

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

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 27 July 2015 at 6 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

#### **PRESENT:**

Councillors:	I Dixon (Deputy Town Mayor)	K Graham
	D Blackburn	G Mclean
	A Forbes	G Roughead
	A Gibson	C Seymour
	G Hill (arrived late)	G Smith

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Wendy Pattison, Town Clerk  
Paul Taylor, Kompan  
Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk  
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace  
21 members of the public

#### **OPEN SESSION**

Questions were asked in regard to the possibility of a salary amounting to £35k was being given to the proposed BTC handy person/locality officer. Cllr McLean advised that this matter was still being discussed and the cost included a vehicle, training and necessary equipment. Cllr Graham advised there were 4 bands and this figure was the top band and BTC were waiting for a breakdown in the lower salary bands from NCC. Play Park transfer costs were also queried, local transport issues and a proper coach park update were also requested

**C049/15**

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of Councillors, H Bettison, T Forrester, J Beresford and J Lang.

**C050/15**

#### **2. MINUTES**

- i. The non-confidential minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 29 June 2015 were agreed by all Councillors and signed as

a correct record.

- ii. The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 14 July 2015 were agreed by all Councillors and signed as a correct record.

**C051/15**

### **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Cllr McLean declared a personal interest in items 7 and 8

**C052/15**

### **4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**C053/15**

### **5. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr Dixon advised Councillors that Councillor Bettison was currently on holiday. Cllr Dixon also welcomed Cllr Graham to the Council. Cllr Dixon then read from a letter received from NCC which advised that due to the many difficulties encountered regarding the Portas funding which included, a loss of confidence, lack of ideas, resignation of the Chairman of the Portas Management Group which was the second resignation within a year and a fraud/police investigation which had caused NCC to require a further audit, the Portas money will now be withdrawn. Any current applications will be honoured including the request to fund Electronic Display Boards with a final deadline being given as December 31<sup>st</sup> 2015.

**C054/15**

### **6. CASTLEGATE TOILETS**

Inspector David Garrick was unable to attend the meeting to discuss the recent anti-social behaviour taking place inside the toilets but on request from Cllr Seymour he will again be invited to attend the Council meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> August. Inspector Garrick advised that regular patrols were still taking place and a police suggestion for NCC to install UV lights to prevent drug users from finding veins to inject into, is currently in progress. Cllr Blackburn advised that the toilets needed to have a full time toilet attendant in place which would stop all anti-social behaviour from happening. Inspector Garrick also advised that activity linked to the Portas Fund has been referred to an independent financial body for investigation.

Northumbria Police financial investigations department are still waiting for a response regarding that independent review

Cllr Seymour advised that BTC were looking into introducing a scheme which was used a few years ago called 'Your Welcome' and this comprises of shop owners, café/restaurants opening their toilet facilities up to the public which will hopefully encourage visitors to also spend money within their premises.

C055/15

## 7. PLAY PARKS

- a) Mr Paul Taylor, Kompan gave a presentation on the proposed plans from Kompan to develop Flagstaff Park into a flagship play park. The equipment will be made of hardwood and will be in keeping with the area and will also be suitable for harsh weather conditions. Cllr Gibson and Cllr Mclean have worked with Mr Taylor for several months to ensure a sympathetic and exciting design which will suit all ages. Once agreed, the equipment will take approximately 12 weeks to install. Maintenance training will also be given by Kompan. Cllr Mclean thanked Mr Taylor for his hard work.
- b) Councillors agreed the freehold transfer of all play parks at the Council meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> June. Solicitor, Mr Andrew Daverson, Tait Farrier Graham, will meet with all Councillors on 7<sup>th</sup> August to discuss boundaries and any other issues pertaining to the freehold transfer. Once the freehold is transferred, BTC will take on the responsibility of maintenance of equipment, grass cutting and the emptying of litter bins.

C056/15

## 8. BERWICK DESERVES BETTER NOTICE BOARDS

Cllr Seymour requested a full breakdown of all costs to BTC and queried the figure of £1.6k to maintain the display boards.

### **Cllr Dixon suspended standing orders to allow Mrs Jennifer Mclean to advise the Council.**

Mrs Mclean advised Ms Dixon, Berwick Tourism Officer would be able to update the boards by computer and this would not impact on Ms Dixons current weekly 6 hours work for BTC. Insurance re the boards would be paid by Active Northumberland. Lighting re the boards can be dimmed and they won't affect traffic. No planning permission will be needed and one of the boards will be placed near to the Advertiser office. A query on the removal of cycle racks to allow for this was advised that it may not be necessary. A lively discussion then took place with some Councillors concerned that if this matter was deferred it may not qualify for the Portas funding due to NCC's recent letter. Cllr Blackburn proposed agreement for BTC to fund the boards and this was seconded by Cllr Gibson. Cllr Seymour was against any agreement and Cllr Graham also agreed with Cllr Seymour advising against a vote at the meeting as it wasn't specified on the agenda. A vote then took place with Cllr Dixon abstaining, Cllrs Seymour and Graham were against and Cllrs Forbes, Roughead, Smith, Gibson, Mclean, Blackburn and

Gibson in agreement. Motion was carried in favour of the boards. Cllr Roughead requested that the decision be reviewed in 3 years and this was agreed.

**Standing Orders resumed**

**RESOLVED: Support approved by BTC for Berwick Deserves Better**

**Electronic Display Noticeboards**

**Cllr Hill entered the meeting**

**C057/15**

**9. RE-AUDITING OF ACCOUNTS**

Cllr Dixon advised that this matter be deferred to the 17<sup>th</sup> August Council meeting. The Clerk expressed concern that if BTC do not approve the 2014/15 audit at this meeting, and return the audit to the external auditors BDO before September 4<sup>th</sup> 2015, that, BDO will then issue a notice of intent to BTC and this will cause the Council to have to call a public meeting. To get the 2013/14 and 2014/15 accounts re-audited will involve BTC incurring considerable extra costs. Cllr Hill advised that while fraud investigations were still taking place the Council could not progress or sign off the accounts. Cllr Hill also said she had been advised that BDO's deadline was the end of September and that nothing had changed since the previous discussion and while fraud investigations were still taking place the Council should not progress or sign off the accounts.

**RESOLVED: To discuss again at the 17<sup>th</sup> August Council Meeting**

**C058/15**

**10. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

Last year's requests were, improving /extending car parking at Berwick Railway Station, problems regarding the short term parking at Marygate and a cycle route amendment at Berwick Bridge. Councillors felt those requests should go forward again for 2016/17. Cllr Graham mentioned crumbling stonework on the old bridge and this was advised as already being looked into/dealt with by NCC. Cllr Roughead expressed concern regarding bus services being withdrawn and requested that the Town Council seek to a written guarantee from NCC Administration that they will undertake further community consultation before making any proposed changes to services in north Northumberland. **Standing Orders suspended** – mention was made of bollards which were removed by NCC and to be replaced with studs, however this action never took place. It was felt that all the current traffic problems in the Town should be incorporated into the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan. **Standing Orders resumed.**

**RESOLVED: To put forward last year's requests again re LTP**

**11. TOURISM IN BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**

- a) The Clerk advised Councillors re the free Northumberland Coast and Visitor Guide AONB magazine which BTC paid approx. £1, 100.00 for a 3 page entry for 2015 and which may cost £1,300 in 2016 for the same amount of pages and whether Councillors felt 3 pages were necessary. **Standing Orders suspended.** Mrs Joyce Benton advised that the 3 pages had only been charged as 2 pages last year with the 3<sup>rd</sup> page free. **Standing orders resumed**

**RESOLVED: The Clerk to make further enquiries on cost of pages**

- b) A suggestion which was made by Mr Jim Gibson for BTC to pay for a 2.5 minute video link to be displayed on the Visit Berwick website and which could be linked to You Tube and also to bed and breakfasts in the Berwick area. Mr John Haswell, Chairman, Berwick Chamber of Trade further suggested and had a report printed in the Advertiser that all budding film makers got in touch with BTC to send in their own videos. The Clerk advised that there was a time limit on this as if BTC wanted the video put onto the website for future 2016 visitors the light will start to fade once September comes in and was not ideal for filming Berwick at its best. As schools are currently on holiday until September this would delay any progress re the video until next year. **Standing Orders suspended.** Members of the public suggested other professional filmmakers including Jim France who has done a lot of filming re Berwick 900 and also the Lighthouse Company. A further suggestion was made to request budding film makers to still put forward their videos for next year re future approval. **Standing Orders resumed**

**RESOLVED: The Clerk to obtain 2 more quotes**

- c) The free Visitor Guide provided by BTC is currently in a pocket size format and a suggestion was made to change the size to A5 to show photos of Berwick in a slightly better format. **Standing Orders suspended.** Mrs Joyce Benton advised that Berwick TIC preferred the pocket size guide and this was echoed by Councillors.

**RESOLVED: To keep the Berwick Visitor Guide in a pocket size format**

- d) Extra work required to design the 2 Northumberland Holiday Guide pages by Tourism Officer, Ms Louise Dixon on BTC's behalf was advised that this

work would still have to be charged for if NCC had undertaken the art work required on BTC's behalf.

**C060/15**

## **12. BUS SHELTERS**

Three estimates have been received in regard to installing a bus shelter outside ASDA in Tweedmouth. Councillors agreed to purchase a shelter from More than Shelters at a cost of £3,172.40 plus VAT which includes installation. There is £4761.34p in the budget for a shelter. Although the shelter is slightly higher than the required height, Cllr Gibson advised this can be installed deeper to allow for this requirement. Cllr Roughead also requested a bus stop and a timetable provision from NCC but was advised this may/can be incorporated.

**RESOLVED: To buy a bus shelter from More than Shelters**

**C061/15**

## **13. TWEEDMOUTH WAR MEMORIAL**

Cllr Jim Smith brought his concerns to BTC that the lettering on the Tweedmouth War Memorial was fading and needing renewal. The Clerk advised current difficulties in obtaining 3 quotes from qualified Stone Masons with only one company out of 4 contacted advising they will send in a quote. The Clerk will keep trying to obtain relevant quotes for the work to be done with an option to try and obtain a grant from the War Memorial Trust to cover the costs if quotes are considerable.

**RESOLVED: To obtain 3 quotes**

**C062/15**

## **14. SEAT STRATEGY**

Councillors have agreed to check the seats and benches in their wards and advise the Clerk which seats are still needing attention. Cllr Blackburn was concerned that he may not have time to do this and Cllr Graham and Smith will attend to this ward on his behalf. Bamburgh PC has a policy in place to look after seats in the parish by residents adopting a seat and the Clerk will contact them to ask for further information/advice. Cllr Mclean advised the type of seats in the wards needed to be specified, such as serpent, stone and also dedicated seats to loved ones. It was decided that all Councillors will email the Clerk with repairs re the seats before the next Council meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> August.

**RESOLVED: Councillors to email the Clerk in regard to seat maintenance/repairs in each ward by 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015.**

**C063/15**

## **15. NORTHUMBRIAN CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

Cllr Seymour praised the work of CAB and it was proposed BTC give £20k to

support CAB, this was seconded by Cllr McLean and agreed by all Councillors.

**RESOLVED: To donate £20k to support the work of CAB in Berwick**

**C064/15**

**16. BERWICK VISUAL ARTS**

Cllr Hill advised that this payment request had not been a straight forward one and there had been some confusion and also wondered how much re donations had been received by Berwick Visual Arts from the Lowry exhibition? Cllr Hill said she had been told the payment was outstanding and it referred to the £3k grant which was agreed by the Events and Finance Committee in November 2013 and on that basis she was happy to propose that the payment be authorised and this was agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED: To pay Berwick Visual Arts £3k**

**C065/15**

**17. APPROVAL OF HIGHCLIFFE YOUTH CLUB GRANT**

Approval of £2.5k to support Highcliffe Youth Club was proposed by Cllr Seymour and seconded by Cllr Gibson and was agreed by all.

**RESOLVED: Approval of £2.5k to be given to Highcliffe Youth Club**

**C066/15**

**18. XMAS LIGHTS ON THE NEW BRIDGE**

Mr Gavin Barlow, NCC has advised BTC re the Christmas Lights on Royal Tweed Bridge, Berwick upon Tweed that the area has been inspected, and the problems encountered last Christmas were minor, and related generally to the Christmas Motifs. NCC do plan to do some work on the Bridge and renew some cabling to improve the integrity of the electrical supplies, but this will not require any contribution from anyone.

**RESOLVED: No further action required**

**C067/15**

**19. AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS AND ORDERS**

Councillors agreed to approve all payments

Cllr Hill drew attention to the employment of a handy person would bring annual Staff Salaries up to near half of the precept.

**RESOLVED: To approve the payments and orders appended to these minutes.**

**C068/15**

**20. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 19 May 2015 was proposed by Cllr Seymour and seconded by Cllr Smith.**

**C069/15**

**21. ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration**

Committee meeting held on 8 June 2015 was proposed by Cllr Dixon and seconded by Cllr Roughead.

**C070/15**

**22. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** To adopt the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 15 June 2015 was proposed by Cllr Hill and seconded by Cllr Dixon.

**C071/15**

**23. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr Seymour proposed Cllr Graham represent BTC on HELM and this was seconded by Cllr Hill. Cllr Graham also requested if another Council representative could join the two Councillors already in place re Berwick in Bloom and the Clerk will make further enquiries.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr Graham to join HELM and the Clerk to ascertain whether Cllr Graham can join Britain in Bloom.

**C072/15**

**24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 17 August 2015 at 6 pm.

**RESOLVED:** To exclude the press and public during discussion of the following item, which includes issues of a personal and confidential nature.

**C073/15**

**25. MINUTES**

The confidential minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 29 June 2015 were agreed by all Councillors and signed as a correct record.



24 July 2015 (15-16)

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

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
113	Other Events Grants	23/07/2015	101127	Grant	Maltings Trust	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
114	Professional Services	23/07/2015	101128	Legal services	Collingwood Legal	624.00	124.80	748.80
115	IT Equipment	23/07/2015	101129	IT equipment	Northern Lab	1,744.68	348.93	2,093.61
116	Hoppa Bus	23/07/2015	101130	Printing	Shiel Morrison	60.00	0.00	60.00
117-27	Salaries:	23/07/2015	101131	Salaries:	Northumberland County Council	6,561.81	0.40	6,561.81
132	Photocopies	24/07/2015	101132	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	72.55	14.51	87.06
133	Floral Displays [materials]	24/07/2015	101133	Compost	Northumberland County Council	421.74	84.35	506.09
134	Floral Displays [labour]	24/07/2015	101133	Planting	Northumberland County Council	551.23	110.25	661.48
135	Floral Displays [labour]	24/07/2015	101133	Watering	Northumberland County Council	137.81	27.56	165.37
136	Councillor Travel & Subsistence	24/07/2015	101134	Ink cartridges	G McLean	19.99	0.00	19.99
139	Subscriptions	24/07/2015	101134	Subscription	North East Regional Employers Organisation	295.00	59.00	

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

**Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council****DIRECT PAYMENTS TO BE NOTED**

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Net</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
109	SSP Electricity [June]	09/07/2015	direct debit	Electricity	British Gas	36.71	1.83	38.54
110	Salaries: Pension	23/07/2015	direct debit	Pension	NEST	153.13	0.00	153.13
111	Electricity	23/07/2015	direct debit	Electricity	Southern Electric	42.41	2.12	44.53
112	Gas	23/07/2015	direct debit	Gas	Southern Electric	35.54	1.77	37.31
128	Civic expenses	23/07/2015	debit card	Phone Credit	Joyce Benton	30.00	0.00	30.00
129	Postage	23/07/2015	debit card	Stamps	S Cozens	25.20	0.00	25.20
130	Mayor personal & official expenses	23/07/2015	debit card	Stamps	S Cozens	37.80	0.00	37.80
131	SSP Electricity [April]	23/07/2015	direct debit	Electricity	British Gas	8.93	0.44	9.37

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Notes</b>
113	Grant awarded towards Town Hall hire for 2014 Opera season [minute F092/13]
114	Charges for employment law advice during June
115	Payment for replacement office computers
116	Hoppa Bus timetables
117-27	July Salary payment
132	Office printing & photocopies
133	Compost for Summer Bedding
134	Planting of Summer Bedding
135	Watering of Summer Bedding [June]
136	Ink Cartridge