



Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council

Minutes of the Town Council Communities and Local Services
Committee Meeting held on Monday, 14 October 2024 at 6.00pm
in The Meeting Room, Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Office,
Unit 1, 82 – 88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors: R Driver (Chair)
J Bowden
G Brown
J Robertson
T Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE:

Stephen Robinson, Operations Manager
Stephen Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk
Cllr P Rowe
Cty Cllr I Hunter
Dennis Fancett, Chair of The South East Northumberland Rail
User Group
1 members of the public

| MINUTE NO. | TITLE AND DESCRIPTION OF ITEM | Mover | Second | Decision |
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| CLS052/24 | OPEN SESSION | | | |
| | Members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. This is for a period of 15 minutes overall and is limited to 3 minutes per person. | N/A | N/A | Cty Cllr I Hunter reported a missing litter bin from the corner of Cornhill Road and Shielfield Terrace. The Operations Manager reported that this has now been resolved. |
| CLS053/24 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | | | |
| | To receive apologies for absence. | N/A | N/A | Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs M Greener, G Smith, L Stephenson and J Turton. |
| CLS054/24 | MINUTES | | | |
| | To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Communities and Local Services Committee meeting held on Monday, 02 September 2024. | JR | JB | Enquiries were raised regarding if a meeting with the Riding of the Bounds (RoB) Committee has been arranged, the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme (LTPCP), Mapping Software and the Grant Application for flower beds at the Greenses. Responses were provided that the meeting with the RoB has taken place, |

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| | | | | <p>the LTPCP is for 2025-2026 if successful, a decision on the Mapping Software has been deferred for 6 months to allow the Operations Manager to investigate and options with partners are being explored for the Greenses flower beds.</p> <p>After which, the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 02 September 2024 were agreed and signed as a correct record.</p> |
| CLS055/24 | DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS | | | |
| | <p>(i) Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 9 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature they must not participate in any discussion or vote on</p> | N/A | N/A | <p>i. There were no disclosures of interests.</p> |

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| | <p>the matter and must leave the room.</p> <p>(ii) To receive and consider requests from members who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any items on the agenda an application for dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to enable members to participate in discussions and voting.</p> | N/A | N/A | <p>ii. There were no requests for dispensation.</p> |
| CLS056/24 | ENVIRONMENTAL VOLUNTEERS | | | |
| | <p>Verbal update from Officers and elected Members.</p> | <p>Nem con</p> | | <p>The Finance Officer read out the update provided by Cllr L Stephenson as follows:</p> <p>Generally speaking the level of litter has dropped mainly due to the weather, Little Pier Road group out regularly don't require any equipment, other individuals and litter picking volunteers out and about as usual, no other equipment is required at the moment and with Five Arches, it will be good to see the samples of stickers / labels that have been ordered to put on bins, lampposts etc.</p> |

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| | | | | After which, the Committee RESOLVED to note the update. |
| CLS057/24 | GRANT APPLICATION | | | |
| | To consider a grant application from SENRUG (The South East Northumberland Rail User Group). | TS | JB | <p>Dennis Fancett, the Chair of SENRUG provided an update to including that the group represents east Northumberland as well as the south-east of the county, they are not politically aligned and are not a single campaign group.</p> <p>Councillors then asked a number of questions and raised a number of concerns including collaborative working with other rail group such as Rail Action Group East of Scotland, the potential for main line service to be cut, benefits to the town including direct travel to Edinburgh and London Kings Cross and benefits for tourists including walkers and cyclists.</p> <p>After which, the Committee RESOLVED to make a grant of £500 to SENRUG.</p> |

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| CLS058/24 | REQUEST FOR DONATION | | | |
| | To consider a request from Carers Northumberland for a donation to help fund services. | Nem con | | <p>During the discussion, Standing Orders were suspended sufficiently to allow Cty Cllr I Hunter to update the Committee that the letter has been sent to all Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>After which, the Committee RESOLVED that when requests for donations are received, a response be provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A grant application form and a copy of the Town Council's grant guidelines, and • A covering letter stating that the Town Council doesn't generally make donations whilst if the application is more Berwick specific it may be looked on more favourably. |
| CLS059/24 | TREE PLANTERS | | | |
| | To receive an update from the Operations Manager. | Nem con | | The Operations Manager provided an update that informal discussions had taken place with Northumberland County Council (NCC) who are not |

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| | | | | <p>against the proposal as long as it does not interfere with the Highways Act, however, it was felt that it was best to wait until a meeting had taken place with a sight loss charity before progressing the project.</p> <p>After which, the Committee RESOLVED to note the update and that the Operations Manager will circulate draft plans for locations after the meeting with the sight loss charity.</p> |
| CLS060/24 | CHRISTMAS LIGHTS | | | |
| | 2024 Christmas Lights discussion. | | Nem con | <p>The Operations Manager updated the Committee with regards to Christmas Lights that had failed the annual testing process whilst the option of leasing was also discussed.</p> <p>After which, the Committee RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That £1,200 – £2,000 be spent from Ear-Marked Reserve (EMR) 327 on string lights for the Town Hall with the proviso that the |

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| | | JR | JB | <p>Guild of Freeman be asked for a donation, and</p> <p>2. To evenly reduce the loss of 13 Christmas Lights amongst the Communities.</p> |
| CLS061/24 | COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN | | | |
| | To receive an update. | Nem con | | <p>The Operations Manager provided an update that he is meeting with Cllr M Greener to discuss a draft of the plan before meeting with NCC, after which the draft plan would be circulated with Councillors.</p> <p>After which, the Committee RESOLVED to note the update.</p> |
| CLS062/24 | PROPOSALS FOR GROWTH AND SAVINGS | | | |
| | Members may wish to consider whether there are any areas of the Councils work where expenditure should grow or where savings can be made. | | | <p>Cllr J Robertson provided an update that after the Strategic Plan meeting it is proposed to bring a transparent plan with 6 months, 1 year, 3 years and 5 years programmes to the next meeting of this Committee before it is brought to Council.</p> |

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| | | | | After which, the Committee RESOLVED to note the update. |
| CLS063/24 | ACTION PLAN | | | |
| | To receive an update. | | | <p>The Committee RESOLVED:</p> <p>CLS 12 (Christmas Lights) be removed, CLS 14 (Xmas trees in Prior and Upper Spittal) reconvene next year, T3 (Cleansing of pedestrian areas of Marygate) remove as not viable, T6 (Condition of town centre buildings – gutters and weeds) remove as the Town Council doesn't have permission to work on the buildings, CLS 16 (Community Garden and Allotment demand) remove as duplication, CLS 18 (Report on outdoor activity options) remove, CLS 19 (Provide new bus shelter outside of Asda) now ordered, change RAG status to Amber, CLS 20 (Provide seating and table at Highcliffe) remove as complete,</p> |

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| | | | | <p>CLS 22 (Report on taking over Berwick market) move responsibility to Council and report to next meeting,</p> <p>CLS 23 (Green Conference) defer until Chief Officer appointed,</p> <p>CLS 27 (Report on potential for acquiring town centre property for residential) defer until Chief Officer appointed,</p> <p>CLS 30 (Remove digital signboards from Marygate and Castlegate carpark),</p> <p>CLS 34 (Move bin outside office back onto cobbled strip), CLS 35 (Move benches outside office back onto cobbled strip) and CLS 38 (Move the Jubilee Lamp to the Queens Garden) are all part of on-going discussions and will be able to be removed together,</p> <p>CLS 42 (Fence 5 arches allotments) quotes are being sought, however, there may be a need for updated costs if extra land is obtained for the site,</p> |
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| At this point it was unanimously RESOLVED to suspend standing orders sufficiently to allow the meeting to proceed beyond 8pm. | | | | |
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| | | | | <p>CLS 44 (Council Policy regarding allotments and Council Policy regarding Memorial plaques) Officers are aware of demand against supply for allotments, there is the potential for 7 more plots at 5 Arches, there is currently a charge of £300 to adopt a bench in situ for a Memorial Plaque, there isn't a policy for placing a new bench, a report be brought to the next meeting of this Committee.</p> <p>CLS 45 (Moving the Beacon for next D-Day ceremony) partners have suggested that the beacon could be used in its current location, VE Day and VJ Day to be added,</p> <p>CLS 46 (Implement changes needed based on play parks safety report) all urgent maintenance issues have been dealt with, cost effective ways of dealing</p> |

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| | | | <p>with non-urgent issues are being investigated,</p> <p>CLS 47 (Install water supply at the BTC nursery) Operations Manager to seek costs for the installation of a tap on the neighbouring business,</p> <p>CLS 48 (Report on future of Greenses Haven Play Park) lot of items coming to end of life, the holiday park have been approached but they have their own play area, whilst there is also access issues to consider. A report including likely replacement costs and the option of closure be brought to the next meeting of Council,</p> <p>CLS 49 (Seagulls) the investigation of costs of a hawkker and rooftop kites be deferred to February 2025,</p> <p>CLS 50 (Signposts) now in Town Council storage, NCC still to convene group on town centre signposts,</p> |
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| | | | | T5 (Investigate options to clean gutters on Marygate) remove as unable to progress, and T10 (Police and Crime Commissioner to public meeting) remove as no response to invitation. |
| CLS064/24 | EXPENDITURE VS BUDGET YEAR TO DATE | | | |
| | To note the report. | | | Members asked a number of questions and raised a number of queries including on transport costs and litter bins whilst Councillors noted that future costs of the Wardens and movement / spending of EMR's would be subjects of reports to this Committee. After which, the Committee RESOLVED to note the report. |
| CLS065/24 | DATE OF NEXT MEETING | | | |
| | The next meeting of the committee will be held on Monday 04 November 2024, at 6:00 pm. | N/A | N/A | Noted. |