

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, PONTELAND ON 10 OCTOBER 2018

Present: Councillor A Varley (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs C Caisley, L Darwin, R Dodd, Mrs C Greenwell, A Hall, Mrs S Johnson, Mrs K Overbury, A Shanley and Mrs K Woodrow.

81. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Ahmed and T Edwards-Clay.

82. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 12 SEPTEMBER 2018

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 September 2018 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved.

83. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A declaration of interest was received from Councillor A Hall in respect of Minute 86 (iii).

84. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

85. PLANNING

(i) Planning Committee

Minutes of meetings held on 21st August and 4th September 2018 were circulated for information.

(ii) Report on recent planning decisions

There was nothing to report.

86. GRANTS

(i) Diamond Inn

A grant application had been received from the above-mentioned organisation for a grant towards the cost of holding the annual firework display on New Year's Eve.

Councillors expressed some concern regarding the large numbers of people who were on the road last year and asked if the applicant could be requested to consider introducing security and using plastic glasses at his establishment. It was also suggested that he could pass this request onto other licenced premises in Ponteland as well as asking if a sign could be displayed

requesting customers to be respectful of neighbouring properties. He should also be asked to inform the Police of the event.

86. GRANTS (Continued)

(i) Diamond Inn (continued)

RESOLVED –

(i) A grant of £500 be awarded to the applicant in respect of the firework display.

(ii) The Clerk be requested to also write to the applicant asking for consideration of the items set out above relating to security, plastic glasses, requesting the co-operation of other licensed premises and informing the Police of the event.

(ii) Community Action Northumberland

A grant application had been received from the above-mentioned organisation for a grant towards supporting their work in the community groups sector.

RESOLVED – A grant of £150 be approved.

(iii) Rotary Club of Ponteland

A grant application had been received from the above-mentioned organisation for a grant towards the cost of holding the Christmas market on 9 December. The market would be held in the Memorial Hall and would include a range of stalls, carol singing and other festive activities.

Councillor Hall replied to several queries raised by Members and stated that the Rotary Club were paying the room hire costs to the Memorial Hall and they hoped the venue would build on the success of the first two Christmas markets held. Costs were increasing each year with the need to pay indemnity charges etc. He was asked why Rotary could not retain some of the money raised to fund the event. He stated that this was not allowed under the Rotary charity regulations.

RESOLVED – A grant of £600 be approved.

Note – Councillor Hall declared an interest in Minute 86(iii) above and took no part in the voting.

87. PROJECTS REPORT

The projects report had been circulated for the information of Councillors.

RESOLVED – The report be accepted.

88. ANNUAL AUDIT RETURN 2018-19

A report by the Clerk in relation to the above had been circulated.

Members were informed that the External Auditor report and certificate for 2017-18 had been received from PKF Littlejohn on 3rd October. The Auditors had not raised any issues with the Town Council.

88. ANNUAL AUDIT RETURN 2018-19 (Continued)

A copy of the certificate and sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Annual Return (AGAR) had been circulated to Councillors.

The information was now on display on the Town Council's website and on notice boards.

RESOLVED – The Council approve and accept the External Auditor report and Certificate for 2017-18 and sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR.

89. COMMEMORATION OF THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Councillors were reminded that the Clerk and Councillor Mrs Overbury had been asked to work on the above and provide regular updates to the Town Council. A report had been circulated and this was the final update report prior to the various events taking place. The Clerk and Councillor Mrs Overbury had met with Reverend Allinson from St. Mary's Church on the 9th October to discuss final arrangements.

A list of ongoing actions was set out in the report.

Councillors were advised of the success of the recent poster competition. The Mayor and Councillor Mrs Overbury had attended Ponteland Middle school earlier in the day where the Mayor had presented prizes to the overall winner of the competition and two runners up. A cheque had also been presented to the school.

The winning poster would appear on the front of the November issue of PNV and on the front of the order of service.

Arrangements were in hand for the service for children on Friday 9th November. Letters would be sent out to the schools in the next few days. The service was at 11.00 a.m. on the 9th November at St. Mary's Church and Councillors were welcome to attend. Ten children from each school would be chosen to plant a wooden cross in memory of one of the fallen from the First World War (40 in total). The Mayor would also place a wreath on each of the three Commonwealth War Graves in the churchyard.

Arrangements for the service on the morning of the 11th November were progressing. The order of service was in the process of being finalised and members were shown a draft copy.

Councillor Mrs Overbury reported on arrangements for the Celebration of Peace event being held on the evening of Sunday the 11th. As part of the Battles Over campaign, a bugler would play the Last Post at 6.55 p.m.; the Beacon would be lit at 7.00 p.m. and the church bells would be rung at 7.05 p.m. The choir would sing some songs and battery powered tealights would be given out to children. The church would be open and would be extensively decorated. The Reverend would have a short service at about 7.30 and read out the 'Tribute to the Millions' from the Battles Over campaign.

Refreshments would be available in the Parish Centre.

There would be a full-page article in the November PNV and all events would be advertised on social media, the website and notice boards in order to gain maximum attendance.

It was suggested that the other church choirs should be asked to join in the singing and Councillor Mrs Overbury agreed to raise this with the Vicar.

**89. COMMEMORATION OF THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR
(Continued)**

It had been suggested to light up the Pele tower in red during November at a total cost of £130 and this was agreed.

The Clerk reported that the donated commemorative seat had been delivered and she was in the process of organising a dedication service which would likely be on Saturday 3rd November at 11.00 a.m. at the War Memorial with refreshments afterwards in the Memorial Hall.

Details of the budget spend to date was included in the report for information. Councillors expressed their appreciation to the Clerk and Councillor Mrs Overbury for all of the work they had carried out in relation to this project.

RESOLVED – The report be accepted, and the Council agree to the suggestion to light up the Pele tower in red during November.

90. ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

A report by the Clerk had been circulated.

Members were reminded that an approach had been made to the Town Council by the NCC Public Protection department regarding the provision of an Environmental Enforcement Officer to parish and town councils under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) arrangement.

The Clerk had met with the Principal Health Protection Unit Manager to gain more information on this subject and report back to the Council.

The offer was the provision of an officer for two days a week in Ponteland. It was likely the other three days would be in Cramlington. The County Council would be the employer and would be responsible for all costs and management which would then be recharged under the SLA on a quarterly basis pro-rata. A 12-month contract was required with a review at month 10. The benefits of taking this offer were explained within the report and included a heightened responsiveness to environmental issues and a substantial increase in proactive environmental enforcement. This would be an addition to the existing service.

It was reported that several other parish and town councils in the county had already signed up to this arrangement.

Details of the issues the officer would deal with were set out in the report.

They would also deal with campaigns and education of the public on environmental matters such as dog fouling, litter and fly tipping. They would also have the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

The officer would submit quarterly reports to the Town Council and the issues dealt with would be monitored by the Clerk.

The costs involved were £15,182 per annum. If the officer was in post for 1 January 2019, the costs for the current year would be £3795 and the remaining amount of £11,387 would be included in the budget for 2019-20.

The Council were in favour of signing up to this arrangement for 12 months subject to regular reviews of effectiveness and a review at month 10 on whether to continue the arrangement.

90. ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

RESOLVED – The Council inform NCC that they would like to proceed with the offer of a dedicated Environmental Enforcement officer for two days a week for an initial 12-month period which would be reviewed.

91. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS/FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council was asked to appoint a Working Party to review the above documents in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. A comprehensive review had taken place in 2017-18.

RESOLVED – Councillors Varley, Darwin, Mrs Overbury and Shanley be appointed to this Working Party to review the above.

92. SALARY REVIEW/CONDITIONS - STAFF

The Council was asked to appoint a Working Party to carry out an annual review of staff salaries and conditions.

RESOLVED – Councillors Varley, Hall, Mrs Johnson and Mrs Overbury be appointed to this Working Party to review the above.

93. HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a meeting of the Highways Working Party held on 14 September had been circulated for considerations.

RESOLVED – The Minutes and the following recommendation be approved:

(i) Item 281 – data collection project

It was agreed that the best use of Members time and Highway resources was to report all instances of defects in the usual manner to NCC in the future. Members agreed that the data collection project that had been initiated some months ago be dropped in favour of ongoing reporting.

94. ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Working Party held on 17 September had been circulated for consideration.

RESOLVED – The Minutes and the following recommendation be approved:

(i) Toilet roof quotes

..... DATE

CHAIRMAN

The Council agreed that the work to replace the toilet roof be carried out and approved the acceptance of the lowest quote in the sum of £4009. The cost would be met from contingencies and the work was dependent on agreement by the Peel House apartments residents to scaffolding being erected in their grounds.

95. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Councillor Dodd reported that the contract for the school and leisure complex had been awarded to Keir and that work would start shortly.

He reported that the Minister for Education had recently opened the new Darras Hall Primary school.

Events for Local Democracy week would be held in week commencing 15 October and various Town Councillors had agreed to participate. Councillor Dodd reported that he had set up a meeting with a Senior Planning officer on 23rd November at County Hall to discuss the Section 106 monies for the Bellway development at the former Police HQ site. Town Councillors were invited to attend if they wished to do so. He also reported on the progress of the work at the car park. There was an issue with a BT cable that would increase the costs of the work.

96. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor submitted details of his diary engagements for October and November.

97. REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

(i) Ponteland Community Partnership

Minutes of a meeting of the PCP held on 18 July had been circulated for information.

98. ACCOUNTS/ BANK RECONCILIATION/ BUDGET REPORT

The Accounts Committee approved payments totalling £38,375.72. A copy of the monthly budget report was also circulated, as well as the Bank reconciliation for September 2018.

RESOLVED – The reports be accepted.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 6.45 P.M.
AT THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE