



Council Offices, Greenwell Lane, Alnwick,
Northumberland NE66 1HB

Our Ref: FC/01/2019

Clerk to Council
Bill Batey
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Dear Councillor

4th January 2019

The next meeting of the Council will be held on **Thursday 10th January 2019** 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. Minutes Silence in Memory of former Councillor Ritchie Waddell
2. Questions from the Public
3. Apologies
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Request for a Dispensation
6. Update on Police Matters – Sergeant Sharon Wilmore-Greaves
7. Alnwick Bike Track Project
8. Minutes of the Last Meeting (13th December 2018)
9. Matters Arising
10. Mayor's Report
11. Update on County Council matters
12. Minutes of the Committees
 - a) Planning, Highways & Transport Committee Meeting (13th December 2018)
13. 2018/19 budget update, to agree the 2019/20 budget and to set the 2019/20 Precept.
14. Councillor Matter – Communication (to be raised by Cllr L Wearn).
15. Correspondence
16. Financial Matters - Payments
17. Any Other Urgent Business

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 5**Request for a Dispensation**

Guidance from Northumberland County Council relating to declarations of interest when setting the budget and precept, is that all councillors should apply in writing for a dispensation to the Council to enable them to be involved and vote. At the start of the meeting the clerk will circulate a form and ask councillors present to sign it (this covers the application in writing). Under this agenda item we will acknowledge the receipt of the requests for dispensations and will then vote on granting the dispensation.

Recommendation: That the Council grants a dispensation to all Councillors to enable them to participate in full decisions relating to the setting of the 2019/20 Budget and Precept.

Agenda item 6**Update on Police Matters**

Sergeant Sharon Wilmore-Greaves will attend the meeting and update Councillors on police matters in the Town.

Agenda item 7**Alnwick Bike Track Project**

Representatives from Gallery Youth will be in attendance and they will give an update on the project. The Clerk will outline the budget position; the majority of expenditure has now been incurred (there are some payments on this agenda) and as a contract condition, a project retention is being held until February. The full grant payments due to the Council of £108,000 are likely to have been received by this meeting. The Town Council previously agreed to make up to £10,000 available to the project if required to assist its completion; at the time of this decision, it was not clear if Sport England would support the project with a grant. Sport England did subsequently commitment £20,000, but as a grant condition required the Town Council to put money into a sinking fund for future repairs and maintenance. The actual figure was unspecified and the Council agreed to revisit this at the end of the project when full expenditure and income was known. The budget analysis and breakdown which will be provided by the Clerk at the meeting, will show the project costs. Councillors can then consider the level of funding to be allocated to the repairs and maintenance sinking fund and how this should be managed.

Recommendation: That Councillors note the Bike Track Project update and agree the allocation to and operation of, the repairs and maintenance sinking fund.

Agenda item 10**Mayor's Report**

An update on the Mayor's diary will be given at the meeting.

Agenda item 11**Update on County Council matters**

Councillors Castle and Moore will update the Town Council on County Council matters.

Recommendation: To note the update.

Agenda item 13**2018/19 budget update, to agree the 2019/20 budget and to set the 2019/20 Precept**

A budget update for 2018/19 will be given at the meeting by the Clerk.

Recommendation: a) To note the 2018/19 budget position

Each of the Council's committees has approved a recommended budget for 2019/20, these are as follows:

Committee	Net Expenditure
Cemetery	£19,300
Recreation & Amenities	£110,155
Finance & Policy	£177,130
TOTAL	£306,585

Some of the main changes to the proposed committee budgets for 2019/19 are as follows:

- The Cemetery budget includes a prediction of £2,000 less income. This reduced figure is likely to be higher than the actual 2018/19 income.
- The Recreation and Amenities Committee are budgeting for an increased budget towards events, the increase is £4,145 and the majority of this, will be given as grants to outside bodies. A two year replacement programme for the Town Centre planters was agreed last year and in this, the second year, the proposed expenditure is £3,720. £3,500 is also budgeted for the painting of Town Centre lighting columns.
- Within the Finance & Policy Committee budget an additional £5,000 is earmarked for grants to local organisations (making £30,000 available). Office accommodation costs have increased following the move to Greenwell Lane the 19/20 budget being £11,800. The Neighbourhood Plan/Council priorities budget is increased by £10,000 to £20,000 and after the estimated carry forward from 2018/19 is added, the overall budget is likely to be £34,750 for 2019/20. **From this budget it is recommended that £12,000 is allocated for the appointment a part-time operative (2.5 days a week) to work alongside the current town handyperson.**

With these changes, the overall recommended budget for 2019/20 is therefore **£306,585**. The Clerk will update on any changes to this figure at the meeting, and the recommendation may need to be amended, if appropriate.

Recommendation: b) To approve the 2019/20 budget of £306,585.

Having agreed the budget the Council must then set the precept. At the Finance and Policy Committee on 6th December 2018, the Committee considered the extent to which reserves should be used to support the 2019/20 budget. The Committee has recommended reserves, which are currently in line with the reserves policy, are not used to reduce the precept in 2019/20.

The Finance and Policy Committee also reviewed the Town Council precept for 2018/19 in comparison to other town councils in Northumberland. In 2018/19 the average Town Council precept for a Band D dwelling was £106.34, compared to £105.29 for Alnwick. The highest in the northern area was Morpeth at £115.65, whilst the overall highest was Newbiggin at £158.77.

A precept of £306,585 would be an increase of £19,410. The Town Council has been informed of the draft 2019/20 Council Tax Base which is 2789.49 Band D equivalent dwellings (an increase of 62.10). The Council Tax Base will be approved in January by NCC. With this Council Tax Base, the Town Council precept will increase to £109.91 for a Band D dwelling, which equates to an annual increase of £4.62 (8.9p per week) and is a 4.4% increase. The new Alnwick Band D town council precept is likely to be around, or slightly higher than the Northumberland Town Council average.

Recommendation: To set a precept for 2019/20 of £306,585.

Agenda item 15 Correspondence

The following correspondence has been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action if any
Dec/Jan	Various thank you letters from grant recipients	To note
13 th Dec	Northumberland Estates – Proposed Rent increase Ratten Row allotments from March 2020	Officers in discussion with NE
17 th Dec	Lesbury Parish Council – details of Consultation arrangements for their Neighbourhood Plan	Available from the Clerk
19 th Dec	NALC enews	Available from the Clerk

Recommendation: That the correspondence received be considered.

Agenda item 16 Financial Matters - Payments

The following payments are due (as at 4th January); this list will be updated at the meeting, if necessary.

PAYEE	TOTAL PAYABLE	VAT ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
Northumberland County Council	£2,343.60	£390.60	3 additional grass cuts
Northumberland County Council	£433.40	£72.23	Stage Costs Xmas Lights/Lantern Parade
Northumberland County Council	£123.66	£20.61	Tree clearance Bullfield Orchard.

James N McLean	£9,000	£1,500	Interim Payment – new allotment water supply Ratten Row
WL Straughan	£7,599.04	£1,266.51	Bike Track -Planting
W R Batey	£174.37	£9.56	£37.37 key cabinet for office, £137 Planning Fee Bike Track Variation
Northumberland County Council	£124.00*	£0	Northumberland Hall – Remembrance Sunday
Greenfingers Services Ltd	£193.20	£32.20	Bike Track Fence Wire
Information Commissioner	£40.00	£0	Data Protection Registration Fee
Petty Cash	£100.00	£16.67	Fuel - van
TOTAL	£20,131.27	£3,308.38	

*Indicates Local Government Act 1972 s137 Expenditure (£124)

The following payments are now paid by direct debit and are reported for information			
BT	£268.93	£44.62	Phone Bill Fenkle St. paid 22nd Dec – includes connection charge for new office
BT	£28.99	£4.83	Phone Bill Cemetery paid 28 th Dec
npower	£55.51	£2.64	Town Hall Clock paid 10 th Jan
British Gas	£22.55	£0	Gas HomeCare policy – Cemetery Lodge Paid 15/12 £19.97)
NEST	£602.68	£0	Employer pension scheme contributions for Dec.
O Brien	£89.18	£14.86	Trade Waste - Cemetery (30 th Jan)

Recommendation: To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £20,131.27 and to note the direct debit payments of £1,067.84.