

## BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting** held on Thursday 8 July 2010 at Briardale Centre, Briardale Road, Blyth, at 7.00pm.

### PRESENT:

Councillors:

J Condon	J R Potts
A L Gibbs-Barton (Mayor)	O Potts
J Newman	L Rickerby
K Nisbet	F Wilson
R Parker	

### IN ATTENDANCE:

S Noddings, Town Clerk plus four (4) members of the public.

### OPEN SESSION:

Questions or issues raised by the members were as follows: -

**Blyth Community Forum** – A member of the public raised the issue because it was felt that the Blyth Community Forum was really struggling due to problems in organizing and hosting meetings. They felt that Blyth would lose out and asked whether it was possible for Blyth Town Council to become involved by offering support and encouraging action.

Councillor Gibbs-Barton responded that the democratic and community strands should really remain separate but Blyth Town Council was happy to work with the Forum wherever possible. Councillor Ellis is Chair of the Forum currently and Councillor Nisbet was involved.

Councillor Nisbet stated that she was also concerned about the lack of action.

Councillor Parker recommended that Blyth Town Council should write to Thom Bradley, with a copy to Councillor Ellis, expressing these concerns.

**Action: AG-B**

### Initials:

**Publicity** – a member of the public enquired about publicity for Blyth Town Council meetings and events. It was explained that to-date the News Post Leader, notices at community centres and emails had been used. A recent development following a meeting with the Manager of the Keel Row was that the Community Notice Board would now be used to display notices. Councillor Gibbs-Barton also explained that he was actively pursuing the use of Tourist Information Boards and that this was proving very positive.

**Plans Regeneration Funds for the Market Place** – a member of the public enquired whether there were any plans and/or regeneration funds for the Market Place. Councillor Gibbs-Barton replied that the seasonal activities were being planned and that this would be addressed as an agenda item. Ray Browning of Northumberland County Council explained that there was further work planned for the market place and more planters are planned to brighten up the area. In addition finger posts are to be introduced to provide directions; spikes are to be fitted on top of the light columns to deter pigeons and seagulls; some of the plinths are to be removed or moved; proposals are being considered to bring back the gates to the market place; no budget is available for banners; and while NCC contributed £2,000 to the Christmas budget last year it was unlikely to be able to contribute this year.

#### **C105/10 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors S Davey, K Ellis, C Isles, D A Lovatt, P J Lovatt, P Reid and I M R Tompkins.

#### **C106/10 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 June 2010 were discussed, agreed and signed as a correct record.

Issues arising from these minutes but not covered by the agenda were as follows: -

- 2.1 Michael Sweeney Memorial – Councillor Gibbs-Barton confirmed that the family of Michael Sweeney understood that the Blyth War Memorial was at Ridley Park.

**Initials:**

- 2.2 Deputy Mayoress's Chain of office – it was agreed that a letter would be drafted and sent to the NUM seeking their views on the matter.

**C107/10 3. PRESENTATION BY RAY BROWNING,  
REGENERATION MANAGER OF THE SOUTH EAST  
TEAM, NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL  
REGARDING CURRENT PROJECTS IN BLYTH**

It was agreed that due to the lack of a projector for Ray Browning's presentation that he would come back to the Council Meeting scheduled for the 9 September 2010 to be held at the Buffalo Community Centre.

Ray then proceeded to update those present on the following:

3.1 **Morrison's Store** – Compulsory Purchase Order powers have been agreed as it was perceived that the lack of a quality grocery offer was leaking purchasing power out of Blyth. The plans could result in 90 to 140 new jobs. Ten properties have been purchased to date. Resistance from the minority of businesses but a compensation package has been put forward. Traffic Survey results and Traffic Management report were to form part of the proposals. The concerns of the Blyth Town Council Planning and Development Committee were raised regarding the proposed re-routing of traffic and the lack of a clear phased parking strategy during the building/demolition.

3.2 **Improvement of Town Centre Shops** - £800,000 available through the Townscape Heritage Initiative – providing grants to improve mainly priority buildings in Bridge Street and Waterloo Road. It was suggested that a small forum be established to support this project. **Action:** To consider the involvement of Town Councillors. Councillor Nisbet, one of the Ward Councillors, was nominated and it was agreed she would be involved in the forum.

3.3 **NaREC/Offshore Wind Industry** – the importance of NaREC to Blyth was explained along with details of the ongoing expansion and it's now "National" status for renewable energy. Future provision of test technology will require massive buildings and will attract associated businesses to the North

**Initials:**

East. It was stressed how important it was that all opportunities were maximized. The importance of the planned visit on the 16 July 2010 was emphasized along with the possibility of future public meetings, visits, etc. The new training tower has been developed in partnership with Northumberland College. Councillor Rickerby declared an interest in NaREC. It was also confirmed that there were presentations taking place in the Keel Row currently.

3.4 **August 12-14 Event** – it was confirmed that a tall ship would be coming into the harbor as part of the Blyth Renewables Festival. Leanne Beattie would be contacting Blyth Town Council in the near future about this event.

3.5 **Occasional Town Centre Newsletter** – an occasional newsletter is being proposed to promote activities within Blyth.

**C108/10 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**C109/10 5. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 JULY 2010**

The Minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 1 July 2010 were then discussed, moved and adopted as were the minutes of the meeting held prior to the last Council Meeting on the 10 June 2010.

**C110/10 6. MINUTES OF THE ASSETS COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 JUNE 2010**

The Minutes of the Assets Committee held on the 15 June 2010 were then discussed, moved and adopted.

**C111/10 7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND URGENT MATTERS**

7.1 **Christmas Lights** –Volunteers were invited to participate in an Events Working Group that would also include Seasonal Activities. Councillors Nisbet, Wilson, Parker and Rickerby expressed an interest in the Working Group. Other volunteers would be welcome.

**Initials:**

It was confirmed that a proposal had been invited for the co-ordination of events around the 2010 Seasonal Lights and that notionally there would be a raffle for a cash prize, charity contribution and the right to turn on the lights.

**7.2 Animation of Blyth Market Place** - Councillor Gibbs-Barton explained that a number of Councillors had attended a meeting with Officers from Northumberland County Council to establish whether Blyth Town Council would either lead or collaborate in a forum to animate the market place. A partnership approach had been proposed to make best use of the limited funds available through BVAL and the Arts Forum.

Questions were asked and it was confirmed that it would be purely events that the group would look at.

It was agreed that a strategy was required and that the Events Working Group should meet as soon as possible.

**7.3 Discussion Draft** – A discussion draft was tabled by Councillor Condon regarding the utilization of Ebor House for Councillors Surgeries. After much discussion it was agreed that because most Councillors had existing arrangements within their Wards the proposal would not be adopted.

**C112/10 8. DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the Council is Thursday 9 September 2010 at 7.00pm at the Isabella Community Centre.

**Signed by the Chairman:** .....

**Date:** .....