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**Minutes of the West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held at Bedlington Community Centre, Front Street West, Bedlington.**

**On Thursday 9th January at 6.30pm.**

**PRESENTATIONS**

* None scheduled for the meeting.

**QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL**

* A member of the public asked for the Christmas lights to be extended so they go as far as Broadoaks estate and it was agreed to be put on the agenda for February’s meeting for discussion.
* A member of the public mentioned the planned work at Plessey Woods (improvement/extension of the café and toilets) and they asked for West Bedlington Town Council’s support to endorse the application.

**PART A - ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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| Min ref |  | **Attendance / apologies and declarations of interest** | **Determination** |
| 25/0 |  | **In attendance** | Councillors Crosby, Hedley, Henderson, Taylor (Chair), D Wallace, R Wallace and Thompson. Town Clerk S Young, and Assistant Town Clerk, M McTeer. Three (3) members of the public.  |
| 25/1 | a. | **Apologies for absence**1. To receive and note any apologies for absence from councillors.
2. To consider and determine any dispensations for absent councillors.
 | 1. Apologies for absence from Councillor Hogg and Todd were **NOTED.**
2. There were no dispensations for absence for this meeting.
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| 25/2 | b. | **Declaration of interest**1. Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 12th July 2012.

ii. To consider any requests for dispensations. | 1. No declarations were declared.
2. No dispensations for this meeting.
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**PART B – MATTERS FOR DECISION**

1. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS / SUMMARY OF DELEGATED DECISIONS**

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|  |  | **Details of meeting or delegated decisions** | **Determination** |
| 25/3 | a. | To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held on 12th December 2024. | **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held on 12th December 2024 are **APPROVED** as a true record**.**  |
| 25/4 | b. | To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting that are not included as agenda items. | There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2024. |

1. **MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION**

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|  |  | **Matters for discussion / decision** | **Determination** |
| 25/5 | a. | **Finance**1. **Reserves** - The Council are requested to review and (if appropriate) update the current “Reserve Provision” based on the actual position as of 31st March 2024. No account is made of current in-year spending or any resulting potential surplus or deficit. (A further review (approx. May 2025) will confirm the actual reserve provision as of 31st March 2025. (Details distributed to members).
2. **Reserves** - The Council are requested to review and update (if appropriate) Policy No. 20, Policy for Financial Reserves. (Current policy distributed to members).
3. **Quarterly Finance Report** - The Council are asked to review the current years expenditure against its current year’s budget and (if appropriate) make recommendations to bring both inline. (Report distributed to members. There are no significant areas of unplanned overspends or unplanned spending for future projects currently).
4. **Internal Audit Interim Report** – The Council are requested to NOTE the interim internal audit report distributed. There is no area of concern reported.
 | 1) After reviewing the Reserve Provision, members unanimously **AGREED** that no updates were to be made. 2) After reviewing the Policy for Financial Reserves, members unanimously **AGREED** that no updates were to be made. 3) After reviewing the Quarterly Finance Report, members unanimously **AGREED** that no updates were to be made. 4) Members **NOTED** the internal audit report. |
| 25/6 | b. | **Governance** 1. **Review of council policies**

The Council are asked to review and (if appropriate) update the following approved policies:1. Policy No. 5 Dignity at Work (Bullying and Harassment) Policy.
2. Policy No. 6 Grievance Policy,
3. Policy No, 7 Health and Safety Policy,
4. Policy No.9 Disciplinary Policy.

(All current approved policies distributed to Councillors).1. **Review of Lone Worker Risk Assessment**

The Council are requested to discuss and decide upon any practical solutions that could be implemented to reduce the risk(s) associated with Lone Working. (Current Risk Assessment distributed to members)1. **Review of Asset Register**

The Council is asked to review (and if appropriate) update the current Asset Register. A summary of the register detailing current year additions and deletions distributed to members). | 1) After reviewing the policies, members unanimously **AGREED** that no updates were to be made.2) After reviewing the policy, it was **AGREED** that two additional telephone numbers should be added to the policy for the lone worker to contact, if the need arose. It was **AGREED** that it’s at the lone worker’s discretion whether they let visitors into the Community Centre or not, and that decision would be supported by the Town Council. 3) After reviewing the asset register, members unanimously agreed no updates were to be made and this was **ENDORSED.**  |
| 25/7 | c. | **Community Chest / funding requests**The Council are requested to discuss and decide upon funding requests from:1. Bedlington Community Centre request £500 for the purchase of an online event ticketing system.

NB - APPLICATION WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT. | Application **WITHDRAWN** by applicant. |
| 25/8 | d. | **Planning** 1. **Planning applications – where comments have been requested**

 The Council are asked to discuss and decide if it wishes to make any comments in relation to the planning applications received for comment.

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| **Ref** | **Description** | **Response due date** |
| 24/04124/FUL | Converting the garage into a habitable space, extending the rear of the garage and fitting a roof lantern into a new flat roof.Location:9 Winchester Way The Chesters Bedlington Northumberland NE22 6JN | 26th December 2024 |
| 24/03607/FUL | Work to refurbish and extend the cafe and kitchen of the visitorcentre and to refurbish the adjacent public toilets. Location: Visitors Centre Plessey Woods Country Park Shields Road Hartford BridgeBedlington Northumberland NE22 6AN | 31st December 2024 |

\*Where the response date is before the date of the meeting an extension has been agreed to allow consideration of the application at the meeting and an opportunity to submit comments. Note: recent notified planning decisions and other planning applications (where comments have not been requested) are shown in PART C for information only). |

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| **Determination** |
| No comment |
| It was decided by members that West Bedlington Town Council would **SUPPORT** this application. It was suggested that having recycling facilities at the site could go in the letter of support as well as a suggestion that the footpath could be improved on the walk down to Plessey Woods.  |

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| 25/9 | h. | **Working groups / committees (items for decision or discussion)** 1. Any recommendations from the working groups for decision by full the Council. The Council are requested to "agree a proposal that the Christmas light switch on for 2025 is more traditional than in previous years and will include a male voice choir and a Christmas market".
2. Any other items from working groups – the Chair of the group will feed back to the Council any other items discussed, any ongoing and future matters been worked upon by the working group.
 | 1) Members unanimously **AGREED**. Feedback from 2024’s event was extremely positive, especially the free rides, so more of the same is planned for 2025’s event, plus an artisan market in Community Centre. 600 panto tickets were booked and 475 attended, which was disappointing, so a small fee for booking will be implemented for 2025’s panto. 2) The updates to the Neighbourhood Plan have been made and are to be included on West Bedlington Town Council’s website in January 2025. Further consultation is planned for spring 2025. Details to be included in the next issue of Update.  |
| 26/10 | i. | **Bank reconciliations**The Council are asked to APPROVE a checked bank reconciliation of £10,217.20 as of 31st December 2024 for current account, a Deposit Account Balance of £366,784.57 as of 31st December 2024, and a CCLA account balance of £25,000. | The bank reconciliations were **APPROVED** by members. |

**PART C – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION OR TO BE NOTED**

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|  |  | **Matters for information or to be noted** |
| 25/11 |  | **RESOLVED to NOTE** Sections a, b, and c. Note section f is not part of the agenda and is included for information only. |
|  | a. | **Chair’s update and any reports from external meetings**1. The Chair will make any relevant announcements and provide updates to members.
2. To receive feedback from Councillors from any external meetings since the date of the last Council meeting.
 | Councillor Thompson informed members that she can’t attend the “Community Assistance Centres” meeting at Cramlington Community Hub on Monday 13th January 2025, 9:30am – 12:00pm, so Councillor Taylor said she would attend instead.  |
| 25/12 | b. | **Consultations**

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| From | Description | Details |
| None for this meeting |  |  |

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| 25/13 | c. | **Invitations**

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| From | Event  | Response details |
| N’land County Council  | Northumberland Line Project Team - Opening Event in Ashington.  | Councillors- **NOTED**  |
| Environment & Climate Fund | Launch of the Northumberland Environment & Climate FundRegister online at: https://www.tickettailor.com/events/northumberlandcountycouncil/1375201 | Councillors- **NOTED**  |

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| 25/14 | d. |

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| **Schedule of payments and receipts**Details of payments and (receipts) to be noted since last Council update. All payments gross of VAT.

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| Payee | Amount£. p | Description | Councillors **NOTED** all scheduled payments/receipts in section (d).  |
| Northumberland CC  | 1,372.80 | Christmas Lights Road Closure Costs |  |
| HAGs-SMP Ltd | 30.00 | Replacement Play Equipment part. |  |
| Reay Security Ltd CCTV | 809.64 | CCTV Charges |  |
| Smart Office Systems Ltd | 25.09 | Printer Charges |  |
| Widescope Web Design | 94.69 | .gov email facility  |  |
| Widescope Web Design | 204.00 | .gov domain subscription costs |  |
| CCLA Deposit Fund Interest | -98.72 | Interest on investment |  |
| D & M Fencing Ltd | 1,104.00 | Play Area remedial repairs (ROSPA). |  |
| D & M Fencing Ltd | 720.00 | Christmas Tree Fence 2023 and 2024, |  |
| Harriet Louise Productions | 2,500.00 | 2024 Pantomime |  |
| Reay Security Ltd  | 83.04 | CCTV Church Lane |  |
| Reay Security Ltd  | 446.40 | Play Area Gates Locking |  |
| Talk Talk Business | 59.42 | Telephone + Internet |  |
| Charmain Hamilton  | 425.00 | Generator for Switch-On |  |
| Malcolm Wilkinson | 138.00 | Internal Audit Fees |  |
| Dogwood Production CIC  | -250.00 | Return of Community Chest Funding |  |
| Transfer In from Deposit Account | -20,000.00 | Deposit to Current Account  |  |
| Northumberland County Council  | 8,165.43 | December Payroll Costs |  |
| Defib Machines Limited  | 2,896.06 | Annual Charges for defibrillators |  |
| Defib Machines Limited  | 2,190.00 | Annual Charges for cabinets |  |
| WL Straughan & Son Ltd -  | 2,385.60 | Repairs to Christmas Tree Pit' |  |
| Wireless Logic Limited | 539.14 | CCTV Sim Card Charges |  |

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| 25/15 | e. | **Other planning applications**Where comments have **not** been requested.

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| **Ref.** | **Description** | **Decision** | **Comments**  |
| 24/03221/PRUTPO | Certificate of Lawful Development - Proposed development for change of use for the existing built-in garage, as the entire space will be converted from vehicle storage to domestic use, specifically to extend the kitchen and create a utility storage area. 2 St Nicholas Drive Bedlington Northumberland NE22 5SE | PERMITTED | No comments from members for all planning in section (e). |

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| 25/16 | f. | **Planning decisions notified to West Bedlington Town Council by Northumberland County Council**.Councillors - NOTED

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| **Ref.** | **Description** | **Decision** | **Comments**  |
| 24/03606/PRUTPO | Tree Preservation Order Application - T1 Corsican Pine - remove lowerscaffold limb. Location Pinegrove House 2 Bellingham Court Bedlington Northumberland NE22 5QS | PERMITTED |  |
| 24/02362/REM | Reserved Matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for construction of 6no. dwellings on approved application 21/01927/OUT Location Land North West Of Blue House Farm Blue House Farm Road Netherton Colliery NE22 6BD | WITHDRAWN |  |
| 24/02362/REM | Reserved Matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout andscale for construction of 6no. dwellings on approved application21/01927/OUT Location Land North West Of Blue House Farm Blue House Farm Road Netherton Colliery NE22 6BD | GRANTED |  |
| 24/03162/FUL | Erection of 12 stables and (retrospective) 5 barnsLocation Land To South Of Hartford Drive Hartford Drive Hartford BridgeNorthumberlandNE22 6AJ | REFUSED |  |
| 24/03848/FUL | Retrospective - New timber summer house to rear gardenLocation 21 Orchard Way Broadoaks Bedlington NorthumberlandNE22 6BU | GRANTED |  |
| 24/03859/FUL | Single storey rear extension with shallow slope roof - 4mLocation 24 Errington Way Fenwick Park Bedlington NorthumberlandNE22 6FH | GRANTED |  |

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| 25/17 | g. | **Police report.**No Police report for this meeting. The next scheduled regular report is for the March 2025 meeting. |
| 25/18 | h. | **Matters for information only** Any matters pertaining to the Council, that members would like to bring to the attention of other members and residents. For information only no proposals or voting on these matters.1. Councillors – nothing for this meeting.
2. Town Clerk – nothing for this meeting.
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| 25/19 | i. | **Date of next meeting**The next scheduled meeting of the Council will be on Thursday 13th February 2025 at 6.30pm in Bedlington Community Centre, Front Street West, Bedlington. The agenda for this meeting to be issued on Thursday 6th February 2025. |

**PART D – EXEMPT BUSINESS**

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

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|  |  | **Matters for discussion / Decision / Information** |  |
| 25/20 |  | There is no exempt business for this meeting. |  |

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| 25/21 |  | **Close of meeting**The Chair closed the meeting at 7.03pm |

**WEST BEDLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL - COUNCILLORS**:

Bill Crosby, Paul Hedley, Cath Henderson, Adam Hogg, Christine Taylor, Victoria Thompson, Jayne Todd, Dianne Wallace, and Russ Wallace.

**Signed by Chair Date**