

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.15pm**

- Present** Cllrs A Symmonds (Item 11 onwards plus Item 6. Mayor's report), S Allcroft, P Edge, B Grisdale, M Harrington, G Mavin, S Patience, M Swinbank, L Wood-Mitchell, A Waton, G Watson, L Wearn (Chair for Items 1 through 10).
- In attendance** W R Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer.
- C18/124 Questions from the public**  
None.
- C18/125 Apologies for absence**  
Councillors Aynsley, Broom, Castle, Humphries, Moore and Westendarp.
- C18/126 Declarations of Interest**  
None.
- C18/127 Minutes of the Last meeting (8<sup>th</sup> November 2018)**  
The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were tabled for approval.  
**RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were agreed as a true record.**
- C18/128 Matters Arising**  
18/114 d) Councillor Patience asked if a bell could be considered for the reception at Greenwell Lane directly linked to the new office.  
18/115 The Town Clerk advised he would circulate possible dates for the Away Day.
- C18/129 Mayor's Report**  
Councillor Symmonds reported the main events attended since the last meeting:  
November 9<sup>th</sup> – Service of Remembrance and unveiling of poppies at St Paul's School.  
November 11<sup>th</sup> – Remembrance Sunday at St Paul's Church. Very busy with over 600 people in church and almost 1,000 people at the War Memorial. He thanked the councillors who supported the event.  
November 17<sup>th</sup> – Alnwick Forum event in Northumberland Hall.  
November 23<sup>rd</sup> – Christmas Lights Switch on. Once again it is a wonderful display around the town and we thank the Christmas lights team for that.  
November 28<sup>th</sup> – Stallholder and Afternoon tea at County Hall on the invitation of the Civic Head.  
December 7<sup>th</sup> – NCC Civic Head Christmas Carol Service at St Lawrence's Church in Warkworth.  
December 12<sup>th</sup> – Civic Carol Service at St Michael's Church. He thanked those councillors who attended the event. Once again the highlight was the school children from St Paul's school who performed.  
December 13<sup>th</sup> – Rotary Christmas Lunch at which the Town Clerk became a Paul Harris Fellow – the highest Rotary award an individual can receive.

**C18/130 Feedback on County Council matters**

No County Councillors were able to attend so Councillor Moore had advised that he would do an update which would be circulated.

**RESOLVED: To circulate an update from Councillor Moore to all councillors.**

**C18/131 Filling the Vacancy on Finance & Policy Committee**

The Town Clerk advised that the resignation of Councillor Aynsley from the Finance & Policy Committee meant that there was now a vacancy on that committee. He asked if any councillors were interested in the vacancy. Councillor Waton advised that he was interested in being considered for the vacancy.

**RESOLVED: To Councillor Waton be appointed to the Finance & Policy Committee.**

**C18/132 Outside Body Representative – Investing in Alnwick**

The Town Clerk advised that at present Councillor Moore and the Project & Funding Officer attended the Investing in Alnwick meetings. Councillor Moore had advised that he felt that there was a conflict of interest with his NCC work and wished to step down. The Town Clerk advised that he would put together a briefing paper, with input from Councillor Wood-Mitchell, which he would circulate to all councillors so everyone could have the opportunity to be considered.

**RESOLVED: To email a briefing paper to all councillors on Investing in Alnwick group.**

**C18/133 Alnwick Forum Consultation Event Feedback**

The Town Clerk advised that the Consultation event on November 17<sup>th</sup> had been well attended. He advised that a total of 195 questionnaires had been completed to date, with 119 completed on the day. He gave a summary of some of the comments:

What people want in Alnwick

- a new bus station
- more shops
- less charity shops
- more sports facilities

What people don't like

- empty shops
- lack of parking
- speeding cars
- the state of the bus station

What people wanted to see done to the old DCHS site in Howling Lane

- more car parking
- more housing
- more green space

What people wanted to see done to the old Lindisfarne School site

- a community hub/adult education centre
- sports facilities and green space
- a drop-in centre
- some more housing
- protection of green space

What safety improvements people wanted to see in Narrowgate

- strong support for pedestrianisation

People's Top priorities

town centre improvements  
more green spaces  
improved sports and leisure facilities

He advised that a further consultation event was planned on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019 to give feedback from the 1<sup>st</sup> consultation event.

Councillor Patience reported that feedback was being collected from DCHS.

**RESOLVED: To note the interim feedback.**

**C18/134 Update on Vacant Properties in the Town**

The Project & Funding Officer gave an update, as at December 2018, on the vacant shops in the town centre.

He reported that since the first survey of vacant town centre business properties in July 2018, 9 premises had been vacated but 6 of those had been quickly re-let. Another building which was vacated two years ago is currently being converted for re-use. Landlords have advised that a further two or three units are expected to be occupied early in 2019.

Councillor Watson asked why the survey had been undertaken if the Town Council had no influence on the situation. He felt the outcomes of the survey should be publicised. The Project & Funding Officer advised that the Town Council directed enquiries they received about shops to the relevant agents.

Councillor Wearn felt the survey was a good way of getting an independent measure of the situation in the town.

Councillor Symmonds said it was important to produce facts about the situation.

Councillor Harrington reported that there were no vacant industrial units available in Alnwick which was positive news.

Councillor Patience asked if there was any data about the vacant residential units above some of the vacant shops. The Project & Funding Officer advised that this had not been thoroughly investigated.

The Town Clerk reported that the new owner of the old NCC Depot site planned to demolish the existing buildings and build starter units.

**RESOLVED: To note the update.**

**C18/135 Councillor Matter – Councillor Swinbank – Proposed Motion on Climate Change**

Councillor Swinbank had circulated a paper on Climate Change and his thoughts on what the Town Council could do. He advised that Alnwick was already being affected with more flooding, heatwaves and high winds.

He reported that in 2015 there had been an agreement signed in Paris by Governments committing to set a target for warming at 1.5°C.

He gave some examples of actions the Town Council could undertake:

CEMETERY - looking at the way fuel is used and the way the buildings are heated.

MEETINGS – could have paperless meetings.

EDUCATING PEOPLE – give sustainability advice to local businesses; influence other people in the town to undertake actions; give grants to businesses.

### Councillor comments / questions

Councillor Allcroft thought that the idea was good but that the Town Council should start small. She also felt that the Town Council should develop an Environmental Policy.

Councillor Edge said it was a massive issue and was relevant to Alnwick. He felt the timescales Councillor Swinbank had suggested were reasonable.

Councillor Waton felt the aspiration should be adopted but was unclear what Carbon Neutral actually meant. He felt that a carbon audit should be undertaken first to see where the Town Council are currently. He was unsure how the Town Council would measure who received a grant.

Councillor Swinbank explained that any actions need to be supported and undertaken by the current Town Council as it was not possible to which commit future Town Councils to any actions.

**RESOLVED: Alnwick Town Council aims to become carbon neutral by 2031 and put in place mechanisms to undertake a carbon audit after which the Council considers more detailed resolutions.**

### **C18/136 Minutes of Committees**

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting (8<sup>th</sup> November 2018) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were agreed as a true record.**

Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting (15<sup>th</sup> November 2018) including a recommendation of Cemetery Fees for 2019/20 were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were agreed as a true record including the Cemetery fees for 2019/20.**

Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting (22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018) including a recommendation of Allotment Rents for 2019/20 were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 were agreed as a true record including the Allotment Rents for 2019/20.**

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee Meeting (6<sup>th</sup> December 2018) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were agreed as a true record.**

### **C18/137 Correspondence**

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action
26/11	CAN news	Circulated
28/11	NALC news	Circulated
4/12	Resident – condition of the cobbles	To discuss (ii)
5/12	NCC – consultation on charges for events	To discuss (i)

- (i) The Town Clerk advised that the charges would be made for events to cover road closure costs as well as litter picking, extra bins, toilet opening.

Councillor Swinbank felt that extra charges could have a negative impact on local events.

Councillor Wearn agreed and thought NCC should support local events.

Councillor Mavin thought it was strange that having won a Gold Tourism Award Northumberland County Council are not supporting local events which tourists came to see.

Councillor Patience felt the Town Council should object to the proposal.

- (ii) The Town Clerk reported that a resident had complained about the standard of repair of the cobbles and the use of tarmac.

Councillor Watson reported that the cobbles were in an awful condition.

Councillor Edge reported that some areas were so bad and were still not being repaired properly.

**RESOLVED: To receive the correspondence.**

## **C18/138 Financial Matters**

### **a) Payments**

The following invoices had been received/payments were due:

<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>TOTAL PAYABLE</b>	<b>VAT ELEMENT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Viking	£77.95	£12.99	Stationery (paid)
Swarco	£362.66	360.44	Speed sign replacement solar panel (paid)
Blackshaws	£319 .00	£53.17	Van Service (paid 27/11)
Petty Cash	£100.00	£16.67	Fuel for Van (paid
Royal Mail Group	£116.40	£19.40	Response Service Licence
Northumberland County Council	£4,485.21	£0.00	Greenwell Lane Lease 29th Oct - 24th March
W R Batey	£285.04	£30.11	Remembrance Sunday refreshments, £27.10, Postage £100.44, Gifts - Remembrance Sunday £63, Alnwick Forum refreshments £39.60, photo frames for civic awards £54.90
Grannies	£50.00	£0.00	Refreshments Business Forum
Fife Plant Hire	£221.40	£36.90	Flags/Cement/Sand
Rix Petroleum	£671.48	£31.98	Gas oil
Team Valley Web Design	£600.00	£100.00	Website Hosting
Electratest (UK) Ltd	£108.00	£18.00	PAT testing at Cemetery & Office
Diamond Group	£7.01	£1.17	Printing Nov 18
James McLean	£267.67	£40.28	Materials and Safety Boots
Bill Grisdale Design	£259.00	£0.00	Alnwick forum Display Boards
Playdale	£393.95	£65.66	Play Area Parts
St James Church Centre	£85.00	£0.00	Business Forum Room Booking

Grannies	£100.00	£0.00	Remembrance Sunday Refreshments
Damp Detectives	£320.00	£0.00	Cemetery Lodge Damp survey
J Pibworth	£376.37	£52.73	Union Flag £87.47, Materials for Large Poppies £12, Bulbs for Alnwick in Bloom £276.90 (to be deducted from their grant)
NCC	£252.00	£42.00	Town sign repairs
Mechanics Institute	£460.00	£0.00	Room bookings
Northumbria in Bloom	£200.00	£0.00	Entry fee for Northumbria in Bloom
Kompan	£4573.49	£752.25	Basket swing mechanism installation (£1386 + £new basket £4513.49)
Community@NE66	£12.00	£0.00	Room hire
Chubb	£179.77	£29.96	Cemetery maintenance contract
J Pibworth	£15.71*	£0.06	Civic Carol Service refreshments
James McLean	£124.48	£14.08	Safety boots and tools
Azure	£91.00*	£0.00	Civic Carol Service Order of Service
Azure	£91.20	£15.20	Mayor's Christmas cards
NCC	£10,089.13	£5.00	Payroll for October 2018
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£26,620.92</b>	<b>£1,929.05</b>	

\* Indicates LGA 1972 s137 Expenditure (Total £106.51).

The following invoices were paid by direct debit & were reported for information:

BT	£35.96	£8.43	Phone Bills Cemetery (paid 28/11)
BT	£38.17	£6.36	Phone Bill Fenkle Street (paid 22/11)
BT	£51.24	£8.54	Quarterly Broadband Charge (paid 30/11)
NEST	£584.61	£0.00	Employer pension scheme contributions for November (paid 15/12)
British Gas	£22.55	£0.00	Gas HomeCare policy
Biffa	£111.48	£18.58	Trade Waste - Cemetery (paid 30/12)
Wave	£90.44	£0.00	Water - Cemetery Lodge. Store and Tap (paid 3/12)
Wave	£24.00	£0.00	Water - Cemetery Tap (paid 13/12)
Wave	£2,034.66	£0.00	Water at Ratten Row allotments (paid 21/12)
Wave	£42.20	£0.00	Robertson's Pant (paid 21/12)
npower	£13.01	£0.62	Cemetery Store (paid 16/11)
npower	£55.21	£32.75	Cemetery Chapel (paid 16/11)

#### b) Grants

The Town Clerk reported that at the Finance & Policy meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2018 a number of grant payments were recommended. The following grants, totalling £24,754, were approved by Full Council:

Alnwick Playhouse Trust £5,000

Bailiffgate Museum £2,000

Northumbrian CAB – Alnwick Office £4,000  
HospiceCare North Northumberland £2,000  
Alnwick & District Sports Council £300  
Alnwick Dolphins £600  
Alnwick Cricket Club £600  
Alnwick Tennis Club £600  
Alnwick Juniors Football Club £600  
Lionheart Radio & Media CIC £850  
Alnwick Music Society £400  
Alnwick Choral Society £400  
Age UK Northumberland £1,000  
VoiCes Northumberland Ltd £1,000  
North East Equality & Diversity Ltd £1,000  
Community@NE66 £1,000  
Alnwick Arthritis Club £190  
Friends of the Bullfield Community Orchard £600  
1801 (Alnwick) Squadron Air Training Corps £614  
Mechanics Institute £500  
NE Credit Union £500

In addition the Council agreed a contribution of £1,000 towards the Town Crier

**c) Bank Reconciliation**

The Town Clerk issued the most recent bank reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Account as at November 30<sup>th</sup> 2018. He reported that the cash book expenditure and income balanced. He reported that 10 cheques, valuing £51,011.13, remained unpresented but five of these amounting to the value of almost £46k were to NCC for payroll and other services.

He reported that Income at November 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 was £318,171 and Expenditure was £273,170.03.

Councillor Watson raised a question about the Income and Expenditure Account regarding the Willowburn Unit. The Town Clerk advised that alternative accommodation was being looked into.

**RESOLVED: i) To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £26,620.92 and note the direct debit payments of £3,103.53; ii) To approve and authorise the grant payments to the value of £24,754 including the contribution to the Town Crier; iii) To agree the bank reconciliation as at November 30<sup>th</sup> 2018.**

**C18/139 Any Other Urgent Business**

Councillor Wearn asked if Communications could be added to the next Full Council agenda for discussion.

Councillor Patience reported that the Corn Exchange was in a bad state of repair including a chimney. She asked if, as it was on a public right of way, NCC could be asked to take a look as a matter of urgency.

The public meeting closed at 9.14pm.

**C18/140 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 item discussed was:

1. To agree the Private Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018