

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 21 December 2015 at 6 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	H Bettison (Town Mayor)	G Hill
	J Beresford	P Hodgson
	I Dixon	G Roughead
	A Forbes	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
Robert Welsh, Halberdier
Alex Thompson, NCC
Dr. Martin Podeyn, Sustrans
Lesley Wood, NCC
9 members of the public

OPEN SESSION

Mr Andrew Marshall referred to page 7 of the Warren report regarding legal challenge. The Local Government Act 1972 only allows the Council to delegate a function to committee, sub-committee or officer. Mr Marshall expressed concern at the legality of Tourism Forum and also the Tourism Advisory group which was thought to have been formed through Environment and Resources Committee. Cllr Bettison advised the Council would look at both groups. Councillor Dixon were unsure whether there actually was a Tourism Advisory group. Cllr Roughead advised the Hoppa Bus would run on Wednesday 23rd December and after a break would resume on January 6th 2016. The lack of a light in the alley way next to the Advertiser was also mentioned by Cllr Roughead and Cllr Hodgson advised this would be

rectified once CCTV installations were made and the possibility of a camera in that location was also probable.

C165/15 **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of: Councillors D Blackburn (holiday), A Gibson (unwell), J Lang (personal), Cllr Forrester and G McLean (holiday).

C166/15 **2. MINUTES**

Cllr Hill expressed concern at the ambiguity of the wording; “resolved to not increase the precept on the current draft budget figures” and drew Councillors attention, and emphasised the previous minute, which referred to the fact a decision had been made, by 11 votes to 2, to not increase the precept. The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 23 November 2015 were then agreed and signed as a correct record.

C167/15 **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

None.

C168/15 **4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

C169/15 **5. TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr Bettison advised how busy the Christmas civic calendar had been and many visits had been made to carol services and various events. The Mayor’s Charity RNLI benefitted from the Christmas Fair held in the Town Hall and an invitation was made for everyone to attend the Boxing Day Dip at 11am at Spittal promenade. Cllr Bettison thanked Cllr Goodyer and team members for gaining a grant of £48k from the Coastal Revival Fund and also mentioned that the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan was well on track. Cllr Bettison also mentioned Mr John Campbell, RNLI who gave up his time and went across to Cumbria to help and assist flood victims. Sadness at the Seton Hall closure was expressed and the impending closure of Jus Rol was very much in everyone’s thoughts and minds especially at this time of year. Cllr Bettison asked for Council for approval to write to rivals of Jus Rol, Kraft, to see if they would be interested in taking over the running of the site and this was agreed by Councillors.

C170/15 **6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Reports from Councillors, G Jones, I Hunter and J Smith have been received and circulated and are available to read.

C171/15 **7. BERWICK TOWN CENTRE AUDIT**

A presentation was given by Dr Martin Podeyn, Sustrans and Mr Alex Thompson, NCC on how Berwick town centre could be improved by alterations to traffic management in central parts of the town. This would include making proper cycle paths/provision and encouraging more people to exercise by walking/cycling. Changes would include closing the Old Bridge to traffic including Bridge Street. Marygate could be pedestrianised and needed to have layout changes /re-thinking. Hide Hill as the widest street could be remodelled and a Gateway could be made into the town at North Road. Cllr Bettison thanked both Dr Podeyn and also Mr Thompson for their presentation but thought it was just a dream and it would never come to fruition. Cllr Bettison advised the officers to look back 16 years and find the original plans which were never used. The officers advised there was a small pot of money available through LTP in 2016/17. Cllr Roughead thought novelty Zebra crossings outside schools was an idea and a crossing was also required in Marygate due to the road being extremely busy. Suspend Standing Orders – Mr Darling asked where the present information had been obtained and was advised Millers and Tweed and Silk. Re-instate Standing Orders.

C172/15 **8. MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE**

Mr Colin Hardy thanked all Councillors for their help in fund raising for Motor Neurone Disease and presented a certificate of thanks to the Mayor on the Town Council's behalf.

C173/15 **9. LAND TO THE REAR OF WALLACE GREEN / COXONS LANE CAR PARK**

Ms Lesley Wood, NCC requested whether Councillors would allow removal of the restrictive covenant entirely from the small area to the rear of number 11 Wallace Green so that it can be transferred to the new owners and to allow them a small garden; and to remove Tesco PLC, which has the benefit of the restrictive covenant but no other connection to the land, from the Council's title. Cllr Hill was against agreement of this request. Cllr Goodyer said he would welcome a new covenant but requested in addition for 1) A share of the capital receipt 2) That all legal costs are covered by NCC and 3) The freehold on the remaining land be transferred to BTC. Cllr Seymour also requested the legal fees should be paid by NCC.

RESOLVED: Ms Wood will advise NCC of the Town Council's requests.

C174/15 **10. FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP / FORUM**

A Berwick Forum was requested to be established by NCC to facilitate open communication and discussion in relation to the proposals outlined in NCC's Town Asset

plan. The formulation of the group follows meetings with the members of the Town Council in regard to the Town's assets. Cllr Hill advised that concern has been expressed about the lawfulness of previous groups. She said that some had also been undemocratic and felt that this proposed group's structure was unwise and lacked transparency. This was also echoed by Cllr Seymour and Cllr Goodyer also agreed. It was decided to request the Clerk to write to NCC and advise them of the decision to not form a small group.

RESOLVED: To write to NCC and advise BTC's non agreement to forming a small group.

C175/15

11. COASTAL REVIVAL FUND

Councillors were asked for their agreement/acceptance of a £48k grant received from the Coastal Revival Fund recently awarded for the Barracks Re-awakening project.

RESOLVED: Acceptance of the Coastal Revival Grant was unanimously agreed by all Councillors.

C176/15

12. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Goodyer showed Councillors the NP Flyer which will be distributed to all residents in the Town. Cllr Goodyer then proposed approval for authorisation for expenditure before invoices, printing costs for the flyer, £275 for distribution in the Berwick Advertiser, up to £100 for distribution in the Spittal Newsletter and up to £600 for a NP website and all stationery costs, this was seconded by Cllr Seymour.

RESOLVED: Agreed unanimously by all Councillors.

C177/15

13. VICTORIAN FOUNTAIN

The fountain requires the placement of a tank and a pump and Cllr Graham thought the tank would be better placed as near to the fountain as possible. Cllr Seymour expressed concern at the suggestion to colour the water to prevent anyone drinking it and wondered what the ingredient would be. The water would be effectively stagnant water and would not be suitable to drink. Cllr Dixon disagreed with the concern re colour of the water and advised as long as the fountain was back in service any colour of the water would do. Cllr Forbes thought a notice should be put up advising the public not to drink the water.

RESOLVED: To go ahead and get the fountain working again.

C178/15

14. TWIN TOWNS

Cllr Roughead advised that the Town Council had missed the 25th anniversary of twinning with Norwegian Twin Town Sarpsborg. However, it is their one thousand year

anniversary in 2016 and suggested the Council send a congratulation card and a DVD of Berwick 900.

The Council approved of this and the Clerk asked for an address to send the card and also advised that elements of twinning were a civic function and responsibility for this would need to be decided as the Mayor has her own secretary and the Town Clerk does not have access to the Mayor's diary. Cllr Bettison advised she would copy the Clerk into the diary. Cllr Dixon advised he would be willing to lead a small committee in regard to twin towns and Cllr Goodyer advised he would look into EU funding.

RESOLVED: The Clerk to send a card to Sarpsborg on receipt of the relevant address from the Mayor's Secretary.

C179/15

15. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL MANGEMENT

Cllr Hill advised acceptance of using Mr Warren to guide the Council through changes to the Council's financial procedures. She also asked for it to be noted that this should also include the use and scope of delegated authority, budget setting and, in relation, to risk management, assessing the risks posed by certain decisions made under the previous regime.

RESOLVED: Agreed unanimously by all Councillors.

C180/15

16. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

Cllr Hill expressed concern at the lack of information and ambiguity in relation to Portas payments, included several to Cittaslow. She said that she could not agree to the Portas payments, on the grounds of legal and other concerns about legitimacy.

Cllr Hodgson advised he had reviewed all invoices and explained what each invoice was for re Cittaslow - registration of Berwick in Bloom with Britain in Bloom, hire of conference facilities and the hire of a bus to show delegates around the town. Cllr Hill was also against payment of the Portas invoices and Cllr Goodyer agreed the situation was not ideal but the Council must honour the payments. The Clerk also advised if the payments were not made re Portas, NCC may not pay them as the payment deadline was due in December. Cllr Seymour queried boat trips and Cllr Hodgson advised this was made up of various elements and was not just for boat trips. Cllr Hill advised she was against approval of payments, 305, 311, 312, 313, 314, 298, 303, 315 and Cllr Seymour and Graham both abstained.

RESOLVED: It was agreed by Councillors to approve the payments and orders appended to these minutes.

C181/15 17. APPROVAL OF PLANNED EXPENDITURE

None.

C182/15 18. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Cllr Hodgson advised that the draft budget had still not been agreed and would need further consideration at the next finance meeting. Cllr Hodgson then proposed the minutes and this was seconded by Cllr Graham.

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 9 November 2015.

C183/15 19. PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Seymour and seconded by Cllr Smith.

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 20 October 2015.

C184/15 20. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Graham was proposed and agreed as the Council representative for Cittaslow.

RESOLVED Cllr Graham to be appointed as the Council representative for Cittaslow.

C185/15 21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 25 January 2016 at 6 pm.

Cllr Gary Smith wished everyone a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and this was also seconded by the Mayor, Cllr Hazel Bettison

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PORTAS PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
305	Boat Trips	27/11/2015	101221	Portas Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	1,005.00	0.00	1,005.00
311	Wilson's Tales	11/12/2015	101208	Portas Grant	Wilson's Tales project	1,520.00	0.00	1,520.00
312	Pop-up Shop	11/12/2015	101224	Portas grant	Berwick Town Team Ltd	1,586.42	0.00	1,586.42
313	Berwick Deserves Better	11/12/2015	BACS	Portas grant	Berwick Deserves Better	9,926.40	0.00	9,926.40
314	Berwick Deserves Better	11/12/2015	101225	Postage	Wireless Logic	6.00	1.20	7.20

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED**

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
298	Other Events Grants	27/11/2015	101216	Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	365.60	0.00	365.60
303	Berwick in Bloom [annual]	27/11/2015	101216	Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	200.00	0.00	200.00
315	Other Events Grants	11/12/2015	101216	Grant	Cittaslow Berwick	200.00	0.00	200.00
316	Maintenance & installation	11/12/2015	101226	Christmas lights installation	Landels Electrical	1,850.00	370.00	2,220.00
317	Bus Shelter Maintenance	11/12/2015	101227	Bus Shelter repairs	Bob Lee Welding	621.88	124.38	746.26
318	Remembrance Day	11/12/2015	101228	Printing	Shiel Morrison	280.00	0.00	280.00
319	Professional Services	11/12/2015	101229	Legal services	Clr Law	500.00	100.00	600.00
320	Other Marketing	11/12/2015	101230	Film	Lighthouse Films	1,800.00	0.00	1,800.00
323	Professional Services	11/12/2015	101231	Professional advice	S Warren	10,613.45	0.00	10,613.45

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

DIRECT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
321	Electricity	11/12/2015	directdebit	Electricity	Southern Electric	51.57	2.57	54.14
322	SSP Electricity	11/12/2015	directdebit	Electricity	British Gas	8.93	0.44	9.37

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

Voucher

Notes

- 305 Part payment of Portas Grant to support infra-structure provision for boat trips
- 311 Final payment of Wilson's Tales Portas grant
- 312 Payment for Pop-up shop Portas project approved by Berwick Town Team Ltd
- 313 Second & final payment for Digital Notice Boards
- 314 Delivery charge for Digital Notice Boards SIM cards
- 298/315 Grant for Northumbria in Bloom awards ceremony [part payment]
- 303 Contribution to costs of Berwick's entry to Northumbria in Bloom competition
- 316 Contribution to costs of installing Christmas Lights on Berwick Bridge
- 317 Repairs to Tweedmouth [Asda] bus shelter
- 318 Printing Remembrance Day service sheets
- 319 Agreed payment under terms of settlement with former Town Clerk
- 320 Production of promotional film for Berwick upon Tweed
- 321 Office electricity use
- 322 Spittal Splash Park electricity [standing charge]
- 323 Costs for conducting review of Financial Management