

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 19th May 2011 in the Council Chamber, Clayport Street Alnwick at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs E Blakey (Mayor), J Bell, G Castle, K Gray, W Grisdale, M Harrington, B Hewison, G Knox, S Patience, R Roberts, A Symmonds, B Thompson, J Thompson, R Waddell, S Walton and G Watson.

In attendance: W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk.

C11/65. Apologies: Cllrs Allcroft and Moore

C11/66. Welcome to new Councillors:

The Mayor welcomed Councillors Jilly Bell, Bruce Hewison, Jim Thompson and Rachael Roberts to their first council meeting following their election at the recent Castle Ward by-election. The clerk reported that all four councillors had made their declaration of acceptance of officer and had completed the appropriate interest forms.

C11/67. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

C11/68. Election of the Mayor

The Mayor gave a report on her term of office, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. She outlined a number of initiatives and suggestions that had been delivered during the year and thanked councillors and the clerk for all their hard work and support.

The clerk reported that two nominations had been received for the position of Mayor, these were:

- Eileen Blakey, proposed by Cllr Allcroft and seconded by Cllr Gray, and
- Alan Symmonds, proposed by Cllr Patience and seconded by Cllr Grisdale

In accordance with the constitution, voting papers had been issued to all councillors and all councillors had cast a vote and the majority of votes (15 votes to 3 votes) had been obtained by Cllr Symmonds and therefore he was duly elected as Mayor for 2011/12.

RESOLVED: That Councillor A Symmonds be elected as Mayor.

Councillor Symmonds paid tribute to Councillor Blakey for her Council leadership over the last 2 years and thanked all councillors for voting. He said he was looking forward to his term of office and the challenges ahead. He completed and signed his declaration of acceptance of office.

C11/69. Election of Deputy Mayor

One nomination had been received, this was for Geoff Watson who was proposed by Cllr Castle and seconded by Cllr Allcroft.

RESOLVED: That Councillor G Watson be elected as Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Watson completed and signed his declaration of acceptance of office.

C/11/70. Committee Appointments and Appointments of Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees.

The proposed committee membership was tabled at the meeting, this took into account the preferences of councillors. These were proposed and seconded.

RESOLVED: The Recreation & Amenities Committee comprises of Councillors; Allcroft, Bell, Blakey, Grisdale, Harrington, Hewison, Knox, Patience, Roberts Walton, and Watson.

RESOLVED: The Cemetery Committee comprises of Councillors; Allcroft, Bell, Blakey, Gray, Moore, B Thompson, and Walton, plus a representative from Denwick Parish Council.

RESOLVED: The Planning, Highways and Transport Committee comprises of Councillors; Gray, Grisdale, Harrington, Hewison, Knox, Moore, Roberts, Symmonds, B Thompson, J Thompson, Waddell and Watson.

To enable the composition of the Finance and Policy committee to be finalised it was agreed to appoint the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the above committees.

Councillor Patience was proposed and seconded as Chairman of the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor Patience be appointed as Chairman of the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

Councillor Harrington was proposed and seconded for the position of Vice Chairman of the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor Harrington be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

Councillor Gray was proposed and seconded as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee

RESOLVED: Councillor Gray be appointed as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee.

Councillor Moore was proposed and seconded for the position of Vice Chairman of the Cemetery Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor Moore be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Cemetery Committee.

Councillor Grisdale was proposed and seconded as Chairman of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor Grisdale be appointed as Chairman of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee.

Councillor B Thompson was proposed and seconded for the position of Vice Chairman of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor B.Thompson be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee.

Twelve councillors had requested positions on the Finance and Policy Committee but the constitution only made provision for eleven places. A number of councilors were in support of increasing the membership to twelve to accommodate all the councillors interested.

RESOLVED To increase the membership of the Finance and Policy Committee to twelve councillors.

The membership of the Finance & Policy Committee was then proposed and seconded as on the list tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED: The Finance & Policy Committee comprises of Councillors, Allcroft, Blakey, Castle, Gray, Grisdale, Hewison, Patience, Symmonds, J Thompson, Waddell, Walton and Watson.

Councillor Blakey was proposed and seconded as the Chairman of the Finance and Policy Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor Blakey be appointed as Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee.

Councillor Walton was proposed and seconded for the position of Vice Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee.

RESOLVED: Councillor Walton be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee.

C11/71. Appointments to Outside Bodies

A schedule of the outside bodies was tabled at the meeting, together with suggested representatives. A number of vacant positions were considered and appointments made. Two vacancies remained on the Alnwick in Bloom Committee.

RESOLVED: Outside Bodies appointments were as per the schedule attached to these minutes.

C11/72. Dates of Meetings

A draft schedule of council and committee meetings was tabled for approval and is attached to these minutes.

RESOLVED: That the council and committee dates be approved.

C11/73. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (14th April 2011)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2011 were agreed as a true record.

These were duly signed by the mayor.

C11/74. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising.

C11/75. Draft Accounts 2010/11

The Clerk updated the meeting on progress regarding the production of and auditing of the 2010/11 accounts. A copy of the Income and Expenditure Account, Bank Reconciliation and Balance Sheet were tabled and outlined. These showed the Town Council had a total of some £82,000 in reserves at the 31st March 2011. The Clerk outlined that the internal audit work would be commencing shortly and that electors would be able to exercise their rights to inspect the accounts between 6th June and 1st July. The Annual Return will need to be

approved by the council at the next meeting and submitted to the external auditor by 8th July.

RESOLVED: The draft accounts 2010/11 be received and approved.

C11/76. Update on discussions with NCC regarding local services

On April 15th the Mayor and Clerk met with representatives of Northumberland County Council to discuss the County Council proposals regarding local services for 2012/13. The minutes of that meeting had been circulated to councillors. The meeting was an initial discussion about possible changes in 2012/13. It was likely that the town council would be taking over responsibility for seats and bus shelters and the county council were considering reductions in flowerbed planting and the possible transfer of responsibility for litter bins, some parks, some public conveniences and some buildings. Further information would be provided by the County Council to enable discussions to be progressed and decisions to be made.

RESOLVED: The current position be noted.

C11/77. Consideration of the provision of a dog bin on Walkergate

A request had been received from NCC to consider the provision of a dog bin on Walkergate. A litter and dog fouling problem has been identified and in discussions with NCC the suggested solution was the provision of a litter bin (to take litter and dog waste) and that the county council may fund 50% of the cost, leaving the town council approximately £200 to pay. Some Members expressed concern about the use of litter bins for dog waste and the lack of information for the public about this and wished to receive more information about dog waste disposal. Discussions also took place regarding the need for a dog bin at the Community Orchard and in the Pastures. It was decided that the latter should wait until a fuller review of litter and dog bins takes place.

**RESOLVED: a) That the council contributes 50% towards the cost of a litter bin on Walkergate, and if the county council is unable to meet the remaining cost, then as an alternative, a dog bin is provided in the location, and
b) A dog bin be provided in an accessible area at the Community Orchard.**

C11/78. Parking in the Market Place

The Clerk updated councillors on a meeting he had with Alnwick Police which had discussed the enforcement issues and problems. Members were in agreement that the current parking was unsatisfactory and were concerned about safety issues. They also wished to have this local issue considered under the next stage of the County Council's car parking strategy as soon as possible. A County Council officer should also be invited to a future meeting of the council to discuss the matter further.

RESOLVED: That the police be urged to undertake additional patrols to enforce the current orders and Northumberland County Council be asked to progress consideration of the resolution of this local issue, under their car parking strategy.

C11/79. Minutes of Committees

a) Planning Committee Meeting (14th April)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 14th April 2011 were agreed as a true record.

b) Projects Committee (21st April)

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 21st April 2011 were agreed as a true record.

C11/80. Correspondence

The clerk reported that the following correspondence has been received since the last meeting:

Date	Detail	Action
4 th May	CPRE Field Work magazine	Available from the clerk on request
5 th May	Arriva – Bus Update	Available from the clerk on request
12 th May	NCC – invitation to scrutiny meeting on 21 st June, 6pm Morpeth. Agenda - Wind Farms and Local services	Discussed
13 th May	NCC – email about IT problems at Alnwick Library – update next week.	To note

RESOLVED: That the correspondence received be noted and Councillor Blakey attends the Scrutiny meeting on 21st June.

C11/81. Financial Matters – Payments

The clerk reported that the following invoices had been received for payment.

HMRC	£968.17	Tax and NI
Wages Account	£3000	Transfer to wages account
AFS Country Store	£69.80	Weedkiller
Greenlay	£73.22	Machine Parts
James McLean	£20	Grease Cartridges
WR Batey	£882.69	Town Twinning expenditure £405.50 Civic Gifts £453.50 Card and printing £23.69
Pottergate Pantry	£280	Town Twinning catering Friday
Embleton Hall	£310.10	Town Twinning – Meal Sunday
The Oaks Hotel	£475.95	Town Twinning - Meals Thursday and Saturday
Dreadnaught Coaches	£125	Town Twinning - coach tour
R Turnbull & Sons	£94.80	Town Twinning- buffet lunch
Azure Charitable Enterprises	£86	Town Twinning - Printing
JL Taxis	£230	Town Twinning - Collection/Drop off journeys to airport
A Symmonds	£19.80	Mileage claim 11 th April North Area Com.
Northumberland County Council	£2431.50	NNDR cemetery
Barter Books	£42	Town Twinning - refreshments
Petty Cash	£44.96	Petrol and Poison
npower	£335.34	Cemetery Chapel and store, Paid 28/4/11,
Bailiffgate Museum	£75	Donation for Town Twinning reception
TOTAL	£9,564.33	

The following agreed payments were also due:

Alnwick Music Festival	£3,000	Annual Grant award
Alnwick Food Festival	£1,100	Annual Grant award

Alnwick in Bloom	£1,875	Annual Grant award
Mayor (as elected)	£1,000	Annual Mayoral Allowance
ACDT	£500	Contribution to Alnwick Ambassador Scheme
TOTAL	£7,475	

The following payments were now paid by direct debit and were reported for information		
BT	£98.56	Phone bills cemetery and cemetery lodge Paid 28 th April 11

RESOLVED: To approve and authorise the above payment amounting to £17,039.33 and to note the direct debit payments of £98.56

C11/82. Any Other Business

- a) Councillor Harrington wished someone to investigate what happened to the wooden benches that were at the road junction at the bottom of Willowburn Avenue, prior to the new roundabout being built.
- b) Councillor Waddell highlighted the lack of road markings at the junction between South Road and Wagonway Road following the roadworks.
- c) Councillor Watson briefed members on the news that the Olympic Torch was coming to Alnwick in 2012 and wished this to be discussed at the next meeting.

C11/83. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED: That pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that if members of the public were present during the discussion of these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100 1 and paragraphs 3 and 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The following item was considered:

C11/84. The Mechanics Institute Building

The meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.