declared a personal interest in Item 13 (Visit Berwick Leaflet 2017) that was not sufficient to require him to leave the meeting.

C130/16 5. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

C131/16 6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Mayor apologized for the unavoidable absence of the Mayor, and reported on some events the Mayor had attended since the last Council meeting.

C132/16 7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

The reports were noted, and are appended to the Minutes of the meeting.

C133/16 8. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Members were invited to receive the notification of payments made, and, subject to a written answer being provided to Cllr Hill regarding a query about payments for maintenance of park benches it was **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

C134/16 9. THREE-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

A number of members spoke concerning both the lists submitted to council, and their own priorities, and, in order to enable a full consultation upon the budget it was **RESOLVED**

- i) To note the clerk's advice concerning the budget process and s.215 of the Local Planning Act,
- ii) To invite further comments from members as to their priorities, and
- iii) To receive a further report from the clerk at the next meeting of council concerning both the budget process and the mechanisms for consulting on the budget and MTFP.

C135/16 10. BERWICK INFIRMARY

Members provided an update on discussions that had taken place with the architects for the proposed re-development in order to convey to them the strength of feeling concerning the need to maintain features of the building as assets of the town. Standing Orders were suspended to allow County Councillor I Hunter to inform council that the matter would also be discussed at the next meeting of the North Area Committee of Northumberland County Council, which would be held in Rothbury. It was **RESOLVED** to note the update.

C136/16 11. SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

The successful outcome of the conference was reported to council by elected members and it was **RESOLVED** to provide an additional budget of £200 from general reserves to enable the conference expenditure to be met and to contribute to the economic development of the town.

- C137/16** **12. BERWICK INVESTORS CONFERENCE – BUILDING ON THE BRIDGE**
It was **RESOLVED** to provide a budget of £2000, as per the paper presented by Cllr Goodyer, from general reserves to contribute to the economic development of the town.
- C138/16** **13. VISIT BERWICK LEAFLET 2017**
[NOTE: Councillors E Goodyer, having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, left the meeting during consideration of this item].
In the interests of efficient decision making it was **RESOLVED** to defer the matter to the next council meeting.
(i) to enable the clerk to prepare a written report, and
(ii) to enable elected members to provide feedback to the clerk on their priorities as to the quality and price of the proposed leaflet.
- C139/16** **14. BERWICK INNOVATION & SKILLS CENTRE**
A number of members spoke on the report, before it was **RESOLVED** to receive the report.
- C140/16** **15. COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM**
After a discussion it was **RESOLVED**, in order to contribute to the economic development of the town, to
(i) Support the recommendations of the report, and
(ii) To delegate to the clerk the power to pursue discussions with the CCT, before reporting back to council.
- C141/16** **16. WESTFIELD PLAY AREA**
After a discussion during which standing orders were suspended to allow the Sheriff to provide some historical information concerning the creation of the play park in question as a village green it was **RESOLVED**, in order to obtain best value and to mitigate the risks inherent in taking responsibility for maintenance of an asset to delegate to the clerk responsibility for
(i) Conveying the opinions of the council to Four Housing concerning this issue,
(ii) Exploring alternative options with Four Housing, and
(iii) Investigating whether Four Housing is under an existing or implied duty to maintain the play park,
and to report back to council.
- C142/16** **17. FLORAL DISPLAY BUDGET**
In order to maintain a clear policy basis for purchasing decisions it was **RESOLVED** not to take up the proposal to purchase additional floral display barrels.
- C143/16** **18. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**
It was **RESOLVED** to receive the update.

C144/16 **19. OLD BRIDGE**

A number of members spoke on this topic, and standing orders were suspended to allow the Sheriff and members of the public to take part in the debate. In the interests of efficient transport in the town, and to benefit its economic development, and to allay the concerns of residents, it was **RESOLVED**

(i) for the clerk to seek urgently, from NCC, the latest report as to the structural condition of the bridge, and

(ii) for the clerk to explore and report back to council on options for the future of the bridge.

C145/16 **20. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 9 August 2016.

At this point the meeting was adjourned to allow Inspector Liz Hall of Northumbria Police to provide an update on the recent march through Berwick. Upon the resumption of the meeting with the Deputy Mayor in the chair the order of business continued.

C146/16 **21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 24 October 2016 at 6 pm.

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 business on the basis that public discussion might prejudice the Council's position and staffing issues might be discussed.

C147/16 **22. BERWICK LOCAL SERVICES OFFICERS**

In the interests of obtaining best value and ensuring effective decision making it was **RESOLVED** to maintain the status quo until council could receive a written report at its next meeting.