



## **Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Full Council held on Thursday 8 October 2020 at 4.30 pm.**

### **Present:**

Councillors: W Taylor (Mayor), M Richardson, (Deputy Mayor), E Anderson-Smith, D Carr, A Cartie, J R Potts, K Nisbet, A Parson, S Stanger, J Reid, L Rickerby, G Thompson, G Webb

Officers: Joseph Hughes, Town Clerk, Malcolm Wilkinson, Deputy Town Clerk, Maureen Hawthorne, Committee Clerk

Others Present: M Jackson, Events Co-ordinator

Members of the Public: 10

Invited Guests: 2

The Mayor welcomed members of the public who were observing the meeting. The meeting opened with Public Question Time where members of the public can ask a maximum of two questions each.

Question 1 – Has there been any contact with NCC planning department regarding them taking the power away from the people of Blyth if they object to a building or planning proposal.

Answer - There has been no contact with the Planning Authority on this issue as the procedures are laid down by regulations which are followed by the Planning Authority Northumberland County Council. The Town Council can and do make observations on planning permission requests and forward them to the planning authority.

Question 2 -In October 2017 I asked what percentage of the half million pounds budget between the partnership between BTC and NCC is allocated to the upkeep and maintenance of our town centre. I have asked this quest on two occasions at full council meetings previously, could I get an answer on it please.

Answer - The budget for the partnership work carried out by Northumberland County Council is agreed by the Town Council and covers the different types of work needed within the Town Council boundary. This budget is not split down to individual areas but based on the work needed for the town based on experience of past years. The work carried out is monitored and inspected to ensure adequate service levels and regular meetings arranged to exchange views on progress throughout the year.

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Councillors:</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Disclosure of Interests and the Grant of any Dispensations</b></p> <p>Councillors K Nisbet, L Rickerby and J Reid declared an interest in the matter relating to the 4 outstanding planning applications.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Mayors Announcements</b></p> <p>The Mayor took the opportunity to speak about Councillor Olga Potts, a friend and colleague who passed away recently; The Mayor met Councillor Potts when he joined the Council and said it quickly became clear that she dedicated her life to helping others. He spoke for everyone in saying that Councillor Potts is missed by everyone. The Council observed a minutes silence to remember her.</p> <p>Due to the pandemic there have been few Mayoral engagements, however the Mayor did attend the recently unveiling of the sculpture at Elphin Walk, a fantastic piece of artwork depicting the history of Blyth. The Mayor extended thanks to Councillor Nisbet who contributed some of her NCC allowance toward the building of the sculpture.</p> <p>The Mayor continues to be involved in the Blyth Food Partnership. Both he and the Town Clerk met with Thom Bradley to talk about what is happening in Blyth at the moment in terms of food provision for those in need and how BTC can get involved and help out. There is going to be an "Operation Elf" to provide presents and food to those most in need as well as a Mayor's Christmas Appeal to feed into Operation Elf. The Mayor provided some statistics on the number of people living in poverty – 200-350 in Blyth, as well as highlighting the unemployment figures and those currently furloughed. As events are not taking place in Blyth at the moment Council was</p>

	<p>asked to agree to the Event’s Co-ordinator working with Thom Bradley at CVA to use her local expertise gained during the past 6 months with her contacts with local organisations</p> <p>Members unanimously agreed to the proposal</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Thursday 23 July 2020 (Part I &amp; II)</b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true record.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Actions from Full Council held on Thursday 23 July 2020</b></p>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Minutes resolved by the following Standing Committees</b> <i>(Any Councillor wishing to raise a matter from the minutes below should speak to the Chair/Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk in advance of the meeting)</i></p>
<b>6.1</b>	<p>Minutes of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 1 September 2020 (Part I &amp; II).</p>
<b>6.2</b>	<p>Minutes of the Community Funding Sub Committee (Part I &amp; II) held on Thursday 10 September 2020.</p>
<b>6.3</b>	<p>Minutes of the Community Development Committee held on Tuesday 22 September 2020 (Part I &amp; II).</p>
<b>6.4</b>	<p>Minutes of the Governance Committee held on Tuesday 29 September 2020.</p>
<b>6.5</b>	<p>Minutes of the Partnership Working Group held on Tuesday 28 July 2020.</p>
<b>6.6</b>	<p>Minutes of the Planning and Development Sub Committee held on Thursday 1 October 2020.</p> <p>Members noted all of the above minutes as a true record. They also considered four outstanding planning applications and agreed that they had no comment to add (please see attached list).</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>The Northumberland Line</b></p> <p>The Mayor welcomed Racheal Bateman and Stuart McNaughton, NCC. A presentation was circulated to all members and both Rachael addressed this at the meeting.</p>

	<p>The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All six stations are now included as one phase</li> <li>• The project is now in the design stage</li> <li>• Consultation will be on line (November). NCC have a new consultation system -Citizen Space.</li> <li>• Hard copies will be available to be posted to residents on request.</li> <li>• Engagement with local schools.</li> <li>• Publicity via News Post Leader, Evening Chronicle, twitter etc.</li> <li>• The level crossing at Newsham will be replaced by a bridge.</li> <li>• Work with local businesses to help them understand how they can maximise opportunities.</li> <li>• Community engagement.</li> </ul> <p>Key dates are set out in the presentation and any questions can be directed to <a href="mailto:Rachael.bateman@northumberland.gov.uk">Rachael.bateman@northumberland.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Report (1)</b></p> <p>1. <b>Home Working</b> – Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree to the proposal that in light of recent developments officers should remain working from home. This will be kept under review.</p> <p>2. <b>Office Arrangements</b> – Christmas 2020 - Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to close the Office on Wednesday 23 December 2020 until Monday 4 January 2021.</p> <p><b>3. Internal Auditor Report (Appendix 1)</b></p> <p><b>Council RESOLVED</b> to agree the recommendation from Governance Committee to accept the report</p> <p><b>4. External Auditor Report (Appendix 2)</b></p> <p><b>Council RESOLVED</b> to agree the recommendation from Governance Committee to accept the report</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Decision Report (2)</b></p> <p><b>Christmas Events Plans</b></p> <p>Members discussed the information provided in the report and <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the proposal for the Christmas event.</p>

<b>10</b>	<b>Delegation Actions Report</b>  There were no delegated actions to report.
<b>11</b>	<b>Information Report</b>  There were no items for information.
<b>12</b>	<b>Planning for the Future – the White Paper</b>  Councillor Potts summarised some of the information contained in the white paper, adding that NALC have also provided a lot of detail. A discussion took place around the changes the White Paper will bring to planning – there are 26 questions to be answered as part of the consultation. It was agreed that members should submit any comments they wish to make to the Committee Clerk by 15 October 2020. Following that an Extraordinary Full Council may be convened should it be necessary in order to co-ordinate a response to the consultation by 29 October 2020.
<b>13</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>  There was no other business to report.
<b>14</b>	<b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b>  Thursday 14 January 2021. If the current restrictions continue this will be an electronic meeting.
<b>15</b>	<b>PART II</b>  Pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960; that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

**MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL:**

Councillor W Taylor (Mayor)  
Councillor M Richardson  
Councillor E Anderson-Smith  
Councillor D Carr  
Councillor A Cartie  
Councillor K Ellis

Councillor K Nisbet  
Councillor A Parsons  
Councillor J Potts  
Councillor J Reid  
Councillor L Rickerby  
Councillor S Stanger  
Councillor G Thompson  
Councillor G Webb