



Ashington Town Council  
Town Hall  
65 Station Road  
Ashington Northumberland NE63 8RX  
Town Clerk: Mike Slaughter  
Tel: (01670) 624520 / 624521  
E-mail: [mikeslaughter@ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:mikeslaughter@ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)



# ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at 7:00pm on Tuesday 14 November 2017, at the Council Chambers, Town Hall, Station Road, Ashington.

## PRESENT:

### **Councillors:**

Mark Purvis (Chair)	Victor Bridges
Marjorie Chambers	Avril Chisholm
Matthew Cuthbert	Brian Gallacher
Lynne Grimshaw	Lawrence Henderson
Kris Lavery	Liam Lavery
Ken Parry	Pauline Thompson
Tom Wilson	

## IN ATTENDANCE:

Mike Slaughter – Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer  
Sharon Parmley – Senior Admin Officer (minute taking)  
Members of the Public – 0

### **C17/731 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Nicola Chambers, Stephen Fenwick, Jim Lang and Bob Walkinshaw.

### **C17/732 2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of interest from Members present.

### **C17/733 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on the Tuesday 5 September 2017, were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **C17/734 4. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

##### **C17/728 7. PLANNING APPLICATION – 17/02694/FUL**

**To provide new vehicular access off Morpeth Road to the site now occupied by Enterprise Rent-A-Car, including alteration of the existing highway and closure of the acceleration lane from A1068.**

Cllr Grimshaw reported that there had been no further updates and it was understood that the application had been deferred pending a response from the applicant to comments received, including those of the detailed Town Council response.

#### **C17/735 5. CIVIC HEAD'S REPORT**

The Civic Head informed members that he had attended the following events:-

- Saturday 7 October – “Fell-Em-Doon” Joseph Wilson, photographic display at Woodhorn Museum
- Saturday 19 October – Fireworks display at Bothal Primary School.
- Saturday 28 October – Charity Concert by Ashington Male Voice Choir for the Civic Head of Northumberland's Charity at St Mary's Parish Church, Wooler
- Sunday 29 October – Ashington Colliery Band concert at YMCA Northumberland
- Sunday 12 November – Ashington and Bothal Remembrance Services

#### **C17/736 6. LEADERS REPORT**

The Leader had sent his apologies as he was unable to attend. Cllr Kris Lavery reported on the Leaders behalf that;

- The installation of the Town Centre CCTV cameras, funded entirely by the Town Council, had commenced and was expected to be operational by mid-December; and that
- Highways interactive speed cameras, funded by the Town Council and Divisional Ward County Council members, were now operational and initial reports suggested they were having a positive impact in reducing and addressing speeding issues in the town.

## **C17/737 7. FINAL ACCOUNTS 2016/17**

The Town Clerk reported that the Auditor's Report on the 2016/17 Accounting Statements and Annual Governance return had now been received.

Members were informed that, on the basis of the External Auditors review, the information in the annual return was in accordance with proper practices and no matters had come to attention giving cause for concern that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

The Town Clerk reported that there were no other matters that, in the opinion of the External Auditor, required the issue of a separate report.

### **Resolved:**

**That:**

- (i) The External Auditors report on the Final Accounts for 2016/17 be formally received and accepted,**
- (ii) The Council formally note that there were no matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements had not been met; and that**
- (iii) The Council formally note that there were no other matters that needed to be drawn to the attention of the Town Council or that required the issue of a separate additional issues arising report.**

## **C17/738 8. BUDGET WORKING GROUP 2018/19**

The Town Clerk presented a detailed report and reminded members that, while the 2016/17 reduction of the committees and restructuring had undoubtedly helped with timely programming of work and Council approval, there was still much background work to be done in drafting fully priced budget information and options for informed consideration and discussion by elected members.

The Town Clerk further reminded members that in determining a draft budget for 2017/18 the Council had set up a smaller Budget Working Group to look at all financial options and prepare a draft for Committee and Full Council consideration. This group

undertook the preparatory work, considered any capital schemes, growth or one-off areas of work and presented detail to fellow members at formal Committee Meetings and Full Council. The Town Clerk highlighted that it was important to note and recall that the Budget Working Group had no delegated decision-making powers.

Members acknowledged that the establishment of the Budget Working Group had been very beneficial and had smoothed the 2017/18 budget process for members in properly discussing and appraising all relevant material matters and planned projects. The Town Clerk requested that the Council again consider the establishment of a similar Working Group in discussing and formulation the draft 2018/19 budget for Council consideration.

**Resolved:**

**Recommendations:**

**(i) That the Town Council establishes a small Budget Working Group to prepare a 2018/19 draft budget, with fully appraised options, for the consideration of Finance & General Services Committee and Full Council; and that**

**(ii) The Budget Working Group membership consist of:**

**The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Business Chair and Vice Business Chair of the Council and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee. (6 Members)**

**C17/739 9. NO WAITING & LOADING AT ANY TIME PARKING RESTRICTIONS – HIGH MARKET, BOTHAL WARD, ASHINGTON**

Cllr. Grimshaw informed members that this scheme was now operational and was having a positive impact in addressing the parking problems in the vicinity of the school.

Cllr. Grimshaw further informed members that there had been violations of the scheme and that highways enforcement officers had been asked to monitor the scheme in coming weeks.

## **C17/740 10. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

### **Arch Stakeholders Group**

Cllr Marjorie Chambers reported that:

- Retail interest was still strong in relation to the Town Centre development and recent consultation had also indicated real interest in a smaller cinema/arts centre; and that.
- The current work been carried out on the highways and ground works would be finished in 2019, with the bus interchange taking priority. Cllr. Chambers reported that comment had also been made at the meeting that the bus interchange development work should also positively look at the provision of new public convenience provision.

### **Neighbourhood Services Partnership**

Cllr Brian Gallacher reported on recent discussions regarding the Neighbourhood Services Partnership issues and reminded all members that there was an urgent need to put forward ward requests for the forthcoming winter work programme.

Cllr. Gallacher reported that both the Neighbourhood Services Board and the Environment & Amenities Working Group were looking at a number and full range of options for floral presentations, entrance features and other environmental service enhancements.

## **C17/741 11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Town Clerk informed members that a casual vacancy had arisen in the Central Ward following the resignation of former Councillor Ely Turnbull. Members were informed that the vacancy had been duly advertised and the closing date for the proper calling of a by-election was 28 November 2017.

## **C17/742 12. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

To be agreed, subject to the timetable and programme for the Annual Budget and Precept setting for 2018/19.

**The meeting closed at 8:05pm.**