

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held at 7:00pm on Tuesday, 3 May 2016, at the Town Hall, Station Road, Ashington.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Ely Turnbull (Chair)	Victor Bridges
Vicky Brown	Keith Chambers
Marjorie Chambers	Avril Chisholm
Glyn Davies	Stephen Fenwick
Lawrence Henderson	Kris Lavery
Liam Lavery	Mark Purvis
Pauline Thompson	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mike Slaughter – Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer
Stephen Humphrey – Funding & Projects Officer
Members of the Public – 4

C16/614 1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr. Turnbull thanked members and Town Council staff for their support during his term of office as Chair. Cllr. Turnbull also thanked the previous support of the late County Councillor Cllr. J Sawyer and Town Councillor Cllr. L Brown as well as thanking Cllr. A Chisholm for carrying out the role of Vice-Chair during the year. Cllr. Turnbull informed members that the signing of the new Town Twinning Charter and reaffirming links with Remscheid, in Germany, had been the highlight of his busy and very rewarding year.

On behalf of the Council, Cllr. Fenwick thanked Cllr. Turnbull and Cllr. Chisholm for their work and commitment throughout the year.

One nomination for the position of Chair to the Town Council was received and duly seconded, for Cllr. Chisholm.

Resolved:

That Cllr. A Chisholm be duly elected as Chair of Ashington Town Council for the Civic Year 2016/17.

Cllr. Chisholm, as the newly elected Chair, signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the prescribed form and assumed the Chair.

C16/615 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

One nomination for the position of Vice-Chair was received, and duly seconded, for Cllr. V Bridges.

Resolved:
That Cllr. V Bridges be duly elected as Vice-Chair of Ashington Town Council for the Civic Year 2016/17.

C16/616 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Les Alderson, Louis Brown, Maggie Lang, Wyn Stewart and Bob Walkinshaw.

C16/617 4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest from Members present.

C16/618 5. APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Resolved:
That Cllr. S Fenwick be duly elected as Leader of Ashington Town Council.

C16/619 6. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Resolved:
That Cllr. K Lavery be duly elected as Deputy Leader of Ashington Town Council.

C16/620 7. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes from the meeting held on 8 March 2016 were agreed as a true record.

C16/621 8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

C16/609 Arch Stakeholder Group for Town Centre Regeneration:

The Town Clerk reported that work to redevelop Station Road would commence on 9 May with an expected completion date of mid-November 2016. Members were informed that a “Shop Front Improvement Grant Scheme” had also been approved with an estimated budget of £250k.

The Town Clerk informed members that it was very likely that Northumberland County Council (NCC) would ask the Town Council to work with Ashington Town Team in the development and management of the scheme.

C16/622 9. COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The Town Clerk circulated a document outlining the Council’s Committee and Sub Committee structure. The Town Clerk informed members that discussion had taken place with the Leader regarding the current structure and meeting schedule and the consensus was that the current system fully met the business and administrative needs of the Council and had worked well in moving forward the work of the Council in a timely manner

The recommendation was for the Finance & General Purposes Committee to continue meeting on a monthly basis, for the Environment & Amenities Committee to continue meeting bi-monthly, and the Planning & Regeneration Committee to meet on an “as and when required” required basis.

The Town Clerk stated that the membership of the Personnel Sub-Committee was being proposed as designated post holders incorporating: Chair of the Council; Leader & Deputy Leader of the Council and Chair & Vice Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

After a short discussion, it was agreed that the recommendations be accepted and agreed.

Resolved:**That:**

(i) The Town Council formally adopt the Committee and Sub-Committee structure; and that

(ii) Membership of the main Committees and Sub-Committees be agreed as follows:-

Committee	Membership
Environment & Amenities (Bi-Monthly meetings)	All Members
Finance & General Purposes (Incl. Small Grants & Donations Sub-Committee) (Monthly meetings)	All Members
Planning & Regeneration (Meetings as and when Required)	All Members
Sub-Committee/ Working Group	Membership
Personnel Sub-Committee	Chair of the Council, Leader & Deputy Leader; Chair & Vice Chair of the F&GP Committee.

C16/623 10. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Town Clerk submitted a list of current outside bodies and asked that in relation to organisations receiving financial subsidy from the Town Council, consideration and preference be given to any individual council members with a keen interest in a particular organisation and an ability and willingness to attend meetings.

The Town Clerk reported that in relation to Ashington Town Team and the Arch Stakeholder Group there was a need to ensure consistency in representation during the town centre regeneration work.

Resolved:

That:

(i) Ashington Town Council representation on outside bodies be agreed as follows:-

Outside Body	Representative/s	Substitute/s
Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) County Committee	Leader of the Council	Deputy Leader
Ashington Town Team incorporating Arch Stakeholder Group	Cllr. S Fenwick Cllr. M Chambers (Plus Town Clerk)	N/A
Wansbeck Valley Foodbank	Deferred to next Full Council	N/A
Credit Union for South East Northumberland	Cllr. P Thompson	N/A
Wansbeck Citizens Advice Bureau	Deferred to next Full Council	N/A
Northumberland CVA	Deferred to next Full Council	N/A
Northumberland Federation of YMCA's	Cllr. E Turnbull	N/A
Real Deal Plus (Ashington Life Centre)	Deferred to next Full Council	N/A

(ii) The Town Clerk be requested to formally notify outside bodies of Ashington Town Council representation as outlined above.

(iii) Town Council representatives be required to submit a report to Full Council after attending any meetings of outside bodies.

C16/624 11. DRAFT FINAL ACCOUNTS 2015/16

The Town Clerk presented the Draft Final Accounts for the Financial Year ended 31 March 2016 for consideration and informed members that the full accounts would be submitted together with the 2015/16 Annual Governance return at the next Full Council meeting.

The Town Clerk informed members that successful external funding applications for the Ashington Memorial Garden and allotment work during the year had left the Town Council in an improved financial position as at 31 March 2016.

Members were informed that the Internal Auditor had been asked to undertake an independent audit of the overall Ashington Memorial Garden Project and to provide a report for members. Members were advised that this work would likely take place in July 2016, once the final funding had been received from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Town Clerk informed members that, as well as the opportunity to review the overall project and how the Council had handled contingencies, funding applications and risks, this independent work would be very beneficial for future reference and subsequent major funding applications as well as establishing whether the Town Council's project management and governance model was both fit for purpose and appropriate.

The Town Clerk reported the estimated General Financial Reserves Balance as at 31 March 2016 was expected to be as £294,080. Members were informed that the proposed use of the reserves would be submitted for debate as an agenda item at the next meeting of Full Council.

C16/625 13. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Full Council was scheduled for Tuesday, 7 June 2016, at 6:00pm, in the Council Chamber.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm.