

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

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 17 July 2017 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed**

Councillors:	G Roughead (Town Mayor)	A Gibson
	H Bettison	K Graham
	A Bowlas	C Lewis
	R Bruce	H Nichols
	I Dixon	B Parkin
	B Douglas	G Smith
	A Forbes	L Stephenson
	T Forrester	

#### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Gareth Davies, Town Clerk  
Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk  
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace  
Chief Superintendent Sharon Scott, Northumbria Police  
Inspector Liz Hall, Northumbria Police  
John Woodman, Citizens Advice Bureau  
25 members of the public, 1 member of the press.

Council received a presentation from Chief Superintendent Sharon Scott of Northumbria Police, assisted by Inspector Hall concerning the planned changes to customer access to Berwick Police Station. A number of elected members and members of the public asked questions or made contributions.

John Woodman of the Citizens Advice Bureau gave a presentation on future provision of services in Berwick. Mr Woodman explained the forces that were driving change, both in terms of channel shift by customers and the reduction of funding. Mr Woodman answered all the questions put to him and acknowledged the strength of feeling around the potential loss of walk-in and face to face services. At

the end of the presentation, the council RESOLVED without dispute to authorize the Town Clerk to enter into negotiations to attempt to find a solution that addressed the concerns of councillors and members of the public.

## **OPEN SESSION**

One member of the public spoke briefly.

### **C042/17 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence, but Cllr Bowlas had apologized for his likely lateness.

### **C043/17 2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 20 June 2017 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **C044/17 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Cllr H Bettison declared a personal and pecuniary interest during the discussion of Item 12 and left the room for the remainder of the discussion.

### **C045/17 4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**

There were no requests for dispensation.

### **C046/17 5. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

It was **RESOLVED**

- a. To recognise the Berwick 900 'tags' as part of the Evidence Base,
- b. To approve the High Level Policy Options set out in the Background Evidence Papers for the Natural Environment & Youth Topics,
- c. To request that the Berwick, Spittal & Tweedmouth Steering Group start the process of developing Draft Planning Policies,
- d. To agree to provide a training session for all Councillors and members for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering and Working Groups to cover the Planning Policy development process, and
- e. The procurement of this training course to be delegated to the Town Clerk.

### **C047/17 6. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor indicated that he had attended the Bishops Garden party, the Jaguar XK event in aid of Prostate Cancer charities, the Cubs centenary event and Berwick Academy careers fair.

**C048/17**

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

Members **RESOLVED** without division to note the correspondence log after the Town Clerk had provided explanations relating to an issue with HMRC.

**C049/17**

## **8. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL**

It was **RESOLVED** without division to note the schedule of payments.

**C050/17**

## **9. FUTURE EVENTS**

After the Town Clerk had introduced his report and Cllr Forbes had spoken council **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders sufficiently to allow Mr David Blackburn to address council. After a substantial presentation from Mr Blackburn elected members further discussed the matter, before it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision on the matter to enable the promoters of the scheme to further address councillors concerns as to the size, cost and relevance of their proposals.

**C051/17**

## **10. ALLOTMENTS**

It was **RESOLVED** on the motion of Cllr Forrester, seconded by Cllr Bowlas that council note the report, and delegate to the Town Clerk the power to allocate and terminate tenancies, with the power returning to the Local Services committee in the absence of the Town Clerk, subject the rights of appeal set out in the report.

It was further **RESOLVED** to adopt the allocation policy set out in the report on that topic.

**C052/17**

## **12. GOLDWINGS GRANT APPLICATION**

The Town Clerk introduced the grant application, and explained the history so far. Cllr Bettison withdrew after explaining her link to one of the charitable beneficiaries of the event. On the motion of Cllr Douglas, seconded by Cllr Gibson, it was **RESOLVED** to offer a grant of £2000.

**C053/17**

## **13. RAILWAY SERVICES TO BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**

Cllr Bettison returned to the room at this point.

It was **RESOLVED** on the motion of Cllr Forrester, seconded by the Mayor, that council adopt as its goals with regard to transport

- a. Reliably connecting Berwick to Newcastle and Edinburgh within a sixty to ninety minute journey time, via a variety of modes, allied to a consistent and reliable public transport offer that enables commuting, and
- b. Developing a public transport and road network for Berwick that enables

residents to maximize their potential earnings and which opens the Berwick jobs market to a wider talent pool, and further that council instructs officers to lobby pro-actively for the delivery of a consistent and coherent clockface rail service for Berwick upon Tweed.

**C054/17**

#### **14. FORWARD PLAN**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Forward Plan.

**C055/17**

#### **15. LOCAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Local Services Committee held on 15 May 2017.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of the Local Services Committee held on 26 June 2017. Council further **RESOLVED**, on the motion of Cllr Graham, seconded by Cllr Lewis

- a. that no new play areas be created except in association with new housing developments and developer funding,
- b. that spending be focussed on upgrading existing play areas, both by full replacement and by incremental upgrades,
- c. that funding for upgrades via partnership working and grant funding be explored,
- d. that priority be given to developing a workable skatepark for older children, and
- e. that land ownership for all the play areas be fully explored and clarified.

**C056/17**

#### **16. PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee held on 15 May 2017.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee held on 3 July 2017.

It was further **RESOLVED**, on the motion of Cllr Graham, seconded by Cllr Bowlas, that council recognised the current unworkable situation with regards to grants, and instructs staff to undertake a review of grant criteria and prepare a report proposing categories of events based on their impact on tourism or regeneration, as well as their contribution to the communities of Berwick upon Tweed.

Council further **RESOLVED**, on the same motion, that, in the interim, Council should suspend the guidelines adopted in November 2015 and agree to consider applications on an ad hoc basis and delegated to the People and Communities

committee the power to devise a new scheme of grant funding for events and community organizations, on the basis of the proposed reports from officers.

**C057/17**

#### **17. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 30 May 2017.

**C058/17**

#### **18. BUDGET & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the draft minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee held on 10 July 2017.

On the motion of Cllr Forbes, seconded by Cllr Gibson, it was **RESOLVED** that council delegated authority to the RFO to enter into a new telephony contract, including authority to enter into a multi year contract, after consultation with the chair and vice chair of the Budget and Administration committee.

**C059/17**

#### **19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 21 August 2017 at 6 pm.

**Council RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was appropriate to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following business on the basis that public discussion might prejudice the Council's position and staffing issues might be discussed.**

At this point the Public withdrew. Council then **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders sufficient to allow the meeting to continue beyond 20:00

**C060/17**

#### **20. OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE**

After a briefing from the Town Clerk it was **RESOLVED**

1. To delegate to the Town Clerk authority to seek estimates for replacement uniforms and formal wear for staff,
2. To make the virements proposed in the Town Clerk's report to provide for an earmarked reserve for this purpose, and to provide a budget in year for preparations, and
3. To establish a working group of officers, stakeholders and Cllrs Forbes, Dixon Lewis, Bruce, Bettison and Bowlas, under the chairmanship of the Mayor to progress these matters.

**C061/17**

## **21. FIVE ARCHES PLAY AREA AND ALLOTMENTS**

After receiving the report of the Town Clerk, and his explanations as to its urgency, it was **RESOLVED** on the motion of Cllr Gibson, seconded by Cllr Bettison that council

1. Agreed to the transfer of the former play area to NCC,
2. Agreed to the creation of the proposed access way, and its recognition as a right over NCC's land by way of an appropriate deed, drawn up by NCC, subject to NCC's tenants confirming that they will not allow parking beyond the proposed parking area, or casual use of the access way by their members,
3. Agreed to NCC taking the lead on the issue of the covenant, subject to BTC reserving its right to take further legal advice if NCC prove unable to resolve this issue, and
4. Agreed to delegate to the Town Clerk the right to progress these matters on council's behalf, but not to incur any expenditure without any reference back to council.

The meeting closed at 20:35