

Morpeth Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council Committee Meeting

Wednesday 21st March 2018

at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber of Morpeth Town Council

Present: Councillors: N Best - Mayor

D Bawn
A Byard
J Gebhard
R Hogg
K Holmes
J Parreira
A Tebbutt
J Tebbutt
J Wearmouth
R Wearmouth

Clerks: Mrs T Bell – Town Clerk
Mrs J Wilson – Office Manager

Absent Councillors: Councillor L Cassie – Apologies Received (Personal)
Councillor D Herne – Apologies Received (Business)
Councillor N Bawn – Apologies Received (Personal)
Councillor R Thompson – No Apologies Received

One member of the public was also in attendance.

Meeting commenced at 6:40pm.

409/17 Mayoral Announcements

- Members were reminded that the usual rules about recordings apply.
- Members were reminded that the usual rules regarding switching off mobile phones apply.
- The Annual Charity Swimathon took place on Saturday 10th March. Cllr Byard and her team completed 78 lengths of the pool. All monies raised will be split between the Morpeth Lions and the Mayors charity.
- The Easter Oranges annual event will take place at Carlisle Park, Morpeth on Monday 2nd April 2018 at 11am. All councillors are encouraged to attend. Active Northumberland will be organising Easter related games in the park.
- The Annual Assembly will take place on Wednesday 18th April 2018.
- The 51st Morpeth Gathering will take place from 6th to 8th April 2018, all councillors are encouraged to attend.

410/17 **Mayoral Diary**

Members were provided with the schedule of events to be attended by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor from March to May 2018.

RESOLVED

- (i) The information was duly noted

411/17 **Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman received the following declarations of interest on this occasion:

Cllr R Hogg – Items referred from other committees – Parish Boundary Working Group (Personal – Resident of Southfields)

412/17 **Public Participation Time**

Cllr Phillip Ashmore, Hepscoth Parish Council, addressed the committee to raise concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the Parish Boundaries, on behalf of Hepscoth and Mitford Parish Council.

Cllr Ashmore raised the following points:-

1. Parishioners of both Hepscoth and Mitford see the actions taken by Morpeth Town Council (MTC) as an act of betrayal and a land grab. Following many years of cooperation in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan, the actions proposed may damage future relations.
2. Morpeth is the fifth richest council in the county, Hepscoth and Mitford are two of the smallest, to take away up to 50% of the precept is not acceptable.
3. Parishioners will see an increase of £100-£150, however it is not clear what the additional services will be.

Both councils have bitter opposition to the proposals and would welcome the six month delay in decisions as suggested by Hebron Parish Council.

The Chair thanked Cllr Ashmore for his representations.

413/17 **Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 24th January 2018**

The minutes of the above meeting was approved as a true record with the following amendment:-

To add '*prior to the meeting*' following Cllr A Tebbutt – No Apologies Received.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Minutes of 24th January 2018, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved, and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

414/17 Matters Arising from Full Council Committee Meeting on 24th January 2018

See appendix A.

415/17 Items referred from Other Committees and Working Groups

Finance and General Purposes Committee

i. Final Accounts – Year End Procedures

Members were asked to approve the following documents as adopted by the Finance and General Purposes Committee

(a) Internal Audit Policy and Risk Assessments

A vote was taken: 11 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

(b) Annual Treasury Management Policy

A vote was taken: 11 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

RESOLVED

- (i) To approve the Internal Audit Policy and Risk Assessment
(ii) To approve the Annual Treasury Management Policy

Finance and General Purposes Committee

ii. Updates from Working Groups – Parish Boundary Working Group

Members were provided for consideration with a copy of the business case in relation to the proposed parish boundary amendments.

Cllr Bawn advised members that the document was prepared through a working group, which reported to F&GP and it is the recommendation of F&GP to proceed with the proposals as outlined and liaise with those Parishes who are affected by the proposals.

A detailed discussion followed where by both for and against arguments for the proposals were raised.

Cllr Hogg advised members that she attended a meeting with Hebron Parish Council who were not wholly opposed to the idea. However they would request that more time is given for them to consider the proposals to

allow them to fully inform residents. They also raised concerns regarding the proposals to section C, where different sides of the road would be paying varying amounts. Hebron would like additional information regarding the proposals.

Cllr Bawn proposed that the document is adopted as MTC's position and continue consulting with the proposed affected parishes over the next six months.

A proposal was made to withdraw the recommendation to take the document direct to NCC.

A vote was taken: 11 For, 0 Against and 0 Abstention

A proposal was made to adopt the document as a position statement, using it to engage with adjoining parishes over the next six months.

A vote was taken: 9 For, 2 Against and 0 Abstention (Cllr J Tebbutt voted against the proposal)

A working group was proposed to take this item forward, reporting back to F&GP before a final recommendation is made to Full Council in September 2018.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted
- (ii) To withdraw the recommendation to take the proposals direct to NCC
- (iii) To adopt the document as the Councils position statement and engage with the adjoining parishes
- (iv) To form a working group consisting of Cllrs J Tebbutt, R Wearmouth, D Bawn, R Hogg and Best and the Clerk who will report regularly to F&GP before final recommendation to Full Council in September 2018
- (v) Following the first meeting of the Working Group, to invite adjoining parishes to a meeting to discuss the proposals.

Cllr Hogg declared a personal interest in this matter, see min 411/17.

Member of the public left the meeting at 6.55pm

416/17 Morpeth Business Improvement District (BID)

Members were asked to consider how the Council will use its vote in the BID ballot.

Members discussed the representations, made prior to Full Council, by campaigners of both yes and no parties. Members agreed that they came with an open mind and would fully take on board the points raised by both sides, some believing it would be best to abstain from vote.

Concerns were raised as to the future of some events, such as Fair Day, without the BID as it will come a time where the Chamber of Trade and the Town Team may naturally cease due to the lack of volunteers.

Cllr Best proposed the vote be taken in four parts.

1. Should the decision of the Council, on whether to use the vote, be taken in closed session?

A vote was taken: 0 For, 11 Against and 0 Abstention

2. Should the Council use their vote in the BID ballot?

A vote was taken: 7 For, 0 Against and 4 Abstention

3. Should the Council use one or two votes in the BID ballot?

A vote was taken to use one vote only: 9 For, 1 Against and 1 Abstention

4. Should the Council vote Yes in the BID ballot?

A vote was taken: 8 For, 0 Against and 3 Abstention (Cllr's Gebhard, Holmes and R Wearmouth abstained from the vote)

Members discussed whether it would be appropriate for the Council to make a statement on how the Council voted.

A proposal was made to make a statement to be issued on the Town Council website.

A vote was taken: 8 For, 1 Against and 2 Abstention

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted
- (ii) To vote Yes in the BID ballot, using only one vote
- (iii) Cllr J Wearmouth to draft a statement for the Town Council website

417/17

Emily Inspires Vote

Cllr Best advised members that an Edwardian Tea Room and Suffragette Market took place in the Town Hall on 10th March 2018. A number of suggested ideas for improvements to Morpeth were made and Penni Blythe, Emma Weston Jones and the Mayoress shortlisted five to take forward in a vote. Of those shortlisted and voted on, members were asked to consider if any of the following should be taken forward by the Town Council –

1. A creative, Performance Arts, Museum and Cinema centre
2. A place for teenagers to hang out
3. More defibrillators



4. Lights on the MUGA in Stobhill
5. More wheelchair accessible places

Cllr Bawn advised members that defibrillators are being installed with the assistance of County Councillor Small Scheme funds.

Members agreed that the Morpeth Forum are currently addressing items 1 and 2.

Cllr Hogg asked if members would consider contributing towards lights for the MUGA at Stobhill. The Clerk advised that this would need to be discussed at F&GP.

RESOLVED

- (i) Information duly noted
- (ii) Refer item 5 back to Chantry Middle School for further information

418/17 Representatives on Outside Bodies

Members received the Outside Organisation reports.

Cllr J Tebbutt asked if a presentation would be made to Council on the Benchmarking Exercise commissioned by the Chamber of Trade.

RESOLVED

- (i) The information was duly noted
- (ii) Invite a representative of the Chamber of Trade to present the results of the Benchmarking Exercise to a future Planning and Transport committee meeting

419/17 Strategic County Councillor Updates

Members were provided for information with a written update from Cllr R Wearmouth. Cllr D Bawn advised members that he had no further update.

Cllr R Wearmouth advised that there has been issues with flooding on Morpeth Common. He also advised that the refurbishment of the gates and railings at Carlisle Park has been referred to Daljit Lally for consideration. A response the car parking consultation is expected to be available in May 2018.

Cllr Best advised members that the Morpeth Forum are approving the development brief in relation to the sale of the old library site, and when approved has requested that this be circulated to members.

RESOLVED

- (i) The information was duly noted.
- (ii) A copy of the Development Brief to be circulated to members.

420/17

Local Council Issues

There were no issues for Local Council raised on this occasion.

Members unanimously agreed that the following resolution be passed to exclude the press and public from the meeting to discuss the following item in closed session:

“That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the disclosure of the following items on the agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of schedule 12A in the 1972 Act as indicated below:

Issues concerning: Information relating to business affairs.

The meeting concluded at 8:03pm with Councillors’ N Best, D Bawn, A Byard, J Gebhard, R Hogg, K Holmes, J Parreira, A Tebbutt, J Tebbutt, J Wearmouth and R Wearmouth



414/17 Matters Arising from Previous Committee Meetings – Appendix A

Minute Number	Item	Current Position	Action from meeting
336/17 (262/17)	Representatives on Outside Bodies	Cllr R Wearmouth informed members that County Cllr J Riddle has confirmed that the Emergency Planning Exercise was for Category 1 responders only, coordinated by the Government, which is the reason that local councils were not invited	Information duly noted.
338/17	Representatives on Outside Bodies	Cllr R Wearmouth advised that there has been no meeting of the Greater Morpeth Development Trust therefore a request for a later start time has not yet been requested.	Information duly noted. To request a later start time at the next appropriate meeting.
341/17	Local Council Issues	Cllr Gebhard advised that he has no update regarding street closure costs for the Chamber of Trade as one Local Council meeting did not have public participation and the other was cancelled. The Clerk advised that the charges for 2018 have been reduced to £250 and will increase to £500 from 2019.	Information duly noted. Cllr Gebhard will raise at the next appropriate Local Council meeting.

SIGNED: *P. Gebhard*
 DATE: 14/5/16
 CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN
 MORPETH TOWN COUNCIL
 STANDING COMMITTEE