

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2014
at 7 pm at the Sports and Community Centre Newbiggin by-the-Sea.**

PRESENT:

Councillors: W Rogers (Chairman)
 M Boon L Burns M Cholerton
 R Dixon M Peden S Todd

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: 7 members of the public

At the invitation of the Chairman the Reverend Peter Sinclair opened the meeting with prayer.

OPEN SESSION

The Chairman invited questions from members of the public including any questions relating to the budget proposals.

- A member of the public referred to the wasteland site opposite Woodhorn Church and to its potential to be used in a similar way to City Farms and Urban Garden schemes. This could be similar to the project at the Briardale Centre in Blyth to provide training and produce food from the land. Members advised that the site had been bought for development and planning permission granted for housing.
- A member of Newbiggin in Bloom requested information on progress with the acquisition of a water bowser for use around the town and was advised that while it had been investigated it was known that County Neighbourhood Services had acquired a motorised bowser and the matter would be raised at a planned meeting with them the following week.
- A resident made an observation regarding the announcement of the County Council moving from County Hall back into local towns. It was agreed that there were a number of possible locations in the town that could accommodate some staff from the County Council.
- In relation to the budget a query was raised regarding the cost and location of web hosting for the Town Council. It was suggested that the service could be provided more cheaply.
- A resident remarked that the lighting at the back of the Sports Centre and the route from the Colliery area in particular was poor. She also enquired about the Events Leaflet publication for the coming season and that an event was

taking place at Alnwick as early as 19 March where distribution would be possible. No submissions had yet been made for the publication but would be pursued in due course.

- The budget proposals identified three headings for environmental projects and the Town Clerk advised that a scheme was being developed with Neighbourhood Services to improve public gardens along the bay and that allocations were being included for similar projects to be developed in the town centre and wider town.
- The local residents undertaking such sterling work around the town were members of Newbiggin in Bloom and identified as Brian and Tracey Taylor of Welfare Crescent. Members agreed that a letter be sent to record the Town Council's gratitude for their voluntary services.

C085/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Thompson.

C086/13 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

C087/13 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 09 October 2013 had been circulated and were approved by the Members.

The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 11 December 2013 had been circulated and agreed although the budget recommendations would be considered later in the meeting.

Resolved that:

- (i) The minutes of the meeting on 09 October 2013 be approved and adopted;**
- (ii) The minutes of the meeting on 11 December 2013 be approved with the budget recommendations to be considered later on the agenda.**

C088/13 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Grant Committee held on 13 November 2013 were received for information the Committee having acted under delegated powers.

C089/13 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

No new interests were declared at this point.

C090/13 Dispensation for Members to set the Precept

The Town Clerk referred to the change in legislation that had omitted the previous dispensation for Members in relation to setting the local Council Tax and Precept applying to properties for which interests had been declared in the statutory register and invited the Town Council to grant dispensations.

RESOLVED that: all Members of the Town Council are granted a dispensation to take part in the setting of the Precept.

C091/13 Property Tax Base for setting the Precept

The figure advised by the County Council for 2014 – 15 was 1,346.74 after the omission of those properties in receipt of Council Tax Benefit which was the equivalent of almost 700 Band A properties. The Town Council had no influence over the Property Tax Base which was used to calculate the proportion of Precept recovered from each other property in the town.

RESOLVED that: the Tax Base figure of 1,346.74 is noted.

C092/13 Budget for 2014 - 15

The recommendations from the Finance Committee as set out in Appendix 1 were referred to which incorporated existing budgets for local services and administration of the Council. Modest planned increases for some environmental improvement schemes around the bay town centre and wider town were included along with an increase in provision for building costs owing to a reduction in income.

RESOLVED that: the Town Council Budget for 2014-15 as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed at a total sum of £146,445.

C093/13 Precept for 2014 - 15

The Town Clerk and the Chairman explained the representations at both national level and direct to the County Council regarding the expected Government Grant to Town and Parish Councils to compensate for the reduction in Property Tax Base. The meeting was advised that the County Council would not be passing any grant to the Town Council so the Precept would need to increase to compensate or the Budget would have to be reduced.

Taking account of the budget previously agreed; the property tax base notified by the County Council; the withholding of Government grant and without an allocation from balances Members agreed that the Precept request would be the same amount as the Budget.

RESOLVED that: the Precept for 2014 – 15 be £146,445.

C094/13 Bus Shelters

Members were updated on the project proposals from the Portas Town Team regarding the provision of bus shelters and associated highway works at the entrance to Sandy Bay near the North Seaton roundabout that had been designed by the County Council with scheme costs depending on the type of shelter installed.

Mixed views were expressed concerning the relative expense of the scheme; likely use; exposed site; potential traffic conflicts and vandalism.

Councillor Burns declared an interest as a member of the Portas Team and advised that if the shelters were installed at this location the bus operator Arriva while not able to contribute to the costs would provide advertisements to benefit Newbiggin on their buses. There was an option for the Town Council to contribute to the scheme and another for the Portas Team to meet the full costs provided the Town Council would agree to future maintenance.

The possible benefits of the scheme were considered by the Members including the improvement of this entrance to the town and it was proposed to accept the free offer of the bus shelters and agree future maintenance.

RESOLVED that: the Town Council accept the bus shelters to be installed at this location and undertake future maintenance.

Signed by the Chairman:

Date:.....

Summary Budget 2014.15	Budget 2014.15
ADMINISTRATION	37,150
OFFICE/MEETING COSTS	7,735
FEES & CHARGES	4,640
MEMBERS EXPENSES	1,150
SERVICE DELIVERY	31,500
REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS	20,000
SPECIAL EVENTS	5,000
PROJECT FUNDING	41,900
	<u>146,445</u>
ADMINISTRATION	
Salary provision	30,000
NI contributions	3,000
Pension Gratuity	4,000
Travel/Subsistence	50
Training/conference	100
	37,150
OFFICE/MEETING COSTS	
Rates	1,755
Building heating/cleaning	2,630
Telecommunications	700
IT Equipment	100
IT Support	150
Room Hire – meetings	250
Printing & Stationery	450
Postage	100
Equipment & Furniture	100
Insurances	1,500
	7,735
FEES & CHARGES	
Audit	600
Legal & Election – Casual Vacancy	
Public Notices	
Subscriptions – NALC	650
Professional Fees	200
Publications	2,500
Website hosting	220
Publicity	250
Bank charges	220
	4,640
MEMBERS EXPENSES & CIVIC	
Councillors expenses	600
Training costs	200
Town Assembly	100
Civic Expenses	100
Remembrance Day	150
	1,150
TOTAL ADMIN EXPENSES	48,045
SERVICE DELIVERY	

Play Areas	
Public toilets	
War Memorial maintenance	
Bus Shelter maintenance	
Public Seating maintenance	
Floral displays (annual bedding)	
Newbiggin Nipper service contribution	
Christmas Lighting	
	31,500
REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS	
Bus Shelters	
Play Areas	
Public Seats	
Public waste bins	
	20,000
SPECIAL EVENTS	
Gardens Competition/N in Bloom	1,000
Newbiggin Triathlon	2,500
Music events programme	1,500
	5,000
PROJECT FUNDING	
Bay Environmental Schemes	5,000
Town Environmental Schemes	5,000
Town Centre and Gateway Projects	5,000
Bursary - Wansbeck Music Festival	300
Holiday and leisure schemes	14,400
Youth and adult support schemes	3,000
Community volunteering support projects	2,500
Events Leaflet	700
Small Grants scheme	6,000
	41,900
Total budget	146,445