



Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday 13th Nov 2014 in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.15pm.

Present Cllrs P Allcroft, S Allcroft, P Broom, G Castle (left the meeting at 8.15pm), D Farrar, W Griddale, M Harrington, P Holt, J Humphries, K Moore, S Patience, R Roberts, A Shilton, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

In attendance Councillor H Cairns; W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Administration Assistant; Chris Friend, Alnwick Food Bank (CAP).

C14/95 Questions from the public
There were no questions from the public.

C14/96 Apologies for absence
Councillors G Mavin and S Mavin.

C14/97 Declarations of Interest
Councillor Cairns and Castle declared a non-pecuniary interest in county council matters; Councillors Griddale and Patience declared a pecuniary interest in item 10. Lease for Bike Track Project; Councillors Castle, Griddale, Roberts and Patience declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Item 13. Draft Neighbourhood Plan and Councillor Griddale declared a pecuniary interest in the Item 16. Financial Matters - Payments.

C14/98 Alnwick Food Bank
Chris Friend gave a presentation about the Alnwick Food Bank. At present around 30 food parcels are given out each month in Alnwick.

Councillors questions:

Councillor Moore asked about sell by dates. Chris explained that packers sort through the goods before distribution.

Councillor Humphries asked if there was a typical applicant. Chris said there was limited data at present but there didn't seem to be any trends.

Councillor Roberts asked what the best way to support the food bank. Chris said by telling people about the food bank. Also they have need for a new distribution centre.

Councillor Roberts also asked what they were desperate for. Chris said there is a 'Short of' list on the website www.alnwickdistrictfoodbank.co.uk but generally it was items such as cereals, long life milk and tinned potatoes. He also said that they would like to offer nappies and toiletries if they had more room.

Councillor Broom thought that perishable food could be cooked, made into soup and frozen. Chris felt this was a good idea but would need freezer space.

Councillor Farrar asked how people got referred to the food bank and whether people were referred from the JobCentre. Chris explained that he goes into the JobCentre once a week but that a lot of people are referring themselves.

Councillor Moore asked if there was a typical content of a food bag. Chris said it usually contains pasta, pasta sauce, tinned steak/ham, soup, tinned fruit and veg.

C14/99 Minutes of previous meeting (October 9th 2014)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2014 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

C14/100 Matters Arising

C14/85 War Memorial Update The Admin Assistant informed councillors that the Work on the memorial was complete and councillors at the Remembrance Day service and procession would agree that the conservators have done a really good job. NCC conservation officer has commented that the bronze work is excellent and the best methods and materials were used to carry out the conservation and restoration work.

Originally estimated to cost £9,558 actual costs were £12,008 with the increase in three areas - additional scaffolding costs; additional costs for extra stonework poulting and additional conservator days to get the work completed in time for Remembrance Day and carry out work on the lantern. This was not part of the original costs and may be offered an additional grant by English Heritage.

During the works, some concern about the stability of the central column was made. A structural engineer has inspected it and will produce a detailed report which may suggest some monitoring is needed which could mean additional work on the column. WMT have been notified and confirmed that a further grant could be available towards the cost of this work.

The War Memorial will be rededicated when we are confident that all works are completed.

The Mayor thanked the Administration Assistant for her work on the War Memorial.

Councillor Symmonds confirmed that he had been kept up to date with the increased costs that the council would understand his sanctioning them on their behalf. He also commented that the conservation work had been well done and that that the Town Council now had a memorial that, whilst reflecting its age, would go on for years as a focal point in the town.

Councillor Moore asked if scaffolding would be needed for any further work on the memorial? The Town Clerk said that the work could probably be carried on a static platform or a cherry picker.

C14/85 Remembrance Sunday 2014 The Town Clerk informed councillors that there had been an excellent turn out on Remembrance Day. Over 500 people were at the church service, over 300 people took part in the procession and more than 700 people were at the restored War Memorial to watch the laying of wreaths.

C14/87 Views on Petition Received from NCC Councillor Castle confirmed that the request for lights at Abbeylands would cost in the region of £15k and was being considered by NCC.

C14/88 New Town Council Office - 27 Fenkle Street Councillor Moore asked if there was a code for the door at the new office location. The Town Clerk advised there wasn't but there was a buzzer system in operation which could be answered from the office. He also advised that the new internal signage had been agreed by NCC but that the outside signage needed planning permission.

C14/99 Speed Monitoring Wires The Administration Assistant gave an update. She had sent the request to NCC for 5 speed monitoring wires to be put in place, as requested by councillors at:

CLAYPORT BANK between Chapel Lands and Shepherds Rest Pub

CLAYPORT BANK between the two pedestrian crossing close to TA Centre

SOUTH ROAD down the hill from The Oaks roundabout

ALNMOUTH ROAD near Ravensmount

SWANSFIELD PARK ROAD on the hill towards Hope House Lane

NCC have confirmed that the monitoring wires will be put in place but that this could take 3 months as one man does the whole of Northumberland. The tubes are normally in place for one week and the data produced will be sent to the Town Council. Results are analysed by NCC and if they meet the criteria required to be considered for additional enforcement measures by the Northumbria Safety Roads Initiative, the data will be forwarded to them by NCC. The criteria is that 85% of vehicles are exceeding the speed limit for the road by 10% + 2 mph.

C14/101 Resignation of Chris Goodfellow and filling the vacancy

The Town Clerk updated the council that further to the resignation of Chris Goodfellow, no request had been made to Northumberland County Council for the vacancy be filled by an election. He confirmed to councillors that the vacancy could now be filled by co-option where any interested individuals are asked to submit in writing, in 500 words, why they would like to become a councillor. He confirmed that there was a new clause in the town council Constitution to cover voting and that the process would be put in place to enable the Council to vote at the December meeting. He also informed them that, as with previous vacancies, he would be available to speak to any interested parties. Councillor Roberts felt that a drop-in session for prospective candidates with a couple of existing councillors would be a useful. Councillor Roberts and Councillor S Allcroft volunteered.

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that Councillor Goodfellow was a council representative and an authorised signatory for the Mechanic's Institute. Councillor Farrar volunteered to be the authorised signatory but that this would be offered to the new councillor on their appointment.

RESOLVED: a) To receive the update from the Town Clerk and use the co-option procedure to seek applications from prospective councillors with a view to making a decision at the next Council meeting; b) To appoint Councillor Farrar as the new representative and authorised signatory for the Mechanic's Institute.

C14/102 Town Council Transparency Code Requirements

At the last Finance & Policy Committee, the Town Clerk gave an update on the range of new measures regarding the openness and transparency of councils' affairs being implemented by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). At that time it was expected that regulations would make the Transparency Code mandatory (subject to Parliamentary approval) and that all local councils with annual income or expenditure greater than £200k would be affected. However, when the regulations were published, they confirmed that the Code will not apply to any town or parish council with annual income or expenditure below £6.5million. Alnwick Town Council is not therefore required to publish information under the Code.

Councillor Symonds commented that when this was discussed at the Finance & Policy Committee he had thought that everything the Town Council did was already very transparent.

RESOLVED: To note the position.

C14/103 Rights of Way Survey

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that they had received a letter in August asking Town and Parish Councils to co-ordinate Rights of Way surveys in their areas. Councillors had been invited to a presentation by Susan Rogers from the Joint Access Forum regarding volunteers surveying the condition of footpaths and bridleways in our parish. Councillors Farrar and Roberts, the Town Clerk attended the meeting along with a small number of other interested parties, including the Ramblers Association and operators of Health Walks. The outcome of the meeting was that there appeared to be some appetite by volunteers (including those present and from those not able to attend) to undertake the survey, but with the Town Council coordinating this. A draft survey form has been prepared by Susan Rogers. If the Council takes the lead it will need to plan the survey, undertake risk assessments and ensure that our insurers are satisfied and that the survey will be covered under the public liability insurance. Initial discussions with our insurers have indicated that volunteers undertaking the survey will be covered under the Town Council's public liability cover, but they did emphasize that risk assessments be undertaken.

Councillor S Allcroft asked if any action would be taken as a result of the survey e.g. overgrown paths. Councillor Roberts commented that Susan Rogers had mentioned that there is an NCC officer responsible for Alnwick and that they would have some practical things that can be checked as part of the surveys.

Councillor Patience asked if the survey would be done more than once as there would be different issues in Winter and Summer. Councillor Farrar said it was the intention to do the survey twice a year. Councillor Patience asked what exactly would be checked. Councillor Roberts confirmed it would be footpaths, bridleways and byways open to all traffic.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the Town Council had any responsibility for footpaths. The Town Clerk confirmed that they didn't.

RESOLVED: To agree that the Town Council should lead and coordinate the survey.

C14/104 Lease for Bike Track Project (east of Allerburn Lea) Councillors Grisdale and Patience left the meeting for this item.

The Town Clerk gave an update that following previous reports to Council, support in principle was given to the Alnwick Bike Track project. Northumberland Estates were prepared to offer the site and had suggested that the Town Council should hold the lease for a rent of £100. It was proposed that the site would be managed by the Gallery Youth Project and that the Town Council enter into a Management and Maintenance arrangement with them. The scheme is now being worked up in detail by Groundwork North East, in readiness for funding and planning applications. The Council has been asked to sign the lease to assist with these applications. He informed councillors that the Planning Application was due in by November 21st followed by the SITA application which will be considered in Feb/Mar 2015.

Councillor Harrington asked if there were any implications for the Town Council if they signed the lease and SITA funding or planning approval were not obtained. The Town Clerk said there was a clause to cover this.

Councillor Swinbank asked how big the site was. The Town Clerk said about 1.5 acres. Councillor Swinbank asked if there would be any insurance liability. The Town Clerk said the Town Council could take a later decision on insuring the jumps etc. but

that our insurers would not cover any accidents as we are not running the site. Councillor Shilton asked what would happen if Gallery Youth pulled out of the project? The Town Clerk confirmed that all the lease clauses could be put into the Management and Maintenance agreement with Gallery Youth.

Councillor Harrington felt it was important to be clear that the Town Council were not covering the insurance.

Councillor Humphries felt it was also important that motorised vehicles did not use the site. The Town Clerk said he would speak to Groundwork North East on the matter.

Councillor Cairns said that if the lease wasn't signed money couldn't be moved forward. She also confirmed that the Police supported the application.

Councillor Farrar asked why there was a rent review after 5 years. The Town Clerk said we could ask Northumberland Estates about no rent review during the term of the lease. Councillor Roberts commented that there was originally a peppercorn rent proposed and that she agreed with Councillor Farrar about no rent review. The Town Clerk confirmed the lease had a 12 month notice to quit on both sides.

RESOLVED: To give delegated powers to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee to agree the terms and conditions of the lease.

C14/105 Feedback on Walkabout with Bob Hodgson NCC

On 23rd October a number of councillors took part in a walkabout with Mr Bob Hodgson, the new Area Manager (North), Neighbourhood Services. The Town Clerk gave an update on the areas visited and the items discussed during the walkabout:

- Swansfield Park – strimming in the play area and trimming of trees.
- Glovers Green Play Area – agreed for the Town Council to remove hard landscaping.
- Bus Station – 2 new bins now in place. NCC have spoken to Arriva about the amount of litter which has since been removed.
- Market Street Public Toilets – work 75% complete at visit but now 99% complete. Breakdown of costs have been received and will be circulated to all councillors. Bins and baby changing facilities still to be put in.
- Community Orchard – spoke about grass cutting and damage to trees.

Councillor Broom commented that there was a lot of litter still at the bus station. Councillor Patience suggested that Arriva were invited to a future Rec & Amenities meeting.

C14/106 Outside bodies - reports by representatives

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that, at the Annual Meeting of the Council, they appoint representatives to a number of outside bodies. Councillors not involved, often receive little feedback on the activities of these organisations so to address this, it was suggested that during the year a brief report from council representatives is tabled at the relevant committee and a written report tabled at the Annual Meeting. The Town Clerk took councillors through his suggested outside bodies split between committees:

Finance & Policy

Alnwick St Paul's Charity	Alnwick Air Cadets
Citizens Advice Bureau	Alnwick & Denwick Relief in Need Charity
Community Action Northumberland	Town Team Partnership
Playhouse Trust	Bailiffgate Museum
Gallery Youth project	MACPI
Local Living	

Recreation & Amenities

Alnwick in Bloom
Alnwick Food Festival

Alnwick Music Festival
Alnwick Sporting Club

He also proposed that NCC Area Committee matters, LMAPS issues, the Mechanic's Institute and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group reported to Full Council. Councillor Farrar asked if some comments could still be treated as confidential. The Town Clerk confirmed that they could, only if the matter was discussed in private.

RESOLVED: To approve the suggested feedback mechanism from outside bodies.

C14/107 Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that the publication of the draft Neighbourhood Plan was highlighted to the Council in August and its content outlined. This has since been out for consultation and over 450 comments have now been received from some 80 individuals and organisations. These comments are currently be analysed by the section leads who are documenting responses to each comment and determining if any changes are necessary to the plan. Full details of the work will be presented at the next Council meeting.

RESOLVED: The Council endorses the content of the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

C14/108 Minutes of Committees

- a) Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee Meeting (9th October 2014) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee meeting held on 9th October 2014 were agreed as a true record.

- b) Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee (16th October 2014) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 16th October 2014 were agreed as a true record.

C14/109 Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action
16th Oct	NALC – Local Gov. Transparency requirements	See agenda item 7
27th Oct	NCC – Precept information due by 2nd Feb 2015	To note
4th Nov	NCC -Meeting re parish operated cemeteries – 10th Nov.	Clerk to attend
7th Nov	NCC – Archaeology in Northumberland	Available from the clerk on request
19th Nov	Core Strategy Unit - notification of dates for consultation in Alnwick. Jan 17th - Northumberland Hall Jan 30th - Library	Available from the clerk on request

RESOLVED: To note the correspondence received.

C14/110 Financial Matters – Payments

The following invoices had been received for payment:

HMRC	£1,927.02	Tax and NI
Wages Account	£5,000.00	
Diamond Business Systems	£54.00	Photocopier quarterly Charge (paid 16/10)
npower	£480.04	Cemetery Chapel (paid 22/10)
BT	£94.41	Broadband charge (paid 22/10)
Royal Mail Group	£4.30	Postage
Border Tyres Ltd	£18.00	Tyre Sealant
CBS World	£47.26	Stationary (includes 0.60p underpayment on previous invoice)
WR Batey	£55.40	Refreshments £55.40 Remembrance Sunday
Northumberland County Council	£450.00	3 month's rent, 27 Fenkle Street
Royal Mail Group	£108 .00	Renewal of Response Services Licence
Bill Grisdale	£123.45	£94.45 train fare (to collect mayors chain) and £29 DVD for neighbourhood plan
Hirst Conservation	£12,008.00	Works to War Memorial
DW Scaffolding	£2,004.00	Scaffolding for War Memorial work
Vaughtons	£1,744.14	Work to Mayor's Chain
ARCH	£38.46	Insurance for unit at St Thomas's
Northumbria in Bloom	£200.00	Northumbria in Bloom entry fee
Notice Board Company	£2,067.60	New notice board for Northumberland Hall
Argyle Planning	£2,610.00	Work on ADNP in July, August and September
Grannies	£75.00	Remembrance Day refreshment costs
Royal British Legion	£38.00	Remembrance Day wreath (includes £19 donation)
Cash	£75.00	Remembrance Day vouchers for helpers (£25 x 3)
Royal Reg. Fusiliers Band	£75.00	Remembrance Day donation to band
TOTAL	£29,297.08	

The following payments are now paid by direct debit and were reported for information

BT	£86.24	Phone bills cemetery and cemetery lodge Paid 28 th October 14
BT	£150.73	Initial connection charge and rental for 27 Fenkle Street (paid 23 rd Oct 14)

A grant application was received from the Alnwick Playhouse Concert Band asking for equipment for their 20th anniversary concert on 15th November 2014. Following consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance and Policy Committee a grant of £350 was agreed.

RESOLVED: To approve and authorise the above payment amounting to £29,297.08 and to note the direct debit payments of £236.97 and the grant of £350.

C14/111 Councillors Issues

a) Councillor Holt - upkeep and parking issues on Bailiffgate, Canongate, The Peth and Northumberland Street. She advised the council that a lot of people who live in these areas walk so it is important that the walkways are kept cleared especially leaves in the drains. Rain is a real issue as it goes down Canongate due to the build up at The Duchess High School/Hulne Park end of the road. She asked if the Town

Council could speak to NCC about this issue. She also raised parking issues in the same area. There is a nursery, school and church in the area and many drivers park on the pavement causing a real problem especially for disability scooters. She also noted that parking in The Peth was still a problem. Councillor Holt requested a site visit by NCC officers. Councillor S Allcroft advised that cones had been put down at the top of The Peth and Councillor Moore confirmed that this was until a more permanent solution was put in place. Councillor Broom felt that the area was really badly lit and that leaves are a real issue.

b) Councillor Farrar - surface water flooding. He advised the council that there were several areas within the town where flood water was a problem and asked if councillors would send any issue areas to him to collate.

RESOLVED: i) To arrange a site visit with the appropriate NCC Officers and Councillors ii) To email surface water locations to Councillor Farrar.

C14/112 Feedback Local Multi-Agency Crime Prevention Initiative Meeting

Councillor Moore advised the council about the process for reporting noisy vehicles. People should record the registration number and dial 101 to report it.

C14/113 Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Farrar advised the council that Alnwick Friends of the Cemetery had won an Outstanding Award from Northumbria in Bloom, Neighbourhood Awards.

Meeting closed at 9.18pm