

Billingham Town Council (BTC)

Minutes of Annual Meeting - Billingham Town Council

Council Chamber **Tuesday**
Billingham **13th May 2008** **Time: 6.00 pm**

Present: **Councillor Mike Smith (Chairman)**
Councillors; Alan Gallimore, Ann McCoy, Eleanor Mockler, Jean O'Donnell, Colin Pollard, Sharon Scott, Sue Skilbeck, Mick Stoker.

Apologies: Apologies were received from, Councillors: Helen Atkinson, Jane Dobson, Olive Milner and Paul Smith

Official: Apologies received from Dianne Rickaby (Clerk)

In Attendance: 3 members of the public.

137/08 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2007/08 FOR YEAR OF OFFICE.

Prior to opening the Meeting, the Chairman gave his report for 2007-2008, (copy filed in BTC Office). He then invited questions from those present:

- Cllr McCoy had three points to make:
 - i. In the first edition of the Newsletter, due to technical problems her telephone number had not been included. The problem has now been resolved and her telephone number will be available for the next edition of the Newsletter.
 - ii. The Shaw Trust – Cllr McCoy feels that this is an excellent organisation who work with people with learning difficulties and it would be more appropriate to say that their work is 'more cost effective' rather than 'cheap'.
 - iii. There is a need to do more promotional work, e.g. who

A member of the public asked about the reference to costs of £35,000.00 in relation to John Whitehead Park (refer Chairman's Report) and asked why BTC had to put money in.

The Chairman explained that changes were to be made in the tennis court area, i.e. new multi games area/skateboard area which would cost in excess of £350,000.00. If they can raise 10% funding it will give the project a kick start. We are not able to give the 10% but would look at BTC involvement.

The meeting was then opened and continued with agenda item 2.

- 138/08 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF BILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2008/09.**
Cllr Smith was proposed and there being no other candidates proposed Cllr Smith was elected as Chairman for the Council year 2008/2009.
- 139/08 CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.**
The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by Cllr Skilbeck.
- 140/08 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF BILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2008/09.**
Cllr Skilbeck was proposed and there being no other candidates proposed Cllr Skilbeck was elected as Vice Chairman for the Council year 2008/2009.
- 141/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies were submitted from Councillors: Helen Atkinson, Jane Dobson, Olive Milner and Paul Smith
- 142/08 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
There were no declared interests submitted.
- 143/08 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** –The meeting will be adjourned for 15 minutes to allow for public participation.
No questions received from members of the public.
- 144/08 TO SET MEETING DATES FOR 2008/09**
Cllr Pollard suggested asking all Members about the suitability of dates of future meetings.

Cllr O'Donnell felt that Tuesday was the best night because of other council commitments on the other weekdays, which Cllr McCoy concurred with.

Cllr Pollard requested that future dates could be changed, i.e. brought forward, different night if Members requested.

It was resolved:
The Council agreed to set the dates at the next Council meeting.
- 145/08 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO:**
The Billingham Partnership
Police Liaison Group
Parish Liaison Group

Currently, Cllr Dobson has been appointed to the Billingham Partnership; Cllr Milner attends the Police Liaison Group, and Cllr Atkinson attends the Parish Liaison Group.

Cllr Pollard suggested that this agenda item should be set aside and dealt with at the next Council meeting because the Members mentioned above were not present.

Cllr McCoy pointed out those Members had been appointed to committees until the AGM and therefore moved that existing people were represented until the next Council meeting. Seconded by Cllr O'Donnell.

Cllr Mockler professed an interest in the committees but unfortunately has no transport and therefore has difficulty in attending committee meetings.

It was resolved:

This agenda item to be taken forward to the next Council meeting for resolution.

146/08

TO APPOINT COMMITTEES/SUBCOMMITTEES?

Finance / Future Planning Committee
Development Committee
Environmental Committee

The Chairman suggested that Members think about the different committees and bring this item to the next Council meeting. He outlined the remit of the three committees:

Finance / Future Planning Committee – already discussed at previous meetings.

Development Committee – new name for the Events Committee as it includes events, the website, the newsletter etc.

Environmental Committee – has to come into place fairly quickly, as decisions have to be made about litter bins, dog bins and flower tubs.

Cllr Pollard referred to the last Council meeting when the Finance / Future Planning Committee had been mentioned but the Development/Environmental Committees had not been mentioned. He went on to say that if Council wants to encourage people to be on committees (once get over the practicalities) they need to be clear about the remit of these committees.

The Chairman stated his intention was to explain about the different committees (as he had – refer above), one already being in existence and the necessity of the others. He suggested requesting the Clerk to send an email/letter to all Members giving information about the different committees.

It was resolved:

Clerk to send information to all Members for Members to read and bring thoughts to next Council meeting.

147/08 TO CONSIDER PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS/RENEWALS TO BE PAID ANNUALLY:

The Chairman pointed out the following:

Zurich Municipal Insurance Policy – the Clerk to look at other insurance companies to ensure best deal for BTC.

National Association of Local Councils and Cleveland Local Councils Association – both beneficial for BTC.

Society of Local Council Clerks – Clerk has information in relation to costing, but again, beneficial for the Council and the Clerk.

Cllr Pollard stated that one of the big perks of the Clerk being a member was that she has a password to access their website without which we could not get access to information.

It was resolved:

Payment agreed.

148/08 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 18th MARCH 2008.

Consideration was given to the minutes of Billingham Town Council meeting held on 15th April 2008.

It was resolved:

The minutes of the meeting are received as a true and correct recording of proceedings.

149/08 MATTERS ARISING – from the minutes of 15th April 2008.

Cllr Mockler made reference to providing the residents of Cowpen with free gardening and felt that this was unfair to rest of pensioners in other areas of Billingham.

The Chairman explained that there would be further talks with the

Probation Service and a consultation about the gardening scheme before anything went ahead and it was not just Cowpen that would be involved.

With reference to page 8 of April minutes, Cllr McCoy gave a further update on the petition to request traffic calming n Malvern Road. Cllr McCoy advised that she had again met with Steve Lumb (Community Engineer) and together with PC Simon Pearson they had discussed a few ideas. Steve has gone away to see if a survey of residents is necessary and draw up plans.

Cllr McCoy will report back to Town Council.

Cllr McCoy also reported that the Police using bikes have been so effective, resulting in four prosecutions from offences committed in John Whitehead Park, however, the Chief Constable would not allow policemen to ride the bikes unless they were in full uniform. Cllr McCoy reported that this is totally impracticable and felt BTC should raise this issue. However, it may now be resolved but she will bring this issue back to the next meeting if the Chief Constable insists on full uniform.

Cllr McCoy also reported about boy racers in the car park. Hallidale are working with PC Simon Pearson on this issue. Hallidale are responsible for payment in respect of six permanent ramps (the temporary ramps have been removed). PC Simon Pearson has asked Cllr McCoy to obtain an estimate from Stockton Borough Council (SBC) engineers for the work. In addition, Section 57's have been served on a number of car owners and Cllr McCoy explained that a second serving could result in cars being taken from owners.

150/08

FINANCE

The Chairman explained that the Council need to ratify figures at the next Council meeting in time for audit. He suggested that Members take the Finance Report home to study and bring any questions to next meeting.

The Chairman also informed Members of the need to agree to increase the Clerk's hours to those of full-time as previously discussed. There is also a need to consider employing a part-time administration assistant.

Cllr Pollard asked for clarification in respect of the deadline for accounts to be audited.

The Chairman was unsure of the exact date but felt there was time to allow Finance Report to be discussed at next Council Meeting prior to audit.

Cllr Pollard pointed out that the report should read "Summary of Receipt and Payments Account for the year ending 31st March 2008" not 2009.

Cllr McCoy would like it put to the Clerk that the Inland Revenue payment appears excessive, amounting to a third of her salary. This seems excessive unless it includes other items.

It was resolved:

That the Report be discussed at the next Council meeting and Cllr McCoy's point be put to the Clerk.

151/08

REPORT FROM EVENTS COMMITTEE (sub committee of Development Committee).

The Chairman gave an update of minutes from the Events Committee. The following items were discussed:

Billingham Carnival/Billingham Folklore Festival:

With reference to Billingham Carnival and Billingham Folklore Festival, although the Events Committee had suggested donations of £500.00 to each event, the Chairman informed Members that there may be a possibility of the Council receiving funding from other sources which may allow a contribution of one thousand pounds to each event without any cost to BTC.

Cllr Skilbeck asked by donating this amount would it be setting a precedent for the future.

The Chairman explained the need to set precedents by looking at the size and scale of suggested operations i.e. major and minor.

Cllr Scott asked what the timescale would be for this issue.

The Chairman replied that we would know by the next Council meeting.

Cllr Pollard pointed out when talking about a Finance Committee, this was in terms of when the Council gives out money the Finance Committee needs to look at it very carefully. Do we leave it to the Finance Committee but bring back to the Council for ratification. The Finance Committee gives time for the committee to be able to look at situation in depth.

The Chairman asked that this matter be put on hold until the next Council meeting.

It was resolved:

The matter was moved by Cllr McCoy and seconded by Cllr O'Donnell.

Cowpen Residents Association Fete

The committee had suggested a donation of £250.00 minus the costs of promotional items and fundraising games. Any profits to be donated to the Residents Association. The Cowpen Residents Fete is on 14th June and Members were requested to attend if possible and contact the Clerk with the time they are available.

Cllr Scott asked if all resident associations could contact the Clerk and receive help.

The Chairman explained that registered groups could contact BTC.

It was resolved:

£250.00 minus costs be approved for Cowpen Fête.

Newsletter

There have been problems with the distribution of the Newsletter – some residents have not received copies whereas Wolviston Village residents have mistakenly received copies. The Clerk is in discussion with the delivery company who made the mistakes and is requesting reimbursement.

Because of the delivery mistakes the date for the 'Name our Newsletter' has been extended. The Clerk is contacting the people who have entered the competition to date (approximately 15) to explain the extension time.

Requests were received for Braille and audio copies of the newsletter. These will be available in the Council Office. Current problems with the audio copy are being resolved by the Clerk.

152/08

OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Stoker – on Agenda Item 9 – would it be possible to get some representatives from the Council onto the Road Safety Steering Group.

Cllr Scott informed the meeting that she attends this committee and would like to continue.

Ward Councillors receive invites but not BTC Councillors.

The Chairman informed Members that we are not currently on the invite list for this committee, however, the Clerk is addressing this issue.

It was resolved:

To bring this matter to next Council meeting.

Cllr O'Donnell made reference to planning applications. Of the current seventeen, sixteen were delegated, the remaining one being an application for modifications to jetty no.5, LNG delivery pipelines and LNG storage and regasification facility by Norse Pipeline Limited, agent - ConocoPhillips European Power Ltd. Although no issue with this application Cllr O'Donnell felt it important that we look at planning applications for anything to do with Billingham.

Cllr Pollard pointed out that he had noticed from the attendance list that Cllr Juko had resigned.

The Chairman explained that he would be discussing this after any other business items raised.

A member of the public asked if there were any byelaws in respect of garden fires. He pointed out that SBC had various collection schemes in operation for garden rubbish that fires were not necessary and spoilt peoples' days in the garden.

Cllr Scott asked for his address to pass on to the Clerk, however, Cllr Stoker took the gentleman's telephone number and said he would look into the situation.

The Chairman then informed Members that Cllr Juko has resigned; a letter was received from her last week. He has been in touch with SBC and everything has been set up for what BTC has to do. Also, the Clerk has posted statutory notices in Central Ward today.

Spare copies are available if Members think an area has been overlooked.

Anyone can apply. For an election to be held, ten signatures of residents of Central Ward must be received by 3rd June 2006. If nothing is received by this date, BTC can co-opt somebody directly onto the Council.

If more than one name is received and an election is held, it could cost the Council approximately £7,000.00.

If ten people do not sign up for an election and there are two interested people, BTC will vote and this will not bear any costs for BTC.

Cllr Pollard commented that if an election was not called within the statutory fortnight, then BTC has a duty to co-opt. If an election is called, anyone can stand, but in terms of people putting names forward and there being no election, people can put names forward to be co-opted.

The Chairman explained that if an election is called and only one name is put forward, there would only be a cost of approximately £50.00 as no election needs to take place.

Cllr Stoker explained that the ten names have to be on the Electoral Register.

Cllr Pollard asked if the Electoral Roll is different to that of 2007.

The Chairman explained that it had been updated and is usually sent out at this time of the year.

153/08 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 17th June 2008

There being no further business the meeting was closed.

Signed.....
Chairman to Billingham Town Council

