

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 23 June 2014 at 6 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	I Hunter (Town Mayor)	J Lang
	J Beresford	J Robertson
	I Dixon	G Roughead
	P Elliott	C Seymour
	T Forrester	F Simpson
	A Gibson	J Stephenson
	G Hill	A Turnbull
	G Jones	

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Finch, Town Clerk

S Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

M Richardson, Sheriff

J Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace

Sergeant S Crane, Northumbria Police

Colin Hardy, on behalf of the Motor Neurone Disease Association

Approximately 29 members of the public

The Town Mayor welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

C021/14 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of: Councillor H Bettison (personal).

C022/14 2. MINUTES

The accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2014 were discussed. Councillor G Hill wished it be noted that under Item 1 'Election of Town Mayor' she had said that Councillor J Lang's statement (set out in Appendix D attached to those minutes) was 'defamatory and a disgrace'.

The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 12 May 2014 were agreed and signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Hill's statement.

CO23/14

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

CO24/14

4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

(i) Requests for dispensation enabling them to participate in discussion and voting on Item 7 (a) and (b) were received from Councillor I Hunter, G Jones and J Robertson.

(ii) The Council agreed to the dispensations requested.

CO25/14

5. STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

Members of the public made statements on the lack of a Town Council media strategy in relation to the forthcoming referendum in Scotland; the agreed location for the coach park in Chapel Street; and employment issues between two former County Council employees and Northumberland County Council. Members clarified that these issues were the responsibility of Northumberland County Council.

CO26/14

6. MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE ASSOCIATION

Colin Hardy, on behalf of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, spoke to the meeting about motor neurone disease. He reported that it was currently Motor Neurone awareness month and gave information about the disease and its impact on both those diagnosed and their carers, as well as statistical information and concluded by asking those present to sign an on-line charter supporting the Association. Councillors confirmed their personal commitment to sign the on-line charter. Members were then given the opportunity to ask Mr Hardy questions.

The Chair thanked Mr Hardy for providing the Council with this information.

Standing Orders were suspended.

Sgt Steve Crane of Northumbria Police updated the meeting on a planned English Defence League march. The date of the event would be Saturday, 5 July 2014 between midday and 4pm approximately. There would be an extra police presence for the event. Sgt Crane made those aware there was also a counter

demonstration happening on the same day and wanted to reassure the Council and the public that appropriate arrangements were in hand. He encouraged those present to make the police aware if they felt strongly about either march and to provide feedback afterwards.

The Chair thanked Sgt Crane for his up-date.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

CO27/14

7. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2014

The Clerk gave an explanation of the internal and external audit arrangements.

(a)RESOLVED: To note the report of the Internal Auditors and that no actions were required. Councillor G Hill abstained.

RESOLVED: To exclude the press and public during discussion of Item 7 (b) Section 2 Question 8, which included items of a personal and confidential nature.

[NOTE: The Town Clerk and Councillor G Hill left the meeting during consideration of this item].

RESOLVED: That the Council would record an answer of 'No' to Question 8 of Section 2 – Annual governance statement 2013/14.

RESOLVED: To re-open the meeting to the press and public for the remainder of the meeting.

(b) RESOLVED: In accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations, to approve the accounting statement and annual governance statement for the year ending 31 March 2014. Councillor G Hill abstained.

CO28/14

8. STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED:

- (i) To agree the proposal made at the meeting on 12 May 2014 that the following be incorporated into Standing Orders: 'That Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council should make audio recordings of all meetings of the full Council and its Committees. The recording of each meeting should be made available to the public on the Town Council website within seven working days of the meeting. Where the press and public are formally excluded from parts of a meeting on the grounds of**

genuine and legitimate confidentiality, those parts should be omitted from the recording posted on the website.'

NOTE: The proposal is dependent on permission being obtained from the Freemen of Berwick-upon-Tweed, owners of the Town Hall which is a Listed Building.

- (ii) That the policy on filming, videoing, photography and audio recording at council Meetings, proposed by Councillor G Hill should not be adopted.**

Note: The proposal was voted upon and at Councillor G Hill's request the voting pattern would be recorded. The result was 6 for (Councillors I Dixon, T Forrester, G Hill, G Roughead, C Seymour and A Turnbull), 8 against (Councillors J Beresford, P Elliott, A Gibson, G Jones, J Lang, J Robertson, F Simpson and J Stephenson) and 1 abstention (Councillor I Hunter); and

- (iii) To consider the proposal by Councillor G Hill that the following be incorporated into Standing Orders: 'The Town Council does not authorise spending of the funds of the Council in instructing an external firm of Solicitors to represent the Council in any matter in which expenditure exceeds £250, without the express authority of the Finance Committee and without conducting a full cost benefit analysis to such instructions.', and in accordance with Standing Order 79 adjourn this item without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of Council.**

CO29/14

9. PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6 May 2014.

CO30/14

10. EVENTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Events Committee meeting held on 27 January 2014.

CO31/14

11. ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee meeting held on 10 March 2014.

CO32/14

12. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: (i) Councillor A Turnbull to represent the Town Council on the Children's Board; (ii) Councillor A Turnbull to represent the Town Council

on the Berwick Youth Project; and (iii) Councillor G Roughead, pending confirmation he is able to attend meetings, to represent the Town Council on St Aidans.

CO33/13

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 28 July 2014 at 6 pm in the Town Hall.