

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**In St James Church Rooms, Pottergate, Alnwick at 6.30pm**

**Present** Cllrs Broom, Coghill-Marshall, Harrington, Hewison, Humphries, Lyford, Swinbank, Symmonds, G Watson, D Watson and Wearn.

**In attendance** P Hately, Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer; J Coltman, Communications Officer.  
Dr Graham Syers, Alnwick Medical Group.

The Mayor welcomed Bruce Hewison to the Full Council meeting. He also congratulated Councillor Sugden on his recent marriage.

**C22/77 Questions from the public**

None.

**C22/78 Apologies for absence**

Councillors Allcroft, Castle, Parker and Temple.

**C22/79 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Swinbank declared a non-pecuniary interest in County Council matters.

**C22/80 Alnwick Medical Group – Dr Graham Syers (GS)**

Dr Syers explained he wears two hats so would give an update on behalf of Alnwick Medical Group where he is GP Partner and Northumberland CCG where he is Locality Director and Prescribing Lead.

ALNWICK MEDICAL GROUP – Back up to almost full-time doctors. He explained that there may be a change in the person patients may initially see e.g. pharmacists, mental health specialist or link workers.

The appointment system was still being worked and that all e-consults were being dealt with within 3 days. He also explained that there was a need to have some down time to undertake staff training.

INEQUALITIES WORK – the CCG were doing work which showed that there were some areas in Northumberland where you could live shorter. There was a Community Builders pilot being run in the Alnwick area to develop people.

**C22/81 Approval of Minutes of the Last meetings**

The minutes and Private minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were tabled for approval.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October agreed as a true record.**

**C22/82 Matters Arising**

None.

**C22/83 Mayors Report**

The Mayor gave a verbal update on the activities he had undertaken since the last meeting. Details can be read on the Town Council's website under News.

**C22/84 Updates:**

**a) County Council**

Councillor Swinbank reported that NCC are undertaking inequalities work which is long-term and has cross party support.

He reported that Communities Together, set up during Covid and an important point of contact for residents, will be at the Forum event at Northumberland Hall on November 19<sup>th</sup>. He added that the Alnwick 20mph zone would be covered at the event.

Councillor Symmonds knew there were pressures on budgets and asked what level of consultation would be done. Councillor Swinbank advised that no consultation had taken place with County Councillors as yet.

### **b) Advisory Groups:**

#### Economy

Councillor Lyford advised that there was a Civic Society event at St James's Church Centre on November 16<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm.

#### Retail & Town Centre

Councillor Harrington reported that the Story Fest event in February 2023 was now a confirmed event.

Christmas events for 2022 were discussed and it was agreed that in future events would be matched up.

He reported that Alnwick Garden had recruited a new Garden Manager (Ian McCallister) and that Mark Brassell would be focusing on Lillidorei.

The plan was to have the screen project in place for Easter 2023, hopefully funded by S106 money.

Councillor Broom reported that some of the shop fronts in the town centre were in a very bad state of repair. Councillor G Watson advised that Alnwick District Council used to have a shop front grants scheme.

Councillor Harrington suggested councillors had a walk around the town.

Councillor Lyford asked if there had been an increase in the number of empty shops in the town centre. Councillor Harrington advised there was a queue of people looking to take on town centre premises.

Councillor Lyford asked if there were monitoring data for the Town Trail app. Councillor Harrington advised that statistics were being monitored.

Councillor Swinbank wondered if the Town Council could promote civic pride. Councillor G Watson thought there could be a Civic Pride Award.

#### Sustainable Travel

Councillor Swinbank reported the Sustainable Travel Advisory Group had discussed: 20 mph zone in Alnwick, drop kerbs, routes to schools and Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan.

He reported that the Alnwick Greenway had offered a 15-year lease

He advised that, as part of the residents parking, a feasibility on yellow lines and junctions was being explored.

### **c) Alnwick Forum**

Councillor Swinbank reported that the forum had done an assessment of the boards which would be used at the Forum event on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Councillor Broom made an official request for drop kerbs between Narrowgate and Fenkle Street.

## C22/85 Minutes of Committees

Minutes of the Cemetery Committee Meeting (20<sup>th</sup> October 2022) were tabled to be received.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were received.**

Minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee Meeting (27<sup>th</sup> October 2022) were tabled to be received.

**RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were received.**

## C22/86 Financial Matters

### a) Payments

The following invoices had been received and payments are due:

Name	Amount	VAT	Description
J Pibworth	£936.70	£133.19	Town Tidy materials; NiB / AiB refreshments; photo frame, tablecloth & pens, floral tribute; bulbs
Rix Petroleum (Hull) Ltd	£1,405.53	£66.93	Fuel for cemetery vehicles
AE & MA Duff	£119.47	£0.00	Ukraine Payment
Oksana Shevchuk	£147.15	£0.00	Ukraine Payment
St James's Alnwick URC Charity	£75.00	£0.00	Room hire
St James's Alnwick URC Charity	£295.00	£0.00	Room hire
St James's Alnwick URC Charity	£48.00	£0.00	Room hire (Ukraine event)
The Northumberland Estates	£100.00	£0.00	Bike Track Lease
Davidson & Son	£55.62	£9.28	Materials
Agilico	£21.20	£3.53	Monthly copying charges
Sutcliffe Play Ltd	£42.96	£7.16	Replacement parts for play area
Worknest	£3,969.34	£661.56	Year 2 fee for HR system incl H&S
Broxap Limited	£2,269.20	£378.20	10 fingerposts (to be refunded by Hardy's)
James N McLean	£298.20	£34.19	New compressor and materials
CBS World	£338.34	£0.00	Order of Service for Remembrance Day
Lionheart Radio & Media	£439.28	£0.00	Platinum Jubilee Music Concert fee
Northumberland County Council	£15,656.40	£2,609.40	Spring & Summer bedding and extra grass cuts
J Pibworth	£257.13	£42.86	Zoom licence fee, stationery, bulb planting equipment
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>£26,355.05</b>	<b>£3,946.30</b>	

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

Name	Amount	VAT Element	Description
Biffa	£154.94	£25.82	Trade waste (Aug 2022)
Barclays Bank DD	£22.00	£0.00	Bank Charges (Aug - Sept 2022)

BT	£75.70	£0.00	Telephone charges Oct 2022 (Cem)
Anglian Water	£8.43	£0.00	Water Charges (Cemetery)
Corona Energy DD	£44.18	£2.10	Monthly electricity charges (Aug 22)
Northumberland County Council	£13,802.16	£5.83	Payroll (Sept 2022)
British Gas	£30.90	£0.00	Monthly gas contract
Anglian Water	£220.84	£0.00	Water Charges (Allotments)
Anglian Water	£13.88	£0.00	Water Charges (Rob Foun)
BT	£95.80	£15.97	Telephone charges Oct 2022 (Office)
Biffa	193.68	£32.28	Trade waste (Sept 2022)
<b>TOTAL DD PAYMENTS</b>	<b>£14,662.51</b>	<b>£82.00</b>	

**RESOLVED: To approve the payments of £26,355.05 and note the Direct Debit payments of £14,662.51.**

**b) Bank Reconciliation**

The Assistant to the Town Clerk issued the Bank Reconciliation at 31<sup>st</sup> October showing cash in the bank as £479,463.43. All transactions to date had been reconciled to the accounting system with no variances.

**RESOLVED: To approve the Bank Reconciliation for October 2022.**

**c) Budgetary Controls**

The Assistant to the Town Clerk explained that the budgetary control reports for October 2022, showing the receipts and payments for each Committee and current balances for each budget line, would be sent out shortly.

**C22/87 Warm Hubs**

The Town Clerk reported that a list of the Warm Hubs/Spaces in Alwick was needed. He advised that the Town Council had received two applications for funding for Warm Hubs/Spaces had been received from Alwick Playhouse and Alwick Youth Hostel.

Councillor Symmonds how the Town Council would evaluate the value for money of the Warm Hubs/Spaces.

Councillor G Watson advised councillors could visit the Warm Hubs/Spaces and report back to the Town Clerk.

Councillor Wearn wondered how well used the current Warm Hubs/Spaces were.

Councillor Broom thought it was important that the Town Council let people know about the Warm Hubs/Spaces.

Councillor Wearn felt a Warm Hub/Space flyer could be produced for the Forum event on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

**RESOLVED: The Town Clerk and Mayor to evaluate and approve applications for Warm Spaces and allocate funding.**

**C22/88 Committee Vacancies**

The Town Clerk advised there were two committee vacancies for Chair and Vice Chair of Finance & Policy.

Councillor Symmonds was happy to be Chair of Finance & Policy and was duly approved.

Councillor Swinbank was happy to be Vice-Chair of Finance & Policy and was duly approved

**RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Symmonds as Chair of Finance & Policy and Councillor Swinbank as Vice Chair of Finance & Policy.**

**C22/89 Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Refresh – update**

The Town Clerk explained that Peter Biggers had done a good job on the scoping project so was being recommended to be the Town Council's supporting consultant.

Councillor Lyford felt that Community Engagement could be done as a separate part of the refresh work and could be undertaken by the other shortlisted consultant.

Councillor Wearn supported Councillor Lyford's suggestion.

Councillor Symmonds felt that using Peter offered continuity but would like to see more people involved with relevant expertise when needed in the process.

The Town Clerk advised that other needs will be identified by the stakeholder group.

Councillor Broom felt Peter Biggers should have authority to identify and used other consultants.

**RESOLVED: To commence the refresh of the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, appoint Peter Biggers as the Town Council's supporting consultant and use other consultants with expertise in specialist areas as and when needed.**

**C22/90 Housing Needs Assessment - update**

Councillor Lyford gave a summary of the Housing Needs Assessment report. She explained that there was a need to understand the different types of affordability and that there needed to be more adaptive accommodation and more 2 and 3 bedroom properties needed.

A recent meeting about community led housing had included a mapping conversation and identified that the best people to run them are Town and Parish Councils.

She added that there could be help with the issues of housing for young people by reallocating 1-bedroom older people's accommodation.

She was requesting funding to undertake a feasibility study.

The Town Clerk asked if there was a financial led model. Councillor Lyford advised there were several different ones including bonds.

Councillor Symmonds supported the request for financial support for a feasibility study.

**RESOLVED: Councillor Lyford to bring a costed proposal for a feasibility study to the next Full Council meeting for approval.**

Councillor Broom thought there was county council land sitting idle which could be used.

Councillor Harrington felt it could be a regular Alnwick Forum item.

**C22/91 Correspondence**

The Town Clerk advised he would circulate the correspondence the following day.

**C22/92 Any Other Urgent Business**

Councillor Symmonds reported that a card and present could be sent to Councillor Allcroft once she was home.

Councillor Symmonds advised that the King's Coronation steering group should meet as soon as possible to decide the content and involvement of St Clouds University.

Meeting ended at 8.40pm