

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on
Thursday 14th April 2016
in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.15pm**

- Present** Cllrs W Grisdale (Chair), P Broom, G Castle, P Edge, M Harrington, P Holt, J Humphries, G Mavin, S Mavin, K Moore, S Patience, A Shilton, M Swinbank, A Symmonds and H Cairns (County Councillor).
- In attendance** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer and one member of the public.
- C15/178 Questions from the public**
None.
- C15/179 Apologies for absence**
Cllrs. S Allcroft, P Allcroft.
- C15/180 Declarations of Interest**
Councillor Castle declared a non-pecuniary interest in county council matters.
Councillors Swinbank and Edge declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 13 and Councillors Castle, Grisdale and Patience declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 14.
- C15/181 Minutes of the Last meeting**
The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 10th March 2016 were tabled for approval.
RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2016 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.
- C15/182 Matters Arising**
C15/166 (C15/153) HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY The Town Clerk advised councillors that the first meeting with the selected contractor was on April 15th at NCC. Councillor Swinbank asked if anyone from Denwick Parish Council had been invited. The Town Clerk confirmed that they hadn't.
- C15/183 Mayor's Report**
The Mayor's Report is on his blog www.alnwickmayor.wordpress.com. He advised councillors that this was his last meeting as Mayor as he would not be standing for re-election for 2016/17. He thanked everyone for their support during his time in office and would recommend the opportunity to other councillors.
Councillor Castle thanked the Mayor on behalf of all councillors. He felt it had been a good three years for the Mayor and that he was to be congratulated on his non-party bias in which he had undertaken the role.
Councillor Grisdale thanked councillor Castle and said that it had been a sad last month in office with the death of John Stevens. He also reminded councillors about the Alnwick Spring Show on April 23rd and that the closing date for the Mayor's Civic Awards was April 25th with the ceremony on May 4th.
- C15/184 Minutes of Committees**
Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee Meeting (10th March 2016) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee meeting held on 10th March 2016 were agreed as a true record.

Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting (17th February 2016) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee held on 18th February 2016 were agreed as a true record.

Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting (24th March 2016) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee held on 24th March 2016 were agreed as a true record.

C15/185 Council Vacancies

The Town Clerk reminded Councillors that Rachael Roberts and David Farrar had resigned from the Council as they are moving away from the area. Notice of the Vacancies had been displayed and electors had until 5th April to approach Northumberland County Council requesting that the vacancy be filled by an election. No request has been made so the Town Council can now fill the vacancies by co-option. The vacancies run until the council elections in May 2017 with one in Clayport Ward and one in Castle Ward. He reminded councillors that the voting for the co-option would be in Private at the Full Council meeting on May 12th.

As in previous co-options interested individuals are asked to submit in writing why they would like to become a councillor.

The suggestion is that the vacancies are advertised with a deadline for applications of Friday 6th May. The suggested timetable for May 12th was:

Planning Committee 6.00 – 6.45pm

Informal session with potential candidates 6.45 – 7.15pm

Full Council with co-option voting from 7.15pm

It had been agreed by the Planning Committee that its business would be completed by 6.45pm.

RESOLVED: To accept the co-option timings.

C15/186 Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action if any
11th March	Northumberland Estates – notification of start of construction of the phase 2 Distributor Road, Greensfield. Due to be completed end of August	To Note
April	Members of the Public- Request for dog bins a) near Greensfield Farm and b) on the Battlements/Rugley Road. Damage to Dog Bin at footbath on Hope House Lane	New Locations agreed with NCC and damaged bin to be replaced. NCC happy for ATC to put in new bins (1)
3rd April	Jonathan Park – request for Town Council to include new planting proposals	Clerk investigating cost. Awaiting cost from NCC

	at rear at Greenwell Lane in our watering contract with NCC	
6th April	Citizens Advice Northumberland – DAWN Advice CAB in Morpeth now part of Northumbrian CAB	To Note
7th April	NALC - enews	To circulate to Councillors
	CAN News	Available from the Clerk on request
	Joint Area meeting May 9 th @ 6-9pm (Northern Group of Parishes) (2)	To circulate to Councillors

(1) Councillor Swinbank asked if it was obvious that dog mess could be put in the bins. The Town Clerk advised that the new bins had two stickers on them which should make it quite clear.

Councillor G Mavin said that it had been mentioned at NCC that the bins were dual purpose.

Councillor Cairns advised that in Ellingham the dog wardens had put stickers on the bins.

(2) Councillor Patience asked if the joint NCC/ATC meeting would still take place. The Town Clerk advised councillors that Kevin Bartlett had retired and Alex Bennet was leaving NCC.

RESOLVED: To accept the correspondence.

C15/187

Constitution Review

The Town Clerk advised councillors that several changes had been suggested at the Constitution Review meeting:

1. Planning Committee time – this had been discussed at the Planning Committee meeting and it was agreed to stay with the current system of Planning Committees before the Full Council meetings.

RESOLVED: To keep the Planning Committee at 6pm before Full Council meeting with effect from the Annual Meeting of the Council on May.

2. Mayor and Deputy Mayor at all committee meetings – Councillors felt that the constitution should be changed to reflect that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor could rather than should be on all committees.

RESOLVED: To change the Constitution to reflect that it was not a requirement that the Mayor or Deputy Mayor must be on committees with effect from the Annual Meeting of the Council on May.

3. Staffing Sub Committee – Councillor Swinbank asked when the Staffing Sub Committee would be held. The Town Clerk advised this would be put in place by the Finance & Policy Committee as and when needed to deal with any staffing matters including disciplinary issues. Members of this Staffing Sub Committee would be chosen at the first meeting of Finance & Policy in the new council year.

4. Clarification of a quorum - the suggestion was that the constitution should clarify the actual quorum number.

RESOLVED: To update the Constitution accordingly with effect from the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

5. Code of Conduct committee meetings – wording needs to be changed to include reference to section 27 of the Localism Act 2011.
6. Filming / recording of Council meetings – wording needs to be changed to reflect new legislation regarding recording of council meetings.

RESOLVED: To update the Constitution with effect from the Annual Meeting of the Council on May.

7. Councillor allowances – suggested keeping this item under review.

RESOLVED: To keep under review.

C15/188 Draft dates for meetings 2016/17

The Town Clerk advised that the Draft dates for the meetings in 2016/17 had been circulated. He advised councillors that Planning Committees would stay before Full Council meetings and that the dates for Finance & Policy were set to be able to pick up deadline dates for grant applications and budgets.

RESOLVED: To recommend the meeting dates for 2016/17 to the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

C15/189 Annual Audit arrangements

The Town Clerk advised councillors that the annual return and final accounts would be presented to the Full Council at the Annual Meeting on 12th May after which they would be sent to the internal auditor. Feedback from the internal auditor would then be given at the June meeting, prior to submission of the accounts to the external auditor.

He explained that the external auditor had informed the Council of the following key dates for this year's annual return and audit:

Make accounts available to public 13th June to 22 July 2016

Submission of Annual Return By 27th June 2016

Completion of Audit By 30th September 2016

He advised that as the Town Council now had income and expenditure greater than £200,000 an interim review was required and an interim review questionnaire would need to be completed

RESOLVED: To note the update and the audit timetable.

C15/190 Safe Routes to the new High School – recommendations from the Sustainable Transport Working group

Councillor Swinbank gave feedback on the report produced by the Sustainable Transport Working Group. He explained that the priority of the report was for routes to the new High School. He also had advised councillors that the report would go forward to NCC Officers and County Councillors.

Councillor Castle commented that it was a very positive report.

The Town Clerk explained that the report had been considered at the Planning Meeting earlier in the evening.

RESOLVED: To give the report to County Councillors and NCC Officers.

C15/191 Feedback from outside bodies

a) Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Clerk gave an update on the status of the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan. He explained that an independent inspector had reviewed the plan against a set of policies and criteria and made recommendations for changes to the plan. The inspector had also advised that he felt there was need for a hearing and that the plan can go forward to a referendum July 2016.

The inspector was complimentary of the content and the work which had gone into producing the plan, he felt that 63 policies was too many and that some did not meet the basic conditions. He had suggested that 21 policies were deleted.

He explained that the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had met and discussed the inspectors report and felt that many of the policies he had suggested be deleted could be kept as Community Action Plans (CAPs). The Steering Group agreed that 15 policies could be deleted but that 6 needed to be kept.

The inspector's report had been sent to NCC for review. NCC might say that they will go with the inspector's report or that they will go with the changes suggested by the Steering Group. He explained that the feedback from NCC should be available at the next Full Council meeting.

Councillor Patience asked if the CAPs would be part of the referendum. The Town Clerk explained that they wouldn't be. Councillor Patience asked if that meant that the CAPs did not form a legal part of the process. The Town Clerk advised that they weren't.

Councillor Holt commented that she felt the inspector's report was very good.

Councillor Symonds wanted to applaud the people who worked on the Neighbourhood Plan. He felt that the Town Council would support the CAPs.

Councillor Castle said it the Town Council had taken on board the need for a Neighbourhood Plan very early on in the process.

RESOLVED: To accept the update.

C15/192 Financial Matters – a) Payments

The following invoices had been received/payments were due:

PAYEE	TOTAL	VAT	DETAIL
2015/16 Budget			
HMRC	£3,067.48	0	Tax/NI March – Paid 31/3
AJ Yearnshire	£169.85	£28.30	New Ext Tap – cemetery Paid 21/3
Glasdon	£4,481.30	£746.88	4 new seats & 3 new litter bins
Town & Country Tree Surgeons Ltd	£816	£136	Tree Works Cemetery

J Pibworth	£87.73	£14.62	Root Barrier and Dongle for Cemetery computer
St James Church Rooms	£225	0	Room Bookings Jan - March
St James Church Rooms	£20	0	Room Booking 25 th Feb
Thomas Sherriff & Co Ltd	£53.89	£8.98	Mower Blade
Thomas Sherriff & Co Ltd	£602.68	£100.45	Tractor Repairs & service
Sportsworld (NE) Ltd	£4.80	£0.80	Printing on Hi Viz Jackets
James McLean Ltd	£176.38	£29.40	Hi Viz Jackets and Tools
NPD	£1,008	£168	Alnwick Leaflet distribution 2016
Petty Cash	£40.00	£3.33	Petrol (£20, Chimney Sweep £20)
The Mole Company	£86.70	£10.12	Supplies
Trees Please	£317.53	£52.92	Trees for cemetery and Willowburn roundabout
2016/17 Budget			
Wages	£6,000	£0	Transfer to Wages Account
Max Recycle	£1,145.71	£190.95	Cemetery Trade waste contract
Institute of Cem. and Crem Management	£90	£0	Annual Membership
NCC	£392.04	£0	NNDR Cemetery Chapel
NCC	£290.40	£0	NNDR Fenkle Street
NCC	£2,662	£0	NNDR Cemetery
W R Batey	£492.60	£82.10	Printer Cartridges
Arch	£42.48	£0	Insurance
TOTAL	£22,272.57	£1,519.93	

In addition, the Recreation and Amenities Committee agreed to progress the 'Your Welcome Scheme' for public conveniences at the following establishments. Costa, The Queens Head and the Blue Bell (The Alnwick Gate). Under the agreements they will need to receive payments for £250 for the first half of 2016/17.

The following payments are now paid by direct debit and were reported for information:		
BT	£44.84	Cemetery (paid 29 th March)
npower	£164.06	Town Hall clock and Robertson's fountain
BT	£27.49	Fenkle Street (paid 21 st March)
Northumbrian Water	£799.77	Water supply Allotments, Robertson's Fountain and Cemetery (2 bills)

Financial Matters – b) Investments

The Town Clerk advised that the Council has a 1 year Time Deposit with Santander which matured on 26th March 2016 and following discussion with the Chairman of the Finance and Policy Committee the money would be re- reinvested for a further 12 months attracting 1% interest.

RESOLVED: i) To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £22,227.57; ii) To note the direct debit payments of £1,036.16; iii) To endorse the investment decision.

C15/193 Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Swinbank asked if NCC could be invited to a Full Council meeting to talk about the travel plan for the new High School.

Councillor S Mavin was concerned that Miller Homes are building the new school and they were responsible for the schools that have issued in Edinburgh. Councillor Grisdale advised it was not the construction that was the issue in Edinburgh but the fact that no annual testing had been taken up.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm