

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 21 September 2009 at 6 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	F Simpson (Town Mayor)	M McNeely
	J Beresford	J Robertson
	P Herdman	C Routledge
	G Hill	J Smith
	I Hunter	J Waterhouse

IN ATTENDANCE:

J Hutchinson (Sheriff)

S Finch, Town Clerk

Inspector Martin Baylis, Northumbria Police

Gillian Simmons, Locality Officer, Northumberland County Council

6 members of the public

OPEN SESSION

The Town Mayor welcomed those present.

Inspector Baylis, introducing the Police and Communities Together (PACT) session, said the current priorities were violence against the person, and criminal damage against vehicles. He outlined the measures the police were currently taking against 'boy racers', and excessive drinking by young people.

It was noted that the change in local government had created a temporary weakening of the Criminal Disorder Reduction Partnership, but the Local Multi-Agency Partnership was working well.

Issues raised by members included illegal parking and problems in Prior. Members of the public made special mention of boy-racers in Bridge Street after 7pm; disturbances late on Saturday nights in Golden Square; and the markings at the exit to the Bridge Street car park.

The Mayor thanked Inspector Baylis for attending.

In a response to a query by a member of the public, it was confirmed that a meeting to discuss future plans for Town Twinning would be hosted by the Town Council on a date to be arranged.

CO34/09 **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Bettison, Bowlas, Houghton and Pauline.

CO35/09 **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council held on 13 July 2009 were agreed and signed as a correct record subject to its being noted that Councillor Herdman had attended.

CO36/09 **3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Herdman, Robertson and Smith each declared a personal interest in Item 9 (Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trustees).

CO37/09 **4. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on events she had attended, including: crowning of the Salmon Queen the Tweedmouth Feast, the RNLI fete, the Minden Day Parade, the Food Festival, an event at RAF Boulmer, the opening of the Berwick Film Festival, the Golf Charity event which raised £2000 for the Mayor's Charity, and Mayor's Sunday; she also advised those present of a forthcoming Valuation Evening in aid of her charity.

CO38/09 **5. VACANCY**

Members were advised of the resignation from the Council of Councillor David Stewart. The Mayor expressed her regret at his departure.

The Town Clerk detailed the procedure for filling the vacancy, which allowed electors of Lower Spittal ward to request an election, and in the absence of such a request from at least ten electors, the Council to co-opt a new member.

CO39/09 **6. COMMUNITY FORUM**

Gillion Simmons, Locality Development Officer, reminded members of the purpose of Community Forums and their relationship with Parish and Town Councils. She also advised that at present it was likely that Berwick and Norham

and Islandshire may opt for separate forums, which would reduce the overall amount available for each to provide, via a 'host' body, administrative support.

The next step was to hold a public meeting to establish local support for a Forum, and it was planned to hold this in the week commencing 12 October.

CO40/09

7. BERWICK COMMUNITY PLAN

Councillor Robertson reported to members the discussions which he and Councillors Beresford and McNeely had had with Berwick Community Trust. He outlined the proposal to undertake jointly with the Trust an assessment of community requirements through personal questionnaires delivered to a sample of homes within the Town Council area and completed with the help of researches.

The purpose was to inform the budget setting and priorities of the Town Council.

RESOLVED: The Town Council to contribute £6,000 from un-earmarked reserves, towards the cost of the joint research project with Berwick Community Trust.

CO41/09

8. UNIVERSITY BID

Gillian Simmons outlined the progress to date on a bid to establish a Higher Education facility and presence in Berwick-upon-Tweed.

A statement of intent on the proposal had been submitted by the University of Sunderland, and a response was expected in October.

CO42/09

9. BERWICK-UPON-TWEED CORPORATION (FREEMEN) TRUSTEES

The Town Clerk reminded members that Northumberland County Council had delegated to the Town Council its responsibilities in relation to the Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trust. This included the requirement to nominate, each year, five non-Freemen Trustees.

RESOLVED: Councillors Bettison, Bowlas, Herdman, Robertson and Simpson to be proposed as non-Freemen Trustees of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Corporation (Freemen) Trust.

CO43/09

10. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

The Town Clerk advised that since model Standing Orders had been adopted at an early stage, it was now appropriate to review these and amend them if appropriate.

RESOLVED: The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Hunter to meet informally to consider the Standing Orders and make recommendations to the next meeting of the Council.

CO44/09

11. EVENTS COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Events Committee meeting held on 7 September 2009.

CO45/09

12. FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 7 September 2009.

CO46/09

13. IT SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

Members considered the paper which had been circulated proposing support for Councillors to enable them to make full use of electronic communication.

RESOLVED:

1 In the interests of cost and time-saving, and to enable all members to be fully included in Council communications, all members should have access to electronic communication.

2 To obtain quotes with a view to purchasing or leasing a small 'pool' of lap-top computers and printers which could be made available immediately to those members without any form of electronic communication facility, and/or as an emergency measure where members' own equipment is faulty.

3 A small working group, comprising the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Hill, to meet informally to discuss a draft policy for allocating resources for connections, maintenance, supplies, and training, for discussion at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and with a view to incorporating a more detailed proposal into the budget for 2010-11.

4 The Town Council to arrange IT training for any members requiring assistance.

CO47/09

14. ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes of the Environment and Regeneration

Committee held on 8 September 2009.

CO48/09

15. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED: Councillor Routledge to represent the Town Council on the Market Town Welcome.

CO49/09

16. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: To receive the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 14 July 2009 and on 15 September 2009.

RESOLVED: To exclude the press and public during consideration of Items 17 and 18, which included issues of a personal and confidential nature.

CO50/09

17. STAFFING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: To adopt the minutes and recommendations of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 20 July 2009.

CO51/09

18. MAYORAL SUPPORT

RESOLVED: To adopt the proposals for enhancing support for Mayoral and Civic Functions.

RESOLVED: To re-open the meeting.

CO52/09

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 16 November 2009.