

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

13 MAY 2013

PRESENT:- Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor)(in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Cooke, Deacon, Mrs Grady, Hinchcliffe (Minutes 1 to 14 inclusive), Kinch, Peat, Robinson, Watson and Yarker.

Also in attendance:- 6 members of the public.

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

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

Councillor Harrison was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

Resolved – That Councillor Harrison be elected Town Mayor for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

Councillor Harrison then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He thanked the Council for his election and reported that his wife, Mrs Pauline Harrison, would be the Town Mayoress.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

Councillor Watson was proposed but not seconded. Councillor Blissett was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

Resolved – That Councillor Blissett be elected Deputy Town Mayor for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

Councillor Blissett then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES:- None.

4. 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.

5. DELIVERY BY COUNCILLORS OF THEIR DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Clerk confirmed that all Councillors had signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

6. COUNCIL MEETING – 15 APRIL 2013 – MINUTES

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

7. '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 four items considered at the meeting were as follows:-

(1) Planning Committee Meeting – 15 April 2013 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

(2) Dog Fouling Working Group Meeting – 29 April 2013 – Notes

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

(3) Allotments and Play Areas Working Group Meeting – 29 April 2013 – Notes

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

(4) Finance Committee Meeting – 29 April 2013 – Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

8. REVIEW OF 2012/13 MAYORAL YEAR (COUNCILLOR HARRISON)

The Town Mayor (Councillor Harrison) reported verbally on his 2012/13 Mayoral Year, based on the previously circulated list of events which had been attended. He thanked a number of individuals (including the Town Mayoress, Mrs Pauline Harrison) and the office staff for their support during an enjoyable and worthwhile Year. Discussion ensued.

Resolved – (a) That the report be received.

(b) That the cordial thanks of the Council be extended to Councillor Harrison and Mrs Harrison and Councillor John Blissett and Mrs Karen Blissett on the manner in which they have conscientiously carried out the Mayoral role during the Municipal Year 2012-13.

9. REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

(1) Dog Fouling Issues

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Dog Fouling Working Group at Note 7 of the set of Notes at sub-section (2) of Minute 7, when ideas were sought as to how best to spend the available budget of £500 plus the additional £500 that had been obtained through Teesdale Action Partnership's Natural and Built Environment's Small Grants Scheme for Barnard Castle Town Council's 'Poop Scoop Swoop' project.

Resolved - a) that this Council purchases biodegradable poop bags, establishes distribution points throughout the town, e.g. Visitor Information Point, and advertises the facility accordingly;

b) that this Council acts as a central ordering point for any other Teesdale local councils wishing to purchase poop bags so that a greater bulk purchasing discount can be achieved; and

c) that this Council works with Durham County Council's Civic Pride Team to develop a new anti-poop poster.

(2) Allotment Issue – Harmire Road – Plot 1 Flooding/Drainage Issue

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Allotments and Play Areas Working Group at Note 29(ii) of the set of Notes at sub-section (3) of Minute 7, when consideration was given to a flooding/drainage issue in respect of Harmire Road - Plot 1 so that drainage solutions and associated costs could be investigated.

It was recognised that this Council would struggle to fund any solution works from the Allotment Improvements Holding Account as the costs were likely to be in their thousands. However, it was agreed that these costs should be established so that an assessment could be made into the future use of the plot or whether relevant funding streams could be investigated.

Resolved – That drainage solutions and associated costs be investigated in respect of Harmire Road - Plot 1.

(3) Allotment Issue – Crook Lane – Plot 6 Drainage Issue

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Allotments and Play Areas Working Group at Note 29(iii) of the set of Notes at sub-section (3) of Minute 7, when consideration was given to a drainage issue in respect of Crook Lane - Plot 6 and possible solutions were identified.

Resolved – That this Council works in conjunction with the Teesdale YMCA and Teesdale School to regenerate Crook Lane - Plot 6 at a cost of no more than £300 (+VAT) funded from the Allotments Holding Account and provide boundary planting.

(4) Play Area Issue – Marwood Drive - Flooding Issue

Reference was made to the recommendation of the Allotments and Play Areas Working Group at Note 30(i) of the set of Notes at sub-section (3) of Minute 7, when consideration was given to a flooding issue at Marwood Drive that was affecting an adjacent property's garden. It was noted that whilst new drainage solutions were installed in the playing field during the site's revamp in 2008, after a recent site inspection had been carried out, the flooding on the field appeared to be as bad as it ever was.

Resolved – (a) That a CCTV survey be carried out on Marwood Drive's drains, at a cost of £120 (+VAT), to establish any required works to alleviate the flooding situation; and

(b) That the Town Council acknowledges the need to manage land effectively. In that light, the Town Council requires the Clerk to write to English Heritage, Raby Estates and Durham County Council to establish their progress in stabilising the castle wall and report to a future meeting of the Council.

10. REVIEW OF DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, EMPLOYEES AND OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES – INCORPORATING A REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

Submitted – A report outlining a scheme of delegation, based upon the Terms of Reference of the Council's Committees and the job specification of the Town Clerk. A Member moved an amendment to the recommendation in that 'Grants to Other Bodies' should be transferred from the Partnership Committee to the Resources Committee but the motion failed. Another Member moved a further amendment to the recommendation in that all powers and duties relating to traffic management should be under the Planning Committee's remit but the motion failed.

It was noted that the Town Council did not delegate any of its powers or duties to any other local authority.

Resolved – That the scheme of delegation (as appended) and the Terms of Reference of Committees, as submitted, be approved for the municipal year 2013-14.

11. RECEIPT OF NOMINATIONS TO COMMITTEES

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 152(b)/Apr/2013, when a mechanism for members to be appointed to its four new principal committees for the 2013-14 municipal year was agreed, a report outlining the draft nomination roll for committee membership, based on

the expressed preferences of members and the draw for precedence, which took place on 7 May 2013.

Resolved - That the memberships of the Council's four principal Committees for the Municipal Year 2013/14 be as follows:-

Partnership (6)	Planning (4)	Resources (8)	Services (6)
Tony Cooke	John Blissett	John Blissett	Tom Deacon
Tom Deacon	Frank Harrison	Tony Cooke	Angela Grady
Angela Grady	David Kinch	John Hinchcliffe	Frank Harrison
Roger Peat	John Watson	David Kinch	John Hinchcliffe
Thom Robinson		Thom Robinson	Roger Peat
John Yarker		John Watson	John Yarker
		Vacancy	
		Vacancy	

12. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Submitted – The Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, as previously approved at Minute 148(1)/Apr/13.

Resolved – That the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, as submitted, be adopted for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

13. REVIEW OF CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE

Submitted – A report summarising the concurrent functions and associated expenditure incurred by this Council and a list of services carried out by this Council that are paid for through the precept but are also services delivered by Durham County Council elsewhere in the County was provided.

Resolved– That the concurrent functions and associated expenditure be noted.

14. REVIEW OF REPRESENTATION ON OR WORK WITH EXTERNAL BODIES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING BACK

Submitted – A report seeking appointments and nominations in respect of various bodies for the Municipal Year 2013/14. Specific reference was made to the arrangements for reporting relevant business to the Council.

Resolved – (a) That, for the Municipal Year 2013/14, this Council's representatives on the various bodies listed be as follows:-

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|----|---|-----------------------|
| a. | Barnard Castle Business Guild (1) | Cllr Peat |
| b. | County Durham and Cleveland Branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks (1) | Clerk |
| c. | Friends of the Upper Demesnes (2) | Cllrs Peat and Watson |
| d. | Hall Benefaction (1) | Cllr Cooke |

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|----|---|------------------------------|
| e. | NHS County Durham (County Durham Primary Care Trust) – Rural Ambulance Implementation and Monitoring Group (1) | Cllr Cooke |
| f. | Police & Crime Commissioner Community Panel | Cllr Harrison (Town Mayor) |
| g. | St Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association (1) | Cllr Blissett |
| h. | Smaller Local Councils' Forum | Cllr Kinch and Clerk |
| i. | South West Durham Heritage Corridor Partnership | Cllr Cooke |
| j. | The Stannard Trust (1) | Cllr Yarker |
| k. | Teesdale Local Councils' Forum (2) | Cllrs Kinch and Watson |
| l. | Teesdale Marketing Limited (1) | Cllr Peat |
| m. | Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum (2) | Cllrs Blissett and Watson |
| n. | Trustees of Dawsons Cottages (2) | Cllrs Hinchcliffe and Yarker |
| o. | The Management Committee of Trustees of the Barnard Castle Mechanics Institute and Witham Hall Community Association(1) | Cllr Mrs Grady |

(b) That the Town Council reaffirms the reporting arrangements, as submitted.

15. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S AND/OR EMPLOYEES' MEMBERSHIPS OF OTHER BODIES

(A) Resolved – That the Council confirms and agrees to renew its membership of the following bodies:

- (i) County Durham Association of Local Council's; and
- (ii) National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardens.

(B) Resolved– That the Council confirms and agrees to renew its employees' membership of the following body:

- (i) Society of Local Council Clerks.

16. REVIEW OF INVENTORY OF LAND AND ASSETS INCLUDING BUILDINGS AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Resolved – That the inventory of land and assets, as submitted, be noted.

17. REVIEW AND CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURED RISKS

Submitted – A report summarising the arrangements for insurance undertaken by the Council for 2013/14, including the fact that an exercise to compare the costs of other available insurance cover had been carried. The scheduled of insurance was outlined and it was noted that a full copy of the insurance schedule is maintained in the office for inspection.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

18. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Submitted – A report outlining four operational policy and procedure documents for adoption for the 2013-14 municipal year, including the Complaints Procedure, Policy for

Handling Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998 Policy, Press/Media Policy, and which had been revised to reflect the Town Council's current structures and pertinent decisions.

Resolved – That the submitted documents be approved and adopted.

19. SETTING THE DATES, TIMES AND PLACE OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE FULL COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Submitted – A schedule of the dates, times and place of Council meetings during the Municipal Year 2013/14, as previously approved at Minutes 135(1)/Mar/13 and 155/Apr/13.

Resolved – (a) That the following schedule of Council meetings during the Municipal Year 2013/14 (all Mondays) be confirmed:-

2013	2014
8 July 2013	20 January 2014
7 October 2013	24 March 2014
2 December 2013	12 May 2014 (Annual Meetings)

(b) That it be confirmed that the official starting time for all the Council meetings listed be 6.00 p.m., with a public participation 'slot' comprising the first 15 minutes at each ordinary meeting, if invoked.

(c) That it be confirmed that Council and Committee meetings be held in the Dawson Room, Woodleigh, prior to the reopening of The Witham when meetings will relocate to that building.

20. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2013/14

(A) Internal Auditor

It was determined at Minute 11/May/12, that the Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2012/13 should be Mr Gordon Fletcher. A decision in respect of the financial year 2013/14 was sought.

Resolved – That Mr Gordon Fletcher be appointed as this Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2013/14.

(B) External Auditor

It was reported that, in accordance with Section 3 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, BDO LLP had been appointed as this Council's External Auditor for a period of five years. This appointment commenced on 1 September 2012.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

21. APPOINTMENT OF BANKERS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2013/14

It was determined at Minute 12/May/12, that Barclays Bank PLC should be appointed as this Council's Bankers for the financial year 2012/13. A decision in respect of the financial year 2013/14 was sought.

Resolved – That Barclays Bank PLC be appointed as this Council's Bankers for the financial year 2013/14.

22. EAST WARD VACANCY – CO-OPTION

It was reported that, following the recent Town Council election situation, i.e. 11 valid nominations were received for 12 vacancies therefore those who were validly nominated were automatically elected as councillors, this Council consequently had a vacancy in the East Ward. The process for filling this vacancy was outlined.

Resolved – (a) That the co-option process be commenced with a deadline for the receipt of co-option applications be fixed as Monday, 10 June 2013.

(b) That the vacancy be advertised via notice boards, the internet and coverage obtained via the local press gratis.

(c) That a Special Council meeting to consider the co-option applications be scheduled on Monday, 17 June 2013.

(d) That the co-opted candidate be voted onto this Council be means of a secret ballot.

23. DEFERMENT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was determined that, due to time constraints, the meetings of the Council's four Committees, that were due to take place following this Annual Council meeting, be deferred until the scheduled first meeting of each Committee.