

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 11th April 2013 in the Council Chamber, Clayport Street, Alnwick at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs A Symmonds (Mayor), S Allcroft, J Bell, G Castle, K Gray, B Grisdale, M Harrington, B Hewison, G Knox, K Moore, S Patience and S Walton.

In attendance: W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk.

C12/161. Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

C12/162. Apologies: Cllrs Farrar, Roberts, J Thompson, Waddell and Watson.

C12/163. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Gray declared a pecuniary interest in Minute C12/172 regarding an invoice being paid to his son and Councillor Castle declared a non pecuniary interest in county council matters.

C12/164. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (14th March 2013)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Council meeting held on 14th March 2013 were agreed as a true record.

These were agreed and duly signed by the Mayor.

C12/165. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

Referring to Minute.C12/150, Councillor Harrington asked if the licence for the ice cream vendor would be transferred to the Town Council, if the transfer of Swansfield Park and car park went ahead. The clerk confirmed that this would be the case.

C12/166. Mayor's Report

The Mayor's report for the period 14th March to 6th April had been circulated with the agenda. In addition the Mayor outlined questions he had asked at the North Area Committee, these related to removal of advertising signs on the roundabout at Willowburn, progress on the market place car parking scheme and suggesting a feasibility study into the need for a crematorium in the north of the county. He also highlighted to councillors that there was still time to submit nominations for the Mayor's Civic Awards.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

C12/167. Annual Audit Arrangements

The external auditor had informed the Council of the following key dates for this year's annual return and audit.

Display Notice about electors rights	13 th May to 26 th May
Make accounts available to public	28 th May to 24 th June
Submission of Annual Return	By 25 th June 2013
Completion of Audit	By 30 th September 2013

It was outlined that the draft final accounts would be presented to the Council on 9th May and then they will be sent to the internal auditor. Any feedback from the internal auditor will be given at the June meeting, prior to submission to the external auditor.

RESOLVED: To note the Annual Audit timetable

C12/168. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The meeting received an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition the Council's attention was drawn to proposals from the Department of Communities and Local Government to set up a 2 year, £9.5m support programme for neighbourhood planning. This would include the ability to apply for grant payments of up to £7,000. Details were being published on 15th April and applications can be submitted from 1st May. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was keen to make an application, with the Town Council acting as the accountable body for the funding.

RESOLVED: To receive the update and support an application being made for Neighbourhood Plan support with the Council acting as accountable body.

C12/169. Review of the Constitution

A small group of councillors had met on Thursday 4th April to review the Constitution, The recommendations which are contained in the table below were agreed.

Page	Issue	Agreed
Page 3	We could consider reducing the size of the some of the committees particularly Recreation and Amenities. Membership currently on the Finance and Policy Committee and Recreation and Amenities Committee include the mayor and deputy mayor as members	For the membership of the Finance & Policy Committee, Recreation and Amenities Committee and Cemetery Committee. Membership should include the Mayor OR Deputy Mayor
Page 4 c)	Need to update the Plan name	Replace the Alnwick Development Plan and Community Plan with the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan
Page 6 g)	Public speaking - need to ensure rules are clear and met	Clerk to brief member of public prior to the meeting, and set out the procedure on the website
Page 7 t)	Change of wording required,	Minutes to record names of councillors present and those having given apologies
Page 7 z)	Change of wording required	For a meeting to exceed two and a half hours a vote will need to be taken to suspend standing orders
Page 14	Code of Conduct	Reference to be made to the 2012 Code
Page 17	Voting on Appointments – the procedure needs to be modified when there is a May election or alternatively, the date of the annual meeting changed	A sentence to be added saying - In an election year the timescale will need to be modified by the clerk or the date of the annual meeting changed.
Page 21	Liaison with Unitary Councillors – need to clarify who are local Councillors	Replace local councillors with Alnwick Councillors
Page 22 c)	When in a tender situation, the public notice should be placed on the council website, and notice board as well as in the local newspaper.	Reword to include this
Page 26 j)	Cheque authorisation – review details Current arrangement is 3 signatures including the Proper Officer (clerk)	To authorise 5 Councillors (Mayor Deputy Mayor, Chairs of Finance and Policy, Recreation and Amenities and the Cemetery Committees) and require 2 to signatures.
A smaller number of grammatical corrections were also made		

In addition, to enable payments to be authorised and paid quickly in May, it was suggested that the current Mayor be added to the authorised signatures.

RESOLVED: To agree the above changes to the Constitution with effect from the next annual meeting of the Council and to add the current Mayor to the list of authorised signatures.

C12/170. Minutes of Committees

a) Planning, Highways and Transport Committee (14th March 2013)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee held on 14th March 2013 were agreed as a true record.

b) Cemetery Committee (21st March 2013)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee held on 21st March 2013 were agreed as a true record.

c) Finance Committee (21st March 2013)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 21st March 2013 were agreed as a true record.

d) Recreation & Amenities Committee (28th March 2013)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee held on 28th March 2013 were agreed as a true record.

C12/171. Correspondence

The clerk reported that the following correspondence has been received since the last meeting, these were discussed.

Date	Detail	Action
20 th March	Peter Sinclair – invitation for Alnwick to be involved in June 2015, celebrating 800 years of history since the Magna Carta was signed, Meeting in London or Bury St Edmunds to discuss on 28 th May.	Ask to be kept informed and discuss with Bailiffgate Museum
March	CAN News – Spring Edition	Available from the clerk on request
25 th March	Northumberland Estates – request for progress update on cycle track	Will provide via Gallery Youth Project
25 th March	NCC- request for consideration of bus shelter requirements on Clayport Bank to be provided by developer	Discussed with Clayport Councillors and responded
26 th March	NCC – Public Access details of improved planning IT system which will make public access easier – went live 2 nd April	Noted
27 th March	NALC – details of declarations of acceptance of office and Code of Conduct proforma for new Council to use	To introduce for the new Council.

RESOLVED: That the correspondence received be noted.

C12/172. Financial Matters – Payments.

The clerk reported that the following invoices had been received for payment:

Inland Revenue	£1,621.61	Tax and National Insurance (Paid 2/4)
Wages Account	£2,000	
Northumbrian Water	£247.51	Water bill Ratten Row allotments (Paid 2/4)
Northumbrian Water	£37.78	Water Bill Robertson's Fountain (Paid 2/4)
Zurich Municipal	£180.64	Insurance Swansfield Park play area (Paid 28 th /3)
Northumberland County Council	£24.00	Room Booking -15 th Dec. Rent Collection for allotments
Thomas Sherriff	£138.43	Machine parts
Greenlay (Grass Machinery) Ltd	£162.50	Grass Cutter parts
John Gray Ltd	£727.80	Hedgecutter and tractor repairs & parts fitting
Adam Douglas & Son	£120	Charges for advice – Mechanics Institute
National Pen Promotions Ltd	£150.48	Town Council pens (mayoral gifts)
WR Batey	£31.79	Dustpan & brush (£7.99), postage £23.80
Thomas Sherriff	£128.59	Parts – connection shaft for hedgecutter to tractor
CBS Ltd	£32.63	Stationary
A Symmonds	£16.20	Mileage
ICCM	£90	Annual Membership
Argyll Planning Ltd	£1740	Neighbourhood Planning support
Local Living	£20	Hire of stall for Neighbourhood Plan
TOTAL	7,469.96	

The following payments were now paid by direct debit and were reported for information		
npower	£103.62	Town Hall Clock (paid 12 th April)

Cheques were also required for the following annual grants previously agreed.

Alnwick in Bloom	£2375
Alnwick Food Festival	£1100

RESOLVED: To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £10,944.96 and to note the direct debit payments of £103.62

C12/173. Councillor Issues

1. Councillor Hewison raised a number of issues these were:

- a) Bailiffgate request for parking outside of 16 Bailiffgate Adult Residential Care Centre
- b) Request for footpath along the Battlements to connect with Clayport Bank
- c) Battlements request for new salt bin outside of East view and to be set further back from the road to prevent future damage
- d) Battlements request for salt bin in area of Wingrove House
- e) Request for hoggins and gravel to public footpath between Battlements and Swansfield House

- f) Request for hoggins and gravel + regular maintenance of footpath between Swansfield Lodge and Hope House Farm
- g) Pavements in Bondgate Without. The pavement had just been renovated and he was concerned that it would be damaged by vehicles parking on it. He suggested that the press might like to give some publicity to the issue and that shopkeepers could be encouraged to inform their delivery drivers to park on the road.

The matters were discussed in turn and it was agreed to raise the matters with the appropriate County Council officers

RESOLVED: To refer these issues to the appropriate County Council officers.

- 2. **Councillor Castle** raised the need for the litter bin on Green Batt to be replaced. The clerk explained that the old one had been removed because it was broken.

RESOLVED: To replace the litter bin on Green Batt

C12/174. Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Allcroft raised the need for the tarmac path at the bottom of the Column Field (near to the war memorial) to be replaced. She had been informed by the County Council that this would cost £1700 and she asked for Town Council support. Councillor Castle had indicated that he was willing to pay £1000 out of his County Council small scheme budget. It was suggested that in the first place the County Council be approached to see if they would pay the balance, as the Column Field was their responsibility.

C12/175. Vote of thanks to the Councillors standing down in May

As this was the last council meeting prior to the election, the Mayor thanked councillors who were standing down. In particular he paid tribute to Councillor Waddell who was retiring after serving 51 years as a local councillor and Councillor Gray who was retiring after 39 years. He also thanked the Clerk for supporting him during his term of office.

RESOLVED: That those Councillors standing down at the election be thanked for their services.

The meeting closed at 8.08pm.