

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

21 MARCH 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs Moorhouse (Town Mayor) (in the Chair), Blissett, Peat, Mrs Grady (from Minute 115.), Cooke, Yarker, Hinchcliffe, Sutherland and Mrs Thompson.

Also in attendance: Two members of the public; one members of the press.

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

A minute's silence was held as a mark of respect for the passing of Honorary Freeman, Mr Joseph Swinbank.

110. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Harrison (due to ill health) and Councillor Kinch (personal reasons).

Resolved – That Cllr Harrison's and Kinch's apologies be accepted.

111. 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. None were declared at this juncture.

112. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Moorhouse, reported that on 21 April, she would host an afternoon tea party for all residents of Barnard Castle who were 90 or over. There would be a special something for anyone who had their 90th Birthday in 2016. On the evening, there would be a firework display and beacon lighting in celebration of HM The Queen's 90th Birthday.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

113. COUNCIL MEETING – 18 JANUARY 2016 – MINUTES

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

114. 'EN BLOC' ITEMS

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

1. Governance Task & Finish Group – 14 January 2016

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

2. Woodleigh Working Group – 14 January 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Notes be received.

3. Governance Task & Finish Group – 22 January 2016

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

4. Planning Committee Meeting – 25 January 2016

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

5. Governance Task & Finish Group – 17 January 2016

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

6. 2015/16 Events Task & Finish Group – 29 January 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Notes be received.

7. Governance Task & Finish Group – 4 February 2016

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

8. Planning Committee Meeting – 8 February 2016

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

9. Partnership Committee Meeting – 8 February 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Minutes be received.

10. 1940s Event Task & Finish Group – 11 February 2016

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

11. Governance Task & Finish Group – 11 February 2016

Resolved – That the Notes be received.

12. Planning Committee Meeting – 22 February 2016

Resolved – That the Minutes be received.

13. Services Committee Meeting – 22 February 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Minutes be received.

14. Governance Task & Finish Group – 23 February 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Notes be received.

15. 1940s Event Task & Finish Group – 1 March 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Notes be received.

16. Planning Committee Meeting – 7 March 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Minutes be received.

17. Resources Committee Meeting – 7 March 2016

Resolved – That the Draft Minutes be received.

18. Town Mayor's Activities.

It was reported that, since the Council meeting on 18 January 2016, the Town Mayor accompanied by her Consort (Mr Ian Moorhouse and Mrs E Gott), had attended the following:

24 January	Volunteers Celebration Service (Town Council, St Mary's Parish Church, Newgate)
26 January	Charity Curry Night (Hartlepool Borough Council, Spices Indian Restaurant, Marina, Hartlepool)
17 February	Talk (Dinner Group, St Mary's Parish Church, Newgate)
18 February	Charity Evening (Sunderland City Council, The Funky Indian Restaurant, Borough Road, Sunderland).

26 February	Civic Dinner (Hartlepool Borough Council, Flagship Restaurant, Hartlepool)
27 February	Mayor's Band Concert (Ferryhill Town Council, St Lukes Church Hall, Ferryhill)
2 March	Official Opening of The Kenneth King Sixth Form Centre by HRH Duke of Gloucester (Barnard Castle School)
2 March	Formal Opening of The Witham Hall by HRH Duke of Gloucester (Durham County Council, The Witham, Horsemarket)
5 March	Charity Evening (Colburn Town Council, Colburn Village Hall)
11 March	Launch of the Mini Golf Season (Town Council, Scar Top)
11 March	Charity Night (Ferryhill Town Council, Catholic Club, Dean Road, Ferryhill)
12 March	Mayor's Charity Dinner (Richmond Town Council, Cricket Club, Richmond)
13 March	Planting of the Volunteer Tree (Town Council, The Demesnes)
15 March	Wine & Cheese Fundraising Event (Spennymoor Town Council, Clarence Court, Clarence Street, Spennymoor)
16 March	Bus Launch MAX X75/75 (Arriva, Town Centre)
18 March	Shop Opening (Hays Travel, Horsemarket, Barnard Castle)

Resolved – That the information be noted.

115. UPDATES AND REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES

(1) PLANNING COMMITTEE

(i) Vacancy on Planning Committee

Following the resignation of former Councillor Marshall, a vacancy had arisen on Planning Committee.

Resolved – That a member be elected to Planning Committee (considered at Minute 117).

(2) PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

(i) Community Events 2016/17

(a) 1940s Event 24-26 June

A 1940s Event Task & Finish Group was established with delegated authority of £1,000 spend to oversee the 1940s Event 24 to 26 June. A community meeting was planned for 22 March.

(b) HM Queen's 90th Birthday Beacons 21 April

The 2015/16 Events budgetary underspend was to be used to fund a celebration event on 21 April, using the credit note for the cancelled fireworks from Christmas. English Heritage would light their beacon.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(3) SERVICES COMMITTEE

(i) Delivering Differently

A specification for grounds maintenance covering all the town council's areas of responsibility, including those to be transferred from Durham County Council, was to be prepared and circulated at Services Committee on 11 April. The existing Grounds Maintenance Service arrangements would continue until all the transfers of additional open spaces from DCC were concluded and the award of a new contract for grounds maintenance completed.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(4) RESOURCES COMMITTEE

(i) Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19

Resolved – That the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2016-19 be adopted.

(ii) Governance Arrangements

Resolved – (a) That all members return Councillor handbooks to the office in time to be updated with revised, approved policies for the municipal year 2016/17;

(b) That members sign for receipt of handbooks at the Annual Meeting on 9 May;

(c) That a briefing session on policy changes and the impact on members' responsibilities be held before the Annual Meeting on 9 May and;

(d) That a nominated first aider and fire warden, with appropriate training, be appointed for Woodleigh.

(iii) Civic Arrangements 2016/17

It was proposed that Mr Ian Kirkbride be formally appointed as the Town Council's official Town Crier, acknowledging the contribution he made to the success of a range of events in Barnard Castle.

Resolved – (a) That Mr Ian Kirkbride be appointed as the Town Council's honorary town crier and;

(b) That funding be identified, from the events budget, and estimates be sought either to:

(i) cover robe hire for a defined number of official appearances or

(ii) commission a set of robes with an embroidered crest.

116. CASUAL VACANCY – WEST WARD

Submitted – a report containing an overview of the actions taken following the resignation of former Councillor Gary Marshall on 29 February, when a casual vacancy was declared in the town council's West Ward. Durham County Council's Electoral Services defined the notice period for the vacancy from 2 March to 22 March. On 15 March, the Returning Officer had received the requisite number of signatories to call an election. It was confirmed that the election would be held on 5 May, the same day as elections for the Police and Crime Commissioner's office. Members were reminded that there was no budget allocated for elections in 2016/17. The costs of the polling station and electoral staff would be shared with Durham County Council. Members debated whether, or not, to issue polling cards.

Resolved – That polling cards be issued for this by-election on 5 May, at an additional cost of approximately £410 from general reserves.

117. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Following the resignation of former Councillor Marshall, it was noted that vacancies currently existed on Partnership and Planning Committees.

Resolved – (a) That Councillor Cooke be appointed to Planning Committee; and
(b) That Councillor Blissett be appointed as member on 1940s Event Task & Finish Group.

118. REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES

(a) Barnard Castle Business Guild

There was a meeting on 17 February. There was heated debate about the Wednesday market. The AGM was on 18 May.

(b) Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum

There was a new liaison officer. Further target hardening had been carried out at Stainton Grove. The Demesnes bollard had been fixed.

(c) Teesdale Local Councils Forum

There was a meeting on 17 February, with a presentation from Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner.

(d) Smaller Local Councils Forum

A meeting was held on 12 February, attended by Ron Hogg. There were changes to CDALC.

(e) Castle Walls Trust

Following the resignation of former Councillor Marshall, there was no nominated representative. Council originally resolved in 2014 (77/Sep/14) that, as the trust had yet to be constituted, the council should only offer support in principle pending the creation of a working constitution for the trust that was consistent with the council's legal powers to participate in it. That situation remained.

(f) Teesdale Marketing Ltd.

There was no update. The AGM was on 30 March.

(g) South West Durham Heritage Corridor Partnership

Councillor Cooke circulated a written report.

(h) Dementia Friendly Communities

A meeting of Durham Dementia Action Alliance was held on 22 February, attended by Councillor Blissett, in Councillor Harrison's absence. Dementia Awareness Week was 15 to 22 May. A Dementia café was opening in Barnard Castle in the Parish Hall on 20 May. Councillor Blissett and the Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Sandra Moorhouse, had met with the Services Manager (Durham), Alzheimer's Society. A meeting was to be organised for all stakeholders to look at the town becoming recognised formally as a dementia friendly town.

(i) Walkers are Welcome

Following the resignation of former Councillor Marshall, there was no nominated representative.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and
(b) That Councillor Mrs Thompson be nominated as the Council's representative on Walkers are Welcome.

119. CLERK'S UPDATE

Submitted – A report outlining recent activities undertaken by the Clerk and staff and providing updates in respect of correspondence, including Durham County Council and castle walls.

It was noted that under delegated powers:

- (i) A licence to occupy a room within Woodleigh was agreed with the Association of Teesdale Day Clubs on 4 March 2016.
- (ii) Heads of Terms were signed for the transfers associated with: Woodleigh Grounds, flower beds at the Bank and Pearson Terrace and The Demesnes and had been returned to the Assets Team at Durham County Council.
- (iii) A draft lease had been prepared and circulated to a prospective tenant of Ten Fields.

Scar Top Play Area/Mini Golf Freehold Asset Transfer

There were no outstanding issues associated with the Rural Development Programme for England (LEADER) grant terms to be novated to the town council. Similar assurance had been received from Heritage Lottery Fund and was with solicitors. Repairs to the play area needed to be subject to further inspection in April.

Asset and Service Transfer

Heads of Terms had been agreed regarding Woodleigh Grounds, Flower Beds at the Bank and Pearson Terrace and The Demesnes. Leases were now being prepared by Durham County Council.

Draft terms were awaited with respect to other floral and grassed areas, including Scar Top, Bridgegate and Galgate Greens and, also, public toilets in the Market Place and off Galgate. These would be divided between freehold, long leasehold, short leasehold and management agreements.

Wednesday Market

The town council took over sole responsibility for managing the town's Wednesday Market on 2 March. Traders were aware of the changes. Durham County Council Highways had requested that a management plan was prepared related to effecting the road closure and the parking suspension. A formal questionnaire was to be distributed to traders, shoppers and businesses – to be discussed at Services Committee on 11 April.

Woodleigh

The town council's occupancy of Woodleigh commenced on 21 March and this meeting of full Council represented its first official act in its new home. The tenancy on 44B Galgate expired 31 March.

Castle Walls

A statement was issued on behalf of the (nascent) castle walls trust, Gary Marshall, North East Civic Trust and Bond & Dickinson solicitors, representing Raby Estates.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted;

(b) That thanks be given to office staff, Councillors Peat and Blissett for helping with the move and;

(c) That volunteers be requested to help paint the old office at 44B Galgate.

120. REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

Submitted – a report setting out highlighted changes and suggested revisions following consideration and discussion by the Governance Document Review Task & Finish Group.

Resolved – (a) That the following governance documents be approved for the municipal year 2016/17:

- (i) Freedom of Information Policy
- (ii) Data Protection Policy
- (iii) Media Policy and Procedure
- (iv) Equality Policy
- (v) Ordering Procedure for Works, Goods and Services
- (vi) Financial Donations Policy
- (vii) Health and Safety Policy
- (viii) Scheme of Delegation
- (ix) Standing Orders
- (x) Financial Regulations

(b) That governance documents be cross referenced and tabled in final form for adoption at the Annual Council Meeting to be held on 9 May 2016.

121. NECA 20 YEAR TRANSPORT MANIFESTO - CONSULTATION

It was reported that the North East Combined Authority (NECA) had begun a consultation on a 20-year 'Transport Manifesto' that covered both urban and rural areas across the North East, including Durham. The consultation would look at every aspect of transport.

It was intended to 'empower this part of the North East and reinforce its position of being a national and international economic force'.

The Manifesto team was consulting widely for thoughts and suggestions. They had prepared a questionnaire on-line via the NECA website www.northeastca.gov.uk. It was also possible to phone (0191) 277 1156 for a paper copy to be posted out.

The closing date for responses was Friday 8th April 2016

Resolved – That members with an interest in the subject of the consultation complete the questionnaire.