

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
COUNCIL MEETING**

**20 JANUARY 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Blissett (Town Mayor) (in the Chair), Chatterjee, Child, Drew, Finlay, Harrison, Kirkbride, Mrs Moorhouse and Thompson.

**Also in attendance:** One member of the public and one member of the press.

**Officers:** Mr King (Town Clerk).

**66. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Miss Blissett. Members noted that, following the resignation on Councillor Sutherland on 11 January, a casual vacancy had been declared.

**Resolved** – That the apology be accepted.

**67. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 10/May/19 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. No declarations were made.

**68. COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**(1) Full Council – 18 November 2019**

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

**69. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**(1) Request for Twinning**

The Town Mayor had been approached by the Parbat Welfare Society, with a request that the town council considers a 'formal sister city relationship' with the Bihadi Rural Municipality and Barnard Castle. Bihadi is 50 miles west of Kathmandu and is on the bank of the river Kali Gandaki, which is known for rafting and tourism.

**(2) General Update**

The representative vacancies arising from the resignation of Councillor Sutherland were noted, to be further considered under item 72. Council considered its thanks to Judi Sutherland for her service to the town council.

It was noted that efforts of Ian Blake, who had previously presented on the issue of Toilet Twinning, in engaging successfully with local businesses and organisations had been recognised in the award of the title of Toilet Twinning Town to Barnard Castle.

**Recommendation** – (a) That the information be noted;

(b) That the Town Mayor writes on behalf of the council to express its thanks for the service of former councillor Judi Sutherland for her service to the town;

(c) That the council recognises the achievement of Ian Blake in registering Barnard Castle as a Toilet Twinning Town and recommends to the town's county councillors that the resulting certificate be displayed in the customer access point in the town library; and

(d) That the council explores the request from the Parbat Welfare Society in principle, pending contact with the Nepalese Embassy and discussions relating to the practical consequences and costs of any twinning relationship.

## **70. '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 ten items considered at the meeting were as follows:

- (3) Planning Committee – 18 November 2019 – Minutes**
- (4) Planning Committee – 2 December 2019 – Minutes**
- (5) Partnership Committee – 2 December 2019 – Draft Minutes**
- (6) Planning Committee – 16 December 2019 – Draft Minutes**
- (7) Services Committee – 16 December 2019 – Draft Minutes**
- (8) Resources Committee – 13 January 2020 – Draft Minutes**
- (9) Town Mayor's Activities**

Since the Council meeting on 18 November 2019, the Town Mayor accompanied by the Town Mayoress and or Deputy Town Mayor had attended nineteen events.

**Resolved** – (a) That the minutes and draft minutes be received; and  
(b) That the information be noted.

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

From the meetings outlined above, in Item 70, the recommendations of the Resources Committee, meeting on 13 January were accepted.

**Resolved** – (a) That the draft risk register presented (copy previously circulated) be approved;  
(b) That the Chair and Vice Chair of Resources periodically review the council's asset register in line with the identified risk mitigation;  
(c) That Standing Order 7(a) be invoked and that by Special Motion the staffing establishment for 2020/21, as set out, be built into the 2020/21 budget; and  
(d) That additional hours accrued for the identified posts, in addition to the existing working week, are paid monthly in arrears at plain time rates.

## **72. REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES**

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

Updates relating to the forum were reported by Cllr Blissett. The next meeting was due.

### **(2) Smaller Local Councils Forum (Vacant)**

The arising vacancy was noted. Members considered its representation on this group (and possibly the Larger Local Councils' Forum, which shared more in common with the town council). The next meeting to take place on 20 February.

### **(3) Dementia Friendly Communities (Councillor Kirkbride)**

Cllr Kirkbride reported on recent activity by the Group. The group meets every two months. Practical sub-groups meet more regularly. It was noted that donations of materials for 'fiddle mats' would be welcomed. It was noted that 'dementia friends' training for members and the incoming Clerk would be arranged after April.

**(4) Barnard Castle HGV Action Group (Vacant)**

Members noted that Cllr Sutherland had reported back from this group but was not appointed by the Council to represent it on the group. Members felt that maintaining contact with the group was an important issue, particularly considering the continued diversions of A66 traffic through town by Highways England.

**(5) Society of Local Council Clerks (Clerk)**

The Clerk reported on recent workshops on Member Code of Conduct hosted by the Local Government Association.

**(6) Barnard Castle Mechanics Institute & Witham Hall Community Association (Cllr Hallimond)**

There was no update.

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

(b) That for the remainder of the municipal year, Cllr Blissett (Town Mayor) represent the council on the CDALC bodies;

(c) That the clerk approach the Barnard Castle HGV Action Group for a regular update for future meetings; and

(d) That Cllr Hallimond be approached regarding the council's nominated place on the Board of the Barnard Castle Mechanics Institute & Witham Hall Community Association.

**73. INTERNAL AUDIT – 2019/20 – HALF YEAR REPORTS**

The Council's Internal Auditor submitted three independent, half-year reports, providing full and substantial assurance.

**Resolved** – That the content of the Auditor's reports is noted.

**74. APPROVAL OF BUDGET 2020/21**

Further to the meeting of Resources Committee on 13 January 2020 (Item 44), a draft budget was recommended by the committee (Appendix A).

**Resolved** – (a) That the following fees and charges be set for 2020/21:

*Play Areas*

- (i) Tens Field - £100 – no change; and
- (ii) Gate Licence Fee - zero – no change.

*Allotments (per plot)*

- (i) 2020/21 – the allotment plot rental already determined - £47 – no change;
- (ii) 2021/22 - £48 – increase of £1; and
- (iii) Gross income 2020/21 - £4,192 – reduction due to plot consolidation.

*Mini Golf – 2020 season*

- (i) £3 per round for all users – no change;
- (ii) £9 group ticket (up to four players – saving £3) – no change;
- (iii) £15 loyalty ticket (7 rounds bought in advance) – no change;
- (iv) £1 lost ball – no change;
- (v) £6 damaged club – no change; and
- (vi) Gross income - £10,000 – no change.

*Woodleigh Licence (as per agreements)*

- (i) Gross income - £12,750 – no change.

*Woodleigh Charges - Dawson Room Hire Charges (per hour – min 2 hours)*

- (i) Community - £12.50 – no change;
- (ii) Repeat Community - £10 – no change;
- (iii) Commercial - £20 – no change;
- (iv) Commercial Refreshments £1.20 per head (Inc. VAT) – new charge ; and
- (v) Gross income - £1,500 – no change.

*Woodleigh, Scar Top & Demesnes Charges*

- (i) Electricity (performance area) charged at the prevailing metered rate;
- (ii) Commercial use - £50; and
- (iii) Scar Top Banner Frame commercial booking - £50.
- (iv) Gross income - £250.

*Wednesday Market*

- (i) Standard Pitch (0-6m) - £10 – no change;
- (ii) Large Pitch (6-10m) - £15 – no change;
- (iii) Additional metre (or part) beyond 10m - £2 – no change;
- (iv) Charity Pitch - £0 – no change; and
- (v) Gross income - £7,000 – no change.

(b) That the 2020/21 budget be set as detailed in Appendix A, with gross expenditure of £232,862 – an annual reduction of £101 (0.04%)

(c) That the 2020/21 precept be therefore set as detailed in Appendix A, at £195,430 - an annual increase of £4,494 (0.83% at Band D).

## **75. CLERK'S UPDATE**

Submitted – A report outlining recent correspondence and activities undertaken by the Clerk and staff and summarising the Clerk's forthcoming leave. Members noted the progress of the enabling consultation from Durham County Council, previously circulated, for a seasonal no-waiting restriction in Bridgegate. Damage to a window at Woodleigh, over the weekend of 18-19 January was reported.

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

(b) That, in the event that an election is not claimed, the council adopts its previously used co-option mechanism, with a view to making a decision at its meeting on 21 March;

(c) That servicing of the Demesnes bollards be approved, as outlined and that options for the Demesnes accesses be brought to a future meeting of Services Committee.

## **76. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 77, 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 matters referred to at item 77, below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

## **77. STAFFING (CONFIDENTIAL)**

Submitted – a confidential update from the Clerk on correspondence received and activity with respect to staffing.

**Resolved** - (a) That the appointment of Martin Clark as Town Clerk be approved on the reported terms;

(b) That Councillor Drew be appointed to the Staffing Subcommittee; and

(c) That the Staffing Subcommittee oversees objective setting and monitoring of the incoming clerk ,during his probationary period, under delegated powers, meeting under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 §1(2), whereby the press and public be excluded during consideration of these matters referred, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.



## Appendix A

Cost Centre	Budget 2019/20	Draft Budget 2020/21
<b>Expenditure</b>		
101 Council Administration	£ 12,508	£ 13,016
102 Central Support Services (5% pay inflation - 2% assumed)	£ 130,826	£ 128,150 £ 3,769
103 GDPR Compliance	£ 1,000	£ 1,020
104 Elections	£ 5,000	£ 1,000
105 Chains of Office	£ 50	£ 50
106 Woodleigh	£ 20,500	£ 20,530
107 Civic Fund	£ 500	£ 500
110 Defibrillator	£ 100	£ 100
201 Allotments	£ 4,217	£ 4,192
211 Mini Golf	£ 10,000	£ 10,000
221 Christmas Lights	£ 6,500	£ 7,000
231 Play Areas	£ 14,000	£ 14,250
271 Bartlemere/Kalafat Lighting	£ -	£ -
281 Dog Fouling	£ 200	£ 200
291 Wednesday Market	£ 4,000	£ 4,080
302 Youth Provision	£ 500	£ 500
311 Floral & Open Spaces	£ 9,500	£ 9,700
321 Castle & Market Floodlighting	£ 700	£ 700
331 War Memorials	£ 500	£ 500
341 Public Seats	£ -	£ -
342 Bede Road Bus Shelter	£ 50	£ 50
354 Events	£ 7,140	£ 7,280
399 Section 137 Payments	£ -	£ -
401 Contingencies	£ -	£ -
402 Blue Plaques	£ -	£ -
403 Honorary Freeman	£ -	£ -
404 Wayfinding Units	£ 100	£ 100
501 Market Place Public Toilets	£ 5,072	£ 5,175
Tourism Promotion		£ 1,000
901 Capital Project Expenditure	£ -	£ -
	<b>£ 232,963</b>	<b>£ 232,862</b>
<b>Income</b>		
1 Fees and Charges (recreation)	-£ 14,317	-£ 14,292
Fees and Charges (other)	-£ 8,750	-£ 8,390
2 Woodleigh Rental Income	-£ 12,750	-£ 12,750
3 Bank Interest	-£ 1,200	-£ 2,000
4 Grants	£ -	£ -
5 Donations	£ -	£ -
6 Sponsorship	£ -	£ -
7 Miscellaneous	£ -	£ -
8 Cumulative Fund	-£ 2,500	£ -
9 Precept	-£ 190,936	-£ 195,430
10 LCTSG	-£ 2,510	£ -
	<b>-£ 232,963</b>	<b>-£ 232,862</b>



