

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**

**12 MAY 2014**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Harrison (the outgoing Town Mayor)(in the Chair for Minute 1 only), Councillor Blissett (Town Mayor)(in the Chair from Minute 2 onwards); Councillors Deacon, Mrs Grady (Minutes 1 to 25 inclusive), Hinchcliffe (Minutes 1 to 24(2) inclusive), Kinch, Mrs Moorhouse, Peat, Robinson and Yarker.

**Also in attendance:** County Councillor Bell (Minutes 1 to 10 inclusive); Five members of the public (one of whom filmed the meeting by prior agreement); One member of the press.

**Officers:** Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Plant (Deputy Clerk).

**1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014-15**

Councillor Blissett was proposed and seconded. Councillor Mrs Moorhouse was nominated but not seconded (having declined the nomination). There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Blissett be elected Town Mayor for the Municipal Year 2014-15.

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

**2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014-15**

Councillor Mrs Moorhouse was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Mrs Moorhouse be elected Deputy Town Mayor for the Municipal Year 2014-15.

Councillor Mrs Moorhouse then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**3. WELCOME TO THE NEW WEST WARD COUNCILLOR**

It was reported that, pursuant to Minute 101B/Mar/14, two valid nominations had been received for the West Ward vacancy. As neither candidate had withdrawn their nomination papers by the deadline on 10 April 2014, an Election took place on 8 May 2014. Consequently, Gary Marshall had been duly elected and became a Councillor for the West Ward when he made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office on 9 May 2014. The Town Mayor welcomed Councillor Marshall to his first meeting as a Councillor.

**4. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES:- None.**

**5. 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.

## **6. NOTICE OF MOTION SIGNED BY THREE MEMBERS REQUESTING THAT A PREVIOUS DECISION OF THE COUNCIL BE RESCINDED**

Submitted – A notice of motion signed by three members requesting that Minute 111/Mar/14, whereby the council's committee membership and the basis the membership was determined, should be rescinded and that alternative arrangements for determining committee membership should be invoked. However, prior to this motion being put to the vote, a subsequent amendment was put forward by the same members that negated part of the original motion and added a further consideration. Discussion ensued and a member requested that Standing Order 3r (recording of votes) be invoked for any voting on the matter.

The amendment was then seconded and a vote by a show of hands created the following result:-

For the amendment: Cllrs Blissett (Town Mayor), Cooke, Harrison, Kinch, Hinchcliffe, Mrs Moorhouse and Peat.

Against the amendment: Cllrs Deacon, Robinson and Yarker.

Abstentions: Cllrs Mrs Grady and Marshall.

Further discussion ensued. The substantive motion was then put to a vote by a show of hands, which created the following result:-

For the motion: Cllrs Blissett (Town Mayor), Cooke, Harrison, Kinch, Hinchcliffe, Mrs Moorhouse and Peat.

Against the motion: Cllrs Deacon, Robinson and Yarker.

Abstentions: Cllrs Mrs Grady and Marshall.

**Resolved** – (a) That the nomination of councillors to the four standing committees previously indicated by their choices made in 2014, will stand without any changes and will remain in place for the full term of the council (four years), unless any individual councillor should wish to change to another committee when (b ) below shall apply.  
(b) Where an individual councillor wishes to change from their chosen committee to a new committee, a nomination selection process will only be carried out after their notification on intention is given to the Town Clerk, at least four weeks prior to the Annual Council Meeting, or in the event of a committee vacancy being notified or they can, by mutual consent, agree to an exchange with an appropriate committee member.  
(c) When a new council member is elected or co-opted, that councillor will be allocated to the appropriate committee vacancy or they can, by mutual consent, agree to an exchange with an appropriate committee member.  
(d) That the Resources Committee appoints a working group to conduct a full review of the 2014-15 Standing Order and 2014-15 Financial Regulations, as soon as possible, with regard to their interpretation and application to a small town council with points (a), (b) and (c) above being included within the reviewed Standing Orders.

## **7. COUNCIL MEETING – 24 MARCH 2014 – MINUTES**

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

## **8. SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING – 7 MAY 2014 – MINUTES**

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

## **9. '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 eight items considered at the meeting were as follows:-

### **(1) 2014 Spring/Summer Events Meeting - 21 March 2014 - Notes**

**Resolved** – That the Notes be received.

### **(2) Planning Committee Meeting - 24 March 2014 - Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be received.

### **(3) Planning Committee Meeting - 7 April 2014 - Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be received.

### **(4) Special Services Committee Meeting - 7 April 2014 - Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be received.

### **(5) 2014 Spring/Summer Events Meeting - 16 April 2014 - Notes**

**Resolved** – That the Notes be received.

### **(6) Special Partnership Committee Meeting - 23 April 2014 - Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be received.

### **(7) Planning Committee Meeting - 23 April 2014 - Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be received.

### **(8) 2014 Autumn/Winter Events Task & Finish Group Meeting - 2 May 2014 – Notes**

**Resolved** – That the Notes be received.

## **10. REVIEW OF 2013-14 MAYORAL YEAR (COUNCILLOR HARRISON)**

The outgoing Town Mayor (Councillor Harrison) reported verbally on his 2013-14 Mayoral Year, based on the previously circulated list of events that 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.

**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 2013-14.

(c) That the Town Council's Annual Report for 2013-14 be received.

## **11. 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.

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 2014-15.

## 12. RECEIPT OF NOMINATIONS TO COMMITTEES

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 111(a)/Mar/2014, when a mechanism for members to be appointed to its four new principal committees for the 2014-15 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 6 May 2014. Two of the identified vacancies arising from the ballot were subsequently filled by the recently elected West Ward member and the remaining vacancy was filled by a member not already allocated to the relevant committee. Reference was made to Standing Order 4d(vi), whereby full council must vote on the chairmanship of each committee, to be nominated from within the eligible members. However, a member proposed that all the chairs nominated during the 2013-14 municipal year should stay in position to retain consistency but this was not supported.

**Resolved** - That the memberships of the Council's four principal Committees, and the duly appointed chairs, for the Municipal Year 2014-15 be as follows:-

<b>Partnership (7)</b>	<b>Planning (5)</b>	<b>Resources (7)</b>	<b>Services (6)</b>
Thom Robinson (Chair)	Frank Harrison (Chair)	Tony Cooke (Chair)	Roger Peat (Chair)
Tony Cooke	John Blissett	John Blissett	Angela Grady
Tom Deacon	David Kinch	Tom Deacon	Frank Harrison
Angela Grady	Gary Marshall	Frank Harrison	John Hinchcliffe
John Hinchcliffe	John Yarker	David Kinch	Gary Marshall
Sandra Moorhouse		Sandra Moorhouse	John Yarker
Roger Peat		Thom Robinson	

## 13. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Submitted – The Town Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, as previously approved at Minute 107(3b) and (3c)/Mar/14. It was noted that, since the approval of the Financial Regulations, NALC's revised model financial regulations for local councils had been published and the subsequent effects to this council's financial regulations were outlined.

**Resolved** – That the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, as submitted, be adopted for the Municipal Year 2014-15.

## 14. 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 were paid for through the precept but were also services delivered by Durham County Council elsewhere in the County.

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

## 15. 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 2014-15.

**Resolved** – (a) That, for the Municipal Year 2014-15, this Council's representatives on the various bodies listed be as follows:-

- a. Barnard Castle Business Guild (1) Councillor Peat
- b. County Durham and Cleveland Branch of the Clerk

Society of Local Council Clerks (1)

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| c. Friends of the Upper Demesnes (2)   | Councillors Peat and Mrs Grady              |
| d. Hall Benefaction (1)  | Councillor Cooke                            |
| e. NHS Durham Dales, Easington & Sedgefield CCG – Rural Ambulance Implementation and Monitoring Group (1)                  | Councillor Cooke                            |
| f. Police & Crime Commissioner Community Panel   | Councillor Harrison                         |
| g. St Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association (1)  | Councillor Blissett                         |
| h. Smaller Local Councils' Forum   | Councillor Kinch and Clerk                  |
| i. South West Durham Heritage Corridor Partnership   | Councillor Cooke                            |
| j. Teesdale Local Councils' Forum (2)  | Councillors Kinch and Mrs Moorhouse         |
| k. Teesdale Marketing Limited (1)  | Councillor Peat                             |
| l. Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum (2)   | Councillors Blissett (Town Mayor) and Cooke |
| m. Trustees of Dawsons Cottages (2)  | Councillors Hinchcliffe and Yarker          |
| n. The Management Committee of Trustees of the Barnard Castle Mechanics Institute and Witham Hall Community Association(1) | Councillor Mrs Grady                        |

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

#### **16. 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.

#### **17. REVIEW OF INVENTORY OF LAND AND ASSETS INCLUDING BUILDINGS AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT**

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

#### **18. 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 2014-15. The schedule of insurance was outlined and it was noted that a full copy of the insurance schedule was maintained in the office for inspection.

**Resolved** – That the report be noted.

## **19. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Submitted – A report outlining nine operational policy and procedure documents for adoption for the 2014-15 municipal year, including the Complaints Procedure, Policy for Handling Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998 Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Media Policy and Procedure, Ordering Procedure for Works, Goods and Services, Public Participation Procedure and Travel Allowance Policy. Reference was made to the Media Policy and Procedure and a member proposed an amendment that the requirement for prior written confirmation in respect of any requests to the recording of meetings be removed but this was not approved.

**Resolved** – That the submitted documents be approved and adopted.

## **20. 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 2014-15, as previously approved at Minute 107(3(E))/Mar/14.

**Resolved** – (a) That the following schedule of Council meetings during the Municipal Year 2014-15 (all Mondays) be confirmed:-

<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
30 June 2014	19 January 2015
22 September 2014	23 March 2015
17 November 2014	11 May 2015 (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 meetings be held in The Witham Room, The Witham and Committee meetings (except Planning Committee) be held in The Board Room, The Witham.

## **21. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2014-15**

### **(A) Internal Auditor**

It was determined at Minute 20(A)/May/13, that the Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2013-14 should be Mr Gordon Fletcher. A decision in respect of the financial year 2014-15 was sought.

**Resolved** – That Mr Gordon Fletcher be appointed as this Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2014-15.

### **(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.

## **22. APPOINTMENT OF BANKERS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2014-15**

It was determined at Minute 21/May/13, that Barclays Bank PLC should be appointed as this Council's Bankers for the financial year 2013-14. A decision in respect of the financial year 2014-15 was sought. Discussion ensued and concerns were raised as to whether this council was receiving best value through Barclays Bank Plc.

**Resolved** – (a) That Barclays Bank PLC be appointed as this Council's Bankers for the financial year 2014-15.

(b) That the Resources Committee be authorised to carry out a review of the Council's current banking arrangements with a subsequent report to be submitted to full Council.

### **23. REVIEW OF POLICE ATTENDANCE AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

It was reported that, during the 2013-14 municipal year, the Police had attended the October and March council meetings. Based on the agreed dates of the council meetings during the 2014-15 municipal year, the preferred meetings that a Police representative should attend needed to be determined.

Members were reminded that in addition to the Police attending council meetings, the public were invited to attend the regular PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings should they wish to raise specific issues.

**Resolved** - That a representative from the Police be invited to attend the Council meetings scheduled for 17 November 2014 and 23 March 2015.

### **24. UPDATES AND REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES**

#### **(1) Partnership Committee**

##### **(a) Mayoral Event**

It was reported that the Mayor's Charity fundraising event had taken place on 9 May 2014. The event had been well attended and included a number of local town mayors. Once the total costs of the event were taken into account, the anticipated surplus would be donated to the outgoing Mayor's nominated charity, Teesdale YMCA. A formal cheque presentation would be arranged at a date convenient to Teesdale YMCA.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

##### **(b) 2014 Spring/Summer Events**

It was confirmed that a 2014 Summer Events programme, formulated by the Task and Finish Group had been approved by the Partnership Committee with the Group and the Clerk authorised to finalise the event details.

**Resolved** - That the information be noted.

#### **(2) Services Committee**

##### **(a) Big Spring Clean 2014**

It was confirmed that the litter pick, as part of the Big Spring Clean 2014, was carried out on 5 April by a team of 12 volunteers who collected 17 bags of rubbish. It was noted at the meeting that the litter pick had extended to include the pathway between Teesdale School and Teesdale Leisure Centre and concerns were expressed at the amount of litter that had been collected from that area.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

##### **(b) Galgate Greens Improvement Project**

It was confirmed that improvement works to the green north of the Garden of Remembrance, which consisted of the removal of the concrete bollards, installation of new bollards and the re-instatement of eroded earth and grass, had been carried out.

It was also confirmed the two 'odd' bollards on the green to the south of the Garden of Remembrance had been removed and the grass re-instated.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

### **(3) Resources Committee**

It was reported that, at the Resources Committee meeting on 10 March, consideration was given to a recommendation of the Services Committee that the Public Seats 2013-14 under spend, and future Public Seats under spends, should be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account. It was acknowledged that this would allow a build up of funds towards public seating repairs and maintenance in the future.

**Resolved** – That the Public Seats 2013-14 under spend, and future Public Seats underspends, be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account.

### **25. CLERKS UPDATE**

Submitted – A report outlining recent activities undertaken by the Clerk and staff summarised the Clerk's forthcoming leave and provided updates in respect of correspondence with Durham County Council over a range of issues, including the boundary extension proposal, the Demesnes asset transfer, the Wednesday market and an update in respect of an allotment matter.

**Resolved** – (a) That a Special Council meeting be scheduled on Monday 19 May 2014, prior to the Partnership Committee meeting on that evening, to determine an allotment matter.

(b) That the information be noted.

### **26. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Further to the approved 2014-15 budgetary allocation to support the development of a Neighbourhood Plan, a summary of the process initiation was provided. Discussion ensued and it was considered prudent to enquire with neighbouring parish council's as to whether they wished to be part of the process.

**Resolved** – (a) That the Clerk registers an application to designate Barnard Castle, based upon the parish boundary, as a neighbourhood area.

(b) That the Planning Committee consider how best to progress this issue as part of its 2014-15 work programme.

(c) That neighbouring parish councils be contacted to enquire as to whether they wish to be part of a consortium to consider a single Neighbourhood Plan covering a larger area.

### **27. COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS – NOMINATION OF CANDIDATE FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VICE-PRESIDENT**

It was reported that, as a result of the recent passing of CDALC's Executive Committee's Vice-President, Cllr Bill Waters, a Special General Meeting was required to select a new vice-president. Nominations were to be submitted by 31 May 2014.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Bill Jeffrey, of Peterlee Town Council, be nominated for the post of Vice-President of CDALC's Executive Committee.