



Room 5, 27 Fenkle Street, Alnwick
Northumberland NE66 1HW

Your Ref:

Our Ref: FC/4/2017

Dear Councillor

Clerk to Council

Bill Batey

Tel: 01665 714922

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7th April 2017

The next meeting of the Council will be held on **Thursday 13th April 2017** in St James Church Rooms Pottergate Alnwick at **7.15pm**. You are hereby requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

Bill Batey

Clerk to Town Council

Agenda

1. Questions from the Public
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Last Meeting – 9th March 2017
5. Matters Arising
6. Mayor's Report
7. Closure of the Alnwick Middle Schools and Redevelopment of these Sites
8. Minutes of the Committees
 - a) Planning Committee Meeting (9th March 2017)
 - b) Cemetery Committee Meeting (16th March 2017)
 - c) Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting (23rd March 2017)
9. Council Vacancies
10. Correspondence
11. Constitution Review
12. 11th May 2017 Planning Committee Meeting and Draft dates for meetings 2017/18.
13. Annual Audit arrangements
14. Update from:
 - a) Alnwick Town Team
 - b) Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan
15. Financial Matters – a) Payments, b) Investments and c) Bank Reconciliation
16. Any Other Urgent Business

In Private

1. To approve the Private Minutes of the Last Meeting – 9th March 2017
2. Matter Arising
3. Renuit Furniture Project

Declarations of Interest

To receive disclosures of pecuniary interests from Councillors, on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If you become aware, during the course of the meeting, of an interest that has not been disclosed under this item you must immediately disclose it.

Agenda item 6**Mayor's Report**

An update from the Mayor will be given at the meeting.

Agenda item 7**Closure of the Alnwick Middle Schools and redevelopment of the sites**

On 6th March the Town Council were informed by NCC Strategic Estates that the Lindisfarne Middle School

'..will be demolished this summer after the end of the school year. At the current time, there are no plans for the school site following demolition.

Further to the above, you may be aware that the Northumberland Adult Learning Service (NALS) is based at the school. I am therefore working with them to source alternative accommodation.

The Dukes Middle School is leased from Northumberland Estates and as such, notice has been served to terminate the lease'.

It is pointed out by the Town Clerk that there are two policies in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan that deal with these sites; one seeks to protect the community buildings (Adult Learning Centre and Lindisfarne Sports Centre) and the other deals with the proposed redevelopment.

Policy CF1

The following community buildings will be protected and developed as key community facilities and their redevelopment for other uses will be refused unless appropriate alternative provision is made or it can be demonstrated, further to 12 months proactive marketing, that the use is no longer viable: (included in the list are Lindisfarne Adult Education Centre and Lindisfarne Sports Centre)

Policy CF5

When Lindisfarne and Duke's Middle Schools vacate their present sites, the land is allocated for a mix of residential use, community education, open space and recreational uses.

Any proposals for the conversion, extension or alteration of the Duke's School shall respect the architectural and historic character of the listed building and its setting.

On the Lindisfarne site the facilities for community education and community sports should be retained and upgraded for ongoing community use or alternative equivalent or greater provision made within the site. Applications for the development of each of the sites should be accompanied by a master plan and/or a development brief that has emerged further to community engagement and consultation. Neither site will be exclusively developed for residential use. (See also policy ENV3.)

It is not clear to what regard if any has been had to these emerging policies. Councillors may wish to consider the current position to determine how they wish to respond.

Recommendation: Councillors determine an appropriate response.

Agenda item 9 Council Vacancies

Following the election process the new council in May will have 12 councillors and 6 vacancies. Previously Councillors have favoured a co-option procedure in which interested individuals submit in writing why they would like to become a councillor, councillors have also indicated a desire to try to meet candidates prior to making a decision. Councillors should consider if the vacancies should be advertised as soon as possible with for example a deadline of Friday 5th May for letters of interest, to then consider applications at the May meeting. This would enable the successful candidates to participate in Council business from the Annual Meeting. Alternatively more time could be given for applications and decisions taken at the June meeting.

Recommendation: Councillors agree the co-option process to fill the vacancies.

Agenda item 10 Correspondence

The following correspondence has been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action if any
17 th March	NCC – LOVE Northumberland Awards	To note
22 nd March	NCC – Alnwick North MUGA Lights to be inspected and repaired	To note
14 th 21 st 28 th 30 th March	NALC enews	Circulated to Councillors
4 th April	NALC Training Programme 2017	To Circulate to Councillors
6 th April	NCC – reinstatement of Book Banks including Denwick Lane and the Alnwick HWRC	To note

Recommendation: That the correspondence received be considered.

Agenda item 11 Consultation Review

A Constitution Working Group meeting took place in March and a number of issues were considered, these are outlined in the Table below, together with recommendations.

No.	Issue	Recommendation
1.	Scope of Committees and Terms of Reference needs updating	Finance & Policy – add CCTV and Economic Development Recreation & Amenities – add Planting (instead of Alnwick In Bloom), Tourism and Town Signage.

2.	Clarification needed about spokesperson for the council. The Constitution says the main spokesperson is the Mayor.	Whilst the main spokesperson is the Mayor, it may be appropriate for Committee chairs to also undertake the role for their committee remit.
3.	The Timescales for Mayor & Deputy Mayor appointments process will not work in an election year as there is insufficient time between the election and annual meeting	This will not be an issue in 2017, but we will need to modify the procedure in an election year.
4.	Section 30 – (Freedom of Information Act 2000). Section needs broadened to cover Requests for Information.	Retitle 'Requests for Information' and include reference to the Data Protection Act 1998.
5.	Section 33 -Allegations of Breach of the Code of Conduct	Amend the wording of the section to reflect the process which is undertaken by NCC
6.	Outside Bodies Liabilities – these need to be clarified and confirmation given as to coverage by Council insurance.	Officers to confirm
7.	Requirements for estimates. Currently it is a requirement to strive to obtain competitive estimates for purchases under £1,000 and a minimum of two quotes are required between £1,000 and £5,000 and three quotes required over £5,000.	It is not always possible to obtain the required number of quotes. It is recommended that purchases up to £1,000 can proceed on one quote provided it is considered value for money, Between £1,000 and £5,000 officers should strive to obtain a minimum of 2 quotes and should strive to obtain 3 quotes of over £5,000. For items of over £1,000, where only a single quote is received, this should be discussed with the appropriate Committee and approval to proceed obtained.
8.	Working Groups do not meet as often as they should	More frequent meetings are required. For example the working groups established at the first meetings of the committees after the annual meeting, should meet before the second cycle of meetings.

Recommendation: To agree the changes to the Constitution.

Agenda item 11

11th May 2017 Planning Committee meeting and Draft Dates for Full Council and Committee meetings 2017-2018.

Consideration needs to be given to the scheduled Planning Committee meeting on 11th May 2017 (which is immediately before the Annual meeting), this meeting needs to be either rescheduled or cancelled as the new Planning Committee will not have been appointed. A draft list of Council and Committee dates for 2017/18 has also been circulated with the agenda for consideration and then approval at the Annual Meeting of the Council. .

Recommendation: That consideration be given to rescheduling the 11th May 2017 Planning Committee meeting and the proposed meeting dates be considered and finalised and then go forward to the Annual Meeting for approval

Agenda item 12

Annual Audit arrangements

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

Make accounts available to public	12th June to 21 July 2017
Submission of Annual Return	By 26 th June 2016
Completion of Audit	By 30 th September 2016

The annual return and final accounts will be presented to the Council on 11th 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.

As the Council has income and expenditure greater than £200,000 an interim review is required and an interim review questionnaire will need to be completed.

Last year seven recommendations were made by the internal auditor, these are listed below together with the action taken (in red):

1. A Payment Authorisation Block system for invoices should be introduced so it can clearly seen that invoices have been approved and prices and arithmetic have been checked. The block can also indicate where VAT invoices are required. – **Implemented**
2. In line with good practice I recommend that independent checks by members are conducted on a regular basis. Such checks can be on a rota basis by members. **Implemented**
3. A number of payments made in the year are not "invoice driven". In such cases I recommend that the Council introduce a pro forma invoice, which incorporates a payment authorisation block, to clearly state the reason why monies are being released. **Implemented**
4. The Payroll system, whilst effective, is time consuming and involved. The County Council provide a payroll service to parish councils for a nominal sum of £2 per month and I recommend that this option be pursued. **A quote has been requested from NCC, if this is to be implemented the appropriate time to do so, is in April 2017 – the start of the new financial year.**
5. I recommend that at the annual review of Financial Regulations that Clerk and Members review the existing regulations in the light of local conditions of supply and the flexibility needed to operate quickly in the interests of the community. **Undertaken as part of the Constitution review – see agenda item 11.**
6. It was noted that on one occasion in each year the cash held by officers exceeds the insurance limit. I recommend that practice is reviewed or insurance obtained, whichever is the more cost effective. **Procedures reviewed for allotment rent collection which was the one occasion referred to.**

7. I recommend that the Bank Reconciliation Statements produced by the Clerk are reported to the Council together with updated revenue accounts which are reported quarterly. **Reported to Council quarterly in 2016/17**

Recommendation: To note the Annual Audit timetable.

Agenda item 14

Updates from:

a) Alnwick Town Team

The Project and Funding Officer will give feedback on the Town Team activities. A copy of the latest minutes will be circulated prior to the meeting.

b) Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Clerk will update on the Neighbourhood Plan. A referendum date of 15th June 2017 has been confirmed. A representation received by NCC in relation to Willowburn Industrial Site also needs to be outlined to councillors and considered.

Recommendation: To consider the updates

Agenda item 15

Financial Matters – a) Payments

The following invoices have been received for payment (as at 7th April); this list will be updated at the meeting, if necessary.

PAYEE	TOTAL	VAT	DETAIL
2016/17 Budget			
Potts	£1,780	£0	Tourism Leaflet Printing Paid 15/3
D Orange	£350	£0	Tree Survey Cemetery Paid 29/3
HMRC	£3,615.83	£0	Tax/NI March Paid 29/3
St James Church Centre	£225	£0	Room Bookings
Town & Country Tree Surgeons Ltd	£3,738	£623.00	Tree Works Cemetery
Bart Endean	£360	£60	Marker stones for natural burial area
Weasdale Nurseries	£405.67	£67.62	New trees - Cemetery
Weasdale Nurseries	£306.96	£40.89	New trees – Greenwell Lane
Tim Kirton	£8.70	£0	Postage
Bill Grisdale Design	£450	£0	Design work Tourism leaflet
J Pibworth	£10.77	£1.80	Cemetery materials
Streetscape	£764.40	£127.40	Wetpour repair kits
NPD Ltd	£1,560	£260	Tourism Leaflet Distribution
Depothire	£312	£52	Skip - allotments
ABC Cleaning	£620	£0	Cleaning seats, bins, play areas
South Road Tyres	£30	£5	Tyre Repair
2017/18 Budget			
Wages Account	£7,000	£0	
Initial	£1,641.05	£273.51	2 new hand driers, 8 toilet roll holders and 6 soap dispensers for Alnwick toilets

Arch	£10.58*	£0	Insurance, Unit 5 St Thomas Close
Northumbrian Water	£44	£0	Sewerage Charge – Cemetery Lodge
ICCM	£90	0	Annual Subscription
TOTAL	£23,322.96	£1,511.22	

* Indicates LGA 1972 s137 Expenditure (Total £10.58)

The following payments are now paid by direct debit and are reported for information (all 2016/17 expenditure)			
BT	£52.90	£8.82	Cemetery Office Phone
npower	£191.31	£9.11	Town Hall Clock, Robertson's Fountain
BT	£34.20	£5.70	Fenkle Street Office Phone
Northumbrian water	£1,243.95	£0	Water Bills Cemetery (2) Allotments and Robertson's Fountain
NEST	£535.46	£0	Pension contributions

Recommendation: To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £23,322.96 to note the direct debit payments of £2,057.82.

b) Investments

The Council has a 1 year Time Deposit with Santander which matured on 24th March 2017 (£52,415.14). Following discussion with the Chairman of the Finance and Policy Committee this was reinvested for a further 12 months attracting 0.85% interest.

Recommendation: To endorse the investment decision.

c) Bank Reconciliation

The Bank Reconciliation for Quarter 4 2016/17 will be tabled by the Town Clerk

Recommendation: To approve the Bank Reconciliation.