

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday 13th August 2015  
in St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.15pm**

**Present** Cllrs S Allcroft, P Allcroft, G Castle, P Edge, D Farrar, W Grisdale, P Holt, J Humphries, G Mavin, S Mavin, K Moore, S Patience, R Roberts, A Shilton, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

**In attendance** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; Inspector Paul Truscott, Northumbria Police.

**C15/47 Questions from the public**  
None.

**C15/48 Apologies for absence**  
Cllrs. P Broom and M Harrington.

**C15/49 Declarations of Interest**  
Councillor Castle declared a non-pecuniary interest in county council matters. Councillors Grisdale declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 12 as he is a school governor.

**C15/50 Presentation by Inspector Paul Truscott, Northumbria Police**  
Inspector Truscott gave an update on policing matters that affected Alnwick. He advised that the new Chief Constable, Steve Ashman, had given special permission to recruit in North Northumberland. From the recruitment sessions held to date 70 people had been shortlisted.

Overview of crime and disorder

Although crime was going up both nationally and regionally the Alnwick Town figures are down 9% on 2014 with 15 fewer victims. Crime figures for 2015: Burglaries 0; Other 1; Criminal damage 41; Violent offences 1 and Sexual offences 4.

In Alnwick Town centre violence associated with alcohol is under control.

The Home Office has changed the way in which some types of crimes are recorded so there has been an increase in some types of crime. Domestic violence figures have increased as people have more confidence to be able to report instances.

A new array of sexual crimes associated with IT such as the use of Twitter are being reported.

Anti social behaviour, including noise offences, has increased. ASB (Youth) has increased by 12 offences including playing football in the street and drinking in the park. In Swansfield Park there has been damage to play equipment and surfaces as well as an incident with a boy with a knife.

He reported on two special projects / operations that were in place in the town: Project Albuquerque where dispersal notices have been issued to young people in large groups which can cause issues for some people.

Operation Dragoon has been asked to come into the town to talk to the boy racers. So far seven letters have been issued to registered owners. If spoken to again the vehicles will be uplifted due to anti social behaviour.

He commented on the Tom Jones concert and said he was pleased at the way the public behaved.

Councillor questions:

Councillor Roberts asked how many of the sexual offences were related to social media. Inspector Truscott advised that two out of the four offences were social media related and that more needed to be done to educate people.

Councillor S Allcroft asked that if two people fall out then withdraw the allegation would it still count as a crime. Inspector Truscott advise that sometimes it would still count as a crime and that sometimes the CPS might prosecute anyway if the evidence substantiates it.

Councillor Holt asked how security for the Tour of Britain was being dealt with. Inspector Truscott advised that many cycle events were not policed at all but for the event on September 9th police would be placed around the town.

Councillor Castle felt that it said a lot about the Town that councillors had no real issues. He felt that Alnwick was one of the safest places to live in the UK. Inspector Truscott commented that it was about the whole community and that initiatives had been well supported (e.g. Pub Watch).

Councillor Grisdale asked if the recruitment was for full time officers. Inspector Truscott said it was and will be local so the level of understanding of the area would be good.

Councillor G Mavin asked if there were anything that would be helpful in the Town Inspector Truscott advised that the CCTV system needed an update.

Councillor S Allcroft asked if recruitment was just for new police officers. Inspector Truscott advised that it was but they always looked for experts in various areas.

Councillor Moore asked what powers Community Support Officers had. Inspector Truscott advised that CSOs could have a raft of powers but that these needed to be authorised by the Chief Constable.

Councillor Farrar commented that the figures sounded reassuring but that they did rely on victims coming forward. Inspector Truscott agreed but that they are encouraging people to report potential crimes. Councillor Farrar advised that some petty crime, such as that at the allotments, was not always reported.

Councillor Roberts asked if a list of the coverage of the CCTV cameras could be requested from NCC.

**RESOLVED: To write to NCC about upgrading the CCTV system in town centre and asked for a list of current coverage.**

**C15/51 Minutes of the Last meetings**

Minutes of the Full Council meeting on (9th July 2015) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 9th July were agreed as a true record and duly signed.**

**C15/52 Matters Arising**

**C15/27** Councillor Farrar asked if there was an update from NCC on the governance review. The Town Clerk advised that the request had been submitted but that no update had been received as yet.

**C15/43** Councillor S Allcroft asked if the new bin for the top of the Alwynside Estate was now in place. The Town Clerk advised that the bin had been ordered.

**C15/53 Mayor's Report**

Councillor Grisdale reported that the Mayor's Report is on his blog [www.alnwickmayor.wordpress.com](http://www.alnwickmayor.wordpress.com). He also added that the Alnwick International Music Festival had been fantastic and that it was run by a very small committee. Councillor Symmonds said that the committee appreciated the support from the Town Council both financial and non financial.

**C15/54 Minutes of Committees**

Minutes of the Planning, Highways and Transport Committee Meetings (9th July 2015) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee meeting held on 9th July 2015 were agreed as a true record.**

Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting (16th July 2015) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee held on 16th July 2015 were agreed as a true record.**

Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting (23rd July 2015) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee held on 23rd July 2015 were agreed as a true record.**

Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee Meeting (30th July 2015) were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee held on 30th July 2015 were agreed as a true record.**

**C15/55 Annual Return and Accounts 2014/15**

The Town Clerk had circulated the internal auditor's report with the agenda and gave an update on the internal and external audits which had been completed for the year ended 31st March 2015.

Internal audit - the internal auditor had completed a satisfactory audit and had balanced all transactions to the bank accounts. As more work had been done on the asset register he had checked the additions to the register as part of his audit checks. The Town Clerk also explained that if expenditure remained at the same level as in 2014-15 information would need to be presented differently in the future.

External audit - the external auditors had reported that the information in the annual return was in accordance with proper practices and no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. They had identified one minor issue in Section 1 of the Annual Return where the figures for 2013/14 (the previous year) had been stated differently in 2014/15. The Town Clerk acknowledged this and explained the reasons for this and advised that this was in part due to the additional work which had been undertaken to the asset register.

**RESOLVED: That the Annual Return for the Year ending 31st March 2015 be approved and accepted by the Council**

**C15/56 Sustainable transport planning and implementation on Alnwick (Councillor Swinbank)**

Councillor Swinbank had circulated a draft document on Sustainable Transport in Alnwick and gave an update. He felt that a working group could be set up of Councillors and other interested parties to look at the transport solutions especially walking and cycling.

Councillor G Mavin asked if Councillor Swinbank was proposing to look at the NCC report and put in more detail. Councillor Swinbank advised that he was and to broaden to give links to other places.

Councillor G Mavin commented that he would hate for the short term aims to be stifled by going too broad. Councillor Swinbank felt it would not take away from the short term gains and would focus on making things work for Alnwick.

Councillor Castle advised that there were two types of groups - those that acted in an advisory capacity and those that were specific issue linked. He felt that there should be a working group looking at issues as they occur. He also felt it would be advisable to go to NCC with recommendations for them to consider.

Councillor S Allcroft commented that she was disappointed that the cycle routes had got a bit lost in the document. Councillor Swinbank advised that the working group would set priorities from the document. He advised that it was a broad topic that will need to have priorities agreed.

Councillor Patience said she welcomed the document but that all services in the town needed to be looked at. She also advised that there was a CAP (Community Action Plan) in the ADNP which could be used as part of these priorities.

Councillor Roberts commented that the proposed Transport Plan which was prepared to support the planning application for the new school didn't cover everything that was needed. She also felt that as the Town Council's LTPs (Local Transport Priorities) for 2016, would benefit from input from this type of working group in order to identify potential actions and feedback to NCC and other parties.

Councillor Grisdale asked what the meeting cycle for the working group would be. Councillor Swinbank felt that the working group should meet every two months.

Councillor Grisdale also asked who would be invited and whether the public would be included. Councillor Swinbank felt that to start with the working group would be made up of Councillors then expanded when it was felt beneficial.

**RESOLVED: To set up a working group and invite all councillors to attend.**

**C15/57 Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection Policy**

The Town Clerk advised the Council that it had been several years since the council had considered and adopted a FOI Publication Scheme or reviewed its Data Protection Policy. He also advised that the Council receives between 6 and 10 Freedom of Information requests each year. He had circulated a Freedom of Information Act Policy along with a Publication Scheme which sets out the information the Council will make available. Other information can be provided if requested. The Publication scheme sets out the proposed costs where relevant.

He took councillors through the updated documents he had circulated. The Publication Scheme sets out the classes of information the Council has, or will make, available. There are seven classes and each one contains a list of documents or information available:

- Class 1: Who we are and what we do
- Class 2: What we spend and how we spend it
- Class 3: What our priorities are and how we are doing
- Class 4: How we make decisions
- Class 5: Our policies and procedures
- Class 6: Lists and registers
- Class 7: The services we offer

Many of the documents are already available to view and download on the Town Council's website under 'Council Documents' or 'Minutes and Agendas' and others will be added shortly.

**RESOLVED: For Councillor to send any further comments to the Town Clerk who will finalise and update the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Policies in consultation with the Mayor.**

**C15/58 Consultation on Schools Proposal**

The Town Clerk advised that Northumberland County Council had sent a letter consulting with the Town Council on the proposals for schools in the Alnwick partnership which he had circulated with the agenda. He also advised that the consultation is open until 22nd October 2015.

Councillor Grisdale suggested that councillors respond as individuals through the on line form.

Councillor Castle confirmed that any councillor can make an individual response.

Councillor Roberts suggested that councillors looked at the information and an item be added to the September agenda for further discussion and decision as to whether the Town Council will submit a response.

**RESOLVED: To add Consultation on Schools Proposal to the September Full Council's agenda for discussion.**

**C15/59 Correspondence**

The following correspondence has been received since the last meeting:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Action</b>
15th June	NCC – Annual Town & Parish Council Conference – 24th Sept, West Hartford, Cramlington	Up to 2 Councillors to attend (sessions are either at 1pm or 6pm)
20th July	Alnwick Chamber of Trade – Audit of Public Space, - such an audit would be beneficial to the Town	Considered – see a) below.
25th July	David Blackburn – details of scheme to paint boarded windows on derelict buildings to remove eyesores (scheme used in Berwick)	To circulate images to councillors for consideration
29th July	Can - enews	Available from the Clerk on request
31st July	NCC – Core Strategy update	Considered by Planning Committee
6th August	NCC – free computer classes for beginners at Alnwick Library	To note and put poster in ATC notice board
7th August	NALC - e-news	Available from the Clerk on request

a) Councillor S Allcroft suggested that the Chamber of Trade carry out the audit with help from the Town Council.

Councillor Castle felt it would not be an audit but a list as any more than that and it would be a lot of work.

Councillor Farrar thought it would be a lot of work for potentially little return.

Councillor Holt felt that there were things around the town that people were not aware of so the Town Council should not be negative.

Councillor Castle suggested that the Town Council asked for the rationale behind the request.

**RESOLVED: To accept the correspondence and note the dates.**

**C15/60 Feedback Local Multi-agency Crime Prevention Initiative Meeting**

Councillor Moore advised councillors that the next meeting was on August 18th. He also advised that the meetings had a new format which had been very well received.

**C15/61 Financial Matters – a) Payments**

The following invoices had been received for payment.

<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>TOTAL PAYABLE</b>	<b>VAT ELEMENT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
HMRC	£2,779.65	0	Tax/NI payment for July
Wages Account	£5,000	0	
NCC	£138	0	Hire of Northumberland Hall for Volunteers Fair
npower	£356.61	£16.98	Electricity Cemetery Chapel (paid 7/8)
L Spenceley	£47.94	£7.99	Replacement Grave Surround
Event Merchandising Ltd	£43.56	£7.26	Magna Carta Merchandise
WR Batey	£90.22	£7.62	£20.52 Postage, £48.64 Music Festival refreshments, £21.06, Music Festival gifts
Petty Cash	£46.50	£6.67	£6.48 Postage £40.02 Fuel
Harrison External Display Systems	£269.94	£44.99	Flags – Town Team
Azure	£40.76	£4.56	Leaflets/posters Volunteer Fair
Playdale	£66.00	£11.00	Replacement play equipment parts
BDO LLP	£960	£160	External audit fee
Norman Dunn	£200	£0	Internal audit fee
James N McLean	£40.78	£6.80	Supplies
Streetscape	£12,000	£2,000	New play area equipment Glovers Green
Depot Hire Ltd	£228	£38	Skip Hire - cemetery
John Gray Ltd	£144	£24.00	Lawnmower Deck repairs

Thomas Sherriff & Co Ltd	£33.43	£5.57	Machine Parts
Thomas Sherriff & Co Ltd	£31.88	£5.31	Machine Parts
CBS World	£1.50	£0.30	Photocopying
St James Church Centre	£37.50	0	Room Booking Access Meeting
St James Church Centre	£75.00	0	Room Booking Council Meeting
Thomas Sherriff & Co Ltd	£889.90	£148.32	Machine Parts
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£23,521.17</b>	<b>£2,495.37</b>	

The following payments are now paid by direct debit and were reported for information

BT	£84.51	£13.13	Phone Bills Cemetery and Cemetery Lodge paid 28th July
BT	£25.40	£4.01	Phone Bills Fenkle Street paid 23rd July
npower	£98.08	£4.65	Electricity Robertson's Fountain
	£83.11	£3.96	Electricity Cemetery Store
	£97.71	£4.65	Electricity Town Hall Clock

In addition The Town Clerk asked that authority be given to pay the agreed grants to the following festivals and events:

- a) Alnwick Spring Show £200 (£500 less £300 contribution to storage unit)
- b) Alnwick In Bloom - Amount to be determined (£2875 less £200 for the In Bloom Entry Fee and cost of Hanging Baskets provided by NCC, - invoice awaited)
- c) Alnwick International Music Festival – Amount to be determined (£4075 less £650 contribution to storage unit and cost of stall/stage erection by NCC – invoice awaited).

**RESOLVED: i) To approve and authorise the above payments amounting to £23,521.17 and note the direct debit payments of £388.81, ii) To approve the payment to Alnwick Spring Show, Alnwick in Bloom and the Alnwick International Music Festival.**

**C15/62 Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm