

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

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 24 March 2014 at 6 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

#### **PRESENT:**

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

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

D Cook, as Clerk

S Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

M Richardson, Sheriff

J Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace

County Councillor Jim Smith

4 members of the public

The Town Mayor welcomed everyone present to the meeting.

#### **OPEN SESSION**

Julie Pörksen, Lib Dem Candidate, enquired if the Town Council had any comments on the Post 16 Consultation by Northumberland County Council. Councillor I Hunter explained there is an Item on the agenda to discuss this issue.

#### **CO108/13 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of: Councillor T Forrester (work commitments).

#### **CO109/13 2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 20 January 2014 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**CO110/13**

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor G Jones declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 6 (Countywide Parking Consultation).

**CO111/13**

**4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**CO112/13**

**5. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on events attended since the last Council meeting including those that raised over £1,000 for the Mayor's Charities. The Mayor hoped those present could attend the forthcoming Sashing Day and Riding of the Bounds events.

**CO113/13**

**6. COUNTYWIDE PARKING CONSULTATION**

Note: Councillor G Jones left the room during consideration of this item. The Council had been invited to comment on the Countywide Parking Consultation.

**RESOLVED: To submit the following comments to Northumberland County Council regarding the Countywide Parking Consultation: Parking signage should be included at on-street parking bays in Castlegate to ensure consistency of information throughout out the town. This may already be taken into account but Castlegate was not included on the map provided.**

**CO114/13**

**7. DRAFT REVISED NORTHUMBERLAND TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL CHARTER**

The Council had been invited to comment on the Draft Revised Northumberland Town And Parish Council Charter

**RESOLVED: That Members email their comments to Councillor G Hill by 31 March 2014, who will then formulate a response on behalf of the Town Council by the stipulated deadline.**

**CO115/13**

**8. TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS WITH NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

Members noted the previously circulated report regarding Town Council Meetings with Northumberland County Council.

Councillor F Simpson reported that NALC would be providing training on Planning towards the end of April or beginning of May. Members asked Councillor F Simpson to request that NALC convene a training session in Berwick.

CO116/13

## 9. POST 16 TRANSPORT

The County Council is carrying out consultations on proposals to make changes to some of the discretionary elements of the Northumberland Home to School Transport Policy, including changes to the Post-16 Transport Policy, that would potentially affect some students from September 2014.

**RESOLVED: That members should forward any comments to Councillors G Jones and J Robertson who will formulate a response to the consultation on behalf of the Town Council.**

CO117/13

## 10. RISK ASSESSMENT

**RESOLVED: (i) To note that in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011, the Town Council has conducted a review of the risks it faces; (ii) To approve the risk assessment as a complete record and continuous working document consisting of the risks identified; and (iii) To establish a Risk Management Group to include Councillors H Bettison, J Lang, F Simpson and A Turnbull.**

CO118/13

## 11. REPORTS FROM WARD MEMBERS

Councillors debated the merits of Reports from Ward Members on the grounds they could repeat information that Councillors already provided to one another through networking at Committee meetings and would potentially create extra work for officers.

**RESOLVED: (i) That Reports from Ward Members remain as an agenda item at future meetings of full Council; and (ii) That Councillors would provide ward reports at their own discretion.**

The reports received from Ward Councillors on what was happening in their divisions were noted.

CO119/13

## 12. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Reports were received from County Councillors I Hunter, G Jones and J Smith on their divisions and within the county as a whole.

[The reports are appended to these minutes].

CO120/13

## 13. STANDING ORDERS

Councillors discussed the three items which had been proposed and seconded at the meeting on the 20 January 2014:

**RESOLVED:**

**(i) That the proposal made at the meeting on 20 January 2014 relating to**

**filming, videoing, photography and audio recording at council Meetings should not be incorporated into Standing Orders until such time as the Council was compelled to do so by law.**

**Note: The proposal was voted upon and the results were 2 for, 8 against and 5 abstentions; and**

- (ii) To agree the proposal made at the meeting on 20 January 2014 to adopt the terms of reference for the Staffing Sub-Committee (as agreed by the Staffing Committee on 13 November 2013 with the exception of an amendment to the quorum and the requirement for the Staffing Committee Chair to be a member), proposed by Councillor F Simpson:**
- a. That the Staffing Sub-Committee comprises three members of the Staffing Committee including the Chair and that a quorum shall be three;**
  - b. To consider grievance or disciplinary matters in accordance with the Council's grievance or disciplinary policies;**
  - c. To manage, supervise and appraise the Clerk, administer leave requests, record and monitor absences from work;**
  - d. To consider any appeal by the Clerk against a decision on pay; and**
- (iii) To agree the proposal made at the meeting on 20 January 2014 that the Council's Standing Orders should confirm that the public has no advance notification or right to attend a meeting of the Staffing Sub-Committee, the decisions of which, under responsibilities delegated by the Staffing Committee, will always concern individual staff members, disclosure of which would breach the obligations of the Council under the Data Protection Act 1998.**

**CO121/13**

**14. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 17 December 2013 and 28 January 2014.**

**CO122/13**

**15. ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Committee held on 6 January 2014.**

**CO123/13**

**16. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and**

**Resources Committee held on 13 January 2014.**

**CO124/13**

**17. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

No invitations had been received.

**CO125/13**

**18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 12 May 2014 at 6 pm in the Town Hall.

## **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **Report received from County Councillor I Hunter.**

The main item that has been on everybody's mind is the budget which was approved in February. The Administration has stated all outstanding pot holes will be filled by June.

The Administration have also stated they do intend to build houses of the County Hall site and staff will move back into the area offices which has to be an advantage to our economy even if the numbers are not high.

We are informed we will have coach parking in Berwick this year, so it is a matter of watch this space.

We are getting free parking in Berwick from 1<sup>st</sup> April apart from the Railway Station Car Park, based on time limits but discs must be displayed.

The Administration are looking at building Social Housing on Council owned land at Robert's Lodge, which will be going out to consultation as they need to engage with residents. Everybody is welcome to attend the event at Swan Leisure Centre on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2.30pm – 7pm and pass their comments and observations.

County Council has set up a Berwick Patient Care Task & Finish Group which does have Berwick County Councillors on it and allows us another opportunity to air our concerns in Berwick for the services we get. NHS Communication team are supposed to be keeping Berwick residents updated at all stages as the Hospital is getting re-build etc.

## Report received from County Councillor G Jones.

1. **Morrisons** - requesting that the gap in screening is filled following their recent works;
2. **Energy efficient improvements of homes in Newfields** - along with Cllrs Elliott and Robertson, attending resident updates and in communication with Mitie to ensure that the project is completed and no significant issues are unresolved;
3. **Coach Parking** - this has gone out to consultation; awaiting analysis of the responses and a report;
4. **Greenses Residents Parking** - this should be in place shortly;
5. **Tweed Street** - budget priority for improvements in 2015; there may be some opportunities for small capital works in the interim;
6. **Drinking in the parks, and New Road** - working with the police for visibility - it would be a pity if investment in parks could only be enjoyed by a few drinkers.
7. **Parking at the Station** - this has been prioritised in this year's NCC budget so will work with officers on a solution to expand the car parking provision;
8. **Percy Terrace** - issues with work done last March; am instructing further capital works;
9. **North Road** - I get repeated reports of speeding; combined with an absence of a lollipop person for a long period (this is a common issue throughout the County - I've asked for a new approach to recruitment), I've asked the police multiple times for speed checks, which they have responded to promptly;
10. **Elizabethan** - Cllr Elliott and myself attended the demolition start along with Councillor Smith.
11. **NHS** - working with other local County Councillors on service provision for the area - we're asking for issues such as transport, appointment coordination as well services to be addressed.

Other priorities:

Community Centre in Newfields;

Tourism signage;

Removal of double yellow lines from outside the Bowling Club.

## **Report received from County Councillor J Smith.**

1. Investigated use of Dock Road Town Green to find that NCC, as the land owner, has the authority to give permissions for use. This question arose following the organising of the bonfire by two local businessmen.
2. Attended High Speed Broadband presentation in Alnmouth and Superfast Broadband is now available in Berwick. Residents need to contact their supplier, who will send out an engineer to do the connection.
3. Contacted ARCH with respect to Kwik Save building, which is still owned by the Homes and Communities Agency.
4. Commonwealth Flag presented to County by Duchess of Northumberland.
5. Bailiffgate Museum officially reopened, after refurbishment, by Duke of Northumberland.
6. On Task & Finish Working Group looking at Patient Care in Berwick.
7. Cut the first sod for 40 Affordable Houses at Highcliffe.
8. Case work flooding at Tweedmouth, build-up of sand at Spittal Promenade.
9. Met with 4 Housing re demolition of garages.
10. Raising of Commonwealth Flat at County Hall and International Women's' Day.