

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on
Thursday 9th August 2018
in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.15pm**

Present Cllrs A Symmonds, S Allcroft, P Edge, M Harrington, B Grisdale, S Patience, R Moore, M Swinbank, M Harrington, L Wood-Mitchell, G Mavin, G Watson, G Castle and L Wearn.

In attendance W Batey, Town Clerk & Chief Officer; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer.

C18/51 The Mayor welcomed new Town Councillor Linda Wood-Mitchell to the meeting. The Town Clerk advised that Councillor Wood-Mitchell had indicated that she would like to be on the Recreation and Amenities and Planning committees.

RESOLVED: Councillor Linda Wood-Mitchell be elected to the Planning, Transport & Highways and Recreation & Amenities Committees.

C18/52 **Questions from the public**
None.

C18/53 **Apologies for absence**
Councillors Aynsley, Broom, Humphries and Westendarp.

C18/54 **Declarations of Interest**
Councillor Grisdale and Councillor Patience declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11b - Alnwick Bike Track.

C18/55 **Mayor's Report**
Councillor Symmonds reported the main events since the last meeting:
Alnwick in Bloom's presentations of paintings by young people which had been very enjoyable. The Mayor had formally welcomed the Britain in Bloom judges on July 13th. The Assistant to the Town Clerk had worked tirelessly on the day.

A meeting of the Sakura Japanese Cherry Trees group which is looking to plant 100 cherry trees, gifted by the Japanese private sector, in spectacular displays at suitable sites in Alnwick, in 2020. The Mayor and the Project & Funding Officer have been tasked with looking at where the trees could be planted. Stakeholders include the Town Team, NCC, and The Alnwick Garden. The Mayor suggests that this could foster business and cultural links with Japan.

C18/56 **Minutes of the Last meeting (12th July 2018)**
The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 12th July 2018 were tabled for approval with one amendment from Councillor Swinbank which was agreed.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2018 were agreed as a true record.

C18/57 **Matters Arising**
C18/44(d) (ii) The Town Clerk reported he had had an email exchange with the Secretary of State's office and was still awaiting final confirmation of the borrowing approval for the Alnwick Town Junior FC scheme.

C18/58 **Presentation on 'Loving Alnwick' by Cllr Linda Wood-Mitchell**
Councillor Wood-Mitchell explained that Loving Alnwick is very much a new group, a not-for-profit community group which aims to enhance the neighbourhood; it was

inspired by Love Northumberland. It brings another opportunity for the community to put ideas on the table. It works very much alongside the Chamber of Trade from where many of Loving Alnwick's volunteers are drawn. It expects to adopt its constitution at its meeting the following Tuesday at the White Swan Hotel. Loving Alnwick has its own bank account.

It has a committee of three, which it wishes to increase.

Its constitution seeks to empower local communities, strengthen capacity and work with councils and other bodies, for the better.

Current Loving Alnwick projects include those for environmental improvements and to benefit the young and the lonely. It has held initial discussions with Friends of the Earth over The Oaks Roundabout where the grass is full of weeds and could be improved: Loving Alnwick has applied for funding to improve the roundabout's planting and also the green space around that entrance into Alnwick.

Loving Alnwick has a website, www.lovingalnwick@btuk, and an email address; lovingalnwick@gmail.com and has produced its first newsletter.

Loving Alnwick was awarded Runner-Up at the Love Northumberland awards and so has £100 in the bank.

Loving Alnwick is heavily involved in Borderlands and has produced a Borderlands Report, which is on the Loving Alnwick website. It is part of a Working Group for Borderlands and they would like to invite two ATC representatives onto that Working Group.

Councillor comments / questions:

Councillor Watson asked if Loving Alnwick were liaising with Alnwick in Bloom. Councillor Wood-Mitchell said that Loving Alnwick is in regular contact with Alnwick in Bloom and looking to work at other sites around the town.

Councillor Castle expressed concern over the "chain of command" between Loving Alnwick and the key decision-making bodies in the town and the possible "dilution of process" and asked how Loving Alnwick will make decisions given that its membership is voluntary and decisions need to be agreed. Alnwick Forum (the Masterplanning group) is the decision-making body to get things done and needs clarity on how Loving Alnwick will link to it. Also, Alnwick Town Council is ultimately the democratic, decision-making body in Alnwick. Councillor Wood-Mitchell said that she is involved in Loving Alnwick, the Chamber of Trade and now Alnwick Town Council so she forms a link between those organisations. Loving Alnwick is very much a community group with ideas on things important to them; where those ideas go depends on the individual project, for example a project aimed at young people would be taken to appropriate other organisations; there is no intention to undermine Alnwick Forum.

Councillor Wearn expressed concern over raising expectations which cannot be met as there may be wonderful ideas but no financial resource to deliver. Councillor Wood-Mitchell said that she has expressed that things cannot happen without funding but the alternative is not to give people the opportunity.

Councillor Patience also expressed concerns about raising expectations and mentioned that the Loving Alnwick Newsletter had not mentioned Friends of the Earth in its article about the roundabout planting, causing some confusion.

Councillor Edge sought clarity over Loving Alnwick's involvement in Borderlands. Councillor Wood-Mitchell said that Loving Alnwick had heard about an NCC consultation quite by accident and they thought that NCC went away from the consultation event thinking that Alnwick did not have any ideas for Borderlands and this in turn led to

Loving Alnwick arranging their forum meeting at Alnwick Garden along with The Garden and the Chamber of Trade. The Mayor explained that due to an administrative oversight at NCC the Town Council had not been invited to a meeting for parish and town councils at which the Borderlands programme had been an agenda item. However, Alnwick Town Council has now taken steps to ensure that there is a place for the Town Council in Borderlands through a democratic process; an NCC representative will present to the next meeting of the full Town Council, who will explain fully how parish and town councils can be involved. The Mayor said that some the proposals evolving from the Garden meeting in May were largely revenue-heavy and may not come to light through Borderlands support alone, which is for capital funding only.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Wood-Mitchell for her presentation.

C18/59 Local Transport Plan Priorities 2019-20

The Mayor reported that ATC will approve the LTP proposals at the next Town Council meeting on 13th September; there will be a Working Group meeting held prior to this, on the evening of Tuesday 4th September at 7pm at the Mechanics' Institute. All interested councillors are invited to attend.

C18/60 Response to the Northumberland Local Plan Consultation

A draft report from ATC commenting on relevant issues in the Local Plan Consultation had previously been circulated to councillors and the Projects and Funding Officer presented a summary of the salient points: It was noted that the Draft Local Plan is well aligned to the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Swinbank advised that this had been considered in the Planning Committee meeting earlier in the evening; he proposed adding three further comments to the Town Council's official response to the consultation:

- There needs to be an Alnwick settlement boundary which puts down a marker; the number of new dwellings in the town could exceed the 1100 proposed in the Local Plan Consultation document if such a boundary is not secured. The Town Council should seek discussions with NCC about the benefits of having a settlement boundary around Alnwick.
- There needs to be a requirement that all new housing estates must have routes within them to accommodate a bus route without the need for reversing of a bus; Councillor Mavin suggested that this form an amendment to Local Plan policy STP7 as bus companies had been keen to provide town bus services but cannot if this would require the potentially dangerous reversing of buses in housing estates. Councillor Mavin suggested that developments of over 50 houses must include through roads to enable bus services.
- That the County Council should be pushed to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy. Under the legislation, 25% of any Community Infrastructure Levy spend would be locally determined – this will give the Town Council more say and influence.

Councillor Swinbank requested support for these proposals. Also, in the Planning Committee meeting that evening, Councillor Wearn had proposed that an additional policy suggestion should be forwarded for the Housing section of the Local Plan to state that; "Any Development must take account of the Housing Needs Assessment of the Local Area."

RESOLVED: To agree the response to the draft Northumberland Local Plan, with the amendments identified above.

C18/61

Response to the Dept. Of Transport Consultation on the Cross-Country Rail Service

A draft response to the Dept. Of Transport Consultation on the Cross-Country Rail Service had been circulated prior to the meeting and the Projects and Funding Officer explained the salient points. Councillor Watson, a former employee of the railways, had also circulated his response to the proposals to all councillors.

Councillors expressed their concern and incredulity at the proposal contained within the consultation document to solve overcrowding on trains by no longer stopping for passengers at intermediate stations such as Alnmouth. Such proposals contrasted sharply with the huge levels of investment on Crossrail and on HS2, while 20% of people in Northumberland did not have access to a car.

RESOLVED: To agree the response to the Dept. Of Transport Consultation on the Cross-Country Rail Service.

It was also agreed that the Town Council will issue a media release expressing its outrage at the Department of Transport's suggestion that Cross-Country trains should no longer call at intermediate stations, such as Alnmouth. The Mayor thanked Councillor Watson for his excellent response.

C18/62

Updates

a) Willowburn Planning Inquiry

The Town Clerk reported that the Inquiry had been adjourned at lunchtime on July 24th following publication of the new NPPF. The Inspector had requested that written exchanges of the parties' views on the new NPPF should be received by him by Friday, 17th August and final submissions by August 31st. The result of the Inquiry is expected within 2 to 3 months after that. It would appear that the new NPPF gives greater strength to Neighbourhood Plans.

As the Inquiry lasted five days rather than six, the Council had saved some money but this would be partially offset by the need for Peter Biggers to review the new NPPF.

b) Alnwick Bike Track

Councillors Grisdale and Patience left the meeting.

The Town Clerk reported that the Bike Track was on course for completion tomorrow, August 10th and, following a period for the surfaces to consolidate, would open for use on Friday August 24th. An official opening will be held in September. Snagging points had been referred by Groundwork to the contractor.

The Recreation and Amenities Committee had agreed that the Town Council would fund refuse and litter bins, seats and temporary and permanent signage, all of which must be in place before the opening on 24th August.

The Town Council has a lease on the site and the Gallery Youth Project will manage it. Gallery Youth's insurers have said they cannot insure the Bike Track because Gallery Youth is not the leaseholder. Following discussions with The Mayor ATC has taken out the necessary public liability insurance at a cost of £120.

There will be the need for frequent inspections of the site plus an annual inspection by RoSPA. More frequent inspections will probably be needed in the summer months. Gallery Youth accept that this is their responsibility but they don't have the staff and have asked for ATC to do this for which they will look to raise funding.

The grassed area has been seeded and there is budget provision for re-seeding by the contractor, if necessary

Grass cutting will be needed from next spring.

Councillor Watson thought this an excellent facility which the Council should support as much as it can. Councillor Watson also suggested that any re-seeding should include wildflower seeds.

Councillor Castle expressed his gratitude to the Town Council because this is a town facility and suggested that the Town Council pay for insurance, inspection staff costs and grass cutting for the first year and review it later, when there will probably be a "Friends Group" formed who can assist.

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council did put a budget together of up to £10,000, with some going towards a sinking fund; also very little of the contract contingency has been used. The Town Council has also asked for a s106 contribution for future management and maintenance of the site from the Windy Edge planning application. The Town Clerk will bring a report to the Council once the final costs have been determined.

Gallery Youth are doing sessions and planning for events and sessional work at the site, but they will not have a 24/7 presence at the Bike track.

RESOLVED: To agree the Town Council will fund the Bike Track inspection and maintenance costs for the first year, if necessary.

Councillors Grisdale and Patience re-joined the meeting.

c) Alnwick Business Forum

The Projects and Funding Officer reported that the next meeting of the ATC Business Forum will be held at the St. James centre on Monday August 20th when the local MP, Mrs. Ann-Marie Trevelyan, will report to Alnwick businesses on progress with Brexit. Registration is from 5.30 for a 6pm start proper.

RESOLVED: To receive the update.

C18/63 Update from the County Councillors

Local Transport Plan: Councillor Moore's and Councillor Castle's Members' Improvement Schemes could help fund repairs to the pedestrian crossings across the cobbles. Councillor Moore requested the opinions of Town Councillors before deciding.

Councillor Moore provided details of his NCC Members' Scheme Awards so far.

The next NCC Local Area Committee will be held in Alnwick from 6pm on 20th September 2018. The next NCC Planning Committee will be held on 21st August from 3pm and would be open to the public.

C18/64 Minutes of Committees

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting (12th July 2018) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12th July 2018 were agreed as a true record.

Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting (19th July 2018) were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 19th July 2018 were agreed as a true record.

C18/65**Correspondence**

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action
17 & 24 July	NALC news	Circulated
20 July	Northumberland Age UK - looking for assistance	Available from the Clerk
25 July	Resident – parking on Greenwell Road, beyond the car parks	Referred to NCC
26 July	NCC – Joint meetings with parishes - North area 18 th Oct.	Item for agenda to be submitted to the Clerk
26 July	NCC – Parking consultations – St James Estate and Bailiffgate	Considered by Planning Committee
26 July	NCC – Annual Parish Conference – Thurs 5 th Oct. 4pm – 6pm. (2 places)	Mayor & Clerk to attend

RESOLVED: To receive the correspondence.

C18/66**Financial Matters****a) Payments**

The following invoices had been received/payments were due:

PAYEE	TOTAL	VAT	DETAIL
NCC	£10,592.92	£4.17	Payroll June (paid 18/7)
Adam Napier Partnership	£1,386.00	£231.00	Robertson's Fountain Survey
Alnwick & Amble Pest Control	£65.00	£0	Pest Control Treatment Cemetery
CBS World	£35.64	£5.94	Photocopying Willowburn Inquiry
St James's Church Centre	£90.00*	£0	Room Booking – Civic Awards
Janet Pibworth	£53.77	£8.94	Cemetery Signs and Plants
Burnetts Solicitors	£13,200.00	£2,200.00	Legal Costs Willowburn Inquiry
W L Straughan	£37,346.43	£6,224.40	Alnwick Bike Track Off-Site works
Local Living	£612.50	£0	Willowburn Unit Rental Q1 (paid 18/7)
Bari Tea	£100.00*	£0	Armed Forces Week refreshments
Streetscape Ltd	£1,044.00	£174.00	Wet Pour repair kits
James McLean	£213.96	£35.66	Materials
Northumberland Estates	£60*	£10	Armed Forces Refreshments
DVLA	£250	£0	Van Tax
Zurich Municipal	£120.61	£0	Insurance – Bike Track

Marmax	£1,196.40	£199.40	Picnic Benches – Bike Track
Chamber of Trade	£222.82	£2.75	Contribution to Food Leaflet reprint (Town Team Budget)
TOTAL	£66,590.05	£9,096.26	

* Indicates LGA 1972 s137 Expenditure (Total £250).

The following invoices were paid by direct debit & were reported for information:			
British Gas	£19.97	£0	Cemetery Lodge - service contract
npower	£48.77	£2.32	Cemetery Store (27/7)
BT	£59.54	£9.92	Phone Bill – Cemetery Lodge (27/7)
BT	£38.11	£6.35	Phone Bill – Fenkle Street (22/7)
Npower	£249.23	£11.87	Cemetery Chapel (27/7)
NEST	£595.05	£0	Employee & Employer Pension contributions July

RESOLVED: To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £66,590.05 and to note the direct debit payments of £1,010.67.

b) Bank reconciliation

The Town Clerk presented the Bank Reconciliation up to July 2018. The Town Clerk confirmed that he had not yet contacted those who had long standing unrepresented cheques.

RESOLVED: To approve the Bank Reconciliation for June and July 2018.

C18/67 Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Mavin reported that the Clayport Bank speed sign does not appear to have worked for some weeks. The Town Clerk to check and investigate whether the sign is still under guarantee and arrange for repair to be effected.

The public meeting closed at 9.22pm.

C18/68 PRIVATE AGENDA ITEMS

Exclusion of the Public and Press

The following resolution was moved and seconded, to exclude the public and press.

“That pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that if members of the public were present during the discussion of this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100 1 and paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act”. The items discussed were:

1. Co-option of new councillor for the Castle Ward

The Town Clerk reported that no applications or enquiries have been received for co-option so the vacancy will be re-advertised for the September meeting.