

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 23 January 2017 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Councillors:	I Dixon (Town Mayor)	J Lang
	H Bettison	G McLean
	D Blackburn	B Parkin
	A Forbes	G Roughead
	E Goodyer	C Seymour
	G Hill	G Smith
	P Hodgson	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Gareth Davies, Interim Town Clerk

Steve Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk

Joyce Benton, Sergeant-at-Mace

17 members of the public approximately

C244/16

1. ACTIVE NORTHUMBERLAND

Nigel Walsh, Damon Parnaby and Lorraine Dewison from Active Northumberland attended the meeting, and briefed members, who noted the updates.

C245/16

2. OPEN SESSION

Three members of the public spoke.

C246/16

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received on behalf of Cllrs T Forrester, A Gibson and K Graham.

C247/16

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council meeting held on 9 January 2017 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

C248/16

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

C249/16

6. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

C250/16 **7. TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor gave a brief account of what had been, for him, generally a quiet month.

C251/16 **8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

The reports were noted and elected members expressed their gratitude for the reports received.

C252/16 **9. WARREN REPORT**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to

1. note the responses provided,
2. to, where indicated, add items to the Forward Plan,
3. and council further **RESOLVED** that it was content with its handling of the Warren Report in this way.

C253/16 **10. RESERVES POLICY**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to set the level of operational reserves as follows

2017-18	50% of budget
2018-19	40% of budget
2019-20	30% of budget
2020-21	25% of budget

Council further unanimously **RESOLVED** to review its reserves policy as part of the 2018-19 budget process in September 2017.

C254/16 **11. INVESTMENT POLICY**

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that, for the reasons stated in the report,

1. Council will hold its reserves as deposits with banks or building societies, or other deposit takers who are members of the FSCS, denominated in sterling.
2. Council will not place investments in accounts where penalties might reduce the sum invested.
3. Council will not place more than one third of its total investments in notice or term accounts where investments cannot be accessed outwith the notice period.
4. Council will agree a level of reserves as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan / Budget process, as previously discussed, and will limit the amount of that operational reserve to be invested in notice or term accounts to one half, or 50% of that sum. The remainder shall be invested in instance access savings accounts.
5. For the financial years 2016-17, and 2017-18, council acknowledges that it cannot determine what proportion of its reserves could be safely invested in long term investments. For this reason no investments will be made for these financial years with a term or notice period greater than 12 months.

Council further unanimously **RESOLVED** to instruct the Responsible Financial Officer to draw up an alternative form of words for Regulation 9.5 to specify the decision making process for opening new deposit accounts, and for 9.27 and 9.28 for the

control and management of balances between the current account and deposit accounts.

C255/16 12. HERITAGE LAMP STANDS

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to defer this matter to the next meeting of council.

C256/16 13. RISK MANAGEMENT REGISTER

Council unanimously **RESOLVED**, for the reasons laid out in the report, to adopt a risk management methodology that shows, in numerical form, the likelihood and impact of a risk before and after mitigation, on a current mitigation basis, to adopt a formula for calculation of direction of travel, and to instruct the clerk to bring forward proposals for how a risk workshop might be convened, and its outcomes reviewed on a regular basis.

C257/16 14. ASSET REGISTER

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to delegate to the Interim Town Clerk / RFO authority to ascertain the correct accounting treatment of the land used for play areas, to ascertain the correct treatment of play areas, and to bring the revised asset register to a future meeting of council for approval.

C258/16 15. PENSIONS POLICY

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to

1. Confirm its policy of providing a pension contribution of 10% for each member of staff enrolled in NEST, and
2. To delegate to the Interim Town Clerk authority to make the relevant declarations to the Pension Regulator.

C259/16 16. COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllrs Hodgson, Goodyer and Blackburn to represent the council on the Coastal Community Team in the event of the team's bid progressing.

C260/16 17. FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan of Decisions was noted.

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.

C261/16

INTERIM TOWN CLERK

1. It was **RESOLVED**, as a matter of urgency to re-appoint the Interim Town Clerk / RFO Committee to act as line management arrangements for the Interim Town Clerk, and
2. To delegate to the Interim Town Clerk / RFO Committee the power to decide whether it wishes to engage the existing ITC for a further three months from 30 January 2016 via a secondment, or for the same period via direct employment on a no additional cost basis

C262/16

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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