

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

**Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held on Monday 9 May 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-Upon-Tweed**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors: H Bettison (Town Mayor, Chairman up to Item 3)  
I Dixon (Chairman from Item 4 onwards)  
J Beresford  
D Blackburn  
A Forbes  
A Gibson  
E Goodyer  
K Graham  
G Hill  
P Hodgson  
J Lang  
G McLean  
G Roughead  
C Seymour  
G Smith

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Wendy Pattison, Town Clerk  
Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk  
Ian Hay, Sheriff  
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace  
Robert Welsh, Halberdier  
26 members of the public

### **BERWICK LOCAL SERVICES OFFICERS**

Councillors met with the 2 new Neighbourhood Services workers Neil and Chris prior to the start of the meeting.

## **OPEN SESSION**

Mr Spencer Barclay spoke to Council on several issues.

**C001/16**

### **1. UPDATE ON FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FROM STEPHEN WARREN**

Mr Stephen Warren spoke to Council and to the public about the workshops and the work he had undertaken with Councillors and Staff in regard to Risk Management, Financial Procedures and Financial Regulations. Mr Warren is to provide Financial Procedure notes in the next few days which will support the new Financial Regulations. Mr Warren mentioned the current Committee Structure and advised of his suggested changes to streamline and effect a better system of working. Cllr Hill wanted to emphasise that Mr Warren's initial financial report had been damning and serious maladministration had been highlighted and should not be forgotten. Mr Warren said the Council could set up a group to do its own monitoring and initiate action plans against progress reports. External validation would be done by the newly appointed Internal Auditors. Cllr Graham thought the Council should not be dwelling on the past but looking to the future. Cllr Seymour discussed the tender/quote limits that Mr Warren had included in the financial regulations. Mr Warren thought advertising in the Newspaper re low tender bids was self-defeating at a cost of £300-£500 re supporting a tender bid of only £3k. Cllr Goodyer mentioned the importance of financial probity and it was important to recognise the strides made by the Council. Cllr Bettison thanked Mr Warren on behalf of the Town Council for all his help and assistance.

**C002/16**

### **2. THE TOWN MAYOR END-OF-TERM ADDRESS**

The retiring Town Mayor, Councillor Hazel Bettison, gave an address highlighting the most memorable moments from her term of office and mentioned in particular the absence of 5 Councillors when she first took over as Mayor. The closure of Seton Hall and the demise of Jus Rol had started the year off with worrying concerns which had affected the town greatly. Highlight of the year was the success of the Berwick Investors Conference, which Cllr Goodyer undertook on behalf of the town and who was also currently busy Chairing the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan which will assist and benefit the community of Berwick. An audit of all 300 seats in the town has now been undertaken by Cllrs Gibson and

McLean Cllr Bettison went on to thank her family, friends and fellow Councillors for their support, also, naming and thanking Council staff including the Acting Clerk, Assistant to the Clerk and Finance Officer, the new Halberdier and the Sergeant at Mace. The Civic year had been a brilliant success and a lot of new friends had been made.

**C003/16**

### **3. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR**

Councillor Ivor Dixon was proposed by Cllr Bettison and seconded by Cllr Beresford. Cllr David Blackburn proposed Cllr Roughead and this was seconded by Cllr Forbes. Cllr Hill then asked for a named vote.

Cllr I Dixon – Cllrs Bettison, Smith, Graham, Hodgson, Lang, Beresford, Dixon, McLean and Gibson – 9 votes.

Cllr Roughead – Cllrs Forbes, Goodyer, Blackburn, Hill, Seymour, Roughead, – 6 votes.

Cllr Ivor Dixon was duly elected.

Councillor Dixon thanked all Councillors and promised that Berwick would be put back on the map and he would work hard to achieve this.

**RESOLVED: That Councillor Ivor Dixon be appointed Town Mayor of Berwick-upon-Tweed for the year 2016/2017.**

**C004/16**

### **4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

Councillor J Beresford was proposed by Cllr Bettison and seconded by Cllr Gibson. Cllr Goodyer proposed Cllr Roughead and this was seconded by Cllr Blackburn.

Cllr J Beresford – Cllrs Bettison, Dixon, McLean, Gibson, Hodgson, Lang, Beresford – 7 votes.

Cllr Roughead – Cllrs Forbes, Goodyer, Blackburn, Hill, Seymour, Roughead, Smith and Graham – 8 votes.

Cllr Gregah Roughead was duly elected.

Councillor Roughead thanked all Councillors and promised that he would work hard and in particular for all the young people in Berwick.

**RESOLVED: That Councillor Gregah Roughead be appointed Deputy Town Mayor of Berwick-upon-Tweed for the year 2016/2017.**

**C005/16**

### **5. APPOINTMENT OF SHERIFF**

The Town Mayor announced his appointment of Mr Brian Douglas as Sheriff for

the year 2016/2017.

**C006/16 6. BERWICK CYCLE STRATEGY**

Deferred.

**C007/16 7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been accepted on behalf of: Councillor T Forrester.

**C008/16 8. MINUTES**

An addition to the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2016 was requested by Cllr Bettison under Member Obligations to say that she had responded to Mr Spencer Barclays queries. Cllr Hill asked for the word advised to be changed to said which was also included under Member obligations. The minutes were then agreed and signed as a correct record.

**C009/16 9. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Roughead and Cllr Hodgson, Hoppa Bus and Cllr Blackburn, Item 19, Allotments.

**C010/16 10. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

**C011/16 11. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

Councillor Hill said that the Dunn report had previously mentioned making changes to the current Committee Structure. Cllr Hill supported in principle the proposed changes initiated by Consultant Mr Stephen Warren to hold 2 Council Meetings per month keeping Planning and Staffing Committees only, and this was seconded by Cllr Seymour. A proposal to have a working group look into the committee structure in further detail was queried by the Clerk who thought forming a working group was not always the best or most efficient way to look at new changes and Cllr Goodyer thought it could be initiated now and if it didn't work it could be changed back. It was then agreed to start the new Committee structure from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.

**RESOLVED: To commence the new committee structure from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.**

**C012/16 12. APPOINTMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

The membership of Standing Committees for 2016-2017 as circulated was agreed to be deferred due to the new Committee Structure starting on July 1st.

**C013/16 13. REPORT OF MEMBER ACTIVITIES AND ATTENDANCE**

Members noted the reports from those councillors who had provided information

about the bodies on which they represented the Town Council.

**C014/16**

#### **14. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The appointment of Town Councillors to outside bodies as circulated in Appendix D and attached to these minutes.

**C015/16**

#### **15. AUTHORISATION OF EXPENDITURE AND ORDERS**

Cllr Hill queried item 24 which was an invoice from NCC for grass cutting as did Cllr Seymour and this payment was agreed to be deferred re more information. A query on item 38 in regard to Design Services for the digital board map resulted in the **suspension of standing orders** and was responded to by Mrs Mclean who advised the money would be refunded to the Town Council re Portas/NCC. **Re-instate Standing Orders.**

**RESOLVED: It was agreed by Councillors to approve the payments and orders appended to these minutes apart from item 24 which will be given further clarification.**

**C016/16**

#### **16. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDITOR**

Cllr Hill proposed agreement of Company 1 tender bid and this was seconded by Cllr Seymour and agreed by all.

**RESOLVED: To agree the appointment of Company 1 as internal auditors for Berwick Town Council.**

**C017/16**

#### **17. NEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO CURRENT STANDING ORDERS**

It was agreed to accept the proposed amendments to Standing orders re Financial Regulations and to carry forward to the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: Proposed acceptance of amendments agreed re the Council's Standing orders and will be carried forward to next meeting.**

**C018/16**

#### **18. SPITTAL SPLASH PARK**

Councillors agreed to approve the service agreement for Spittal Splash Pool. Councillor Dixon expressed concern at long running uncertainty re the metal cabinet/casing which is currently housing the electrical operating equipment for Spittal splash pool. The Clerk will request a certified electrical engineer to attend the site to look at potential costs to rehouse the equipment. Cllr Bettison thought that a brick housing unit was to have been initiated and after much discussion it was decided to arrange a meeting with Mr Mike Greener and County Councillor

Jim Smith to gain insight into this ongoing problem and the Clerk will also request the Finance Officer bring Councillors up to speed on the housing cabinet issue.

**RESOLVED: Approval of the Service agreement for Spittal Splash Park.**

**To arrange an engineer to look at the costs to rehouse the electrical equipment and to arrange a meeting with Cllr Jim Smith and Mr Mike Greener for background information and to request further information on the current cabinet from the Finance Officer.**

**C019/16**

#### **19. ALLOTMENTS**

Cllr Roughead declared an interest. Cllr Seymour said that together with the Acting Clerk they had met with the Secretary of the Lions Committee to discuss the current lease signed in 2012 and which gave control of the allotments to the Lions Committee. Cllr Seymour thought more information was needed before any further discussion. The Clerk explained that the disparity in rents between the Lions Allotments and other higher rental allotments in the town was concerning and in the interests of fairness they must be looked at. Cllr Hill agreed the statement re fairness and also felt more discussion was required. Berwick Preservation Trust who originally leased the allotments to the Town Council has advised they were unaware that the Council had signed the Allotments over to the Lions Committee. The Clerk/ Councillors will meet with a representative of the Preservation Trust on May 20<sup>th</sup> for further talks and clarification.

**RESOLVED: To gain further clarification on the agreement with the Preservation Trust and the Lions Allotment Committee.**

**C020/16**

#### **20. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED: Cllr Seymour proposed and Cllr Hill seconded to adopt the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23 February 2016.**

**C021/16**

#### **21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 27 June 2016 at 6 pm.

## APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2016-2017 (APPENDIX D)

Name of Organisation	Representative/s in 16-17	Term of Appointment
Berwick Community Trust	Cllr I Dixon	Annual
Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees  From November 2016	Cllr H Bettison Cllr I Dixon Cllr G Hill Cllr J Lang Cllr C Seymour	1 year until 30th November 2016  *Decision on membership was deferred until October 2016
Berwick Fair Trade	Cllr C Seymour	Annual
Berwick in Bloom	Cllr A Gibson	Annual
Berwick Youth Project	Cllr G Smith	Annual
Cittaslow Working Group	No representative	Annual
Conservation Area Advisory Group	Cllr Blackburn	Annual
Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) – County Committee	Cllr Seymour Cllr Graham	Annual
Northumberland Town and Parish Council Charter Review Group	Chair / Vice Chair of the Council	Annual
Parks Steering Group	Cllr G McLean	Annual

Riding of the Bounds Association	Cllr K Graham	Annual
St Aidans	Cllr G Smith	Annual
Sure Start Children's Board	Cllr J Beresford	Annual



Council Meeting

Appendix E  
Item 15  
Monday 9th May 2016

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

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

<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>
7	Stationery & Printing	29/04/2016	101306	Stationery	Viking	36.18	7.23	43.41
8	Councillor Travel & Subsistence	29/04/2016	101306	Print cartridge	Viking	21.28	4.26	25.54
9	Postage	29/04/2016	101306	Stamps	Viking	55.00	0.00	55.00
10	Cleaning	29/04/2016	101307	Cleaning	Crystal Stone Ltd	75.00	0.00	75.00
11	Visit Berwick & Events Leaflet	29/04/2016	101308	Design services	J Herbert	450.00	0.00	450.00
12	Hoppa Bus	29/04/2016	101309	Printing	Fantasy Prints	72.00	14.40	86.40
13	Public Seat Maintenance	29/04/2016	101310	Plaques	Shoecare	37.00	0.00	37.00
14	Public Realm Works	29/04/2016	101310	Plaques	Shoecare	45.00	0.00	45.00
15	Public Realm Works	29/04/2016	101311	Repairs	Bob Lee Welding	1,038.00	207.60	1,245.60
16	Bus Shelter Maintenance	29/04/2016	101312	Bus Shelter cleaning	Wheeleigh Clean	241.00	0.00	241.00
17	Councillor Training	29/04/2016	101313	Refreshments	Lowry's at the Chandlery	36.00	0.00	36.00
18	Public Realm Works	29/04/2016	101314	Repairs	G A Thompson	360.00	72.00	432.00
19	IT Support	29/04/2016	101315	IT support	Northern Lab	90.00	18.00	108.00
20	Expenses	29/04/2016	101316	Printing	Shiel Morrison	240.00	0.00	240.00
21	Photocopies	29/04/2016	101317	Photocopies	Capital Solutions	58.76	11.75	70.51
22	Waste Collection	29/04/2016	101318	Waste Collection	Northumberland County Council	194.22	0.00	194.22
23	Waste Collection	29/04/2016	101318	Waste Collection	Northumberland County Council	10.00	2.00	12.00
24	Grass Cutting	29/04/2016	101318	Grass cutting	Northumberland County Council	1,650.00	330.00	1,980.00
25-31	Salaries	29/04/2016	101318	Salaries	Northumberland County Council	5,285.02	0.00	5,285.02
32	Salaries: Payroll costs	29/04/2016	101318	PAYE costs	Northumberland County Council	2.00	0.40	2.40
38	Berwick Deserves Better	29/04/2016	101308	Design services	J Herbert	200.00	0.00	200.00
39	Bounds Riding	29/04/2016	101319	Rosettes	Berwick Bounds Riding	248.85	0.00	248.85

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

See page 3 for accompanying explanatory notes

<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>
33	Salaries: Pension	29/04/2016	directdebit	Pension	NEST	158.72	0.00	158.72
34	Gas	29/04/2016	directdebit	Gas	Southern Electric	89.59	4.47	94.06
35	Electricity	29/04/2016	directdebit	Electricity	Southern Electric	51.64	2.58	54.22
36	SSP Electricity	29/04/2016	directdebit	Electricity	Scottish Gas	9.60	0.48	10.08
37	Telecoms	29/04/2016	directdebit	Internet services	BT	95.25	19.05	114.30

Explanatory Notes to accompany payment list.

<b>Voucher</b>	<b>Notes</b>
7	Office Stationary
8	Ink cartridges for Cllrs
9	Stamps
10	Office Cleaning
11	Design work for Visit Berwick/Events leaflet
12	Hoppa Bus posters
13	plaque for commemorative seat
14	plaques for Queen's birthday trees
15	repairs to beacon for Queen's birthday
16	quarterly bus shelter cleaning
17	refreshments for Cllr training event
18	repairs to street planters
19	Monthly IT support contract
20	printing for investors conference
21	monthly photocopying costs
22-3	annual waste collection charge
24	charge for spring grass cutting
25-32	April salary & payroll costs
33	monthly pension payment
34	office gas bill
35	office electricity bill
36	splash park electricity bill
37	quarterly internet charges
38	design work for digital notice boards
39	rosettes for Riding of the Bounds [paid from Schedule III surplus