

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018  
in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.15pm**

**Present** Cllrs A Symmonds, P Edge, B Grisdale, J Humphries, G Mavin, R Moore, S Patience, M Swinbank, L Wood-Mitchell, G Watson, L Wearn and C Westerdarp.

**In attendance** W R Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer.

**C18/105 Questions from the public**  
None.

**C18/106 Apologies for absence**  
Councillors Allcroft, Aynsley, Broom, Castle, Harrington and Waton. The Town Clerk advised that a discussion would take place in private regarding a request from Councillor Aynsley.

**C18/107 Declarations of Interest**  
Councillor Moore declared a non-pecuniary interest in NCC matters.

**C18/108 Mayor's Report**  
Councillor Symmonds reported the main events since the last meeting:  
October 22<sup>nd</sup> - a celebration event at the bike track which had been very good. He congratulated the young people and the staff at Gallery Youth.  
November 3<sup>rd</sup> - League of Friends coffee morning for Alnwick Hospital in the Northumberland Hall. The event had raised £1,200.  
November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1801 Alnwick Air Training Corps presentation evening, at Alnwick Castle, when he had been accompanied by Deputy Mayor. It was the best award ceremony he had attended and all the cadets gave excellent presentations.  
He reminded councillors that Remembrance Sunday was on November 11<sup>th</sup> at St Paul's Church and all councillors and their families were welcome to attend.

**C18/109 Minutes of the Last meeting (11<sup>th</sup> October 2018)**  
The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were agreed as a true record.**

**C18/110 Matters Arising**  
None.

**C18/111 Update from County Councillors**  
Councillor Moore (RM) reported that the Alnwick Forum consultation event was on Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup> between 10am and 4pm in the Northumberland Hall. The event was to get residents views about key NCC assets in Alnwick, a consultation of safety proposals for Narrowgate and an update on the works at the Playhouse.  
The 20mph flashing signs – a survey has been undertaken by NCC Highways.  
He reported that an agreement had been reached regarding moving assets from Arch to the replacement company – Advance Northumberland.  
Councillor Grisdale asked if there was an update on the Super Council. Councillor Moore advised that the first meeting of the councils had taken place in Morpeth County Hall

and that the devolution deal had been signed off by all parties. He advised that £600mill would be available over a period of time and that a Mayor would be elected in May 2019. Currently the group was made up of the Leader and Deputy Leader of each of the four councils.

Councillor Patience asked how things would feed into the new group. Councillor Moor advised that there were a number of boards which would feed into the overarching group including Education, Housing & Land, Economic Growth, Children's Services.

Councillor Patience asked how Alnwick Town Council would feed into the Super Council. Councillor Moore advised that there would be a system to feed into NCC which at present was very new so more information would follow.

Councillor Swinbank asked if there was any update on Arch and Allerburn House. Councillor Moore advised that NCC will produce a written reply to the Town Council which he would forward.

Councillor Wearn felt that the money allocated did not seem very much and that the areas with the highest population would get more focus and more of the money. Councillor Moore advised that the Leader and Deputy Leader of NCC were focused on the needs of Northumberland and its rural issues.

**RESOLVED: To receive the update.**

**C18/112 2019/20 Precept Timetable**

The Town Clerk advised that NCC has set a deadline for the submission of the 2019/20 precept information to them as 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019. He advised that the committees will set indicative budgets to be reviewed at the Full Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 when a budget and precept for 2019/20 will be set. He advised that the Indicative Council Tax Base (Band D equivalents) used for the 2019/20 precept is 2774.89, an increase of 47.50 on 2018/19.

**RESOLVED: To note the precept timetable for 2019/20.**

**C18/113 Town Centre Working Group Action Plan**

The Project & Funding Officer summarised the Draft Action Plan for Town Centre and Market Place which had been circulated to councillors. The recommended actions had been produced by the working group to support Town Centre & Market Place actions in the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Mavin felt that there would be an issue with action 13. Examine the possibility of appointing a Town Centre Manager if only the Town Council agreed to pay towards the post.

Councillor Patience felt there was some cross over with Local Living.

Councillor Grisdale asked if there were link to the Community Action Proposals (CAPs) in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Clerk advised that the actions had been put together to specifically support CAPs 1 and 3 which focus on a) the encouragement of independent retail outlet spaces and the active promotion of the Town Centre (and any vacant retail units) to retail businesses expected to enhance the appeal and diversity of the Town Centre; b) to develop a whole year strategy for the Market Place.

Councillor Swinbank explained that the working group were not suggesting that the Town Council solely paid for the Town Centre Manager post and that if other parties were not prepared to contribute then this would not go ahead.

**RESOLVED: To approve the Town Centre and Market Place Draft Action Plan.**

**Update on a) Loan to Alnwick Town Junior Football Club; b) Willowburn Public Inquiry; c) the new Town Council Office; d) the Alnwick Forum including 17<sup>th</sup> November event**

- a) Loan to Alnwick Town Junior Football Club.** The Town Clerk reported that the borrowing approval was now in place. He advised that NCC need the loan agreement to be agreed and that detailed costings were still required.

The agreement between Alnwick Juniors Football Club (AJFC) and Alnwick Town Council (ATC) had been approved by AJFC Trustees. He advised that he had requested a copy of the lease between AJFC and Northumberland Estates. He added that although the planning conditions were taking a while to discharge the work was anticipated to start in March 2019.

He reminded councillors that the 1<sup>st</sup> loan payment by ATC to NCC was due to be taken from the precept payment in April 2019 but that this could be pushed back to September 2019 along with the 1<sup>st</sup> payment by AJFC to ATC.

Councillor Swinbank asked about the build timetable. The Town Clerk advised that ATCs loan was towards the cost of the building which should take a couple of months to complete.

The Town Clerk reported that AJFC were looking to do some planting on site and would welcome input from Councillor Edge.

- b) Willowburn Public Inquiry.** The Town Clerk noted thanks to Peter Biggers and the legal team for their work on the Inquiry. He advised that the deadline date for any legal challenge was December 5<sup>th</sup>. He reported that there was now a derelict industrial site to deal with and the aim would be to get the owner to carry out work on the site. He explained that although the smaller planning application, for 100 houses on the site, had been refused by NCC there could still be an appeal on this application.

Councillor Swinbank thanked the officers and Peter Biggers for their hard work.

Councillor Watson asked if there were any health & safety issues which could be used to push the owner to undertake work on the site. He added that the Inquiry had strengthened the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan in the eyes of NCC's Planning Officers.

Councillor Mavin felt that more publicity should be done about the Inquiry. The Town Clerk advised that he would send something to NALC news.

- c) New Town Council Office.** The Town Clerk reported that all equipment and documentation was being moved into the new Greenwell Lane office and BT were installing the new phone line on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

Councillor Grisdale reported that there was no signage at the new office. The Town Clerk advised that there would be signage after the Alnwick Forum event on November 17<sup>th</sup> as the Alnwick Town Council display board will be put in the window in Greenwell Lane.

Councillor Swinbank asked about a fingerpost sign. The Town Clerk advised that there was a spare slot on the fingerpost by Iceland which could be used to say 'Council Offices'.

The Town Clerk advised that the new office would have BT internet as this meant that the existing email addresses could be retained.

- d) Alnwick Forum.** The Project & Funding Officer advised that this was formally known as the Master Planning Group. It would consider and take decisions on key

NCC sites in Alnwick and monitor other key sites in the town such as the Corn Exchange. The group would be driving towards Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan priorities. The group had met five times with the next meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Alnwick Forum event was on Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup> in Northumberland Hall when display boards will show key points including the alternatives for Narrowgate, an update on the Playhouse as well as potential plans or key sites in the town. There will also be two boards with information about the Town Council and the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Westendarp asked if the information on the Narrowgate proposals was available. Councillor Swinbank advised that it would all be available on-line.

Councillor Edge asked if the Mechanics Institute could be promoted.

Councillor Symmonds felt that it was important that the Town Council got the best library they could for the town.

Councillor Allcroft asked if anything had gone to the schools about the Alnwick Forum event for them to send out.

**RESOLVED: To accept the updates.**

**C18/115 Proposed Away Day**

The Town Clerk explained that at the last Finance & Policy Committee meeting it was agreed to recommend to the Full Council that an away day be organised to consider the Council's future operations, focus and direction. He advised that if the Council wanted to use the away day as part of their 2019/20 budget setting process it would need to take place before the Full Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The 2<sup>nd</sup> option would be to have the away day later in the year and put a figure into the 2019/20 budget for council priorities.

Councillor Gridale explained he had suggested an away day so that the Town Council could focus on what they need from their new Town Clerk and the Town Council going forward.

Councillor Wearn thought the away day should also look at working group functions.

**RESOLVED: i) To email councillors for suggestions for the away day; ii) To organise an away day in January 2019.**

**C18/116 Proposed Settlement Boundary**

The Town Clerk issued a proposed settlement boundary map produced by NCC.

Councillor Swinbank explained that having no settlement boundary could make Alnwick more exposed to potential new housing. The Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan sets out potential housing sites so a settlement boundary would strengthen that.

Councillor Humphries felt it was common sense to have a settlement boundary.

Councillor Swinbank explained that the Planning Committee felt it would be helpful to ask NCC to move the settlement boundary to include the buffer zone at Windy Edge and the DCHS playing fields.

Councillor Patience asked why the Aln Valley Railway and the Alnwick Bike Track were not included. The Town Clerk advised that the guidance was for the settlement boundary to follow the build form.

Councillor Gridale asked if any of Denwick was included. The Town Clerk advised that Lionheart and Cawledge Business Parks were included.

Councillor Moore asked why the Golf Club housing site, and other sites with planning approval, were not included. The Town Clerk advised that they were not attached to other built form so were not included.

**RESOLVED: To agree, in principle, that Alnwick has a settlement boundary and to recommend to Northumberland County Council that the buffer zone at Windy Edge be excluded and the DCHS and Alnwick Town Juniors playing fields be included.**

**C18/117 Notification of Urgency Decision**

The Town Clerk advised that under the Council’s Constitution any decisions taken under urgency powers must be reported to the next Council meeting. He reported that on 15<sup>th</sup> October, he had received a request for additional financial assistance from the Christmas Lights team. During the light displays being installed it had become apparent that a number of the strings of lights (light harnesses) used on the shop frontages, were in a poor condition and as a result were not ideal for new low energy light bulbs. Although the Christmas Lights Committee budget to replace some cabling each year (100m was renewed this year), the Committee would have liked to replace more but could not support this from their budget so had asked the Town Council for financial help. He advised that following discussion with the Mayor, the Chair of Finance and the Vice Chair of the Recreation & Amenities (the Chair not being consulted as he had an interest), it was agreed on 17<sup>th</sup> October to give an additional one-off grant of £2,000 (net of VAT) to enable 200 metres of new light harnesses to be purchased immediately. In making the decision, councillors were mindful that the Music Festival Grant allocated for 2018 had not been spent, so some of this money could be utilised for the Christmas Lights.

**RESOLVED: To note the urgency decision.**

**C18/118 Minutes of Committees**

Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting (11<sup>th</sup> October 2018) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were agreed as a true record.**

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee Meeting (18<sup>th</sup> October 2018) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2018 were agreed as a true record.**

**C18/119 Correspondence**

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action
17 <sup>th</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> Oct	NALC – enews	Circulated
21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	J Matthewson – letter for councillors on Core Strategy	Circulated to Councillors (Clerk to respond)
24 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Cussins – enclosing £5,000 contribution for a bus shelter	Reported to Finance Committee
31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Willowburn Public Inquiry Inspectors Report	Circulated
	NCC – Precept information	Placed on agenda

**RESOLVED: To receive the correspondence.**

**C18/120 Financial Matters**

**a) Payments**

The following invoices had been received/payments were due:

<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>
NCC	£10,400.35	£5.00	Payroll July 2018
NCC	£20,773.15	£10.00	Payroll August & September 2018
NCC	£12,960.00	£2,160.00	Summer/Winter planting 2018
NCC	£2,570.40	£428.40	Watering hanging baskets (deducted from Alnwick in Bloom Grant)
NCC	£469.58	£78.26	Town Council Hanging Baskets
Mole Country Stores	£49.99	£0.00	Grass seed
James N McLean	£36.00	£6.00	Equipment hire and supplies
W R Batey	£2,447.33	£383.22	New office computer & monitor £1,189.04; Filing cabinets £424.80; Table and 4 chairs £564; Refreshments for Remembrance Sunday and Carol Service £121.50; Planning fee – flag pole discharge of conditions (£358; McAfee subscription £89.99
Gordon Wilson Ltd	£792.00*	£132.00	3 metal wreath holders frames for the War Memorial (to hold 30+ wreaths)
Northumberland Estates	£100.00	£0.00	Bike Track lease 11/18 – 11/19
Viking Direct	£182.75	£30.46	Stationery
Broxap	£957.60	£159.60	6 metal bollards for the Cobbles (to protect 6 planters from cars)
W Straughan	£462.00	£77.00	Bike track works
Diamond Business Group	£1020.00	£170.00	New photocopier
W R Batey	£74.99	£15.00	Phones for new office
Azure	£200.00	£0	Printing
St Paul's Church	£40.00	£0	Donation for WWI flower festival display
Specialist Canvas Systems	£4,498.50	£749.75	Flagpole Erection
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£58,034.64</b>	<b>£4,404.69</b>	

\* Indicates LGA 1972 s137 Expenditure (Total £792.00).

The following invoices were paid by direct debit & were reported for information:			
British Gas	£22.50	£0.00	Cemetery Lodge - service contract (paid 15/11)
Biffa	£89.18	£14.86	Trade Waste – Cemetery (Paid 30/11)
BT	£38.93	£6.49	Phone Bill - Cemetery Office (Paid 28/10)
BT	£41.77	£6.96	Phone Bill – Fenkle Street (Paid 22/10)
npower	£17.23	£1.25	Cemetery Store (paid 30/10)
npower	£50.36	£2.40	Robertson’s fountain (paid 17/10)
npower	£14.05	£0.67	Robertson’s fountain (paid 9/11)
Northumbrian Water	£98.18	£0.00	Cemetery Lodge/Tap/Store (paid 14/11)

The Town Clerk advised that he needed to make a payment to the Morpeth Pipe Band for supporting the Remembrance Sunday Parade. He suggested a payment of £200 plus travel costs. In addition a small gift was normally given to those who assist on the day (£25 vouchers for 3 people) and this year should also include the brass band/piper.

#### **b) Bank Reconciliation**

The Town Clerk issued the most recent bank reconciliation and Income and Expenditure Account as at September 30<sup>th</sup> 2018. He reported that the cash book expenditure and income balanced. He reported that 11 cheques, valuing £74,058.39, remained unpresented but three of these amounting to almost half the total were to NCC for payroll.

He reported that the Income at September 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 was £303,251 and the Expenditure was £193,803.95.

**RESOLVED: i) To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £58,034.64 and note the direct debit payments of £372.82; ii) To agree the bank reconciliation as at September 30<sup>th</sup> 2018.**

#### **C18/121 Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The public meeting closed at 9.16pm.

#### **C18/122 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. To agree the Private Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018

2. Request from Councillor Aynsley