

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Full Council

Time and date

Monday 24 November 2025 at 18:00

Place

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Unit 1, 82-88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 1BN

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE Full Council [In-person]

Dear Councillor

The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

Iain McCready

Proper Officer

19 November 2025

Agendas and papers for all meetings can be accessed on <https://www.berwick-tc.gov.uk/meetings>

Members' Apologies

Members are requested to submit their apologies and any Declarations of Interest on the relevant form attached to this agenda to Chief.Officer@Berwick-tc.gov.uk by 5pm on the day before the meeting.

Recording of Council Meetings

This meeting is digitally recorded, broadcasted and retained until the minutes are signed.

Questions by the Public

At the discretion of the Town Mayor, those members of the public, residing or working within the Council's boundary, will be invited to make representations or ask questions in respect of the business on the agenda, or other matters not on the agenda, for a maximum of 3 minutes per person or 15 minutes overall.

Members of the Public are welcome and have a right to attend this Meeting.

Please note that there is a maximum capacity of 10 in the public gallery.

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AGENDA

74.25.Members of the Council

Members of the Council: Cllr John Robertson (Mayor), Cllr Rosemary Mackenzie (Deputy Mayor) Cllr Janice Bowden, Cllr Graham Brown, Cllr Robert Bruce, Cllr Rachel Driver, Cllr Anne Forbes, Cllr Mike Greener, Cllr Laura Hawken, Cllr Paul Hillier, Cllr Ayrin Khan, Cllr Philip Rowe, Cllr Catherine Seymour, Cllr Gary Smith, Cllr Thomas Stewart and Cllr Jane Turton

75.25.Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

76.25.Disclosure of Interests

See attached.

77.25.Open Session

Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. This is for a period of 15 minutes overall and is limited to 3 minutes per person.

78.25.Minutes

To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council extraordinary meeting held on 27th October 2025

79.25.Part 1- Items for Decisions

Review the notes of the Working Groups and discuss any recommendations to Full Council

80.25.Budget Preparation 2026-27

To discuss the report attached

81.25.Notes of the Environment and Communities Group

To receive an update from the Lead Member on the recent meeting of the Working Group and to consider any recommendations to Full Council.

82.25.Notes of the Business and Administration Working Group.

To receive an update from the Lead Member on the recent meeting of the Working Group and to consider any recommendations to Full Council.

83.25.Planning Committee

To note the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 06/11/2025 and to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 04/09/2025. To discuss the pre-application (no. 25/00635/PREAPP) from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust for the Berwick Infirmary and Bell Tower. This application concerns 'the Proposed reconfiguration of the external 'front of house' areas including reconfigured car parking, disabled access, hard and soft landscaping works and the demolition of the wings of the existing Berwick Infirmary Bell Tower but the retention of the bell tower itself.'

84.25.Freeman Trustees

Cllr Stewart will introduce the item seeking Council nominations for five Trustees to the Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen), outlining the role and function of the Trustees. He will also offer a brief verbal report on the past year's work and highlight considerations for 2026.

85.25.Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 15th December 2025 at 18:00

86.25.Part 2 - Confidential Items

TO PASS A RESOLUTION to exclude members of the public and press from the meeting at Part 3 of the agenda (if required) in view of any confidential items under discussion. These will usually relate to exempt staffing matters or contractual matters which may be commercially sensitive.

87.25. Confidential Matters

Any confidential matters (if required) arising from discussions of the Working Group notes.

Disclosures of Interest Form.docx

2025-10-27 - Full Council [In-person] - Minutes[1](3).docx

Budget report Nov 2627 full council.docx

Environment and Communities Working Group 03.11.2025 Notes (DRAFT).docx

Budget and Administration Working Group 03.11.25 Notes Draft.docx

2025-11-06 - Planning Committee Minutes.docx

250904_Draft_Minutes.docx

2500635_PREAPP_External_Consultation_Infirmmary.pdf

summary doc 2025.pdf



Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

Disclosure of Interests Form

(Localism Act 2011)

Notification by a Member of a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Interest in a Matter under Consideration at a Meeting

Please complete the form below to indicate any agenda items in which you have an interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest in an item, please also indicate whether you wish to speak (refer to the Council's Code of Conduct for details).

As required by the Localism Act 2011, I declare that I have a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest in the following matter(s):

MEETING: _____

DATE: _____

NAME OF COUNCILLOR: _____

Agenda Item No.	Type of Interest (Disclosable Pecuniary / Other)	Reason for Interest	Wish to Speak (Yes/No)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to the Chief Officer before the meeting begins.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Council

Time and date

Monday 27 October 2025 at 18:00

Place

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Unit 1, 82-88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 1BN

Minutes

Councillors present:

- Cllr John Robertson (Mayor, in the Chair)
- Cllr Janice Bowden
- Cllr Robert Bruce
- Cllr Rachel Driver
- Cllr Anne Forbes
- Cllr Ayrin Khan
- Cllr Rosemary McKenzie
- Cllr John Robertson
- Cllr Gary Smith
- Cllr Thomas Stewart
- Cllr Jane Turton
- Cllr Laura Hawkin
- Cllr Paul Hillier

Officers:

- Iain McCready (Chief Officer)
- Stephen Robinson (Operations Manager)

Also in attendance:

- Cllr Glen Sanderson (Leader, Northumberland County Council)
- Paul Jones (Director of Environment and Transport, NCC)
- Members of the public
- Representatives of the press

64.25 – Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Brown, Smith and Seymour.

Full Council [In-person] - 2025-10-27

Resolved: That the apologies for absence be accepted.

65.25 – Disclosure of Interests

No new disclosures of interest were declared in addition to those already registered.

Resolved: That the disclosures be noted.

66.25 – Presentation from Northumberland County Council

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Glen Sanderson, Leader of Northumberland County Council, and Paul Jones, Director of Environment and Transport, who attended to discuss current County Council work and its relationship with Berwick.

Cllr Sanderson outlined:

The County Council's 2025–26 budget preparations and £20m savings target.

Key priorities: maintaining free town centre car parking, investment in leisure facilities, and the £64m Berwick schools partnership programme.

Major developments including the reopening of the Northumberland rail line and the £10bn Blackstone/QTS data centre investment near Blyth, which will create jobs and fund a £110m Northumberland Investment Fund.

Environmental commitments including carbon offset measures, district heating potential, and renewable energy initiatives.

Questions from Councillors included:

Cllr Stewart raised concerns from parish and town councils about public transport and the loss of residential homes to holiday lets.

Cllr Sanderson confirmed these were recognised issues, with ongoing discussions with the North East Combined Authority and measures to support long-term rural bus services.

Cllr Forbes queried the allocation of new homes at the Five Arches site; only six had been let to local people.

Cllr Sanderson undertook to contact Bernicia and provide a written response via the Chief Officer.

Cllr Robertson highlighted issues around short-term lets and their effect on housing supply.

Cllr Sanderson and Mr Jones confirmed similar challenges existed across the county and were under review.

Cllr Khan asked about the breakdown of the £64m schools funding and timeframes for delivery.

Cllr Sanderson stated funding covered both the new high school and feeder schools, with planning approved and delivery to proceed as soon as possible.

The Mayor noted the importance of vocational training being included in the new campus, which Cllr Sanderson confirmed.

Cllr Driver queried environmental safeguards relating to the new data centre.

Mr Jones explained sustainable water recirculation and power connections, including renewable energy imports and potential for district heating schemes.

Cllr Khan raised local access to training in renewables and engineering.

Cllr Sanderson described investment in the Energy Central Learning Hub at Blyth and plans for similar vocational links in Berwick.

Cllr Mackenzie asked about regeneration support for Berwick's high street.

Cllr Sanderson invited the Town Council to work jointly with NCC on ideas for regeneration projects, with available funding from the £110m Investment Fund.

Cllr Turton queried future opportunities through the Borderlands Partnership.

Cllr Sanderson advised that while most funding was committed, the Council would continue to pursue suitable projects.

The Mayor raised two operational matters:

The Town Council's wish to progress the transfer of cemeteries once NCC costings were received.

Outstanding legal matters concerning the transfer of war memorials.

Mr Jones agreed to seek updates from NCC Legal Services within one week.

Members also discussed flooding in Spittal linked to a burst water main and historic mine workings. Mr Jones confirmed NCC were liaising with Northumbrian Water to investigate and that repairs and monitoring were ongoing.

67.25 – Open Session

One member of the public addressed Council.

Wendy Robertson questioned the transparency of Council decision-making, referring to closed discussions of the Tourism and Regeneration Task Group.

The Mayor assured her that a written response would be provided within three working days.

Cllr Robert Bruce queried a private meeting between the Operations Manager, Cllr Tom Stewart, and Mr Michael Heriot (Freemen of Berwick), and raised concerns about confidentiality and transparency.

The Mayor and Chief Officer confirmed the meeting was held to gather background information at councillors' request, with no decisions made.

The Mayor reiterated that related matters would be discussed in confidential session.

Cllr Bruce also raised several other issues:

Market operations and financial information, including staff payments.

Consultation on the Quayside pods project.

Removal of trees near the pump track.

Responses were provided by officers and the Mayor, who confirmed that:

Market operations were authorised by prior Full Council resolution.

Residents' concerns about the Quayside and pump track would be investigated.

Written responses would be provided within three working days.

Decision: That officers provide written responses to public questions within three working days.

68.25 – Minutes

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 22 September 2025 were considered.

Amendments and clarifications were noted:

Clarification of the abbreviation "Nem Con" as "no objection."

Confirmation that the pump track decision included both insurance and maintenance responsibilities.

Discussion regarding stonework beneath monoliths and potential vandalism; officers to review protective measures.

Decision: That the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 22 September 2025 be approved as a correct record.

69.25 – Environment and Communities Working Group

Report presented by Cllr Jane Turton (Chair).

Key updates included:

- Lidl declined sponsorship for the bus stop bench.
- The burnt bin issue to be discussed at the next meeting.
- The play areas report due for completion by November.
- Winter planting ongoing, sponsorships running for a calendar year.
- Northumbrian Water repairing a leak near the Spittal War Memorial before Remembrance Sunday.
- A new bin to be installed at the top of Falloden Terrace with NCC permission.
- Consideration of missing trees on Riverside Walk deferred pending Northumbrian Water's engagement event on 4 November.

- Officers to bring Christmas tree location costings and budgets to the next meeting.

Decision: That the recommendation of the Working Group to install a litter bin at the top of Falloden Terrace, with NCC permission, be approved.

70.25 – Business and Administration Working Group

Report presented by Cllr Philip Rowe (Chair).

Key points included:

- The Working Group reviewed the Tourism and Regeneration Group's notes and supported the Quayside project.
- Officers to bring details of the Town Centre signage project to the November meeting.
- Discussion on potential future use of the Cows Building.
- The Market Task Group to invite an external market specialist to attend future meetings.
- Officers to gather festive light costings for November; planning for 2026 to start in January.
- Due diligence required on potential new premises before financial commitment.
- Expenditure versus budget reviewed; EMRs to be used as needed.
- Supported a £1,200 grant to Berwick Rotary Club for road closure costs at the Christmas Market.
- Budget planning for 2026–27 discussed to ensure obligations and community support.
- The AGAR inspection discrepancy of one extra day noted and accepted.
- New internal auditor David Newman appointed at £950 per year.
- Officers to explore more cost-effective accounting software.
- NCC Governance Review documents to be discussed at Full Council.

Decision: That Council approve continuation of the Quayside artisan units pilot as recommended.

Decision: That Council authorise officers to seek necessary landowner permissions for the Quayside units.

Decision: That Council approve a £1,200 grant to Berwick Rotary Club for the Christmas Market road closure.

Decision: That Council approve the appointment of David Newman as internal auditor at £950 per year.

Decision: That Council agree to complete and return the NCC Governance Review pre-consultation questionnaire.

71.25 – Community Governance Review

Following discussion, it was resolved:

That Berwick Town Council has the right number of councillors.

That the Council support the creation of three wards (Berwick, Tweedmouth, and Spittal) in place of the existing seven.

That the Council remain a single combined parish.

That officers seek clarification and adjustments to boundaries with East Ord to ensure properties are not divided.

Decision: That the Chief Officer be authorised to complete and return the questionnaire on behalf of the Council.

72.25 – Date of Next Meeting

Resolved: That the next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 24 November 2025 at 6.00pm.

73.25 – Exclusion of the Public

Resolved: That in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of confidential items relating to staffing or commercially sensitive matters.

The meeting closed at approximately 7.30pm.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Budget Report 2026/27

Budget Report – 2026/27

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

1. Introduction

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council continues to play a vital role in supporting the community, improving public spaces, and delivering projects that make a visible difference to residents and visitors alike. Each year, the Council sets a budget that reflects both its ambitions for the town and its responsibility to manage public funds carefully.

The budget for 2026/27 aims to maintain services, respond to rising costs, and invest in the town's long-term future.

Over the past year, the Council has:

- Welcomed a visit from the Coldstream Guards
- Taken on the Salmon Queen event
- Held VE and VJ Day commemorations
- Increased floral displays across the town
- Provided additional cleaning in the town centre
- Supported community groups and charities through its grants programme
- Begun work on the Woodland Walk and installed new trees and planters in public areas

These projects demonstrate the Council's ongoing commitment to making Berwick a better, cleaner, and more vibrant place for everyone.

2. Current Budget Position

In 2025/26, the Council approved a budget that provided:

- **Total expenditure:** £623,801
- **Total income:** £573,525
- **Shortfall:** £50,276 (met from reserves)
- **Precept:** £401,775
- **Schedule III income:** £147,000

Schedule III income, provided by the Freeman Trustees, supports many of the Council's community and maintenance projects. However, this income is **not guaranteed** and may change each year.

Costs continue to rise due to energy, utilities, staffing, and essential supplies. Departments have reviewed spending to identify savings where possible.

3. Council Tax Base and What It Means

The Council Tax base reflects the number of chargeable homes in Berwick, expressed as “Band D equivalent” properties.

For 2025/26, it was **3,667.98 Band D equivalents**.

With a precept of £401,775, a Band D property paid **£109.54 per year** towards Town Council services.

4. What Residents Currently Pay

Band	No. of Properties	Annual (£)	Monthly (£)	Weekly (£)
A	3,933	73.03	6.09	1.40
B	785	85.20	7.10	1.64
C	601	97.38	8.12	1.87
D	325	109.54	9.13	2.11

Around **95%** of homes in Berwick fall into Bands A–C.

5. Effect of Any Increase

Every **£10,000** added to the Council’s budget increases the Band D contribution by around **£2.73 per year**.

Band	Annual (£)	Monthly (£)	Weekly (£)
A	1.82	0.15	0.03
B	2.12	0.18	0.04
C	2.43	0.20	0.05
D	2.73	0.23	0.05

6. Proposals from Councillors

Councillors have identified several priorities for 2026/27. These include new or expanded initiatives supporting events, young people, play areas, floral displays, and public spaces.

Proposal	Details	Cost (£)
Salmon Queen Event	Extend from one to three days	20,000
Marketing & Market Promotion	Increase promotion to support market growth	20,000
Play Equipment Replacement Programme	Start rolling renewal of play equipment	50,000
Playground Maintenance	Increase from £10,000 to £20,000	10,000
Floral Displays	Increase from £7,500 to £15,000	7,500
Pump Track (Berwick Youth Project)	Council decision: £10,000 per year for 3 years	10,000

Proposal	Details	Cost (£)
Additional Planters	Increase the number of planters across town	10,000
Total Additional Cost		127,500

The Council may consider a **PWLB loan** for the future refurbishment of Spittal Splash Park, subject to Full Council approval and public consultation.

7. Budget Scenarios for 2026/27

Two scenarios have been developed to support councillors in selecting a sustainable budget for the coming year.

Scenario 1: Balanced Operational Budget Including Councillor Proposals

This scenario includes:

a) Inflation and operational pressures

- Rising operational costs across services
- Increased staffing costs
- Higher prices for energy, utilities, and materials
- Identified departmental savings

b) Additional costs from councillor proposals

A total additional requirement of **£127,500**, comprising:

- Salmon Queen Event – £20,000
- Marketing & Promotion – £20,000
- Play Equipment Replacement – £50,000
- Playground Maintenance increase – £10,000
- Floral Displays increase – £7,500
- Pump Track Grant – £10,000
- Additional Planters – £10,000

c) Annual Cost per Household for £127,500 Additional Requirement

Band	Annual Increase (£)	Monthly (£)	Weekly (£)
A	21.63	1.80	0.41
B	25.22	2.10	0.48
C	28.82	2.40	0.55
D	32.43	2.70	0.62
E	39.64	3.30	0.76
F	46.86	3.90	0.90
G	54.07	4.50	1.04
H	64.86	5.40	1.25

d) Overall impact

The combined effects of inflation, wage pressures, and the £127,500 in proposals mean the precept would need to rise to deliver a balanced budget for 2026/27.

Under this scenario:

- Current services are maintained
- Councillor priorities can proceed
- The Council **continues to rely on Schedule III income**

Scenario 2: Long-Term Sustainability – Replacing Schedule III Income (£140,000)

This scenario models replacing the full **£140,000 Schedule III contribution** through the precept, ensuring the Council's core operations are **independent of external discretionary funding**.

Annual Cost per Household — Full £140,000 Requirement

Band	Annual Increase (£)	Monthly (£)	Weekly (£)
A	25.48	2.12	0.49
B	29.72	2.48	0.57
C	33.97	2.83	0.65
D	38.22	3.18	0.73
E	46.72	3.89	0.90
F	55.22	4.60	1.06
G	63.72	5.31	1.23
H	76.44	6.37	1.47

Phased Approach Over Two Years

Year 1 – Half Increase (£70,000)

Band	Annual Increase (£)	Monthly (£)	Weekly (£)
A	12.74	1.06	0.24
B	14.86	1.24	0.28
C	16.98	1.42	0.33
D	19.11	1.59	0.37
E	23.36	1.95	0.45
F	27.61	2.30	0.53
G	31.86	2.66	0.61
H	38.22	3.18	0.73

Year 2 – Remaining Increase (£70,000)

(Same figures as Year 1, as this is the second half of the requirement.)

Use of Schedule III Income During a Phased Approach

- **Year 1:** With £70,000 replaced by the precept, the remaining **£70,000 Schedule III** can be directed to **community projects, events, grants, and public realm improvements**.
- **Year 2:** Once fully replaced, the **entire £140,000** becomes available for **new initiatives**, enhancing Berwick above the core budget level.

This phased approach improves financial resilience while increasing funds available for local improvements from the first year.

8. Illustrative Example of Impact (From Scenario 1)

Band	2025/26 (£)	Example 2026/27 (£)	Annual Difference (£)	Monthly (£)	Weekly (£)
A	73.03	94.66	+21.63	1.80	0.41
B	85.20	110.42	+25.22	2.10	0.48
C	97.38	126.20	+28.82	2.40	0.55
D	109.54	141.97	+32.43	2.70	0.62
E	133.88	173.52	+39.64	3.30	0.76
F	158.22	205.08	+46.86	3.90	0.90
G	182.57	236.64	+54.07	4.50	1.04
H	219.08	283.94	+64.86	5.40	1.25

9. Next Steps

The Chief Officer will refine the draft budget through November and present updates to the Budget and Administration Working Group in December 2025.

A final budget will be presented to Full Council in January 2026.

Officers will continue exploring savings and opportunities for external funding as well as looking at the council's reserves to see if they can be sensibly lowered to fund activities and projects.

10. Recommendation

Members are asked to:

1. Note the updated financial position and projected cost pressures.
2. Consider the proposals outlined in Section 6.
3. Discuss the budget scenarios and potential funding approaches.
4. Provide guidance on which scenario should be progressed to final draft.

Prepared by:
Iain McCready, Chief Officer
November 2025-

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Environment and Communities Working Group

Time and date

Monday 3 November 2025 at 18:00

Place

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82-88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland
TD15 1BN

Group Members

Cllr Jane Turton – Chair
Cllr Rosemary Mackenzie (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Janice Bowden
Cllr Robert Bruce
Cllr Laura Hawken
Cllr Gary Smith
Cllr Thomas Stewart

In Attendance

Cllr Jane Turton – Chair
Cllr Janice Bowden
Cllr Laura Hawken
Cllr John Robertson (Mayor)
Cllr Mike Greener
Cllr Anne Forbes
Stephen Robinson – Operations Manager
Justine Walker – Administration Officer

Notes

Cllr Turton opened the meeting welcoming all and thanking them for their attendance and began the business of the agenda.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mackenzie, Cllr Stewart and Cllr Bruce.

2. **Disclosures of Interest.**

No disclosures of interest were received.

3. **Notes of the Previous Meeting**

Environment and Communities Working Group [In-person] - 2025-11-03

Page 1

The notes from the previous meeting were presented for approval. The chair asked if anyone had reviewed them thoroughly or had any corrections to suggest. A brief discussion ensued regarding some discrepancies that were corrected at the Full Council meeting. It was noted that the old notes still contained errors, but these were addressed in the Full Council meeting. No further issues were raised, and the notes were agreed upon.

4. Decisions from Full Council

The Chair introduced an update on decisions from Full Council, noting that a larger format document had been provided to make it easier to read. The Operations Manager had increased the size of the print to improve accessibility. Key updates included the readiness of the five arches management plan, pending the receipt of a price quote. This plan would be presented to Full Council and potentially pushed through budget administration due to its financial implications. The Allotment Policy was completed, and new allotment sites were being discussed with Northumberland County Council. The Operations Manager hoped to meet with NCC Officers to discuss potential sites, including potentially extending the plot at Sheilfield Park as well as others previously discussed. The discussion highlighted the importance of addressing vandalism and fencing for new allotments and the ongoing need to identify suitable sites. Updates were also given on Bus Shelter installation in December, and the new Bus Shelter Bench was on order.

Items Discussed in the night.

With the agreement of the Chair the Operations Manager introduced two items that were not on the agenda due to them coming in after the agenda had gone out but in need of discussion before the next Full Council.

County Cllr Georgina Hill has requested that the Town Council install new goal posts to replace ones previously removed on the field below Sand Banks at the end of Spittal Prom. Cllr Hill will fund the installation with BTC implementing the install and maintenance. Cllr Hill has done community engagement on the installation, and the public were in favour of them being installed. The group discussed this and agreed to recommend to Full Council.

The second item that was discussed during item 14, was that on their pre installation test, several light fittings have failed. This would leave the display short. Officers have ordered replacement, reconditioned fittings, within their delegated spending powers as set out in the financial regulations to replace these. The group agreed with Officers actions noted this and will note it at Full Council also.

5. Jimmy Strength.

The Operations Manager informed the working group that the statue was nearly complete and ready for installation. However, planning permission for the proposed site on Marygate had not yet been applied for. The group was asked to consider whether they supported the installation on Marygate or preferred another location. Various locations were discussed, including near the old bridge and the Scout Hall, where the statue had historical sat. The working group decided to recommend to Full Council to oppose the installation on Marygate and discuss other locations with the organisations involved with the statue's installation.

6. Declaration of Climate Emergency

Councillor Hawken raised the issue of declaring a climate emergency at a previous meeting. The Operations Manager informed the group that the Council had previously resolved to do so in November 2021. However, it was suggested that the declaration had not been adequately advertised or actioned. The discussion emphasised the importance of making practical changes, such as using recycled plastic benches and peat-free compost, to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability. The working group agreed the need to better advertise the declaration on their website and to list specific actions they were taking to address climate change.

7. Town Forum Updates

The notes from the Town Forum held on the 3rd October were reviewed. Key highlights included the progress of the Old Brewery project in Tweedmouth, the upcoming launch of the community radio project, and the ongoing work at Maltings. The Civic Society's initiative tracker was mentioned, noting that many of the items had been actioned by the Town Council. The Operations Manager agreed to review the tracker and discuss it with the Civic Society, bringing relevant items back to the Council for consideration via the appropriate working group. Concerns were raised about the lack of information on the actions being taken to mitigate impact of the Maltings work on local businesses and residents, and it was agreed to raise these issues at the next Town Forum in December.

8. Northumbria Water

A brief update was provided regarding Northumbria Water's public engagement event scheduled for the following day. Officers and Councillors planned to attend. The group discussed recent issues with water supply throughout the area, including poor communication and historic low pressure in certain areas. These concerns would be raised at the engagement event to seek improvements.

9. Bus/Rail Timetables

The Operations Manager provided an update on the bus timetables. Nexus had produced new timetables, which were being printed and distributed by the NCC. The Council staff installed them at bus stops to ensure residents had up-to-date information. NCC are using Berwick as a pilot to engage other Parish Councils in maintaining timetables, which was receiving positive feedback. Issues with delivery of timetables were noted, and the Operations Manager was working with the County Council to address these.

10. Floral Displays

The winter planting is nearly completed, and the spring bulbs have been planted. Officers are ordering plants for next year, and the group discussed the importance of sourcing plants locally, where reasonably practicable to reduce the carbon footprint.

11. War Memorials

The Operations Manager provided an update on the maintenance of the War Memorials, emphasising the importance of ensuring they were in top condition for Remembrance events. The group discussed the need for proper disabled access at the Castlegate War Memorial and the addition of names from other conflicts. It was agreed to budget for these improvements and form a task group to address these issues.

12. Woodland Walk

The Operations Manager updated the group that some paperwork for the CAT had been received and was being reviewed by Officers before being completed and sent back to NCC.

13. Salmon Queen 2026

The meeting notes for Salmon Queen 2026 were reviewed, highlighting a good attendance and the election of the chair. The group reviewed the 2025 event, identifying successful elements and areas for improvement. Plans for the 2026 event include extending it to a three-day event, with a strong emphasis on improving certain aspects based on feedback from the previous year.

The group is in the process of gathering budget estimates for marquee hire and other costs. There was a discussion about the suitability of different locations for different elements of the event. The event will include bands and local acts over the course of the three days as well as potentially a market. There are plans to meet with local schools to encourage participation, and applications for the Salmon Queen will be sent out in March 2026, with the event timeline detailed up to April.

Action items include involving local organisations for stewarding, using social media to engage former Salmon Queens, creating a media-friendly area for interviews, arranging seating for disabled

attendees, and ensuring vendors stop serving during the crowning. The event will also feature shows and activities, with continuous updates provided through newsletters and Facebook posts. The group discussed logistical aspects such as toilet facilities and first aid provision.

Overall, the planning for Salmon Queen 2026 is thorough, with a clear timeline and detailed actions to ensure a successful event.

14. Blessing of the Christmas Lights 2025

The meeting notes for the Blessing of the Christmas Lights 2025 were discussed briefly. The event will be similar to last year's, scheduled for the 28th of November. Local choirs will sing carols, and the Spittal Variety Group will perform a promotional act. School children will participate with lanterns, walking around as they did last year. The event starts at 4:30 PM, and promotional posters will be distributed to inform the public.

There is a discussion about the budget for the event, noting that there is no significant budget allocated unless Council decides to increase it. The challenge of organising a grand switch-on due to wiring issues was mentioned, with the only physical switch-on possible at the Town Hall. The group discussed the need to purchase additional lights due to failures during testing, with a budget noted for this purchase.

In summary, the Blessing of the Christmas Lights 2025 event is planned to be a modest affair, with the same activities as last year and a focus on managing the budget efficiently.

15. Bin Request

The discussion on bin requests involved several locations. The first request was from a local resident, who suggested that there are not enough bins in the Quayside area. The group noted that there are already several bins in the area but agreed to relocate one bin to a more accessible location to address her concerns.

Councillor Hill brought up additional requests from residents for more bins in the Highcliffe area and on Dock Road. The Highcliffe area was reviewed, and it was suggested to relocate one of the bins from Northern View to a bus stop on Spittal Hall Road to better serve the residents. The Dock Road request was discussed, noting that there are already several bins in the area, and it was decided that there were no suitable locations for a new bin due to restricted footpath widths.

The group agreed to move the bins as needed without requiring additional expenditure, and these changes will be noted at the Full Council meeting.

16. Estate Christmas Trees

The discussion on estate Christmas trees covered various aspects, including the purchase and installation of trees and lights. The group considered the cost and practicality of using planters versus installing cut trees directly in the ground with adequate bracing. It was agreed that purchasing trees and installing them with high quality solar lights would be the most cost-effective and environmentally friendly option.

The group discussed the number of trees needed and the locations for installation, aiming to bring festive cheer to different estates. The cost per tree was estimated at £250, including costs for bracing and solar lights. The group considered the impact on the budget and agreed to proceed within the financial regulations.

There was a discussion about the environmental impact of purchasing trees and the possibility of recycling them after use. The group agreed to investigate more sustainable options for future years, such as growing rooted trees in their compound.

In summary, the group decided to purchase and install Christmas trees with solar lights in various estates, ensuring that the costs are managed within the budget and considering environmental sustainability.

17. Play areas.

The discussion centred around the renewal and maintenance of various play areas. Members agreed that a rolling programme for renewals would be beneficial to avoid large expenses all at once. Improvements should include accessible play equipment, such as accessible roundabouts, especially in solid surfaced parks. The disrepair of the Osbourne Road play area was noted, particularly the tarmac, which is severely deteriorating. The equipment itself is high quality and in decent working order, but the surface needs renewal. The estimated cost for all improvement work for this is estimated around £15,000.

The current condition of Spittal Splash Park was discussed, this was recognised as an important asset within the community for both residents and for the visitor economy. The parks surface is beginning to degrade, some equipment was removed last year, and some features do not work as they should. The mechanics of the park are coming towards the end of their life cycle and currently the park does not recycle water, so a large volume of potable water is wasted. The group considered these factors and concluded to recommend to Full Council to begin the process of replacing the splash park.

The group discussed the necessity of prioritising quick wins and manageable repairs within the next few months, considering the workload. Internal work, such as fence repairs and weeding, should be completed over the winter period to ensure the parks are ready for use by next spring. A budget increase for ongoing maintenance and emergency equipment repairs was deemed necessary.

The Operations Manager was tasked with identifying quick wins and detailing the time involved for each piece of work. Internal works should be completed within the current year's budget, while high-cost areas, primarily surfacing, would require additional budget allocation. The being sent to the Budget and Administration Working Group and on to Full Council, breaking down the necessary work and budget requirements, was discussed.

There was consensus on the need for a £50,000 budget for next year for rolling programme of replacement of equipment. £15,000 to address surfacing issues in Osbourne. The Operations Manager was tasked with producing a Gantt chart to outline the timing and feasibility of each piece of work. Recommendations included increasing the maintenance budget to £20,000, allocating £15,000 for play equipment, and £50,000 for investment in replacements. The urgency of influencing the budget before the next fiscal year was emphasised to ensure the necessary funds are allocated to avoid delays in the renewal and maintenance programme.

18. Westfield Play Park

The group discussed the current situation in Westfield Play Park. The group highlighted the need for the playpark with alternative parks being a long distance from the existing one. Members discussed the Village Green Status of the area prohibiting development. The group tasked officers to enquire about the details around this and the level of protection it offers. Discussion was had around the potential for BTC to adopt the park as it is the only one within the town not under the Councils management. It was agreed in its current condition this would not be suitable but if Bernicia were to invest and renew the park it should be considered. The group discussed Officers contacting Bernicia with Full Council approval to see if an alternative solution would be available. The group also discussed the need to work closely with the NCC Ward Councillor. The group then affirmed there should be a recommendation to Full Council to officially oppose the removal of Westfield Park and task Officers to contact Bernicia to discuss alternative solutions.

19. Bus Stop Repairs/Relocation

The group discussed the report by the Operations Manager concerning repair work needed to the Golden Square Bus Stops, with an estimated value of £500-£750 from a local glazing contractor. A specialist shelter contractor had quoted £3000 The budget for Bus Shelter repairs already being spent due to vandalism. The group agreed the work needed to be completed and the funding

should be taken from the Bus Shelter Reserve and a recommendation would be made to Full Council with the work to be undertaken by the local contractor.

The group then discussed the need for a new Bus Shelter to be installed in Newfields. The group emphasised the popularity of this stop for residents entering the town and the necessity of having a covered shelter. The group agreed to recommend to Full Council to install a new shelter in a similar style to the existing one opposite at a cost of £8000.

20. Items For Future Agendas

No further Items for future agendas were added. On this list remains;

1. Town Centre Garden/Additional Trees
2. Assets of community value
3. Public Access defibrillators
4. Spittal Promenade
5. 5 Arches Entrance
6. 5 Arches Adoption
7. Spa Well Issues. These items were noted for consideration in upcoming meetings.

Ongoing Tasks:

Item 4. Decisions From Full Council – BTC Officers to meet with NCC Officers to discuss potential allotment sites, including extending the plot at Sheilfield Park and clearing overgrown pathways.

Item 6. Declaration of Climate Emergency – Officers to better advertise that Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council declared a Climate Emergency and to promote the measures the Council already take.

Item 7. Town Forum Updates - The Operations Manager to review the Civic Society's initiative tracker and discuss it with the Civic Society, bringing relevant items back to the Council for consideration.

Item 7. Town Forum Updates - Raise concerns about the lack of information on the actions being taken to mitigate the impact of the Maltings work on local businesses and residents at the next Town Forum in December.

Item 13. Salmon Queen 2026 – To bring costings to Budget and Administration Working Group to ensure an adequate budget is in the 2026/27 Annual Budget.

Item 15. Bin Requests - Relocate one bin in the Quayside area to a more accessible location nearer Sallyport.

Item 15. Bin Requests - Relocate one of the bins from near Northern View to a bus stop on Spittal Hall Road.

Item 16. Estate Christmas Trees – Give costs to Budget and Administration for the installation of cut Christmas Trees with solar lights in the outlying estates

Item 17. Play Areas – Send Play Park Inspections Report to Budget and Administration Working Group.

Item 17. Play Areas – Complete internal works such as fence repairs and weeding over the winter period.

Item 17. Play Areas – Prepare a detailed report including a Gantt chart to outline the timing and feasibility of each piece of work

Recommendations:

Item 4. Decisions From Full Council – Recommend to Full Council to install goal posts in Spittal paid for by Cllr Georgina Hill.

Item 4. Decisions From Full Council – To note Officers spending within their delegated powers to replace Christmas Lights.

Item 5. Jimmy Strength - Recommend to Full Council to oppose the installation on Marygate and discuss other locations with the organisations involved with the statue's installation.

Item – 11. War Memorials Recommend to Full Council to agree to budget for improvements to war memorials and form a task group to address issues such as disabled access and the addition of names from other conflicts.

Item 15. Bin Requests – To note the relocation of bins.

Item 15. Bin Requests – To allow officers to purchase additional bins from an underspent budget line.

Item 17. Play Areas – To recommend to Full Council to increase the play areas budget to £20,000 for maintenance, £15,000 for emergency play equipment replacement, and £50,000 for park replacements.

Environment and Communities Working Group [In-person] - 2025-11-03

- Item 17. Play Areas** – To recommend to Full Council to begin the process of replacing Spittal Splash Park.
- Item 18. Westfield Play Park**- Recommend to Full Council to officially oppose the removal of Westfield Park and task officers to contact Bernicia to discuss alternative solutions.
- Item 19. Bus Stop Repairs/Relocation** – Recommend to Full Council to complete the repair work on the Golden Square Bus Shelter, using a local contactor, at a value of £500-£750 with the funding coming from the Bus Shelter Reserve.
- Item 19. Bus Stop Repairs/Relocation** - Recommend to Full Council to install a new shelter in a similar style to the existing one opposite at a cost of £8000 from the Bus Shelter Purchase (line 4503).

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Budget and Administration Working Group

Time and date

Monday 10 November 2025 at 18:00

Place

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82-88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 1BN

Group Members

Cllr Phillip Rowe – Chair
Cllr John Robertson (Mayor)
Cllr Rosemary Mackenzie (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Rachel Driver
Cllr Mike Greener
Cllr Catherine Seymour
Cllr Thomas Stewart

In Attendance

Cllr Phillip Rowe – Chair
Cllr John Robertson (Mayor)
Cllr Rosemary Mackenzie (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Rachel Driver
Cllr Mike Greener
Cllr Catherine Seymour
Cllr Laura Hawken
Iain McCready (Chief Officer)
Stephen Robinson (Operations Manager)
Steve Cozens (Finance Officer)

NOTES:

Cllr Rowe opened the meeting welcoming all and thanking them for their attendance and began the business of the agenda.

51.25. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Thomas Stewart.

52.25. Disclosures of Interest

None Received.

53.25. Notes of Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were reviewed. Members confirmed they were satisfied with the record of decisions and actions, and there were no corrections required.

54.25. Premises Update

Officers updated the working group on the ongoing discussions for the relocation of Berwick-upon-Town Council as the current lease period on the Marygate Office comes towards its end. One of the two potential options Council had approved pursuing had given more information to Officers, and the outcome of this was that the premises would not make a suitable base for the Council due to the associated costs and the proposed terms of the lease agreement. The group considered a report on the second option which is the former Barclays Bank Building on Hyde Hill.

The report laid out several options for the progression of the potential purchase noting that while spending on surveys and plans prior to purchase allowed for the most accurate picture of layouts and projected costs, it introduced an element of risk as the building is still on the open market.

The group discussed in detail all options laid out within the report and the consensus was although the building would suite BTC's needs, a careful approach to ensure best use of public money was required.

The working group concluded to recommend to progress with the potential purchase of the former Barclays site to Full Council with the format for this progression to be discussed at Full Council.

55.25. Expenditure vs Budget Year to Date

The Finance Officer presented an updated summary of expenditure against the approved budget. Each line was reviewed in detail, and members were invited to comment on significant variances.

Areas of overspends were noted in software licences and email hosting, due to the transition to an updated Microsoft 365 system, as well as internal audit and legal fees. Members agreed these were necessary one-off costs linked to compliance and digital resilience improvements.

Questions were raised about the level of corporate subscriptions, and the scope of public realm works, with several group members seeking more details of these. Members also asked for a breakdown of recurring costs versus project-based expenditure. The Finance Officer agreed to circulate a detailed breakdown to assist members in future budget setting discussions.

Members noted the income vs expenditure report and were happy to receive a detailed variance report before the next meeting.

56.25. Grant Applications

The Working Group considered three community grant applications. Each was reviewed for eligibility, community impact, and alignment with the Council's grant criteria.

The remaining funds in the 2025/2026 financial year was discussed noting there was only £5000 left for the remainder of the financial year.

- Spittal Variety Group requested £2,500 for a keyboard, amplifier, and insurance. Members discussed the benefit to the local performing arts community. A reduced grant of £1899.40 was proposed to cover the cost of the keyboard, amplifier and case but not the insurance to balance budgetary constraints against supporting the group.

- Berwick Arts Choir requested £1,000 to help cover venue and performance costs for their winter concert programme. Members recognised the Choir's contribution to the local cultural offering life but wanted more information from the Arts Choir. The application has been deferred and the Finance Officer tasked with

bringing the information back to the next meeting.

- Hilda House Community Project sought £175 for materials to support local social and craft sessions. Members agreed the project represented excellent community engagement value for a modest sum and recommended Full Council support.

The group also discussed the need to reform the grant awarding process, moving to two application windows per year to ensure grants Full Council may wish to support do not get rejected due to budget being previously spent. Groups that are awarded funds annually to be moved to Service Level Agreements (SLA's) so they can be sure of continued support and removes the need for the group to apply annually.

Members also suggest the usefulness of a document supporting the application to see if the organisation/group has been awarded grants in the past to ensure money is evenly spread around the community.

57.25. Market

Officers provided the working group with an update on the operation of Berwick Market since assuming the management in September. The market had been reasonably busy over the summer months and is projected to make a small amount of revenue for the council after rents and other expenditures are paid.

Members discussed the need to balance income generation with maintaining the market's historic role in the town centre. They noted that potential investments in infrastructure, such as improved signage, anchor points for stalls to enhance the market's appeal to traders and in turn residents and visitors.

The Market Task Group meeting notes will be brought to the next meeting for consideration.

58.25. Town Centre Signage

Members considered the report by Officers, working with Visit Berwick to improve tourist directional signage within the town to enhance visitor experience and drive visitors towards Visit Berwick to ensure they have good visibility of the town's tourist offering.

The project will be funded by Section 106 money from the Loaning Meadows development which has been earmarked by NCC for town centre signage. There are two parts to this project. Part one is working with a local designer and copy writer to implement 6 boards with town maps as well as key landmarks in the area the map is in. These are in key tourist areas such as long stay car parks, coach parks and tourist areas and are designed to compliment the existing monolith directional signs. The group discussed this and agreed to recommend to Full Council to progress this element of the project.

The second part of the project is to replace the heritage finger posts. These are an NCC asset but are in a state of disrepair as have not been maintained. Section 106 cannot be used for maintenance of existing assets only for new purchases. The group discussed this and agreed that NCC need to be pressed harder into maintaining the existing infrastructure allowing the section 106 money to be spent on another area of signage. The group agreed to defer this section of the project until NCC had been approached. Officers were tasked with this. BTC could consider adoption of these once in a fit state to do so.

59.25. Play Park Improvements

Officers presented the Play Areas Conditions report that had been produced for the Environment and Communities Working Group. This report highlighted several areas of expenditure that need to be considered for the 2026/2027 financial year.

The group considered the report and supported the recommendations within it and noted the budget impacts for the upcoming financial year.

60.25. Budget Provision for the Coming Year and Beyond

Members discussed the overall financial framework for 2026–27 and beyond. The importance of balancing investment in premises and community assets against rising operational costs was emphasised.

The Chief Officer noted that the ongoing premises review and the outcome of the Barclays building investigation would significantly shape next year's financial planning. Members stressed the need for realism in forecasting and prioritisation of essential services.

61.25. Notification of Receipts

The working group scrutinised and noted the report.

62.25. Bank Reconciliations

The Finance Officer confirmed that bank reconciliations were up to date, with no discrepancies noted. The group discussed the report. Members discussed the need of visiting the office to check over the accounts regularly as part of the financial controls.

63.25. Purchase Orders

The working group scrutinised and noted the report

64.25. Items for Next Agenda and Actions Arising

The arising actions were noted and no items were discussed to be added to the next agenda.

65.25. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Budget and Administration Working Group will take place on Monday 1st December 2025 at 6.00 pm at the Council Office, Unit 1, 82–88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Ongoing Tasks

55.25. Expenditure vs Budget Year to Date: Finance Officer to provide a detailed variance report on expenditure vs income by email prior to the next meeting.

56.25. Grant Applications – Finance Officer to bring more information from Berwick Arts Choir to the next meeting.

56.25. Grant Applications – Finance Officer to produce a document alongside applications to show if the organisation has had successful applications in the past.

58.25. Town Centre Signage – Officers to contact NCC to press for existing posts to be maintained.

Recommendation(s)

54.25. Premises Update – Recommend to Full Council to progress the potential purchase of the former Barclays Bank Building with Full Council to discuss how to do this.

56.25. Grant Applications - Recommend to Full Council to award a grant of £1899.40 to Spittal Variety Group.

Recommend to Full Council to award a grant of £175 to Hilda House Community Project

Recommend to Full Council to amend the grant application process to two windows per year.

58.25. Town Centre Signage – Recommend to Full Council to progress with the part 1 of the Town Centre Signage project.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Planning Committee

Time and date

Thursday 6 November 2025 at 18:00

Place

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82-88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 1BN

Committee Members

Cllr Rachel Driver – Vice Chair
Cllr Mike Greener
Cllr Janice Bowden
Cllr Catherine Seymour

In Attendance

Cllr John Robertson (Mayor)
Iain McCready (Chief Officer)
Lucy Henzell-Thomas (Administrative Officer)

NOTES:

31.25. Open Session

The meeting commenced with an open session where members of the public were invited to make representations, ask questions, and provide evidence relevant to the business on the agenda. There were no members of the public present, so the meeting moved on to the next agenda item.

32.25. Apologies For Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Thomas Stewart, Cllr Gary Smith, and Cllr Robert Bruce.

33.25. Minutes

The minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on 4th September 2025 were reviewed. Councillors confirmed that they had seen the minutes and agreed that they were a correct record of the meeting.

Decision: The minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on 4th September 2025 were signed off without any amendments or corrections. Decision proposed by Cllr Bowden and seconded by Cllr Driver.

34.25. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interest were reported.

35.25. Applications For Planning Permission

The committee reviewed two planning applications.

1. Ref: 25/01184/FUL

Location: Cantys Brig, Cantys Bridge, Berwick-Upon-Tweed TD15 1SY

Description: Conversion of redundant outbuilding to provide annex accommodation.

The councillors reviewed the application, including the floor plan, elevations, and parking spaces. They noted that the proposed conversion would be in keeping with the existing building.

Decision: No objections

2. Ref: 25/03786/FUL

Location: 29 Braeside Tweedmouth Berwick-Upon-Tweed TD15 2BY

Description: Disabled facility - proposed external step lift and associated external works.

The councillors reviewed the application and agreed that it was a sensible and necessary addition to the property.

Decision: No objections

36.25. Planning Application Decision List

The committee noted the list of planning application decisions for October 2025, as detailed in Appendix B.

37.25. Neighbourhood Plan

A verbal update was provided on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. A meeting was held on 30th October with key stakeholders, including councillors, the Civic Society, and the Consultant Jo-Anne Garrick. The discussion focused on strengthening the economic direction of the plan, particularly around tourism. It was noted that the plan should balance heritage protection with new opportunities for economic development.

The update included details on the consultation plans, which will involve a broader consensus package, including an online survey, printed leaflets, and engagement with local schools and stakeholders. The consultation is expected to run for a minimum of six weeks, with a referendum likely by May 2027.

There was an additional discussion about the importance of having printed notes for verbal updates during council meetings. Councillors expressed that having notes available would help them better follow and engage with the discussions. The Chief Officer acknowledged this and suggested that verbal updates should be accompanied by printed notes whenever possible, depending on the capacity of the officers and the standard procedures for meeting preparations.

Task: Ensure verbal updates are accompanied by printed notes whenever possible.

38.25. The Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next Planning Committee meeting was confirmed as 4th December 2025.

Note: The Chief Officer informed the Committee that an application had come in regarding the Berwick Infirmary Bell Tower (Ref: 25/00635/PREAPP) but it had come too late to include in the meeting. The application will be discussed at Full Council on Monday 24th November.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



Planning Committee

Minutes of the Town Council Planning Committee Meeting.

held on Thursday 4th September 2025 at 6.00pm

The Meeting Room, Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82 – 88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed.

Councillors present:

Cllrs T Stewart (Chair), R Driver, J Bowden, R Bruce, C Seymour

Councillors present but not on the committee:

None

Officers present:

Iain McCready – Chief Officer, Lucy Henzell-Thomas – Administrative Officer

Also in Attendance:

3 members of the public

P011/25 1. OPEN SESSION

There were 3 members of the public present – no comment at this time

P012/25 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from M Greener and G Smith

P013/25 3. MINUTES

Minutes from Thursday 5th June 2025 approved by Full Council on Monday 23rd June 2025 and were therefore not required for approval again.

P014/25 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

- i. Cllr Stewart - declared an interest in 2 applications from Appendix A – 25/02798/LBC and 25/02797/FUL and left the meeting for the consideration of those applications.
- ii. There were no requests for dispensation

P015/25 5. APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Ref No: 25/02797/FUL & 25/02798/LBC

Address: The Magna Tandoori 39 Bridge Street Berwick-Upon-Tweed
Northumberland TD15 1ES

Description: Retrospective: Erection of ancillary service building within rear yard of existing restaurant, to replace building demolished in 2010 to enable adjacent development & Listed Building Consent for same project

No objections, the Committee agrees with the Built Heritage & Design Officer's report on the application.

Ref No: 25/02625/LBC

Address: St Andrews Wallace Green Church Wallace Green Berwick-Upon-Tweed
Northumberland TD15 1EB

Description: Listed Building Consent for exterior and interior alterations to improve accessibility, heating system and flexible use of spaces. New ramp access from side entrance. New underfloor heating system in entire GF. Removal of pews and opening of existing walls under galleries to improve side halls and allow church group to use space in multiple ways. Addition of more toilets including accessible one and new kitchen area in rear hall. New air source heat pumps will be placed in existing roof valley of rear hall.

No objections. Berwick Town Council would like to express their support for this application.

Ref No: 25/02909/FUL

Address: Queens Head 2 - 6 Sandgate Berwick-Upon-Tweed Northumberland TD15 1EP

Description: Alterations to internal layout of front restaurant room creating two new bedrooms. Reinstating of historic opening onto street.

No objections.

Note: There was a Listed Building Consent registered in March this year in relation to the project above (25/00987/LBC)

BTC comment Date: Wed 16 Apr 2025

'Berwick Town Council notes that as the plan includes re-opening a previously blocked up door to the street and altering it from what was originally a single door to

a pair of doors, this should also be subject of a linked Planning Application (Under the Article 4 direction).'

Ref No: 25/02877/VARYCO

Address: Berwick St Mary's C Of E First School Newfields Berwick-Upon-Tweed
Northumberland TD15 1SP

Description: Variation of Condition 5 (Highway Works) on approved application 25/00455/CCD in order to vary the wording of Condition 5 to allow phased implementation of the pedestrian/cyclist link from the western boundary of the school (amended description).

No objections.

Ref No: 25/02881/VARYCO

Address: Berwick St Mary's C Of E First School Newfields Berwick-Upon-Tweed
Northumberland TD15 1SP

Description: Variation of Condition 6 (Internal Pedestrian/Cyclist Link) on approved application 25/00455/CCD in order to amend wording to the SEMH Unit shall not be occupied until the pedestrian/cyclist link within the site to the western boundary and the connection to the existing footway on the U104 has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans.

No objections.

Ref No: 25/03000/FUL & 25/02990/LBC

Address: 20 Ravensdowne Berwick-Upon-Tweed Northumberland TD15 1HX

Description: Replacement enlarged side extension including creating access to connect extension to main house. Alterations to include reinstate the rear stair, re-open door opening, replace irreparable windows, replace single glazing with vacuum glazing and removal of garden outbuilding/shed &

Listed Building Consent for same project

No objections but the Town Council would like to have more details of the materials proposed for the extension and will be guided by the Conservation Officer as regards the use of double glazing at the property.

P016/25 6. PLANNING APPLICATION DECISION LIST

The planning application decision list for August 2025 was noted.

P017/25 7. REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the NCC communication regarding the proposed addresses for the development on the Land East of Lifeboat house. The proposed addresses were Heron Quay and Beach Quay. The Committee did not think that 'Beach Quay' was appropriate as it is not on the beach and were neutral on 'Heron Quay'. They also suggested 'Spittal Quay', 'Pilot Quay' and 'Lifeboat Quay' as alternative options.

P018/25 8. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Chief Officer read out the following update.

The NCC Planning Officer Mark Harrison who was working on our draft has now left NCC and the NCC Neighbourhood Plan team have said they will contact us soon for details of a new support officer. Before he left, he managed to take the latest draft plan content and put it into their options paper format, which makes it more succinct and readable for consultation. We have been in touch with Jo-Anne Garrick, an independent planning consultant who drafted the plan originally. She is keen to help us to get the now updated plan moving which will include help with public consultations. She is starting work on this this month, so we hope to have some input from her very soon.

We will be inviting external partners to discussions to ensure we get local support and have covered all bases important to residents, prior to going to the first round of public consultation. At the last meeting with Mark in July he gave us a rough timeframe of 18 months until completion but no breakdown so officers will endeavour to get that information for the councillors as soon as possible.

The 3 members of the public in attendance expressed an interest in being involved and provided their contact details.

P019/25 9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting on Wednesday 1st October. At the previous meeting there was a suggestion to start earlier at 5pm – officers will consult committee regarding this.



Northumberland County Council

Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council
Iain McCready
Unit 1, 82-88 Marygate,
Berwick Upon Tweed,
Northumberland
TD15 1BN

Planning Ref: 25/00635/PREAPP
Your Ref:
Contact: North Area Team
Direct Line: 0345 600 6400
Date: 4th November 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

Proposal	Proposed reconfiguration of the external 'front of house' areas including reconfigured car parking, disabled access, hard and soft landscaping works and the demolition of the wings of the existing Berwick Infirmary Bell Tower but the retention of the bell tower itself.
Location	Berwick Infirmary Well Close Square Berwick-Upon-Tweed Northumberland TD15 1LT
Applicant	Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Application No.	25/00635/PREAPP
Case Officer	North Area Team

The above application will be available on Public Access at <http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications> and I shall be pleased to receive your observations by 25th November 2025.

When commenting via Public Access: after logging in, navigate to 'My Profile,' select 'Consultee In Tray,' and locate the application to submit your comment.

Please note that any comments you do submit will be displayed on our website and except for your e-mail address, phone number and signature they will be published without change.

You can track the progress of the application from the website link given above and when the application has been determined the decision notice will be displayed on the website. It is not the practice of the Council to send out copies of the decision.

Yours faithfully,

Development Management • Development Services •
County Hall • Morpeth • NE61 2EF
Telephone: • Web: www.northumberland.gov.uk

Registration Team
Development Services

INTRODUCTION

The operation and wellbeing of Berwick upon Tweed Town Council is inextricably linked to that of the Berwick upon Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees, including, in recent years, receiving up to 20% of its annual income from the Trustees.

This document sets out a very brief over-view of the relationship between the two organisations, and the role that the Trustees perform.

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The Berwick upon Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees is a registered charity with ten unpaid Trustees and a small number of paid officers, professional advisors and consultants.

It is important to note that – despite being regularly thought otherwise – this body is NOT synonymous with the Guild of Freemen of Berwick upon Tweed (often simply referred to as The Freemen): the Guild has members who in all instances are hereditary Freemen (and more latterly women) of the town, going back to the granting of a new charter by James VI/I in 1604, and earlier.

The Berwick upon Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees were established through an act of parliament in 1926, to administer land, property and any other assets, which had since 1843 been under the control of the Corporation (predecessor of the Borough Council and Town Council) and, prior to that, under the control of the Guild of Freemen.

The principal asset of the Trustees is land: for many centuries all of the land north of the Tweed, as far as the Scottish border, was under the sole control of the Guild of Freemen until the 1843 Act, and even today large parts of the farmland north of the river remain in the Trustees' ownership.

Income from rents on that land, and from sale of parcels of land over time, is apportioned in accordance with the 1926 Act and subsequent Arbitration rulings, and where appropriate is invested and managed on behalf of the Trustees.

The other major asset and responsibility of the Trustees is ownership the Town Hall – the psychological heart of the community, even if it is not currently the civic heart.

After setting aside funds for other purposes, the 1926 Act also determines allocation of surplus funds, which are divided annually between the Guild of Freemen, and the Town Council (as successor organisation to the Corporation named in the Act). These funds

are frequently referred to by councillors and staff as “Schedule 3 monies”, as that is the section of the Act under which the allocation is determined.

The ten Trustees are selected annually in November, with five being nominated by the Town Council, and five by the Guild of Freeman. There is no obligation for the Town Council to nominate serving Councillors as Trustees – any appropriate member of the community may be considered.

Once confirmed in their position, Trustees operate together as a single body in the interests of the organisation, rather than in a partisan manner on behalf of the body that nominated them. There is an expectation of confidentiality in all matters relating to commercial and investment decisions.

The duties of the Trustees are to manage and administer the estate and investments for the benefit of the people of Berwick, and are governed by regulations and guidance set out by the Charities Commission.

The Trustees meet ten times each year – generally in the evening of the last Friday of the month, except for the AGM which is held in the first week of December. There are no meetings in August or November.

The meetings are held in the Town Hall.

Once the nominated Trustees have accepted their position at the AGM, a Chair of Trustees and Vice-chair are elected from among the Trustees, with a one-year term of office. It has been habitually the case that these roles alternate between Trustees nominated by the Guild, and Trustees nominated by the Council

As well as the monthly meetings, the Chair and Vice-chair may also be required to deal with any issues that may arise between meetings.

Thomas Stewart

Chair – Berwick upon Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees 2025