

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING****15 OCTOBER 2012**

(NOTE – Prior to the meeting and in accordance with the decision at Minute 186(2)/Mar/09, a 15-minute slot was allocated for public participation. Two questions had been raised in advance and 7 members of the public were present during the 15-minute slot.)

The questions were put to the Council and responses were given.

PRESENT:- Councillor Blissett (Deputy Town Mayor)(in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Grady, Mrs Hamilton, Hinchcliffe (Minutes 74 to 77 inclusive), Peat, Robinson, Watson and Wood.

Also in attendance:- Mr Bosworth (Outgoing Town Clerk) and Mrs Bosworth (Minutes 74 and 75 inclusive); Mr Carter and Mr Scott (Durham County Council)(Minutes 74 to 77 inclusive); 7 members of the public.

Officers:- Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Plant (Assistant Clerk).

74. APOLOGIES:- Councillors Harrison (Town Mayor) and Yarker.

75. PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING CLERK

The Deputy Town Mayor (Councillor Blissett) introduced the item, welcomed Mr and Mrs Bosworth and read out a citation in respect of Mr Bosworth. Mr Bosworth made a speech of reply. A number of Members then spoke about Mr Bosworth's attributes.

Resolved - That the Council formally records its thanks to Mr Bosworth for his service to the Town Council as Clerk and wishes him well on the occasion of his retirement.

The Deputy Town Mayor then formally presented Mr Bosworth with a leaving gift.
(NOTE - It was stressed that the gift had been personally funded by past and present Members and not from the Council's budget.)

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 72(a)/Sep/12 refers), Members were asked whether they had any personal, pecuniary 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. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

77. THE COUNTY DURHAM PLAN

In accordance with the agreed arrangement at Minute 68(b)/Sep/12, Mr S. Carter and Mr G. Scott, from Durham County Council's Spatial Policy Team, attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the County Durham Plan Preferred Options Consultation. A 'question and answer' session ensued.

Resolved – (a) That Mr Carter and Mr Scott be thanked for their attendance.
(b) That, in order for this Council to formulate a considered response in respect of the County Durham Plan Preferred Options Consultation, a Special Council meeting be convened on Monday, 22 October and the Modernisation Committee meeting scheduled for that evening be postponed.

78. COUNCIL MEETING – 3 SEPTEMBER 2012 – MINUTES

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

79. SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING – 10 SEPTEMBER 2012 – MINUTES

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

80. ‘EN BLOC’ ITEMS

Submitted – In accordance with Minute 72/Aug/04, a further set of items with the accompanying recommendations to be moved ‘en bloc’. The five items considered at the meeting were as follows:-

(1) Planning Committee Meeting – 3 September 2012 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(2) Finance Committee Meeting – 17 September 2012 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(3) Planning Committee Meeting – 1 October 2012 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(4) Christmas Festival Committee Meeting – 1 October 2012 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(5) Town Mayor’s Activities

It was reported that, since the last Council meeting on 3 September 2012, the Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor (as indicated) had attended the following:-

6 September	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress (Mrs P. Harrison)) Teesdale Community Resources Fishing Contest Prize-giving (The HUB).
16 September	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Spennymoor Town Council’s Civic Service and Reception (Trinity Methodist Church, Spennymoor).
29 September	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) John Blenkiron and Sons Limited, Dedication and Formal Opening (19 Galgate).
30 September	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Richmond Town Council’s Mayor’s Civic Sunday Service (Town Hall, Richmond).
1 October	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Picture This 1 st Birthday Prize Draw (Horsemarket).
5 October	(Deputy Town Mayor accompanied by the Deputy Town Mayoress (Mrs K. Blissett)) Spennymoor Town Council’s Charity Evening (Town Hall, Spennymoor).
12 October	(Deputy Town Mayor accompanied by the Deputy Town Mayoress) Chilton Town Council’s Charity Night (Workingmen’s Club, Chilton).

Resolved – That the information be noted.

81. REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

1) Finance Committee - 2013/14 Budget – Initial Consideration

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Finance Committee, at Minute 20 of the set of Minutes at sub-section (2) of Minute 80 above, in respect of the Council's 2013/14 budget initial consideration, that no specific guidelines should be imposed on the budgetary process.

A number of issues were highlighted, including the Council's reserves target of £50,000, 2013 Elections Costs, ongoing staffing costs following the change of the Town Clerk, the further delay in the introduction of the Corporate Plan, the fact that all Members had been contacted regarding possible 2013/14 projects and the probable loss of double taxation because of the current localisation of Council Tax benefits review.

Discussion ensued and specific reference was made to the Council's earmarked reserves situation.

Resolved – (a) That approval be given to the recommendation of the Finance Committee that no specific guidelines should be imposed on the 2013/14 budgetary process.

(b) That the Finance Committee carries out a full scrutiny of this Council's earmarked reserves situation during the 2013/14 budgetary process.

2) Dog Fouling Working Group – Dog Fouling Issues

Pursuant to Council Minute 37/Jun/12, it was reported that the first meeting of the Dog Fouling Working Group took place on 27 September as a first stage of this Council's investigations in respect of tackling dog fouling issues. Members' views were sought on the matter and Members were also advised that the Teesdale Action Partnership was currently seeking the views of local councils on the 'Green Dog Walking' initiative which had been piloted in other areas of County Durham with a view to extending the project in Teesdale.

Resolved – That the following recommendations of the Dog Fouling Working Group be approved:-

- (i) that this Council agrees in principle to the 'Green Dog Walking' initiative;
- (ii) that this Council agrees to work with the Teesdale Action Partnership to explore further solutions to tackle dog fouling issues; and
- (iii) that an article in respect of dog fouling issues be included in the next edition of this Council's Newsletter.

3) Community Events Working Group

Pursuant to Council Minute 62/Sep/12, it was reported that the Community Events Working Group was constituted and met on 1 October to consider options to formulate a policy on the specification and future delivery of a community events programme for the Council. A number of issues were discussed by the Working Group and it was subsequently agreed to make the following recommendations to this Council meeting:-

(a) That a community events policy be recommended to Council, with the objectives that the Council should:

- Maintain and enhance some traditional town-focused festivities
- Indirectly support local charities by supporting charitable events
- Create a better sense of community, bringing Barnard Castle's residents together on a regular basis
- Enhance Barnard Castle as an attractive visitor destination.

- Bring more people into Barnard Castle and indirectly support our local businesses and retailers.
- Shape a programme to ensure high quality and creativity in events.

(b) That, in accordance with Finance Committee Minute 20(c)/Sep/12, the Working Group outline a growth bid of £10,000 to the Finance Committee meeting scheduled for 19 November 2012, to constitute an inclusive events programme of £14,000 for 2013/14, in line with the developed policy.

(c) That a report be submitted to Council on 15 October 2012, setting out the purpose, policy objectives and projected benefits of the Council's events programme from 2013/14.

The draft Community Events Policy was submitted for Members consideration.

Resolved – That the recommendations of the Community Events Working Group be approved and that the Community Events Policy, as submitted, be adopted.

82. REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES

Submitted – A report providing updates on some of this Council's representation on other bodies. The two items included in the report were as follows:-

(1) Teesdale Local Councils' Forum – Meeting on 17 September 2012

It was reported that, at the Forum's meeting on 17 September 2012, matters discussed included The County Durham Plan and updates on Teesdale Action Partnership, Small and Medium Councils' Forum and the Standards Board were also provided.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(2) Barney Guild – Meeting 19 September 2012

It was reported that, at the Guild's meeting on 19 September 2012, matters discussed included future events, Portas Funding and Association of Town Centre Managers, CCTV and the Guild's website. It was also reported that local businesses were being encouraged to install Christmas trees to the façade of premises to enhance the Town's Christmas lighting display.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

83. COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATION ON VARIOUS BODIES – VACANCIES

It was reported that Councillor Mrs Hamilton had resigned from two of this Council's various bodies and Members were asked to consider the filling of the vacancies.

Resolved – (a) That consideration of this Council's representative on St Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association be deferred to the Annual Council Meeting scheduled for 13 May 2013.

(b) That Councillor Mrs Grady be appointed as this Council's representative on The Witham Hall Management Committee.

84. TOWN CLERK'S SERVICE AS SCHOOL GOVERNOR

It was reported that the Council's approval was required for the incumbent Town Clerk to serve, in a personal capacity, as an Academy School governor.

Resolved – That this Council authorises Mr King to serve in a personal capacity as an academy school governor in so much as this neither interferes nor impinges on his duties as Town Clerk.

85. SERVICE AND PROJECT UPDATES

Submitted – A report providing updates of some of this Council's services and current projects. The three items included in the report were as follows:-

(1) Floral and Open Spaces Issues

It was reported that a meeting of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group took place on 17 September 2012 and the following matters were discussed:-

(i) Garden of Remembrance Project

Pursuant to Note 8/May/12 and Council Minute 30(1(i))/Jun/12, an update was provided in respect of the Garden of Remembrance project, including the fact that the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership had agreed that the project, in its existing layout, could be started, albeit there was an issue around the style of the litter bins that Durham County Council had offered to supply free of charge. Details of those companies requested to submit estimates, the subsequent quotations received for the works to be carried out and the consequential actions of the Working Group were outlined. It was confirmed that the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership had subsequently endorsed the Working Groups actions.

It was also reported that investigations had been made into the provision of an additional Memorial plaque in respect of local people who had died in other conflicts since World War II and the Working Groups preferred wording and location of the plaque was circulated. It was noted that the War Memorials Trust has subsequently requested that this Council's name and crest be not included on the plaque as they do not exist on the other plaques and it changes the focus of the new plaque. It was also noted that public opinion should be sought to ensure that there was overall support for such a proposal.

Finally, it was suggested that investigations should be made for the 'odd' wooden bench in the Garden of Remembrance, dedicated to the Durham Light Infantry, to be resited by the Durham Light Infantry War Memorial located in the grounds of The Bowes Museum.

Resolved – (1) That the actions of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group in respect of the works to the Garden of Remembrance project be approved.

(2) That the following recommendations of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group be agreed:-

(a) That, in respect of the installation of an additional Memorial plaque to recognise local people who have died in other conflicts since World War II:-

(i) that the following wording be approved:-

'To remember all those from Barnard Castle who have died serving their Country in conflict or in peacekeeping missions around the world since World War II';

(ii) that public opinion be sought, via this Council's Newsletter and the local press, to ensure that there is overall support for the installation of an additional Memorial plaque; and

(iii) that the plaque be installed on the Boer War Memorial.

(b) That investigations be made for the 'odd' wooden bench, dedicated to the Durham Light Infantry, to be resited by the Durham Light Infantry War Memorial located in the grounds of The Bowes Museum.

(ii) Galgate Greens

It was reported that the Working Group had considered improvement options for the Galgate greens' perimeters. It was confirmed that the state of the Galgate greens had been raised with Durham County Council's Highways department but that they in turn had confirmed that their budget would not stretch to any improvements.

Discussion ensued and whilst most of the Working Groups recommendations were agreed with the preferred improvement option, i.e. the installation of additional concrete bollards to the two main greens, was disputed.

Resolved – (a) That the following recommendations of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group be agreed:-

- (i) that this Council oversees a Galgate Greens Improvement Project as part of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership;
- (ii) that the anticipated under-spend of £300 from the 2012/13 Floral and Open Spaces budget be earmarked as this Council's contribution towards the Galgate Greens improvement project.

(b) That this Council works with Durham County Council's Conservation Officer and Highways department to determine the most appropriate and aesthetic improvement option for the Galgate Greens Improvement Project.

(2) Poppy Appeal

It was reported that arrangements for the 2012 Poppy Appeal were well underway. It was emphasised that procedures had been put in place to ensure that the arrangements generally worked smoothly and that it was imperative that this Council abided by the strict rules laid down by the Royal British Legion regarding collection dates. It was also reported that, Barclays Bank was being accommodating by allowing the use of their facilities to store the collection tins and that the counting process would, for the first time, be carried out by the two Service Administrators at the Bank.

The Council's arrangements for Remembrance Sunday were also well advanced, with the majority of the basic arrangements in place.

Resolved - That the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Sunday arrangements be noted.

(3) Christmas Festival Event 2012

Pursuant to Minute 63/Sep/12, it was confirmed that arrangements for the Christmas Festival Event 2012 were at an advanced stage and that as the Mini Golf hut would not be available for use as Santa's Grotto this year, because the Scar Top improvements would have commenced, an alternative grotto had been located. It was noted that full details of the event would be published in this Council's 'Christmas Festival Events leaflet' and in the local press.

Resolved – That the situation be noted.

86. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

It was determined that, due to further information being received today, the submitted report be noted and that further consideration of this item be deferred to the Special Council meeting scheduled for 22 October 2012.

87. REVIEW OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES – CONSULTATION UPDATE

Submitted – Pursuant to Minute 159(3)/Dec/11, a report providing an update in respect of Durham County Council’s review of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) in County Durham, including that Stainton Grove’s HWRC would remain open and that an alternative facility would be pursued and developed as the consultation had concluded that it was strategically important to retain a HWRC in the Barnard Castle area.

Resolved – That the updated situation be noted.

88. PROPOSED WARD BOUNDARY EXTENSION

It was determined that, due to time constraints, consideration of this item be deferred to the Special Council meeting scheduled for 22 October 2012.

89. TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE EVENT

It was reported that Durham County Council, County Durham Association of Local Councils and Durham Rural Community Council had organised a ‘Town and Parish Council Update Event’ to include presentations on the current position on the asset transfer of community buildings across the county and an overview of emerging policies in relation to the Localism Act.

Resolved – That Councillor Robinson and the Clerk be authorised to attend the Town and Parish Council Update Event on 29 October 2012.

90. BARTLEMERE - KALAFAT STREET LIGHTING SCHEME

It was determined that, due to time constraints, consideration of this item be deferred to the Special Council meeting scheduled for 22 October 2012.

91. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (in respect of Minute 92 below)

Resolved – That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to at Minute 92 below on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Parts 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

92. ‘A JOURNEY THROUGH TEESDALE’ – REPLACEMENT MINI GOLF COURSE – APPOINTMENT OF STONE CONTRACTOR

Submitted – A report summarising the up to date situation in respect of the appointment of the stone contractor for the creation of the stone features as part of the replacement mini golf course - *A Journey Through Teesdale*. It was noted that, as the project funders’ requirements had not been achieved, the original brief submitted to the contractors would be revised and further invitations to quote would be issued on a wider scale. It was highlighted that the revised timetable to continue the progression of the project would require the Council to approve delegated powers to prevent the project stalling any further.

A brief discussion ensued and reference was also made to the future of the adjacent play area.

Resolved – (a) That delegated powers be given to a special meeting of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group to appoint a stone contractor to the mini golf project – *A Journey Through Teesdale*.

(b) That a bid be made to Durham County Council in respect of this Council assuming responsibility/ownership of the Scar Top play area.