

BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING

19 JUNE 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Moorhouse (Town Mayor) (in the Chair); Councillors Peat (in the Chair for item 28(i)), Blissett, Miss Blissett, Chatterjee, Child, Hallimond, Harrison, Kirkbride (from Item 30), Sutherland, Mrs Thompson and Wilkes.

Also in attendance: Mr Ian Kirkbride and Ms Emma Rowell (co-option candidates) (to Item 30); three members of the public; one member of the press.

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

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Having been duly notified prior to the meeting, a member of the public, Mr Gary Marshall, submitted two questions of the Town Council. Mr Marshall was not present at the meeting. The first question asked what the Town Council was doing to put pressure on Durham County Council to come up with a solution to the parking issues, heavy traffic and poor state of roads in certain parts of the town.

The Town Mayor answered that there had already been various traffic management and highways issues affecting the town, brought to the attention of the Town Council, and that concerns were being shared and discussions ongoing with Durham County Council. A written summary of these would be provided by the Clerk to Mr Marshall.

The second question, in relation to the land known as Bede Kirk, the site of the former police station, asked the town council to reassure residents of the town that there would be a full archaeological and historical investigation of the site before any building work started.

The matter was deferred for formal resolution in the council meeting, as part of the consideration of the request to register Bede Kirk as a town green (item 38).

27. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

None.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 12/May/17 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; none were declared at this juncture.

(i) Request for Dispensation

Received from Councillor Mrs Moorhouse – a request for dispensation under Section 33 of the Localism Act Act 2011, to speak and vote on all non-financial matters relating to The Friends of The Bowes Museum.

Resolved – That a dispensation, in all non-financial matters relating to Friends of The Bowes Museum, be given to Councillor Mrs Moorhouse, as Honorary Chair, for the full term of this Council until May 2021.

29. EAST WARD VACANCY – CO-OPTION

Received – a report containing an overview of the expressions of interest received in response to the advertisement of a vacancy on the Town Council for co-option and outlining a process by which members might consider those expressions of interest and vote to fill the vacancy.

It was confirmed that four expressions of interest had been received following the deadline on 12 June from Mr Gary Marshall, Mr Ian Kirkbride, Mr David Kinch and Ms. Emma Rowell. It was reported that Mr Marshall had since formally withdrawn. Mr Kirkbride and Ms. Rowell were present at the meeting. Mr Kinch was unable to attend but still wished to be considered for co-option.

Mr Kirkbride and Ms. Rowell were each given two minutes to state their suitability for co-option. Members questioned both candidates. A motion was proposed, seconded and passed to exclude press and public (including the candidates) whilst debating the suitability of both candidates.

After the press and public had returned, a secret ballot was held. Each Member was handed a voting slip to record their vote for the East Ward vacancy. The Clerk counted the ballot papers in front of Members and the Deputy Clerk acted as adjudicator on the counting of the votes with the following result:

Candidate	Votes
Mr Ian Kirkbride	6
Ms. Emma Rowell	5
Mr David Kinch	0

Resolved – That Mr Ian Kirkbride be co-opted to fill the East Ward vacancy on the Town Council.

Councillor Kirkbride then signed the Declaration of Acceptance.

30. AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2016/17

(1) Outturn Expenditure and Income Statement

Submitted – a report providing an update on expenditure and income for the financial year ending 31 March 2017, summarising the year-end position and comparing the outturn with the originally approved budget. It also summarised movements in reserves, showing the year-end position of the earmarked reserves and the general reserve.

The council's Earmarked Reserves had increased by £2,872 to £50,832. The General Reserve had reduced by £14,478 to £68,499, representing 29% of gross expenditure. It was noted that the total reserve figure remained at 51% of Gross Expenditure at 31 March 2017.

The figures had been reviewed by the council's internal auditor and reconciled to the financial records of orders, payments receipts and banking.

Resolved – that the information be noted.

(2) Internal Audit – Presentation of Annual Report

Received – a copy of the Internal Audit Report for 2016/17. The Council's internal auditor, Mr Gordon Fletcher, was unable to attend the meeting to present the report.

(3) Approval of Sections 1 and 2

Council approval was sought to Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) and Section 2 (Accounting Statements) of the 2016/17 Annual Return. Members were informed that the Annual Return and all supporting information had to be received by the External Auditors, BDO LLP of Southampton, no later than 10 July 2017, with the accounts to be approved by 30 September 2017 at the latest.

Members noted that, due to the town council's income or expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2017 being above the £200,000 threshold, an additional intermediate audit would be required in support of the External Audit.

Resolved – (a) That the content of the Internal Auditor's report be noted;
(b) That Members' approval be given to Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) of the 2016/17 Annual Return as submitted; and
(c) That Members' approval be given to Section 2 (Accounting Statements) of the 2016/17 Annual Return as submitted.

31. ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING – 15 MAY 2017 – MINUTES

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

32. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor reminded members about the town's 1940s weekend 23 to 25 June and requested Members' support.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Peat, reported that the Friends of the Upper Demesnes had arranged an annual walk of the Haymeadow and scything demonstration on Saturday 8 July. Approximately 120 leaflets had been taken from the leaflet dispenser.

It was also mentioned that Teesdale & District Lions Club wished to fund and create a wildflower meadow. It was proposed that a border be created along both sides of the path from the lower to the upper Demesnes.

Resolved – (a) That thanks be given to Teesdale & District Lions Club; and
(b) That the creation of the wildflower meadow be overseen by Services Committee.

33. CIVIC FUND

In the approved budget for 2017/18, Council accepted the recommendation of the Resources Committee and established a 'Civic Fund' of £500, with provision that it be 'aimed at raising the profile of the town, within objectives, guidance and evaluation to be established by full Council'.

Resolved – (a) That the 2017/18 objectives of the Civic Fund be to promote partnership development and to open lines of communication with organisations in the town and with interests bordering the town, which promote partnership working and which celebrate the civic life of Barnard Castle;
(b) That the objectives be measured by the number of individual events supported and the reach of organisations engaged; and
(c) That progress be reported to meetings of full Council, under Town Mayor's Announcements.

34. YOUTH PROJECT

Members were informed that, as previously discussed, development work was continuing to promote young people's engagement with the town council through the development of a Youth Council. Prior to the elections, it was suggested that an informal working group be established to work with relevant youth groups to pursue the concept and to recommend a constitutional model for a Youth Council under the umbrella of the Town Council.

Resolved – That Councillors Miss Blissett, Sutherland, Harrison, Mrs Thompson and Chatterjee be nominated to pursue the Youth Council concept with relevant parties and to report back, making recommendations to Full Council.

35. '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 seven items considered at the meeting were as follows:-

- (1) **Planning Committee Meeting – 22 May 2017 – Minutes**
- (2) **Partnership Committee Meeting – 22 May 2017 – Draft Minutes**
- (3) **Services Committee Meeting – 22 May 2017 – Draft Minutes**
- (4) **1940s Event Task & Finish Group – 23 May 2017 – Draft Notes**
- (5) **Planning Committee Meeting – 5 June 2017 – Draft Minutes**
- (6) **Resources Committee Meeting – 5 June 2017 – Draft Minutes**
- (7) **Town Mayor's Activities**

It was reported that since the Annual Council meeting on 15 May, the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, along with their respective Consorts, had attended the following:

16 May	Prize Giving Evening & AGM (Barnard Castle Scouts, Scout Hut, Wilson Street)
19 May	Opening of 'Peoples Garden' (Veg out in Barney, The Hub, Shaw Bank)
19 May	Opening-Josephine Bowes 'A Women of Taste and Influence' (The Bowes Museum, Newgate)
20 May	Civic 'At Home' (Sunderland City Council, Mowbray Park, Sunderland)
27-29 May	Pet Show & Grand Parade (Barnard Castle Meet Scar Top and Town) Deputy Mayor
31 May	Presentation to Gladys Sparks (Barnard Castle Meet, Charles Dickens Lodge, Galgate) – Deputy Mayor
04 June	Mayor's Sunday Service & Parade & Armed Forces Day (Stockton on Tees Borough Council, Town Hall, Stockton)
04 June	Junior Triathlon (Richmond Triathlon Club, Barnard Castle School, Newgate) Deputy Mayor
14 June	Mayoral Talk (Montalbo School, Montalbo Road)

Resolved – (a) That the *en bloc* items be received; and
(b) That the information be noted.

36. UPDATES AND REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES

(1) Planning Committee

(i) Election of Vice Chair for Municipal Year 2017-18

It was resolved that Councillor Blissett be elected as Vice Chair of Planning Committee for the municipal year 2017/18.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(2) Partnership Committee

(i) Election of Vice Chair for Municipal Year 2017-18

It was resolved that Councillor Wilkes be elected as Vice Chair of Partnership Committee for the municipal year 2017/18.

(ii) 2017/18 Community Events Programme

It was resolved that the £700 remaining in the 2017/18 Events budget be left unallocated at present and be used to support and promote community events in the town, based on future submissions to the Partnership Committee.

(iii) Membership of 1940s Event Task & Finish Group

It was resolved that membership of the 1940s Event Task & Finish Group for the 2017/18 municipal year comprise Councillors Mrs Moorhouse, Blissett, Miss Blissett, Wilkes; Allan Jones, Iris Hillery, Ann Barmby and Denise Charlton (community representatives/ volunteers); and

That evaluation of the 2017 1940s weekend and review of the 1940s Task & Finish Group be scheduled at next Partnership Committee meeting on 10 July.

(iv) Aviation Day – 23 June

It was resolved that members confirm attendance to the office.

(v) The Bowes Museum Update

It was resolved that ideas for spend of £2,000 to support The Bowes Museum's 125th anniversary be brought to next Partnership Committee on 10 July; and

That another letter be sent to the Mayor of Louveciennes regarding a friendship link with the town.

(vi) Christmas Lighting 2017-18

It was resolved that a proposal from Barnard Castle Christmas Lights (BCCL) regarding operation of Christmas lighting from 2018/19 be considered at Partnership Committee on 10 July.

(vii) Other Partnerships

It was resolved that consideration be given to close partnership working with other organisations in the town that were actively encouraging tourism and community events.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and

(b) That the 2018 1940s event be confirmed as 22 to 24 June, with Aviation Day on Friday 22 June.

(3) Services Committee

(i) Election of Vice Chair for Municipal Year 2017-18

It was resolved that Councillor Mrs Thompson be elected as Vice Chair of Services Committee for the municipal year 2017/18.

(ii) Play Areas – Repairs and Maintenance

It was resolved that it be delegated to The Clerk to prioritise recommended actions to repair/ replace equipment in town council play areas.

(iii) Durham Wildlife Trust

It was resolved that Durham Wildlife Trust be asked to give a presentation at next Partnership Committee on 10 July.

(iv) Dog Agility Licence

It was resolved that the licence fee be reduced to £25 per annum from 2017/18 for the dog agility club to access the allotment water supply.

(v) Waiting List Issue

It was resolved that, in this particular instance, approval be given for the potential tenant to be placed on the allotment waiting list.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(4) Resources Committee

(i) Appointment of Vice Chair for Municipal Year 2017-18

It was resolved that Cllr Mrs Moorhouse be appointed Vice Chair for the municipal year 2017/18.

(ii) Effectiveness of Internal Control 2016-17

It was resolved that the review form part of the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

(iii) Internal Audit – Audit Plan 2017-18

It was resolved that approval be given to the Annual Audit Plan for 2017/18.

(iv) Training

It was resolved that, subject to confirmation of the timing of the training, Cllr Mrs Moorhouse attend first aid training on 29 June, or, if not possible, that another councillor attend.

(v) Woodleigh

It was resolved that approval be given to the Clerk to source a window cleaner to clean the exterior of the windows at Woodleigh twice per annum; and That estimates be sought for exterior decoration of Woodleigh, for presentation at Resources Committee on 4 September.

(vi) Ordering Procedure for Works, Goods and Services

It was resolved that a debit card be acquired for the town council's current account with Barclays Bank, within the terms set out in Financial Regulations.

Resolved – That the information be noted

37. REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES

(1) Teesdale Residents' and Travellers' Forum (Councillors Blissett (& Harrison))

There was a meeting scheduled for 4 July. There had been a number of requests from residents to lift parking sanctions on Bridgewater. There were concerns about Harmire Estate.

(2) Teesdale Local Councils Forum (Councillors Mrs Moorhouse and Sutherland)

There was nothing to report.

(3) Smaller Local Councils Forum (Councillor Sutherland)

A meeting was held on 25 May. Cllr Sutherland circulated a detailed note, including the proposal from Larger Local Councils Forum to increase the subscription fees due from each council, instead of using the surplus in reserves, for funding of the secretariat. Each town and parish council was being asked for a view.

(4) Dementia Friendly Communities (Councillors Harrison and Blissett)

The next meeting was scheduled for 19 July. There had been a successful open day held at Durham Town Hall on 17 May. Barnard Castle Dementia Friendly Communities group was working with Teesdale Mercury to promote activities and events each week in the town and was encouraging all shops/businesses in town to train at least one member of staff in Dementia Awareness. A meeting of the group was planned for early July.

(5) Walkers are Welcome (Councillor Mrs Thompson)

There was nothing to report. A meeting was scheduled for 19 June.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and
(b) That Council supports the recommendation to reduce CDALC reserves before additional subscription fees are levied by that organisation.

38. REQUEST TO REGISTER LAND AS A TOWN OR VILLAGE GREEN

Submitted – a report presenting a request received from a resident, Mr Thom Robinson, to submit an application to register the open space at Bede Kirk as a 'Town Green', supplementary to town council's application for a Tree Preservation Order for the trees in that location.

The process for registering land as a town or village green was laid out under section 15(1) of the Commons Act 2006. Applications were made to the commons registration authority (Durham County Council) provided the right to apply had not been excluded in relation to the land. There was no fee. Registering the land imposed a duty on the landowner and did not require transfer of the land into public ownership. The land was currently offered for sale, however, there was no planning application lodged with respect to the site. If there were, that would be a 'trigger event', which would prevent an application to register the land as a green.

Evidence needed to be presented that Bede Kirk had been used by a significant number of local people for recreation 'as of right'. It would be necessary to collect witness statements of qualifying use going back to (at least) 1997. Councillor Peat suggested a public meeting as a way of getting people to come forward. It would be prudent to approach residents on Harmire Road and Bede Kirk.

Councillor Blissett thanked Mr Robinson for bringing this matter to the town council.

Members then considered the archaeological significance of the site as a separate issue, prompted by public question time.

Resolved – (a) That the town council applies to register Bede Kirk as a Town Green; and
(b) That the town council seeks advice on the potential archaeological significance of Bede Kirk.

39. FLY THE RED ENSIGN FOR MERCHANT NAVY DAY

A request had been received from Seafarers UK for the Red Ensign to be flown on civic buildings and prominent flagpoles to commemorate Merchant Navy Day on 3 September. The Red Ensign was the official flag of the British Merchant Navy and Merchant Navy Day had been commemorated since 2000, but only for the past two years had it been the focus of a nationwide campaign to raise public awareness of ongoing reliance on seafarers and shipping. As Merchant Navy day fell on a Sunday this year, it was suggested that the Red Ensign could be flown from Friday 1 to Monday 4 September.

Participating town and parish councils would be added to a prestigious 'Roll of Honour' on the Merchant Navy Day website www.merchantnavyday.uk

A red ensign flag could be purchased for approximately £20, including carriage.

Resolved – That this Council supports Merchant Navy Day on 3 September 2017 and purchases a Red Ensign for no more than £20 out of 2017/18 Events budget.

40. CLERK'S UPDATE

Submitted – A report outlining recent activities undertaken by the Clerk and staff and summarising the Clerk's forthcoming leave.

Under Regulation 7(2) (b) of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, a termination notice was issued on 2 June to an allotment tenant, who had not paid rental for 2017/18, after two reminders had been issued, in accordance with the council's approved policy. Following the decision of Services Committee at its meeting on 22 May, a licence to access water drawn from the Demesnes Allotment had been granted to the Barnard Castle Dog Agility Club. The signed licence was returned on 8 June.

There had been a number of substantive issues moving forward since 15 May.

Asset and Service Transfer including **Scar Top Play Area/Mini Golf Freehold Asset Transfer**

The final documents relating to the novation of funding conditions were still awaited. Evidence of an order being placed for parts for the Scar Top play area was received on 15 May. No further action had yet been taken to complete the repairs to the play area, which were reported by Terry Collins, Chief Executive of DCC, to be due for completion within two weeks on 20 March.

Insurance Claim – The site visit arranged by the council's insurer and the claimant's advocate took place on 18 May, to clarify outstanding technical issues. The council's insurers were continuing to make technical representation in respect of the claim.

Tens Field – Barratt Homes had agreed to fund a surveyor's report to support its request for an easement from Fields in Trust. The town council would instruct the surveyor as the managing agent. A formal resolution in this regard would enable progress.

Golden Lion Rangers FC (Formerly Glaxo Rangers FC) had given notice on its lease of Tens Field. A new tenant (preferably an active football club) should be sought with a view to securing a lease prior to the start of the 2017/18 season. This could be done using the existing terms. Any variation would need the approval of the Services Committee.

Citizens' Advice Barnard Castle – Following council's decision on the request made by CDCAB, they were informed that as the council had no donations budget in 2017/18, it could not respond directly to the request, but that, subject to receiving more information, the request had been forwarded to the Barnard Castle Town Mayor's Charity.

The Town Clerk would be on leave from 23 to 30 June inclusive.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted;
(b) That approval be given to instruct Youngs RPS to undertake a survey of Tens Field to comply with the terms of the Charities Act 2011;
(c) That the lease of Tens Field be advertised with delegated authority given to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Services Committee, to agree a lease with a suitable sports club under the existing approved terms.

41. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 42 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 42 below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

42. HONORARY FREEMAN SCHEME

Received – a report submitting a nomination to the Honorary Freeman Scheme, which had been received from a resident and member of the town council and was sponsored by another member of the town council.

Resolved – That an appropriate recommendation be made to a special meeting of the town council, scheduled for 19 June 2017.

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
Convened in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972**

19 JUNE 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Moorhouse (Town Mayor) (in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Miss Blissett, Chatterjee, Child, Hallimond, Harrison, Kirkbride, Peat, Sutherland, Mrs Thompson and Wilkes.

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

43. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES

None.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 12/May/17 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.

45. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 46, 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 46, below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

46. HONORARY FREEMAN SCHEME - NOMINATION

Received – a report formally submitting nominations 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 nominees. Members voted unanimously to move the motion.

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

(b) That the title of Honorary Freeman be conferred on Rev John Moore for the eminent services he has rendered to the Town of Barnard Castle;

(c) That the title of Honorary Freeman be conferred on Mr John Watson for the eminent services he has rendered to the Town of Barnard Castle;

(d) That the title of Honorary Freewoman be conferred on Mrs Marie Yarker for the eminent services she has rendered to the Town of Barnard Castle;

(e) 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 those honoured, at a cost of £120 per scroll, funded from the general reserve at a reception, within the terms approved for use of the Civic Fund.