



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House, Blyth, on Thursday 26 May 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Members of the Public: 1

Town Councillors

W Taylor (Mayor), K Nisbet (Deputy Mayor), D Carr, G Davey, S Davey, B Erskine, C Humphrey, J R Potts, J Reid, M Richardson, M Robson, S Stanger, A Watson

Apologies

A Barrass, A Cartie, C Jones

Officers in Attendance

Joseph Hughes, Town Clerk
Malcolm Wilkinson, Deputy Town Clerk

Also in Attendance

Jo-Anne Garrick, Planning Consultant

Meeting

Councillor Warren Taylor, the new Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Mayor invited approval of the minutes from the previous meeting held on Thursday 27 May 2021. These were agreed and approved by those in attendance as a true record, which included adding Councillor C Jones to those present.

The Mayor highlighted that there were many areas of interest going on, which included the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Commonwealth Baton Event, BTC Events, Cultural Programme within the Town, British Volt and JDR Cables. It was also mentioned that this could be a tricky year for residents with e.g., the cost of living situation.

The Mayor then invited Jo-Anne Garrick to give her presentation on Neighbourhood Planning and the steps the Council need to take to have a Plan in place.

Consultation with residents and stakeholders is crucial to a successful process and there will be "drop in "events in July 2022 to start receiving their views.

Throughout the presentation many questions/potential inclusions within a Neighbourhood Plan, were asked including:

- Changing empty commercial properties to domestic properties
- Increasing the numbers of houses needed by 2036
- Enhancements to keep the Town looking good e.g. Gateway Signs and Design Codes
- Use of Housing Needs Assessment to support the Plan
- Buildings of High Importance and guidance from Historic England
- Protecting the Green Belt
- The Government's levelling up agenda
- The means of achieving engagement e.g. drop in sessions, questionnaires, social media, as specific questions and newsletters
- Use of previous material e.g., work on the Environment can be used again
- The need to start the process which includes the topics we have previously been informed of
- Shore line management plan
- How are particular themes calculated/decided e.g. Housing and low value areas
- Can Town centre boundaries be changed
- Review the NCC local plan for areas it doesn't address
- Creation of sub units of a Town Centre
- How can we attract businesses into the Town – issue of high business rates
- Attract businesses that can't be on-line
- Acknowledge that we are limited regarding land and tax setting liabilities, and we need to work with matters within our control
- Ensure we discuss with businesses within the Town

Questions from the public included:

- A transport plan including bus, train and road networks including a dual carriageway
- Individual schemes within the Town e.g. Bowes Street
- Making the Town more vibrant
- Review previous plans for suggestions of value
- How can we attract people into Blyth
- Review of empty properties

Jo-Anne outlined that these would need to be fully considered and evidenced before consideration for inclusion within a draft plan. These items would be expanded as a starting point for the “drop in sessions”. NCC will also provide staff and information boards for these sessions.

The Mayor closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their attendance and was looking forward to an exciting year ahead, working with Jo-Anne on the Neighbourhood Plan where the key issue is getting the public and stakeholders on board, and being with the Council along the way to the eventual approval of the Plan.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

Date: 30 May 2022

Signed