

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 19 December 2016 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Councillors:	G Roughead (Deputy Town Mayor)	G Hill
	H Bettison	P Hodgson
	A Forbes	J Lang
	A Gibson	B Parkin
	K Graham	G Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gareth Davies, Interim Town Clerk
Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk
Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace
15 members of the public approximately

OPEN SESSION

In the absence of the Mayor the Deputy Mayor took the chair. Members were informed of the death of the Mayoress, and observed a minute's silence.

- C204/16** **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies for absence had been received on behalf of Cllrs D Blackburn, I Dixon, T Forrester, E Goodyer, G McLean and C Seymour.
- C205/16** **2. MINUTES**
The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 28 November 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.
- C206/16** **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**
There were no disclosures of interest.
- C207/16** **4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION**
There were no requests for dispensation.
- C208/16** **5. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
The Deputy Mayor made a series of announcements concerning his performance of his duties, and on behalf of the Mayor.

C209/16

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

The reports were noted, and a number of questions were asked of Cllr Hunter, who responded to them.

C210/16

7. NOTIFICATION OF PAYMENTS MADE BY BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

It was **RESOLVED**, on the motion of Cllr Forbes, seconded by Cllr Hodgson to note the schedule of payments.

C211/16

8. BUDGET

It was proposed by Cllr Forbes, seconded by Cllr Hill, that the precept requirement be frozen to the same level as in the previous financial year. Cllr's Forbes, Hill and Smith voted for the motion, Cllrs Lang, Bettison, Graham, Parkin, Hodgson and Gibson against, and the motion fell. On the motion of Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Gibson Council then **RESOLVED**

1. To approve the proposed budget, and
2. To delegate to the Responsible Financial Officer / Interim Town Clerk authority to complete the necessary forms requesting the levy of £256,020 to Northumberland County Council.

The votes were cast as follows; For the resolution Cllrs Lang, Bettison, Graham, Parkin, Hodgson, Smith and Gibson; against the resolution, Cllrs Hill and Forbes.

C212/16

9. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

It was **RESOLVED**, by 8 votes to 1, on the motion of Cllr Graham, seconded by Cllr Hodgson, to note the Medium Term Financial Plan.

C213/16

10. ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously, on the motion of Cllr Bettison, seconded by Cllr Hodgson

1. To waive Financial Regulation 7.3 in this case,
2. To spend £3000 from reserves on new accounting software, and
3. To note the need to make future budgetary provision of £900 per annum for multi user licences.

C214/16

11. CCTV EXTENSION

It was **RESOLVED**, unanimously, on the motion of Cllr Bettison, seconded by Cllr Graham

1. That council delegate to the RFO / Town Clerk authority to seek three quotes for the provision of four CCTV cameras, and, provided the total expenditure is less than £5,000, to purchase the devices.

2. That council delegate to the RFO / Town Clerk, authority to enter into data contracts to support the installation of the cameras, either on an annual basis or a monthly contract, depending on cost, and that
3. Council delegate to the RFO / Town Clerk authority to make appropriate virements from reserves to the 2016-17, and subsequent year's budgets, to cover the costs specified in recommendations 1&2.

C215/16 **12. HERITAGE LAMP STANDS**

It was **RESOLVED** to defer consideration of this matter until a future report in January 2017.

C216/16 **13. PLAY AREA MAINTENANCE**

It was **RESOLVED**

1. That a Play Area Maintenance Task and Finish Working Group be created to report back to council by the end of March 2017, on
 - a. The design and management of a reactive maintenance programme for play equipment, and the prioritization of existing faults
 - b. The creation of a grounds management strategy for each play area, and
 - c. The creation of a planned maintenance strategy for play area equipment,
2. That council defer until its next meeting such appointments to the working group as it sees fit, including the appointment of a chair,
3. That council delegates to the Town Clerk, after consulting the Mayor and the chair, if any, of the Task and Finish group, the duty of setting a date for the first meeting of the working group, and
4. That council agrees to receive the Task and Finish Working Group's recommendations at a future meeting.

C217/16 **14. PARK IMPROVEMENTS**

It was **RESOLVED** to note the update.

C218/16 **15. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED**

1. That council preferred an Fol panel convened on an ad hoc basis of three elected members plus the Mayor or Deputy Mayor as its chair, and
2. That council instruct the Interim Town Clerk to prepare a revised Fol process and publication scheme.

C219/16 **16. DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED**, on the proposal of Cllr Hill, seconded by Cllr Graham to adopt the proposed document retention policy.

C220/16

17. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION UPDATE

It was unanimously **RESOLVED**, on the motion of Cllr Bettison, seconded by Cllr Hodgson to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to, after consultation with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor

1. Negotiate the surrender of the existing lease, if possible,
2. Negotiate the new lease /licence with ARCH
3. Incur reasonable removal and re-locations costs, subject to the limits set out in the Financial Regulations up to £2500, and
4. To vire sufficient sums from the reserves, up to £10,000 to cover rent and removal costs.

C221/16

18. LONE WORKER POLICY

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously, on the motion of Cllr Bettison seconded by Cllr Hodgson, to

1. Require the Interim Town Clerk to undertake a skills and safety audit in relation to lone working, and to submit that audit, and any policy or procedure changes arising from it, to the Staffing Committee, and
2. To delegate to the Staffing Committee the power to approve the lone worker policy, and,
3. Subject to the financial limits set by the Financial regulations, to instruct the Interim Town Clerk to make any safety related purchases that might be required.

C222/16

19. RAIL ACTION GROUP, EAST OF SCOTLAND (RAGES) AND EDINBURGH AND SOUTH EAST REGIONAL CITY DEAL

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to instruct the Interim Town Clerk to

1. Write to the MP for Berwick upon Tweed, and the Department of Transport requesting that the UK Government matches the investment made by the Scottish Government into this new rail service by awarding £2 Million to upgrade the facilities at Berwick Station and to convert it into a transport Hub fit for the 21st Century.
2. Write to NCC and request that they reconsider their decision to reject our request that the Core Strategy should highlight the importance of re-opening local rail services in North Northumberland to connect with the new Edinburgh to Berwick rail service. Specifically we request that the Core Strategy should protect land around for the former Scremeston & Belford railway stations so that they can be brought back in to use in the future, and thus support the need for a sustainable transport plan for North Northumberland.

3. That NCC prepare a bid for the Local Transport Programme to support investment in to Berwick Station in order to develop it in to a Transport Hub and Northern Gateway for the Town, and
4. Write to Scottish Borders Council, East Lothian Council, RAGES and the Scottish Government to congratulate them on their decision to invest a further £2 Million in rail services to Berwick Upon Tweed, and offering any assistance than we are able to support speedy implementation of the project.

C223/16

20. OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS OVER CHRISTMAS

The office arrangements were noted.

C224/16

21. FORWARD PLAN

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to note the Forward Plan, and that the Clerk had indicated improvements were likely to be made to its format in January 2017.

C225/16

22. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held on 28 October 2016.

C226/16

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Monday 9 January 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.

C227/16

24. LION ALLOTMENTS

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to endorse the proposed course of action.

C228/16

25. TISSUM PROJECT PROPOSAL

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the proposal.

C229/16

26. STAFFING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 8 August 2016.