

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Environment and Regeneration Committee Meeting held on Monday, 9th March 2015 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors: I Dixon (Chairman)
H. Bettison
G Hill
G McLean
G Roughead

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Acting Clerk
Mr Robert Leetham, Acting Finance Officer
6 members of the public

ER071/14 1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman opened the meeting and requested nominations for a new Vice Chairman, Environment and Regeneration Committee. Cllr Hill proposed Cllr McLean and this was seconded by Cllr Dixon, however, Cllr McLean decided to decline at this moment in time and advised Councillors that he would prefer to wait until he had had more experience as a Committee member. Cllr Hill then proposed Cllr Roughead and this was seconded by Cllr Dixon.

RESOLVED: That Councillor G Roughead be appointed Vice Chairman of the Environment and Regeneration Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

ER072/14 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors A Gibson, I Hunter and F Simpson.

ER073/14 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Cllr Roughead wanted all Councillors to know that the lights at the Golden Square Bus Shelter have now been repaired. Cllr Dixon also advised he would

ensure all Bus Shelters were in good order before NCC handed them over formally to Berwick Town Council.

The minutes of the meetings were then agreed unanimously by all Councillors present as a true record and were duly signed.

ER074/14

4. STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

Mr Brian Darling advised Councillors of several concerns, firstly, the meeting regarding the Town Clerk which took place last Tuesday and the issues surrounding decisions/proposed severance to the Clerk. Secondly, the mismanagement of the Portas Management Group and the failures to comply with Dunn Report suggestions. Mr Darling also advised he had filed a formal complaint about Cllr Gavin Jones regarding several issues relating to the Kwik Save building.

Mr David Spencer Barclay conveyed his concerns over the raised flower bed which is situated to the west of the Parade Car Park which is an angled structure and was erected by NCC and which Mr Spencer Barclay considers dangerous to both children and also to the partially sighted. Mr Spencer Barclay has written personally on this matter to NCC and Town Councillors have requested that he advises the Town Council of the response received and should this be inconclusive, Councillors will look into this issue in more detail and make a probable site visit.

Ms Janet Clare-Dean conveyed her concern after looking at the accounts relating to the Portas Fund. Ms Clare-Dean advised her disquiet at the execution and financial variations and has made a formal complaint to the external auditor.

ER075/14

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor H Bettison declared a personal interest in Item 10, (Hoppa Bus) known to a member of staff;

Councillor G Roughead declared a personal interest in Item 10, (Hoppa Bus) campaigner for the Hoppa Bus;

Councillor G McLean declared a personal interest in Item 8, (Portas Management Group) as a member of the Group.

ER076/14

6. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

ER077/14

7. BERWICK CHARTER MARKET

Cllr Dixon advised his wish for the Town Council to take over the Charter Market

from NCC/ Freeman Trustees which was run originally by the old Borough Council. Because this year is the anniversary of Berwick 900, Cllr Dixon thought it would be a project which would be of great benefit to the Town. Cllr Hill agreed it would be a viable initiative and needed further discussion, but, this decision could not be made straight away. There would also be difficulties to overcome regarding an 'on the spot' person to be available/on hand to organise the Market etc.

RESOLVED – TO COMMISSION A FINANCIAL REPORT ON COSTINGS.

ER078/14

8. PORTAS MANAGEMENT GROUP

Cllr Mclean gave an update on the Portas Group and advised there was a meeting on Tuesday 10th March to further discuss the Market and its future and also re-iterated collective concern re spending the Portas money by the end of June due to various planning delays and other problems. It was very much hoped that they would be allowed an extension of time. Digital Media Boards are coming to fruition and a meeting with NCC Highways on technical siting and points of supply/advice will take place on Friday 13th March. The Chairman, Cllr Dixon suspended standing orders to allow Mr Brian Darling to speak. Mr Darling again conveyed his concern on serious mismanagement of the Group. Chairman reinstated Standing Orders. Cllr Hill also expressed her concern at the Group missing out on NCC match funding.

Mr Ian Beresford, a resident of Spittal has applied for the vacancy for a community representative. Councillors were in general agreement to the appointment of Mr Beresford and Cllr Bettison then proposed and Cllr Roughead seconded his appointment to the Portas Management Group.

RESOLVED – TO APPOINT MR BERESFORD TO THE PORTAS MANGEMENT GROUP

ER079/14

9. INNER WHEELBARROW FEATURE

A galvanised steel wheelbarrow to display flowers was commissioned by Berwick Inner Wheel to celebrate their 90 year anniversary. Unfortunately, various problems arose and prevented them from displaying the wheelbarrow on the Morrisons roundabout at North Road which was the original location. The Chairman, Cllr Dixon suspended standing orders to allow Mrs Sheila Budzynski representing Berwick Inner Wheel to speak. Mrs Budzynski advised Councillors that the Inner Wheel had encountered several problems relating to their donation

of the barrow, including, Public Liability, planning concerns and also maintenance issues. The wheelbarrow has now been given permission to be placed next to a planter on the side of the road near to the welcome sign at North Road so there will be no concerns regarding watering any of the plants contained in the barrow. They will also build a plinth free of charge for the barrow to be mounted onto. It is expected that the wheelbarrow will need painting approximately every 8 years. The Chairman reinstated standing orders. Cllr Bettison proposed that the wheelbarrow be put into place and Cllr McLean seconded.

RESOLVED – TO ALLOW THE WHEELBARROW TO BE PUT INTO POSITION AND TO REQUEST MR COZENS, ASSISTANT TO THE CLERK TO WRITE A LETTER OF THANKS TO BERWICK INNER WHEEL FOR THEIR KIND DONATION TO THE TOWN OF BERWICK.

ER080/14

10. HOPPA BUS

Councillors considered the Hoppa Bus was a much valued service for local residents but was unfortunately losing money. Approximately 5,300 people per year are using the service. £9,900 was allocated by the Town Council and £6,600 has been used. Cllr Hill suggested commercial sponsorship as a potential funding possibility and Councillors agreed that this was a good idea.

RESOLVED – TO CONTINUE THE SERVICE THROUGH 2015

ER081/14

11. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

An application has been made by Mr Brian Douglas for financial assistance of £7,200 to host the Berwick Pipe Band and Highland Dancing Competition at Shielfield Park. This event would take place on a Sunday and Cllr McLean expressed concern that the date should not conflict with other planned festivals. Cllr Bettison thought this was an excellent idea and very good for the Town, however was concerned that more financial details such as entry charges and prize money were not included in the initial request for funding and the amount requested was considerable. This view was also shared by other Councillors. Councillors agreed to offer support in principle.

RESOLVED - MR STEVEN COZENS, ASSISTANT TO THE CLERK WILL BE REQUESTED TO ADD THIS ITEM TO NEXT WEEK'S FINANCE AND RESOURCES MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION/DISCUSSION AND MR DOUGLAS WILL BE CONTACTED TO SUPPLY FURTHER INFORMATION

ER083/14

12. APPOINTMENTS TO OUSIDE BODIES

None

ER083/14

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place at 6pm at Berwick Town Hall on Monday, June 8th 2015