BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

13 MAY 2024

PRESENT: Councillors Drew (the outgoing Town Mayor), Ewart, Foote-Wood, McLean & Turnbull (from item 11)
Also in attendance: Teesdale Mercury
Officers: Mr Clark (Town Clerk) & Ms C Atkinson (RFO)

The outgoing Town Mayor, Cllr Drew opened the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25
Councillor Ing was proposed and seconded in his absence. There were no other nominations.

Resolved – (a) That Cllr Ing be elected Town Mayor for Municipal Year 2024/25; (b) It was further resolved that Cllr Ing would sign his declaration of Office at the next Full Council Meeting (17 June 2024).

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024/25
Councillor Foote-Wood was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

Resolved – That Cllr Foote-Wood be elected as Deputy Town Mayor for Municipal Year 2024/25.

It was agreed by those present that Cllr Drew continues to Chair the meeting

3. DECLARATIONS OF OFFICE
The newly elected Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr Foote-Wood duly signed his Declaration of Office.

4. APOLOGIES
Apologies were received from Cllr's Ing, Blake, Thompson & Connelly.

No apologies were received from Cllr Bigge.

Resolved – That the submitted apologies be accepted.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 10/May/19 refers), Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. No declarations were made.

6. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
(1) Council Meeting – 25 March 2024

Resolved – That the minutes be accepted as being a true and accurate record.

7. EN BLOC ITEMS

This is a report arising from the decision at Minute 72/Aug/04 to amalgamate a number of agenda items so that the accompanying recommendations can be moved 'en bloc'. Any Member has a right to speak on any of the listed items, but it is hoped that discussion can be kept to a minimum.

The items included in the report were as follows:

(1) Services Committee – 15 April 2024 – Draft minutes
(2) Partnership Committee – 29 April 2024 - Draft minutes
(3) Planning Committee – 02 May 2024 Draft minutes

Resolved – That the en bloc items be received and noted.

8. UPDATES, AND REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES

From the meetings outlined above at item 7.

The Partnership Committee approved under the councils Donations Policy an award of £400 to the Northern Dales Richard III Group to support the 550th anniversary of Richard III becoming Lord of Barnard Castle by having a medieval equestrian (in full armour), and attendant lead the 2024 Meet parade in May.

In line with the current policy the grant award is ratified by full council.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and (b) That the grant to the Northern Dales Richard III group be ratified.

9. REPRESENTATIONS WITH EXTERNAL BODIES & REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The Council's current representative on each relevant body can make a verbal update at the meeting.

(1) Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum - (Cllr Turnbull)

The Clerk attended the last meeting, and reported on the plans for the annual migration of travellers to Appleby. The work to secure the Shawbank stopover point by Farrens was welcomed. The decision by Starforth Parish Council to have the gate/barrier in place at Ullathorne's Mill, prior to the Lower Demesnes security being in place was a concern. The bollards on the Demesnes will be in operation from the end of the Meet weekend. Residents have been advised by letter, and asked for their continued cooperation.

(2) Larger Local Councils Forum – (Clerk & Cllr Thompson)

Only issue of note was the awaiting of revised Financial Regulations from NALC.

(3) The Witham Hall Ltd

Nothing to report.

(4) Dawson Cottages Trust (Cllr Ewart & McLean)

All properties are occupied, with one person on the waiting list. Cllr Ewart referred to obtaining additional insurance for Trustees not covered by the Town Council.

(5) A66 CLG (Cllr's Drew & Thompson)

Cllr Drew reported a legal challenge to the scheme has been made. The Community Liaison Group (CLG) is no longer in operation. It will now come off the standing list.

(6) St Mary's Barnard Castle Hall Association (Cllr Connelly)

In the absence of Cllr Connelly no report of any meeting was possible.

10. REVIEW OF THE 2023/24 MAYORAL YEAR (CLLR DREW)

Received – A report on the 2023/24 Mayoral year.
The outgoing Town Mayor, Cllr Drew, referred to her report.

Resolved – (a) That the report of Mayoral Activity be received; and
(b) That the cordial thanks of the Council be extended to Councillor Laura Drew, on the manner in which they have conscientiously carried out the Mayoral role during the Municipal Year 2023/24; (c) That thanks be extended to the Mayor's Consorts: Michael, Nathaniel, Corinne, and Cleo Drew; and (d) That thanks be extended to Cllr Turnbull for substituting for the Mayor on Merchant Navy Day.

11. COUNCIL'S STANDING COMMITTEES

Received - report on committee membership (Appendix A).

Resolved - (a) That the information is received and noted; (b) That Cllr's Chatterjee and Ewart fill the vacancies on the Planning Committee; (c) That Cllr Foote-Wood fill the vacancy on the Services Committee; and (d) That at the first scheduled meeting in the municipal year of each committee, a Chair and Vice-Chair will be nominated and voted upon.

12. REPRESENTATIONS WITH EXTERNAL BODIES & REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Received – A report presenting a list of bodies to which the town council nominated members, and reaffirming the arrangements for reporting relevant business to the council.

Resolved – (a) That, for the Municipal Year 2024/25, this Council's representatives on the various bodies listed be as follows:

Teesdale Residents' and Travellers Forum – **Cllr Turnbull**

Larger Local Councils Forum – **Clerk & Cllr Foote-Wood**

The Witham Hall Ltd – **The Town Mayor***

Dawson Cottage Trust – **Cllr's Ewart & McLean**

St Mary's Barnard Castle Hall Association – **Cllr Connelly**

*The Witham Hall Ltd request the Town Mayor be the representative.

The A66 CLG as a disbanded group are removed from the list.

(b) That the Town Council reaffirms the reporting arrangements set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

13. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S AND/OR EMPLOYEES MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES

Resolved – That the Council confirms and agrees to renew its employees' and Council's membership of the following bodies:

(i) Society of Local Council Clerks
(ii) County Durham Association of Local Councils
(iii) National Allotment Society
(iv) Open Spaces Society

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

14. CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURED RISKS

Resources Committee resolved in November 2018 (Minute 40/Nov/18 refers), that the Town Council's insurance policy be maintained with Zurich Municipal. The current long term agreement the council has reduces the premium by 5% each year and runs to 2027-28.

A full copy of the insurance schedule is maintained in the office.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

15. DATES, TIMES OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Presented - A schedule of the dates, times of Council meetings and Partnership, Services, Resources and Planning Committees during the Municipal Year 2024/25.

It was confirmed that all committee and council meetings commence at *6.00 p.m. on Monday's unless otherwise stated.

*The **Planning Committee** will meet within two weeks of published applications relating to the parish. Meetings will be commence at 5.30pm or 5.45pm or otherwise.

Resolved – That the following schedule of dates and times of all meetings be approved and noted for Municipal Year 2024/25.

Partnership Committee	Services Committee	Resources Committee	Council
01 July 2024	15 July 2024	03 June 2024	17 June 2024
21 October 2024	07 October 2024	02 September 2024	16 September 2024
16 December 2024	02 December 2024	04 November 2024	18 November 2024
03 February 2025	17 February 2025	06 January 2025	13 January 2025
28 April 2025	14 April 2025	10 March 2025	24 March 2025
			*12 May 2025

* Date could change due to elections

16. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25

(A) Internal Auditor

At the Annual Council meeting (Minute 14(a)/May/21 refers) it was determined that the Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2021/22 should be Mr Gordon Fletcher. In accordance with standard procedures, a decision in respect of the financial year 2024/25 is now sought.

Resolved – That Mr Gordon Fletcher be appointed as this Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2024/25.

(B) External Auditor

Mazars LLP were appointed as the town council's External Auditor for a period of 5 years from 2017. Mazars have been successful in the bidding for a further 5 years from 2022/23.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

17. APPOINTMENT OF BANKERS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25

It has been determined that Barclay's Bank PLC should be this council's banker. In line with standard procedures, a decision in respect of the financial year 2023/24 is now sought.

Following a discussion in relation to Barclays Bank closure in 2025, it was agreed the councils bankers will be reviewed within this financial year following an exploration of other options open to the council.

Resolved – (a) That Barclay's Bank PLC be appointed as this Council's bankers for the financial year 2024/25 subject to a further review in November 2024.

18. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND STANDING ORDERS

Resolved – (a) That the councils adopted Financial Regulations & Standing Orders be approved; and (b) That the adopted Financial Regulations & Standing Orders be reviewed at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025.

19. NOTICE OF MOTION

Cllr Laura Drew submitted the following written motion:

Cllr Drew, in her capacity as Mayor, has been approached by Cultura Trust, the organisation leading the proposal of the former NatWest bank building. They are progressing with their project and would like the Town Council to increase its level of engagement in the project – firstly by sending someone to their meetings (in a similar way that the Town Council is represented on other external bodies), and secondly by becoming a signatory to the joint Memorandum of Understanding (attached).

Resolved – a) That the Town Council continue to support the project, and sign the MoU; and (b) That Cllr Drew be the representative from the Town Council at their monthly meetings.

20. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL OFFICE OPENNING HOURS

Currently Woodleigh is open from 10.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday. The recommendation to council is to make a small amendment to 10.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Thursday, and 10.00am to 3.00pm on Friday.

Resolved – That the revised office opening times be Monday to Thursday 10.00am to 4.00pm, and Friday 10.00am to 3.00pm.

21. EAST WARD VACANCY

Following the decision by the council to fill the East Ward vacancy by co-option this is to inform members that no expressions of interest in the vacancy have been received. interest.

Recommendation – (a) That the information is received and noted; and (b)That members hold the East Ward vacancy until full council elections in 2025 and not to re-advertise.

Appendix A **Item 11**

COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES & ELECTION OF CHAIRS 2024/25

1. Introduction

This report presents a draft nomination roll for committee membership, in line with Council Resolution (6b/May/14).

2. Background to the Report

At 2014 Annual Council Meeting, it was decided that existing committee places would stand without any changes and would remain in place for the full term of the council (four years), unless any individual councillor indicated a wish to change to another committee (Minute 6b/May/14 refers).

Any additional, or vacant seats on committees may be proposed, seconded and voted on at this meeting as an amendment to the resolution confirming the roll-over of existing memberships. **There are vacant seats on the Planning (2) and Services (1) Committees**

3. Conclusion

Once the membership of each committee is reaffirmed, a Chair for each Committee needs to be elected for 2024/25, to be nominated from within the eligible members (Standing Order 4f(vi)). Vice chairs, if required by each committee, will be voted upon at the first ordinary meeting of that committee.

Recommendations – (a) That Members receive and approve the following composition of committees for 2024/25*; and

Partnership (7+5)	**Planning (5)**	**Resources (6)**	**Services (7)**
Peter Bigge	Paul Ing	Laura Drew	Peter Bigge
Pauline Connelly	Mike McLean	Ian Blake	Rima Chatterjee
Rima Chatterjee	Laura Drew	Chris Foote-Wood	Pauline Connelly
Chris Foote-Wood	Vacant	Paul Ing	Ian Blake
Jan Thompson	Vacant	Jan Thompson	Fiona Turnbull
Fiona Turnbull		Mike McLean	Valerie Ewart
Valerie Ewart			Vacant
+TCR Hub Rep			
+Bowes Museum Rep			
+Witham Rep			
+BCCL Rep			
+The Meet Rep			

* subject to changes from item 2

(b) That a Chair be appointed to each of the four standing committees from amongst those members duly nominated at this meeting.