

## **BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 15 August 2016 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

Councillors:	I Dixon (Town Mayor)	G Hill
	H Bettison	P Hodgson
	D Blackburn	G McLean
	A Forbes	B Parkin
	T Forrester	G Roughead
	A Gibson	C Seymour
	E Goodyer	G Smith
	K Graham	

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Wendy Pattison, Town Clerk

Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace

32 members of the public

#### **BERWICK FLORAL COMPETITION**

##### **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BERWICK TOWN COUNCIL AND BERWICK IN BLOOM**

Cllr Dixon welcomed everyone to the meeting and as a member of the judging panel said he wasn't an expert but had enjoyed looking and judging many lovely displays and congratulated everyone. Cllr Dixon paid particular thanks to Berwick in Bloom and also to Bernard and Margaret Shaw for all their help in making the competition a great success.

Runners up, Fantoosh (Café /Restaurant), Berwick Holiday Park (Accommodation Provider) and the Sewing Room (Shop). Winners were, Queens Head, Sandgate (Café/Restaurant), Maguires Bar, Ord House, (Licensed Premises) The Retreat (Shop) and The Walls Guest House, (Accommodation Provider).

The overall winner of the Floral Cup donated by Cllr Alex Gibson was declared as the Walls Guest House.

## **OPEN SESSION**

Mr Spencer Barclay referred to earlier requests made to Cllr Hodgson and requested a reply. Mr Stewart spoke on several issues and in particular the algae present at Spittal Splash Park which needed to be cleaned and was a slip hazard. Cllr Bettison spoke of a brilliant Spittal Seaside Festival weekend enjoyed by everyone. Cllr Hunter gave support to the proposed play park improvements at Grove Gardens South. Cllr Hill mentioned unsung hero, Kate who had transformed the watchtower and made it into an Art Gallery free for everyone to enjoy. Mr Spencer Barclay mentioned that there was music at the watchtower also.

### **C083/16 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of Cllr J Lang.

### **C084/16 2. MINUTES**

Cllr Roughead said that 'motion' was written instead of notion at item 15 and Cllr Seymour queried whether item 8 re Financial Procedures was contained in Mr Warren's report and also requested that 'agreed' was changed to 'noted' at item 9 and this was agreed by Councillors. The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 25 July 2016 were then agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **C085/16 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Cllr McLean item 7, Cllrs Parkin, Hill and Goodyer item 10, Cllr Blackburn, item 18.

### **C086/16 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

### **C087/16 5. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr Dixon thanked the Deputy Mayor and the Sheriff for standing in for him at Minden Day and RNLI and commitments. The Mayor and Sheriff also attended Flodden at Branxton and laid a thistle in remembrance. Cllr Dixon also mentioned the Kingston Pipe Band and thanked Cllr Smith, Cllr McLean and the Sergeant at Mace for their help and support on the day. The pipe band combined bagpipes with rock music and delighted crowds in Berwick last Wednesday. Cllr Mclean agreed and said it had been a marvellous day and had been enjoyed by everyone.

### **C088/16 6. COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS**

No reports - Cllr Hunter said she had been busy working on personal issues re

local residents. Cllr Hill asked Cllr Hunter about scrutiny of the administration at NCC by the Berwick County Councillors and went on to give her concerns regarding the lack of rehabilitation for drug users and that the methadone dosage given out had no controls in place. Cllr Hodgson agreed. Cllr Hunter requested any information from Councillors in regard to drug use issues be given to the Town Clerk to pass to her in order that these issues can be discussed at a confidential meeting to be held at NCC. Pot holes have now been dealt with at Shielfield Park.

**C089/16**

## **7. TOWN COUNCILLOR WARD REPORTS**

The Clerk advised Councillors that this item would be put onto the agenda again in September as that month had been the original deadline given. Cllr McLean gave his ward report and discussed flooding issues, dropped kerbs for wheelchair users, another bus shelter at Newfields will be looked at once a decision has been made on appropriate bus routes and the Greenses Harbour beach is a concern re erosion Cllr McLean also announced that work will start at Flagstaff Park on 27th August to install a new play park. Cllr Graham produced a 4 page report containing 13 months work which has been completed at Prior Park and also mentioned the installation of a picnic table and a novelty bin at Grove Gardens South. Cllr Blackburn advised of fundamental changes and issues were becoming increasingly difficult at the Council and also announced he was the bully mentioned on a recent Town Council agenda.

**C090/16**

## **8. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL**

Cllr Seymour requested clearer information be given regarding payments re giving up to date figures and what were they costing? Payments were then agreed by Councillors. Cllr Hill asked about the authorization of the 1% national pay award given to the staff.

**RESOLVED: Agreed by Councillors but clearer information/more clarity regarding payments as requested.**

**C091/16**

## **9. GROVE GARDENS SOUTH PLAY AREA**

Cllr Graham told Councillors that current play equipment at grove gardens consisted of 1 swing, 1 rocker and a repaired climbing frame. Residents had been consulted on what equipment was needed and Cllr Hodgson had helped to secure £12k of funding re Tesco Plastic bags. Cllr Graham requested permission

for £18k to be provided by Council and to go out to tender for new play equipment. Councillor Graham proposed and Cllr Smith seconded and it was unanimously agreed to go out to tender for play equipment the Grove Gardens play area.

**RESOLVED: To go out to tender for new play equipment for the Grove Gardens South Play Area.**

C092/16

## **10. BERWICK COACH PARK**

**Suspend Standing orders – Cllrs Hill, Parkin and Goodyer left the room.** Ms Sue Duerdoth expressed concern to Councillors regarding the proposal of a new Coach Park to be built at Chapel Street. Ms Duerdoth said if it went ahead another Coach Park would have to be built due to the size of the proposed Coach Park which would be tiny. Only 4 coaches could park at the same time and people would have to be dropped off at the Parade as there would be no room for them at the coach park. There would be no room for coaches to manoeuvre and there were serious concerns regarding the bottom of Church Street and negotiating around all nearby streets. Coaches would also need to drive around twice on arrival. There would be a loss of car parking places which was an important issue. Ms Duerdoth also mentioned health issues re nearby residents and the noise levels which would take place every day over an 11 hour time period. Ms Teresa Newham also expressed her concern and said buses were currently parking and dropping off outside Kwik save and were having to reverse into Wallace Green to turn around. Ms Newham also mentioned the area around Chapel Street which was looking neglected and untidy and required placement of a litter bin. Cllr Blackburn agreed Chapel street was not fit for purpose re a Coach Park. **Cllr Seymour left the meeting.** Mr Stewart said traffic should be excluded from the town centre and Mr Brian Douglas speaking as a member of the public also mentioned his concerns regarding traffic issues at the bottom of Church Street. Cllr Bettison said that drivers dropping off passengers may not always allow them to return to the bus as this is passengers was then classed as their rest period and also asked whether Ms Duerdoth and Ms Newham had any other thoughts as to where the coach park could go. Cllr Mclean said the town had parking and traffic issues 8 weeks of the year and this occurred during bank holidays and school holidays. Out of town parking was also mentioned. Cllr Roughead said that not only did Berwick need a coach park but also needed long

term infrastructure for a proper inter transport hub. Berwick is the only principle town in Northumberland without a bus station. Cllr Dixon agreed it was a huge problem and one which would be closely monitored and thanked Ms Duerdoth for bringing the matter to the Council's attention.

**Cllrs Hill, Goodyer and Parkin returned to the meeting – Standing Orders re-instated.**

**C093/16**

## **11. LTP CLARIFICATION**

Cllr Goodyer spoke regarding NCC requesting clarification on whereabouts the Council required Local Transport Plan cycle track requests and referred to the 2015 Sustrans report which was presented to Council last December. Cllr Goodyer mentioned Cycle Path 1 to the south, 68 North, Berwickshire Coastal path and the AONB path could all link up with the Old Bridge and which should be pedestrianised to avoid further damage. Cllr Bettison thought there should be a specific cycle path installed along Spittal promenade and Cllr Mclean suggested installation along the coastal strip from Highfields and through the town. Cllr Goodyer suggested a meeting with Andy Chymera, NCC should be organised regarding the implementation plan for the sustainable transport plan document. This was agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED: The Clerk will arrange a meeting with Andy Chymera, NCC to discuss implementation of the 2015 sustainable transport plan.**

**C094/16**

## **12. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Cllr Goodyer spoke to Council re gaining a grant of £4,280 to employ a planning consultant to assist topic groups move forward and to gather evidence for future policies and asked Council approval to employ planning consultant Jo-Anne Garrick. 8 Planning Consultants were contacted with 5 dropping out and 3 consultants putting in a quote. Ms Garrick provided a comprehensive support document and had also written the Northumberland Core Strategy. Cllr Goodyer also mentioned the Vision and Objectives which was a living document and felt that a formal consultation on them was not required but an informal consultation would take place. Cllr Goodyer mentioned the Small Business Conference which will take place in the Guildhall on September 16th and would be giving out advice, information on funding, technical support and available sources of money for small businesses. Northumberland College would be represented and there was a need to ascertain what skills/courses/premises can be offered and what

skills can be identified. Cllr Goodyer proposed Jo-Anne Garrick as planning consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan and this was seconded by Cllr Graham and unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED: To appoint Jo-Anne Garrick as the Neighbourhood Plan planning consultant.**

**C095/16**

### **13. TOWN COUNCIL SECURITY**

Cllr Hill said there needed to be a degree of proportionality re receiving one malicious call, that we needed to act on police advice and there was a need to monitor but no need to turn the Council chamber into Gatwick airport. Cllr Dixon said the Council had a duty of care to staff and the cost of employing a security guard was not a lot of money. Cllr Graham referred to the Code of Conduct and said this was being broken regularly on social media by biased slants on council matters and thought security was very relevant. Cllr Forbes did agree that there was a duty of care and staff security was important and should be monitored. Cllr Hodgson suggested a Risk Assessment should be undertaken. Cllr Bettison said that the situation had been very relevant due to the murder of MP Jo Cox happening before the call incident. Cllr Mclean said threats had been received by Councillors and Cllr Smith agreed there were concerns in regard to personal safety. It was agreed to monitor and to undertake a Risk Assessment.

**RESOLVED: To monitor the situation and undertake a Risk Assessment.**

**C096/16**

### **14. SEATS ON SPITTAL PROMENADE**

The seats on Spittal promenade are always painted white and it has been suggested to paint them a darker colour so that the seats don't look in need of painting soon after the work has been completed. Cllr Gibson proposed dark blue with Cllr Bettison advising the seats were always white and special waterproof paints should be purchased. The Clerk advised this may be expensive as there were 39 seats to be painted. Cllr Hodgson suggested the Clerk rang up some Coastal Town Councils and ask what paint they used. Cllr Mclean felt a discussion with the painter would be beneficial.

**RESOLVED: The Clerk to ring Coastal Town Councils and ask what paint they use.**

**C097/16**

### **15. ADDITIONAL GRASS CUTTING SERVICES 2016/17**

Cllr Hill said Mr Bob Hodgson did an excellent job but questioned the SLA agreements we had and whether these constituted value for money and said she

was concerned NCC were trying to pass on more services and costs on to the Council.

**RESOLVED: The Clerk will gain estimates of the costs involved re extra grass cutting.**

**C098/16**

#### **16. BERWICK WORKSPACE**

Cllr Dixon said removal costs would be around £50 per hour. Cllr Bettison thought it would be a good move and a town centre location and also office security issues would be much better for everyone. Cllr Graham agreed and said there was also a central reception which would be a good thing and Cllr Mclean also agreed and gave the move his full support. Cllr Parkin also felt it was a more central location and that they were located next to other services such as the MPs office and NCC services. The Clerk advised the rent shown was for 10 months only due to getting 2 free months and the second year would be more expensive. Cllr Blackburn wasn't altogether sure it was a good location. Cllr Forrester thought it was a good move. It was agreed unanimously to move the Town Council Office.

**RESOLVED: To approve removal of the Town Council Offices to the Berwick Workspace.**

**C099/16**

#### **17. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

A Request from the Goldwing Light Parade for a grant of £1,500 was agreed.

**RESOLVED: To grant £1,500.00 to the Goldwing Light Parade.**

**C100/16**

#### **18. COUNCILLOR DAVID BLACKBURN**

Cllr Dixon advised Council that the item requested by Cllr Blackburn had been withdrawn. A response by NCC in regard to Cllr Blackburn's concerns that his emails to NCC were being blocked had been received. Cllr Dixon said the problem had arisen when NCC had changed email systems over from Outlook to Google and many emails had gone straight into trash. **Suspend Standing orders** - Cllr Hunter agreed this was correct as there had been serious problems at NCC and she had lost many of her emails. **Reinstate Standing orders** - Cllr Blackburn requested his new resolution was included in regard to this item which he had emailed to the Chairman and Clerk on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August and was advised that 5 days notice had to be given according to the Council's standing orders. After a short exchange of words, Cllr Blackburn left the room. Cllr Hill thought it was a NCC damage limitation exercise to claim that this was a server

issues and said her emails had definitely been blocked and also said that Cllr Blackburn should have had been allowed to have his say.

**C101/16**

**19. ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

Cllr Smith proposed and Cllr Forbes seconded and were agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED: To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on 13 June 2016.**

**C102/16**

**20. EVENTS COMMITTEE**

Cllr Forbes proposed and Cllr Graham seconded and were agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED: To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Events Committee held on 6 June 2016.**

**C103/16**

**21. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Cllr Forbes proposed and Cllr Hodgson seconded and were agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED: To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on 20 June 2016.**

**C104/16**

**22. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Cllr Roughead proposed and Cllr Dixon seconded and were agreed unanimously.

**RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17 May 2016.**

**C105/16**

**23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 5 September 2016 at 6 pm.