

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday 10th April 2014
in the Council Chamber, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

Present: Cllrs B Grisdale (Mayor), P Allcroft, S Allcroft, P Broom, D Farrar, C Goodfellow, M Harrington, P Holt, J Humphries, G Mavin, S Mavin, K Moore, S Patience, R Roberts, A Shilton, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

In attendance: County Councillor H Cairns, W Batey, Town Clerk, J Pibworth, Administration Assistant, Carlo Biagioni, Alnwick Chamber of Trade.

C13/170 Questions from the Public

Carlo Biagioni, from the Chamber of Trade, asked if anything could be done about the toilets in Alnwick. He asked Alnwick Town Council to keep the pressure on the County Council to ensure they do something.

The Town Clerk explained that the toilets are the responsibility of NCC and we have had several discussions with them. NCC had confirmed that their budget currently had no money for refurbishing the toilets. He explained that Alnwick Town Council has £3,000 set aside towards toilet refurbishments. In addition, Councillor Castle has promised to allocate £3,000 from his Local Improvement Scheme allocation and Councillor Cairns confirmed she would do the same.

Councillor Roberts reassured Carlo that it was as much of an issue for the Town Council and we would do everything they could to expedite the matter with the NCC.

Carlo also asked if the toilets could stay open longer during the summer months. The Town Clerk agreed to take this up with NCC.

C13/171 Apologies

Councillor G Castle.

C13/172 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Goodfellow, Harrington and Symmonds declared a non pecuniary interest in Item 15. Mechanics Institute Accounts 2013/14.

Councillor Grisdale declared a pecuniary interest in Item 14. Payments.

C13/173 Presentation by Tom Spence from Aln Valley Railway

Tom Spence from Aln Valley Railway gave a presentation on the work done so far on the Lionheart site and their plans for the future. He confirmed that they should have steam trains running this year and that they were winners of Heritage Railway Association's 'Highly Commended' Award in 2013.

RESOLVED: That the update be received

C13/174 Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th March 2014 were approved and then were duly signed by the Mayor.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Council meeting held on 13th March 2014 were agreed as a true record.

C13/175 Matters Arising

Referring to Minute C13/163, the Town Clerk advised councillors that the revised Constitution was almost complete with only the rewording of the co-option section to be done, Councillor Farrar had submitted some suggested wording. The revised Constitution would be implemented from the next Annual Meeting.

Referring to Minute C13/164a), Free Car Parking - The Town Clerk gave an update of the NCC document already circulated to councillors on the disc distribution. NCC would be doing a reprint and Councillor Broom suggested that they had £1 printed on them.

Referring to Minute C13/164c), Town Spring Clean - The Mayor thanked Councillor Broom for organising and everyone who took part. Councillors had a few comments / questions following the event:

- can the cobbles be sprayed with weed killer (NCC)
- can pubs be asked to tidy their premises (NCC)
- can more bins be sited around the town (NCC)
- an awful lot of litter in the brambles at Sainsbury's (NCC/ N'land Estates)
- lots of cigarette ends and coffee cups in the bushes at bus station (NCC)
- why are brushes no longer used in the town (NCC)

The Mayor suggested the Town Council put together a report and send to NCC. It was agreed that the Town Clerk write to NCC giving the Town Council's feedback and thanking them for helping. Councillors were asked to submit any comments for inclusion. The feedback should also raise the possibility of a campaign against cigarette-end litter in Alnwick.

C13/176 Mayor's Report

An update on the mayor's diary was available on the website at <http://alnwickmayor.wordpress.com/>

C13/177 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	12th May to 25th May 2014
Make accounts available to public	27th May to 23th June 2014
Submission of Annual Return	By 24th June 2014
Completion of Audit	By 30th September 2014

The annual return and final accounts will be presented to the Council on May 8th then 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

C13/178 Dates for Council and Committee Meetings 2014/15

The Town Clerk had circulated a draft list of Committee dates for consideration which would then be approved at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Councillors reviewed the proposed dates and asked for the time of the Cemetery Committee to be 7pm.

RESOLVED: To agree the proposed meeting dates and that they be forwarded to the Annual Meeting for approval

C13/179 Updates

a) Joint Meeting with NCC on 31st March 2014

The Town Clerk gave an update on the meeting with NCC held on March 31st. (Minutes will be distributed once available). It had been agreed that the meetings would be quarterly with the next one scheduled for June 23rd at 6.30pm.

The meeting on March 31st had discussed:

1. Economic Development & Training - NCC officers would attend a Council meeting to give councillors an update
2. Toilets in Alnwick - some feedback given under Minute C13/170
3. Litterbin provision - NCC pick litter at the bus station but do not want anymore bins as they do not have the resources to empty them
4. Free Parking - feedback given under C13/175
5. Market Place parking - there needs to be a three week consultation period before anything can happen. Legal notices will be put in The Gazette as to the intention to move forward well before the intended June deadline. Parking discs will not be used in the Market Place as they are only being used where parking fees previously applied.

Councillors raised a number of concerns about Market Place parking including access for delivery and other essential vehicles, signage to contain "No return within" timescales and the non use of discs.

RESOLVED: i) To contact NCC to state that Alnwick Town Council would like Market Place to be a disc zone to be in line with other disc zones; ii) to request Northumbria Police enforce the parking enforcements in Market Place

b) War Memorial Survey Update

The Administration Assistant gave feedback on the Condition Survey carried out on April 3rd. Whilst there appeared to be no major structural issues there are a number of concerns regarding deterioration:

STONWORK - There are areas of severe spalling to the stone column, most likely frost damage; there are several areas of disaggregation around the plinth section; significant and unsightly cuprous staining on the stones under the mouldings; approximately 10% of the original lime putty pointing is loose or lost and the remaining pointing is uneven and unsightly with black pollution or green cuprous staining. There are a small number of areas exhibiting a scratched graffiti and areas that have a light coverage of organic growth.

BRONZE ELEMENTS - All appear to be structurally sound but have lost their original patina through natural weathering. The three figures have 80-90% coverage of a dark layer which is a layer of sulphide pollution crust.

Recommended Conservation:

- a) All pointing (approx 74m) raked out and replaced with lime mortar
- b) Remove organic growth and apply a biocide to deter future growth
- c) The spalling and delaminating areas of stonework restored
- d) Scratched graffiti toned out
- e) Cuprous staining removed or lessened
- f) Pollution crust (sulphation) removed and a new patina applied / buffed

Approximate cost will be between £25,000 and £40,000 + VAT.

The Town Clerk reminded councillors the War Memorial fell under the remit of the Recreation & Amenities Committee and that the Chair and Vice Chair had been given delegated powers to submit grant applications.

Councillors felt that this was a fitting tribute to the fallen of Alnwick and that the work should be carried out. They felt that the Town Council should apply for the relevant grants as soon as possible, that the right type of materials be used in the restoration of the memorial and that work should be carried more regularly to ensure its upkeep. They also felt that they should look to add missing names to the memorial including women who died during World War I.

RESOLVED: To accept the update

C13/180 Minutes of the Committees

a) Planning Committee (March 13th 2014)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Transport and Highways Committee held on March 13th 2014 were agreed as a true record.

b) Finance Committee (March 20th 2014)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on March 20th 2014 were agreed as a true record.

c) Cemetery Committee (March 27th 2014)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee held on March 27th 2014 were agreed as a true record.

d) Recreation & Amenities Committee (March 27th 2014)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee held on March 27th 2014 were agreed as a true record.

C13/181 Correspondence

The clerk reported that the following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

	Detail	Action if any
24 March	NCC- Children's Centre Locality Manager – Any available office/storage space for Alnwick food bank?	Councillors considered

	March	NCC – invitation to attend Market Town Benchmarking Dissemination event, 28th April 6-8pm Council Chambers	Councillors to let the clerk know if they wished to attend
	27 March	CAN News – Spring 2014	Available from the clerk on request
a)	29 March	Friends of Voerde – request to have a Council reception for the Voerde delegation on May 23rd at Bailiffgate Museum at 6pm	Councillors approved (see below)
b)	2 April	Druridge Bay parkrun – request for support timed 5k run	Councillors considered (see below)
	2 April	CAN – Invitation to Spring Conference – Stannington Village Hall 2pm 9th May	Councillors to let the clerk know if they wished to attend
	4 April	NALC e news	Available from the clerk on request
	4 April	NCC – Training Sessions on Planning – Alnwick date 23rd April 6-8pm Northumberland Hall	Councillors to let the clerk know if they wished to attend also considered at Planning Committee
	4 April	Colin Harris Websites – merger with Team Valley Web	To note
c)	7 April	Community Action Northumberland requesting donation	Councillors considered (see below)
	7 April	Fire Rescue Plan	Available from the clerk on request
	9 April	Notification of European Election on May 22nd 2014	To note

The Town Clerk advised the Council that the reception for the Voerde delegation would be for around 40 people and would cost around £6 - £7 per head.

RESOLVED: a) To go forward with the reception within a budget of £400.

RESOLVED: b) Not to offer financial support to Druridge Bay parkrun.

RESOLVED: c) To make Community Action Northumberland a donation of £25.

RESOLVED: That the correspondence be noted and actions taken as listed.

C13/182 Feedback Local Multi-agency Crime Prevention Initiative Meeting

Councillor Moore advised there was no update for the meeting.

C13/183 Financial Matters – Payments

The following invoices had been received for payment. .:

HMRC	£2088.99	Tax/NI payment for March
Wages Account	£4000.00	
Northumbrian Water	£17.64	Cemetery (paid 28th March)
Northumbrian Water	£232.91	Ratten Row Allotments (paid 2nd April)
Northumbrian Water	£66.60	Cemetery (paid 28th March)
Northumbrian Water	£38.89	Robertson's Fountain (paid 28th March)

	Northumbrian Fencing	£329.60	St Georges Allotments (paid 2nd April)
	Wybone Limited	£1089.47	3 new Litter Bins
	Glasdon	£650.82	New Litter Bin
	W.R.Batey	£225.93	£23.99 Flash Drive, £143.94 Hi Vis Vests, £58 Play Area parts (Dome caps & washers)
	Alnwick Tyres Ltd	£36.00	Puncture Repair
	Malcolm Lane & Son Ltd	£266.40	Paint for Map Cases
	The Play Practice	£2320.30	New Basket for Basket Swing, Barresdale
	Alnwick Paint and Glass	£150.70	Wood Stain, Metal paint and materials
	Wincetide Ltd (t/a Alnwick Timber in Liquidation)	£175.50	Timber for seats
2014-15 payment	Max Recycle	£2288.16	Trade Waste 2014/15
2014-15 payment	NCC	£381.51	NNDR Cemetery Chapel 2014/15
2014-15 payment	NCC	£2590.50	NNDR Cemetery 2014/15
2014-15 payment	ICCM	£90.00	Membership 2014/15
	Northern Fencing	£3000.00	Allotment fencing Ratten Row
	James McLean	£103.54	Materials
	Thomas Sherriff	£15.31	Parts
2014-15 payment	Chubb Fire & Security	£85.19	Annual service
2014-15 payment	Northumbrian Water	£41.95	Sewerage Rates (half year)
	Petty Cash	£37.74	Fuel, Postage and Materials
Part 2014-15 payment	Bill Grisdale	£880.00	Stickers, design on map and banners for Town Team, Neighbourhood Plan flyer
	Alnwick Round Table	£700.00	Agreed by Rec & Amenities Committee (approved payment will not be released until their accounts have been received)
	TOTAL	£21,903.65	

The following payments are now paid by direct debit and were reported for information		
BT	£70.25	phone bills cemetery and cemetery lodge paid 27th March 2014
npower	£115.25	Robertson's Fountain

RESOLVED: To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £21,903.65 and to note the direct debit payments of £185.50.

C13/184 Mechanic's Institute Accounts 2013/14

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the accounts for the Mechanic's Institute. He noted that they had lost a couple of large users at the takeover point last April. Some budgets including repairs were down on last year giving a slightly better overall position than in 2012-13. He answered questions from councillors about the accounts.

Councillors also had a number of more general comments / questions: Councillor S Mavin asked if the food bank could possibly go into the building. Councillor Farrar commented that the deposit account did not give a great return and asked if some of the money could be put into a higher return

account. He also said a budget for the coming year would be useful to have. The Town Clerk agreed to look into these.

RESOLVED: To accept the accounts and update.

C13/185 Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Goodfellow noted that the press were not at the meeting and that it was important that the meeting was reported. Town Clerk advised that he had been asked for a copy of the minutes by the Gazette.

Councillor Roberts advised that there had been a news item on new technology (Deep Gas Winning) being developed off the Northumberland coast by Five-Quarter. Councillors will be getting an invitation from Friend of the Earth to an event on June 10th in Alwick at which Professor Younger, formerly of Newcastle and Glasgow Universities, who now works for Five-Quarter will be speaking.

Councillor Broom asked about the council buying property in the town. The Town Clerk agreed to research the matter and add it to the Finance & Policy Committee agenda in May 2014.

Councillor Farrar reminded everyone of the next Cemetery clean up.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.