

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 25 January 2016 at 6 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Police and Crime Commissioner, Vera Baird

Chief Executive in support of the Police Crime Commissioner, Elaine Snaith

Chief Constable of Northumbria Police, Steve Ashman

Chief Superintendent, North Area Command, Sharon Evans

Inspector David Garrick, Berwick Police

County Councillor Jim Smith

County Councillor Isabel Hunter

Wendy Pattison, Town Clerk

Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace

21 members of the public

Cllr Bettison welcomed everyone and also advised Mr Tony Kell would be filming the meeting. Cllr Bettison also advised that the Deputy Chair may have to take over the meeting as she had a Civic Function to attend later.

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

The Chief Constable, Steve Ashman advised that this meeting was the first public meeting in Berwick he had attended since coming into Office. Mrs Straughan asked whether there were enough Police in Berwick especially at weekends but also praised responses from local Police Officers Cllr Hill asked questions regarding the provision of Body Cameras to Northumbria Police as a donation had been requested from Berwick Town Council. The Chief Constable advised 400 body cameras were being piloted throughout the force area. Ms Baird also advised on funding constraints. Cllr Blackburn asked about the right of appeal and mentioned that this was not currently an option at NCC. Mr Spencer Barclay mentioned 2 lanes of traffic in a single lane at Golden Square and also queried the current breathalyser. Mr Kell asked questions on anti-social behaviour and Ms Baird advised this was a concern. Cllr Bettison mentioned Domestic Abuse and Ms Baird advised Northumbria Police took this extremely seriously and mentioned NDAS and that a local person was available locally for assistance. Mr Marshall mentioned legalised drug use and the Chief Constable advised firmly that he was not in agreement. Inspector Garrick also mentioned his team were dedicated into looking into local drug use and were currently able to use out of season resources in order to do this. Mr Walker mentioned the 101 phone line as not working between Christmas and New Year and was advised all systems were down. Cllr Bettison thanked everyone for coming.

OPEN SESSION

Mr Spencer Barclay queried CCTV specification in the tender process and was advised by Cllr Hodgson that Home Office guidelines were followed. Cllr Roughead advised problems with the green and red man at the pelican crossing at Golden Square. Mr Watts brought his concern re the Council supposedly moving forward and mentioned receiving unpleasant attacks on his character and also mentioned the current Finance Regulations being advised by the auditor as 'not fit for purpose' and also advised knowledge of Town Councillor discourtesy to current Council staff and mentioned the Finance Officer as having a very difficult time and unable to attend meetings. He also advised knowledge of another member of staff who had resigned re Councillor behaviour but has actually remained in post. Cllr Bettison advised that external auditor Mr S Warren was in Berwick on Friday and would be working with Councillors. Cllr Hill advises procedures needed to be put right and also said she was currently liaising with the Clerk to arrange Councillor Training on 20th or 27th February. Cllr Blackburn mentioned Kwik Save several times.

- C186/15** **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of: Councillors J Beresford (holiday), T Forrester (personal) and J Lang (personal).
- C187/15** **2. MINUTES**
The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 21 December 2015 were agreed and signed as a correct record.
- C188/15** **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**
Cllr Gibson item 13, Cllr Roughead, item 15, Cllr Goodyer personal and prejudicial item 17.
- C189/15** **4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**
There were no requests for dispensation.
- C190/15** **5. UNREASONABLE ALLEGATIONS**
Cllr Bettison read a prepared statement in regard to recent further allegations made by an Elector to the Council's external auditors BDO in regard to Portas monies and which named members of staff and Councillors. This complaint was later advised to the Council as unfounded by BDO's Senior Auditor. Cllr Bettison advised there would be no debate on the matter. Cllr Hill protested profusely against the item and appeared to be supported in this by most of the Town Council. Cllr Bettison advised her main concern was the welfare of Council staff and this item would be discussed again at the Staffing Committee. Cllr Forbes and Hill asked it to be minuted that it was a personal statement by the Mayor.
- C191/15** **6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
The Mayor reported on events attended since the last Council meeting.
- C192/15** **7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**
Reports from Councillors, G Jones, I Hunter and J Smith have been received and circulated and are available to read.
- C193/15** **8. COASTAL REVIVAL FUND TENDERS**
Suspend Standing Orders – Sir Philip Mawer advised that 2 tender bids had been approved at a meeting today which was attended by the Town Clerk and Cllr Lang. Sir Philip could not advise any names re the chosen bids as they had not yet been notified. Councillors were fully in support and Cllr Bettison thanked Sir Philip and Cllrs Goodyer and Lang. Cllr Gibson asked Sir Philip why the Masonic Heritage Group were also discussing a Heritage Hub and was advised that this would be Masonic Heritage Hub and completely different to what the CRF feasibility study at the Barracks was trying to

achieve. Re-instate Standing Orders.

C194/15 9. LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Goodyer advised that Drop in sessions will start next week and the first meeting will take place in grove ward. Feedback on transport issues has already been received.

C195/15 10. GUIDANCE ON USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY MEMBERS

Cllr Hill advised that this was not a policy but merely NCC guidance and it did not include complainant and whistle blowing and advised it needed to be discussed further at a Policy/Strategy meeting. This was agreed by all Councillors.

RESOLVED: To discuss further at Policy and Strategy.

C196/15 11. COXONS LANE CAR PARK

Councillors decided to request from NCC at the last meeting 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. There has been no response and the covenant objection made by BTC runs out on 29th January.

RESOLVED: County Councillors J Smith and I Hunter will chase this up before the 29th January deadline and the Clerk will send all correspondence.

C197/15 12. BERWICK IN BLOOM COMPETITION

Councillors approved the competition and the expenditure of £305.

RESOLVED: To go ahead with the competition.

CLLR DIXON TOOK THE CHAIR AND CLLR BETTISON LEFT THE MEETING

C198/15 13. BERWICK IN BLOOM PORTAS PLANTERS

Councillors agreed and noted that planters could be placed in the town and that the cost for buying them would be paid from the Portas monies of £5k re Make Berwick Beautiful which was one of the chosen choices which was voted for by Councillors.

RESOLVED: Planters to be bought and placed in the Town Centre, Tweedmouth and Spittal and this was noted by all Councillors.

C199/15 14. VISIT BERWICK LEAFLET 2016

Councillors advised that not all of the information was given and after a lively discussion it was decided to allow the Clerk to decide on a bid after consultation with Tourism Officer, Louise Dixon.

The Clerk will decide after further discussion with Ms Louise Dixon.

C200/15

15. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

Cllr Seymour expressed her concern at invoice 345 for the Digital Board contract which is funded by Portas and this was echoed by Cllr Hill. Cllr Hill also expressed concern at invoice 359, NCC Grass Cutting and proposed that both invoices were deferred from approval and requested more information. Cllr Graham queried Northumbria Water invoice 344 payable in advance for attendance at the Victorian fountain. Cllr Goodyer disagreed with deferring invoices 345 and 359 and this was seconded by Cllr Blackburn.

RESOLVED: It was agreed by Councillors to approve the payments and orders appended to these minutes apart from Councillors Hill and Seymour who both abstained from approving invoices 345 and 359.

C201/15

16. APPROVAL OF PLANNED EXPENDITURE

None.

C202/15

17. ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: It was proposed by Cllr Dixon and seconded by Cllr Graham to adopt the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration Committee meeting held on 16 November 2015. Cllr Blackburn wished to abstain and advised Council that the Clerk had refused to put onto the Council agenda 4 extra items which he had requested and advised the Clerk had been too busy to bother.

The Clerk strongly refuted Cllr Blackburn's allegations and advised, the agenda was full and was too late for further items to be added.

C203/15

18. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: Cllr Hodgson proposed to adopt the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 7 December 2015 and this was seconded by Cllr Gibson.

C204/15

19. PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: Cllr Seymour proposed to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 24 November 2015 and this was seconded by Cllr Forbes.

C205/15

20. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

No invitations had been received.

C206/15

21. CALENDAR OF DATES FOR 2016-17

RESOLVED: To adopt the calendar of meetings for 2016-17.

C207/15

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 22 February 2016 at 6 pm.

**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
345	Berwick Deserves Better	15/01/2016	101241	Digital Board phone contract	Wireless Logic	336.00	67.20	403.20
346	AONB Holiday Guide	15/01/2016	101242	Advert Northumberland Visitor Guide	Command Print Ltd	715.00	143.00	858.00
347	Banners	15/01/2016	101243	Banners	Flying Colours Flagmakers	177.95	35.59	213.54
348	Hoppa Bus	15/01/2016	101244	Posters	Fantasy Prints	12.50	2.50	15.00
349	Christmas Trees	15/01/2016	101245	Delivery	Skeldons	120.00	24.00	144.00
350	Hoppa Bus	15/01/2016	101246	Printing	Shiel Morrison	60.00	0.00	60.00
351	Bus Shelter Maintenance	15/01/2016	101247	Bus Shelter repairs	Bob Lee Welding	312.68	62.54	375.22
352	By-election Expenses	15/01/2016	101248	By-election cost	Northumberland County Council	4,608.10	921.62	5,529.72
353	By-election Expenses	15/01/2016	101248	By-election cost	Northumberland County Council	2,455.22	0.00	2,455.22
354	Remembrance Day	15/01/2016	101248	Barrier supply	Northumberland County Council	221.06	44.21	265.27
355	Floral Displays [labour]	15/01/2016	101248	Planting	Northumberland County Council	551.23	110.25	661.48
356	Festive Lighting other costs	15/01/2016	101248	Planter removal	Northumberland County Council	82.06	16.42	98.48
357	Public Realm Works	15/01/2016	101248	Planter repair	Northumberland County Council	49.06	9.81	58.87
358	Bins - litter/grit	15/01/2016	101248	Litter bin replacement	Northumberland County Council	380.42	76.08	456.50
359	Grass Cutting	15/01/2016	101248	Grass cutting	Northumberland County Council	3,300.00	660.00	3,960.00

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
343	Civic expenses	07/01/2016	debitcard	mobile phone top up	Joyce Benton	30.00	0.00	30.00
344	Public Realm Works	15/01/2016	101240	Water services	Northumbrian Water	884.00	176.80	1,060.80

DIRECT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED

Voucher	Code	Date	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
360	Water	15/01/2016	directdebit	Water services	Northumbrian Water	50.79	0.00	50.79
361	Website	15/01/2016	directdebit	Website hosting	Web Wiz	99.50	19.90	119.40
362	Telecoms	15/01/2016	directdebit	phone	BT	63.30	12.66	75.96
363	SSP Electricity	15/01/2016	directdebit	Electricity	British Gas	12.67	0.63	13.30
364	Salaries: Pension	15/01/2016	directdebit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
365	Salaries: Pension	15/01/2016	directdebit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
366	Gas	15/01/2016	directdebit	Gas	Southern Electric	74.18	3.70	77.88
367	Electricity	15/01/2016	directdebit	Electricity	Southern Electric	46.99	2.34	49.33

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

Voucher	Notes
343	Top-up for Mayor's Secretary's mobile phone
344	Payment made to Northumbrian Water to install water supply to fountain
345	Digital Board phone contract funded from Portas
346	Advert for Berwick within AONB 2016 Guide
347	Autumn Festival banners
348	Poster promoting Hoppa Bus
349	Delivery charge for Christmas Trees
350	Additional Hoppa Bus time tables
351	Repair at Golden Square bus shelter
352	By-election costs [printing]
353	By-election costs [staff]
354	Barrier supply and removal for Remembrance Day
355	Planting winter bedding
356	Removing and replacing planters for Rotary Christmas Tree
357	Repairing planters
358	Installing litter bins on Marygate
359	Additional autumn grass cuts
360	Office water charge
361	Annual charge for hosting Town Council website
362	Monthly charge for phone system
363	Splash Park electricity
364	November Pension payment
365	December Pension payment
366	Office gas charge
367	Office electricity charge