

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

21 JANUARY 2013

(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. No questions had been raised in advance and 2 members of the public were present during the 15-minute slot.)

PRESENT:- Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor)(in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Cooke, Mrs Grady, Hinchcliffe (Minutes 118A to part 125 inclusive), Peat, Robinson, Watson, Wood and Yarker.

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

118A. CONTINUATION MEETING SCHEDULING

At this point of the meeting, it was determined that, due to the bad weather conditions, a Continuation Council Meeting would be required.

Resolved - (a) That a Continuation Council Meeting, to consider deferred items from this agenda, be scheduled for 28 January 2013.

(b) That the Christmas Festival Committee meeting scheduled for 28 January 2013 resultantly be rescheduled.

118B. APOLOGIES:- Councillors Mrs Bailes and Mrs Hamilton.

119A. 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.

Members were also reminded that, if they had a beneficial interest in any land/property within Barnard Castle parish, then they had a disclosable pecuniary interest with respect to setting the Precept. If a relevant Member with such an interest did not submit a dispensation request, then that Member would be committing a criminal offence by participating and voting on the item at a meeting. Therefore, to comply with the requirements of Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, it was **resolved** that:-

A dispensation be granted to all Members who hold a disclosable pecuniary interest (arising from holding a beneficial interest in land or a licence to occupy land in the parish), to enable their participation in Minute 125, so as not to impede the Town Council's ability to transact its business in considering its budget and setting a Precept for 2013/14.

There were no other declarations of interest at this juncture.

120. COUNCIL MEETING – 3 DECEMBER 2012 AND CONTINUATION COUNCIL MEETING – 10 DECEMBER 2012 – MINUTES

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

121. 'EN BLOC' ITEMS

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

122. SERVICE AND PROJECT UPDATES

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

123. DURHAM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – COMMUNITY PANELS

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

124. ROYAL GARDEN PARTY

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

125. PRECEPT AND BUDGET 2013/14

Submitted – A report summarising the deliberations of the Finance Committee on a prospective budget for 2013/14, incorporating the Committee's recommendations in respect of the rental and charging arrangements and summarising the Cumulative Fund situation, including earmarked reserves. It was highlighted that budgetary bids and recommendations had been sought from a number of other Committees and Working Groups and the resultant information had been an integral part of the Finance Committee's deliberations. The report concluded with recommendations in respect of the Precept and the overall 2013/14 budget.

Background details for each budgetary item were provided and the budgetary figures for 2012/13 were included for comparative purposes, including projected 'end-of-year' figures for that year. Reference was made to the fact that 21 potential new items/projects had been considered during this budgetary process for inclusion in the 2013/14 budget. However, of those, 10 items had been recommended for deferral by the Finance Committee and an additional 2 items were recommended for deferral by full Council (Minute 112/Dec/12 refers).

It was confirmed that the recommended Precept of £165,257, an increase of £16,615 compared with the Precept for 2012/13, would result in an increase of £21.40 per year (or approximately 41.15 pence per week) for a Band D property in Barnard Castle. The annual contribution would be £97.61 compared with the 2012/13 contribution of £76.20. It was also confirmed that a Local Council Tax Support Scheme grant of £16,466 would be received for 2013/14 from Durham County Council and that this amount needed to be taken into account and deducted from the Precept demand.

Discussion ensued in respect of a number of budgetary items, including the recommended budgetary sum for Community Events, alternative ways to communicate with residents following the decision to discontinue this Council's Newsletter, to discontinue the production of a Christmas Festival Events leaflet with a subsequent budgetary saving of £1,000 and that the Flatts Woods interpretation signs should be restored, with investigations being made for the project to be a part of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership.

Resolved – (a) That the following budgetary recommendations of the Finance Committee be approved:-

- (i) that the following rentals and charges be agreed:-

(A) **Ten Fields** (Barnard Castle Football Club Rental) £60 in 2013/14 (previously determined) (no change) 2014/15 rental will be determined following a comprehensive meeting to review the 'hold over' situation and to enable 12 months' notice to be given).

(B) **Allotments** (per plot) £40 in 2013/14 (previously determined) (no change) £40 in 2014/15 (no change)

(C) **Mini Golf**

£2.00 per round for all users (increase of £1.00

£0.50 lost ball (no change)

£5.00 damaged club (no change)

£6.00 group ticket (up to 4 players – saving £2.00) (new option)

£10.00 loyalty ticket (7 rounds, bought in advance – saving £4.00)(new option)

That charges to be set on a 'per season' basis with a 'two-for-one' promotion for the launch event and first week of opening

That, with effect from 1 April 2013, the setting up of a 'Mini Golf Holding Account be approved'.

- (ii) that production of this Council's Newsletter be discontinued with alternative ways of communicating with residents being used.
- (iii) that Ten Fields budgetary allocation from 2013/14 onwards be amalgamated into the Play Areas budgetary allocation.
- (iii) that any Contingency budgetary requirement be transferred from the Council's general reserves, up to a maximum of £1,500.
- (iv) that any call upon the Town Council with respect to election costs over and above the £1,440 identified in the revenue budget be transferred from the Council's general reserves, up to an inclusive maximum of £5,750.
- (v) that no contribution from the Council's reserves be included in the 2013/14 budget.
- (vi) that a 2013/14 precept of £147,791 be approved (being the Town Council's net budget demand of £164,257 less the LCTSS Grant of £16,466).
- (vii) that the revenue budget for 2013/14 be as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

(c) That the Christmas Festival Events leaflet be discontinued with alternative free advertising methods being utilised.

(d) That the Public Seats Earmarked Reserves include the restorations of Flatts Woods interpretation signs, with investigations being made for the project to be a part of the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership.

(NOTE - Councillor Wood requested that it be minuted that he disagreed with the agreed 2013/14 revenue budget and specifically in respect of the budgetary item 'Community Events'.)

**126. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
(IN RESPECT OF ITEMS 127 AND 128 BELOW)**

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

127. RISK ASSESSMENT AND FINANCIAL

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

128. REFERRALS FROM Floral and Open Spaces Working Group

Consideration of this item was deferred to the Continuation Council meeting.

CONTINUATION COUNCIL MEETING

28 JANUARY 2013

PRESENT:- Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor)(in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Mrs Grady, Hinchcliffe, Peat, Watson, Wood and Yarker.

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

118C. APOLOGIES:- Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Robinson.

119B. 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.

120. COUNCIL MEETING – 3 DECEMBER 2012 AND CONTINUATION COUNCIL MEETING – 10 DECEMBER 2012 – MINUTES

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

121. '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 six items considered at the meeting were as follows:-

(1) Planning Committee Meeting – 17 December 2012 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(2) Planning Committee Meeting – 7 January 2013 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(3) Floral and Open Spaces Working Group Meeting – 8 January 2013 – Notes

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

(4) Editorial Board Meeting – 14 January 2013 – Notes

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

(5) Finance Committee Meeting – 14 January 2013 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(6) Town Mayor’s Activities

Since the last Council meeting on 3 December 2012, it was reported that the Town Mayor had attended the following:-

12 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress (Mrs P. Harrison)) Barnard Castle School’s Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.
15 December	Darlington & District Federation of Townswomen’s Guild’s Carol Service (United Reformed Church).
16 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Spennymoor Town Council’s Civic Carol Service (Town Hall, Spennymoor).
16 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Craigmere House’s Christmas Party (Barnard Castle Cricket Club).
17 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Chilton Town Council’s Civic Carol Service (St Aidan’s Church, Chilton).
19 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Richardson Community Hospital’s Carol Service.
20 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Teesdale School’s School Leavers Celebration Evening.
25 December	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Richardson Community Hospital’s and other local Care & Nursing Homes’ ‘Christmas Day Visit’.
7 January	(accompanied by the Town Mayoress) Darlington Borough Council’s New Year Viennese Spectacular (Civic Theatre, Darlington).
11 January	Informal meeting with Deborah Jenkins of Barnard Castle Vision (44B Galgate) (Costa Coffee).
17 January	Publicity photo-shoot to mark the commencement of ScarTop/Mini Golf redevelopment works (Scar Top).

Resolved – That the information be noted.

122. SERVICE AND PROJECT UPDATES

Submitted – A report providing an update of one of this Council’s services and current projects. The item included in the report was as follows:-

(1) Mini Golf – A Journey through Teesdale

Pursuant to Minutes 92(a)/Oct/12 and 115(5)/Dec/12, it was reported that the course and stonework contractors had now collaborated on finalising their design proposals for both the layout of the course and the outline of carving to the six monoliths which would form

part of the course and these were circulated at the meeting. It was confirmed that the nine holes of the course would depict:-

1. River Tees
2. Market Cross (Monolith on hole)
3. The Witham (Monolith beside hole)
4. The Bowes Museum (Monolith on hole)
5. Hills and Dale
6. Forces of Teesdale
7. Egglestone Abbey (Monolith beside hole)
8. Bridging the Tees (Monolith on hole)
9. Barnard Castle (Monolith beside hole)

Resolved – That approval be granted to proceed with construction and installation of the replacement mini golf course, based upon the designs submitted.

123. DURHAM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER – COMMUNITY PANELS

It was reported that the new Police and Crime Commissioner for Durham intended to establish a series of Community Panels to monitor local policing and crime issues to represent the community safety needs of the localities of its specific area. It was confirmed that all local councils had been invited to nominate a representative to become a member of its associated panel.

Resolved – That Councillor Harrison be authorised to represent this Council on the Police and Crime Commissioner for Durham Community Panel.

124. ROYAL GARDEN PARTY

It was reported that, in accordance with the standard arrangements, this Council had been invited (by the County Durham Association of Local Councils) to put forward a nominee to attend a Royal Garden Party to be held on 30 May 2013, with a ballot to be held if necessary. The criteria were outlined and it was confirmed that only Councillor Yarker had attended a previous Garden Party and could not therefore be nominated again.

Resolved – That Councillor Blissett be nominated to attend the 2013 Royal Garden Party.

126. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (in respect of Minutes 127 and 128 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 Minutes 127 and 128 below on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Sub-sections 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

127. REFERRALS FROM FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

(1) Floral Displays Tendering Arrangements

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group in respect of which competent companies should be asked to submit quotations for the 2013/14 tub planting to provide the Town with an 'all year round' floral display. Information was provided on prospective tenderers and the scheduling of the work.

It was noted that the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group would consider any subsequent quotations received and make an appropriate recommendation as to which business should carry out the 2013/14 tub planting to the full Council meeting scheduled on 4 March 2013.

Resolved – That the following recommendations of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group be approved:-

(a) That the following businesses be asked to submit quotations for the overall floral display contents for the 2013 summer and 2013/14 winter/spring:-

- (i) Eggleston Hall Gardens;
- (ii) Elm Ridge Gardens Limited, Darlington;
- (iii) Ravensworth Nurseries; and
- (iv) Sam Turner & Sons, Piercebridge.

(b) That, subject to the advice received from the chosen business, the floral displays be installed early May so that the Summer floral displays are established in time for the Meet weekend.

(2) Floral Displays Watering Service

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group following the Working Groups' consideration of the subsequent quotations received after articles had been published in the local press to highlight the difficulties being encountered in respect of the floral displays watering service in an attempt to encourage local business interest to carry out the watering service.

Resolved - That the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group's recommendation to accept the tender from Lowfield Gardens (Barnard Castle), in the sum of £2,400, in respect of the floral displays watering service be approved.

(3) Galgate Greens Improvement Project

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Floral and Open Spaces Working Groups' consideration of quotations received so that the overall costs of the project could be established so that an application could be completed and submitted to the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership Community Initiatives Fund in respect of the Galgate Greens Improvement Project works.

It was confirmed that separate meetings had taken place with Durham County Council's Conservation Officer and Highways department to determine the most appropriate and aesthetic improvement option and plans had been provided by the Highways officer that had taken conservation area and highway design guidance into account.

Resolved - That the Floral and Open Spaces Working Group's recommendation to accept the tender from Fairbairns Limited (Stainton Grove), in the sum of £6,470 (excluding VAT) in respect of the Galgate Greens Improvement Project be accepted subject to the necessary funding being secured.

128. RISK ASSESSMENT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Finance Committee, at Minute 41 of the set of Minutes at sub-section (5) of Minute 121 above, following a review by that Committee of this Council's Risk Assessment and Financial Management document.

Resolved – That the Risk Assessment and Financial Management document, as now submitted, be approved.