

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
6 JULY 2015**

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Moorhouse (Town Mayor) (in the Chair); Councillors Cooke, Mrs Grady, Harrison, Marshall, Blissett, Deacon, Robinson and Hinchcliffe.

Also in attendance: One member of the public.

Officers: Mr King (Town Clerk), Mrs Woodward (Deputy Clerk)

46. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Kinch and Yarker.

Resolved – That Cllrs Kinch's and Yarker's apologies be accepted.

47. 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 that point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need had arisen during discussion.

48. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 49. BELOW)

Resolved – That, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 §1(2), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter referred to at item 49, below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Councillor Mrs Moorhouse read out the following statement:

"I would like to draw your attention to the fact that this item is confidential and is being debated in exempt session in accordance with the council's Honorary Freeman policy but chiefly because it deals with a named individual. Firstly, it would be unfair to that individual to presume the outcome of today's meeting and, secondly, if we decide to approve this nomination tonight, his agreement is needed before we are ready to inform the papers and the wider world.

There have been occasions in recent weeks when information which was confidential has been shared outside the council. I need to remind you all that our adopted Code of Conduct requires that members will not "disclose information which is confidential or where disclosure is prohibited by law." That prohibition includes the Access To Meetings Act under which this item is being considered.

We go into exempt session to preserve the rights of an individual like Mr Swinbank or to preserve our commercial position and that is about ensuring we get value for money on behalf of precept payers in this town. There are times when to be effective and to act properly, the council must meet in confidence. Failing to respect that undermines the council and certainly breaches the Code of Conduct."

49. HONORARY FREEMAN SCHEME - NOMINATION

Received –a report formally submitting a nomination to the council's Honorary Freeman Scheme. It was noted that the process, including nomination, consideration and decision, remained confidential and that it should not be disclosed outside the meeting, until conferment of the award was agreed with the nominee. Members voted unanimously to move the motion.

Resolved – (a) That the title of Honorary Freeman be conferred on Mr Joseph Swinbank for the eminent services he has rendered to the Town of Barnard Castle and;

(b) That presentation of a suitable address, by means of a written citation, by the Town Mayor, take place, as soon as practical, at a time and venue convenient to Mr Swinbank.