

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**3<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY, 2008**

**PRESENT :-** Councillor Wood (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Hamilton and Watson.

**Also in attendance:** - Mr S Owens (Teesdale Local Strategic Partnership, (for Minute 29 only).

**27. APOLOGIES :-** Councillors Blissett (Town Mayor) and Cooke.

**28. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 29<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2007**

**Resolved –** That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**29. PRODUCTION OF TOWN PLAN**

Pursuant to Committee Minutes 17/Sep/07 and 25/Oct/07, and as determined at the Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2007 (Minute 94/Oct/07 refers), the Committee Chairman had prepared a formal presentation on the production of a Town Plan, originally planned for consideration at the Committee meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2007 but subsequently cancelled. Whilst representatives from the Barnard Castle Vision project and Teesdale Local Strategic Partnership had been invited to take part in the discussion following the presentation, only the Chairman of the Strategic Partnership, Mr S Owens, was present.

Discussion ensued on the mechanisms already used in the production of a number of Teesdale Village Plans, with Ms S Moorhouse being a key player in the process. The link with funding opportunities was stressed, as was the need to consult widely and involve local community representatives. It was emphasised that the whole exercise had to be carried out on a structured basis.

**Resolved –** (a) That Mr Owens be thanked for his contribution to the Town Plan deliberations.

(b) That Ms S Moorhouse be contacted for help and advice in this matter.

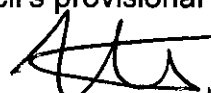
(c) That, in view of the absence of a representative from the Barnard Castle Vision project and two Committee Members, further consideration of the possible production of a Town Plan be deferred until a future meeting.

**30. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING – TEESDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL ASSETS – SUBMISSION OF TOWN COUNCIL'S LIST**

Submitted – A report confirming that, at the Council meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2007 (Minute 128/Dec/07 refers), it was agreed that this Committee should be given delegated powers to determine the list of District Council assets in respect of which this Council might have an interest. It was confirmed that a number of potential lists had already been examined and those lists were included in the report so that full consideration could be given to the preparation of a comprehensive list.

**Resolved –** (a) That the following list of Teesdale District Council's assets, services, etc. be submitted to the District Council as this Council's provisional list:-

Modernisation Committee – 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2008

  
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- (i) Car Park Administration;
- (ii) Woodleigh;
- (iii) Scar Top;
- (iv) Public Toilets;
- (v) The Demesnes;
- (vi) Market Cross;
- (vii) Flatts Woods – Footpaths and Seats;
- (viii) Play Areas – The Demesnes and Scar Top;
- (ix) Public Seats;
- (x) Bus Shelters;
- (xi) Cleaning Arrangements; and
- (xii) Contractual Sites.

As Corrected at Cites. Min. 32/Feb/08:-


(xiii) The Cobbles; and

(xiv) Barnard Castle's Wednesday Markets.

(b) That the District Council be informed that the list at (a) above is submitted with the provisos that this Council's continuing commitment to any of the items on the list will depend on the assimilation of further information to be provided by the District Council and the overall financial arrangements proving satisfactory.

(c) That the following list of powers available to local councils be further investigated, with emphasis placed on (i), (iii), (vi), (ix) and (x):-

- (i) burial grounds, cemeteries and closed churchyards;
- (ii) the making of bye-laws for specific areas of responsibility;
- (iii) public clocks (with particular reference to the 'Town Clock' on Barnard Castle Methodist Church, in respect of which no organisation currently claims responsibility);
- (iv) community centres;
- (v) crime prevention measures – financing;
- (vi) entertainment provision and support of the arts;
- (vii) schemes of collective investment;
- (viii) land acquisition and disposal;
- (ix) licences and lotteries;
- (x) tourism;
- (xi) traffic-calming – financial support;
- (xii) community transport schemes – finance support; and
- (xiii) utilisation of wells, springs or streams for water supplies

  
11/2/08

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE****11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2008**

**PRESENT :-** Councillor Wood (in the Chair); Councillors Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Watson.

**Also in attendance:** - Mrs A. Allen (Barnard Castle Vision) (for Minute 33 only).

**31. APOLOGIES :-** Councillor Blissett (Town Mayor).

**32. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 3<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY, 2008**

As previously reported to the Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2008 (Minute 162(5)/Jan/08 refers), the Clerk referred to Minute 30 of the above set of Minutes and to the omission of The Cobbles and Barnard Castle's Wednesday Market from the list of Teesdale District Council's assets, services, etc in which this Council had expressed an interest. Both of these items had been agreed for inclusion on the list at the Modernisation Committee meeting.

**Resolved –** That the Minutes be approved as a correct record, subject to the following correction:-

Add the following to the list at resolution (a) of Minute 30 (Local Government Restructuring – Teesdale District Council Assets – Submission of Town Council's List):-


- ' (xiii) The Cobbles; and
- (xiv) Barnard Castle's Wednesday Market.'

**33. PRODUCTION OF TOWN PLAN**

Pursuant to Committee Minute 29/Jan/08 and as determined at Council Minute 94/Oct/07, the Committee Chairman made his formal presentation on the production of a Town Plan. Mrs A. Allen from the Barnard Castle Vision project was in attendance to aid discussion.


The Chairman emphasised that the production of a Town Plan was not compulsory in the Quality Council scheme but that such an exercise was good practice. He highlighted the four key issues (Social and Community, Economic, Land and Environment and Leisure) and discussed a number of specific matters which needed to be addressed within the parameters of the four issues. During the discussion, Mrs Allen highlighted those subjects on which research and other work had already been carried out.

It was stressed that one key factor in the production of a Town Plan was full involvement of the local community and to this end, the setting-up of a Steering Group, with a number of subsidiary Focus Groups, was recommended. In addition, full or abridged questionnaires could be sent out and a copy of Staindrop's questionnaire had been circulated prior to the meeting. The identification of sources of funding was also paramount.

  
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It was emphasised that, whilst this Council would be the co-ordinator of the Plan's production, it had to 'belong' to the Town in general. It was not expected that this Council would assume responsibility for all issues covered in the Plan. The need to consult other towns was discussed.

- Resolved** – (a) That it be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2008 that the production of a Town Plan for Barnard Castle be approved, subject to the outcome of further investigatory work to be undertaken as to the detailed work involved.
- (b) That Mrs A. Allen, from the Barnard Castle Vision project, and the Clerk determine the extent to which information to be included in the Town Plan has already been collated so that gaps can be identified.
- (c) That other towns be contacted as to the mechanics involved and the usefulness of producing a Town Plan.

  
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**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL, 2008**

**PRESENT :-** Councillor Wood (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett (Town Mayor), Mrs Hamilton and Watson.

**34. APOLOGIES :-** Councillor Cooke.

**35. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING - 11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2008**

**Resolved –** That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**36. PRODUCTION OF TOWN PLAN**

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 33/Feb/08 and notwithstanding the Council's decision (at Minute 236/Mar/08) not to proceed with the production of a Town Plan at this stage, information from Dr A. Allen of the Barnard Castle Vision project summarising information which was already available for the Town Plan and recommending avenues which could be explored to elicit further information. It was generally considered at the meeting that the response was disappointing and had cast certain further doubts on the practicality of producing a Town Plan.

It was considered that a 'subject-by-subject' approach was probably the best option, with the involvement (using specific areas of expertise and knowledge) of local groups, clubs, businesses, etc. Reference was also made to the potential support of the Teesdale Local Strategic Partnership. The mechanics of the whole process were again outlined, possible funding was discussed and a timescale of twelve/eighteen months was again forecast.

Reference was also made to the offer from the County Durham Association of Local Councils (Council Minute 192(A)/Mar/08 refers) to host (at no cost to this Council) an in-house seminar, solely for this Council, on Town Plans, local government re-organisation and Quality Councils.

**Resolved –** That no further action be taken until the in-house seminar referred to above has taken place.

**37. DATES AND TIMES OF MODERNISATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS DURING MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

Submitted – A report on the prospective meeting arrangements of the Modernisation Committee during the Municipal Year 2008/09, scheduled to fit in with the standard six/seven-week cycle of Council meetings, the 2008/09 dates of which had been agreed at Council Minute 211/Mar/08.

Specific discussion took place at the meeting on the 6.30 p.m. starting time for all Modernisation Committee meetings and it was suggested that the original reason for this early start had been superseded. An alternative starting time of 7.00 p.m. was debated, with the option of starting earlier on occasions when the number of agenda items dictated that course of action. A 7.00 p.m. start would also allow other short meetings to be

*JR Watson*  
23/6/08

scheduled on the same evenings. References were also made to the Summer recess and the fact that, for a number of reasons, the Modernisation Committee meetings had not been scheduled for the same week in each Council cycle.

**Resolved** – (a) That the schedule of Modernisation Committee meeting dates during the Municipal Year 2008/09 be as follows:-

2008	2009
12 <sup>th</sup> May	9 <sup>th</sup> February
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	23 <sup>rd</sup> March
22 <sup>nd</sup> September	
27 <sup>th</sup> October	
8 <sup>th</sup> December	

(b) That, with the exception of the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2008, the official starting time for all the Committee meetings listed be 7.00 p.m.

### 38. FUTURE ROLE OF MODERNISATION COMMITTEE

Reference was made to the scheme of revised decision-making within the Council, hopefully to be introduced in September 2008, and views were sought as to the role of the Modernisation Committee within that scheme. An outline was provided of the issues to be addressed during the exercise and specific discussion took place on the extent of delegated powers for Committees and other subsidiary bodies and for the Clerk. It was suggested that, to determine best practice, visits should be made to local councils in the area to obtain information about their decision-making schemes.

**Resolved** – That the Committee Chairman and the Clerk be authorised to visit a number of local councils to seek information about decision-making best-practice guidelines.

*gR Watson*  
*23/6/08*

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**12<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2008**

**PRESENT** :- Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton, Watson and Wood.

**1. APOLOGIES** :- None.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

Councillor Wood was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Wood be appointed Chairman of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2008/09.

**3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

Councillor Watson was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Watson be appointed Vice-Chairman of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2008/09.

**4. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS – MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

Submitted - A schedule of the dates and times of Committee meetings during the Municipal Year 2008/09, as determined at Committee Minute 37/Apr/08.

**Resolved** – That the information be received.

**5. EDITORIAL BOARD – REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERSHIP – MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

A nominated representative was sought from this Committee to become a member of the Editorial Board for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Watson be nominated as this Committee's representative on the Editorial Board for the Municipal Year 2008/09.

*GR Watson  
23/6/08*

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE, 2008**

**PRESENT :-** Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Watson.

**6. APOLOGIES :-** None.

**7. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR REMAINDER OF MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

It was confirmed that, at the Council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2008 (Minute 16(2)/Jun/08 refers), Councillor Wood had resigned as a Member (and consequently Chairman) of this Committee. The appointment of a replacement Committee Chairman was therefore required for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2008/09.

Councillor Watson was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Watson be appointed Chairman of this Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2008/09.

**8. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR REMAINDER OF MUNICIPAL YEAR 2008/09**

In the light of Councillor Watson's appointment as Committee Chairman at Minute 7 above, it was confirmed that a replacement Committee Vice-Chairman was required for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2008/09.

Councillor Cooke was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Cooke be appointed Vice-Chairman of this Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2008/09.

**9. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL, 2008**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2008**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**11. ROLE OF MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

Submitted – A report summarising the current role of the Modernisation Committee and its possible incorporation in the revised decision-making structure of the Council. The Committee's original Terms of Reference were attached to the submitted report and it was resultantly clear to all present at the meeting that the Committee had lost its sense of purpose, with little being achieved since the Committee ceased to review individual Council services. It was also re-iterated that a list of work to be co-ordinated by this Committee had not been progressed. The Clerk considered that, in its present form, the Committee did not have a place in the new decision-making structure, albeit that a revamped and refocused Committee could be an integral part of that structure.

Discussion ensued on the future role of the Committee, with the main issues covered including the name of the Committee, the possible direct involvement of Members in the work carried out, the need for a co-ordinated team effort and the general involvement of the public in the issues to be addressed.

Specific matters discussed included the need to move forward with the production of a Town Plan, the Council's prospective application for Quality Status (with specific references to the Council's Newsletter and the employee's qualification), the co-ordination of the procedural and policy documents issue, the Council's training programme and the Committee's role in the detailed planning for local government re-organisation (albeit that full Council must make all policy decisions). The Council's links with the Barnard Castle Vision were also discussed.

**Resolved** – (a) That, subject to a complete revamp of its operations, the issue of revised Terms of Reference and a revised Committee name, it is considered that this Committee should be an integral part of the Council's revised decision-making structure.

(b) That it be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2008:-

(i) that a positive commitment should be given to the production of a Town Plan, with the co-ordination to be undertaken by this Committee and the first stage in the process to be the in-house seminar referred to at Committee Minute 36/Apr/08;

(ii) that a target date of the end of January 2008 be set for the submission of the Council's application for Quality Status;

(iii) that the Editorial Board be requested to ensure that the production and issue of four editions of the Newsletter in a calendar year is achieved by the end of January 2008 to enable recommendation (ii) above to be achieved;

(iv) that, whilst other Committees will be involved in the consideration of specific procedural and policy documents, this Committee should be authorised to co-ordinate the overall project;

(v) that this Council's annual and longer-term training programmes be co-ordinated by this Committee; and

(vi) that this Committee should be allocated the responsibility for the examination of detailed local government re-organisation issues.

*JR Wilson*  
22/9/08

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2008**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett and Cooke.

**12. APOLOGIES:-** Councillors Blackie and Mrs Hamilton.

**13. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE, 2008**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**14. QUALITY STATUS SITUATION**

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 11(b)/Jun/08 and Council Minute 48/Jul/08, a report confirming that deadlines of November 2008 (for the production and issue of four editions of the Newsletter in a calendar year) and January 2009 (for the submission of this Council's Quality Status application) had previously been agreed. However, the recent resignation of the Editorial Board Chairman (Councillor Blackie) and the revelation that the Clerk (instead of the Assistant Clerk) would have to obtain the CiLCA qualification had necessitated a review of the deadlines.

It was further reported that the Editorial Board had recommended, to the Council meeting scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008, a revised schedule for forthcoming Newsletters, resulting in unlikely to be reached before June 2009. the criteria of four editions in a year being achieved by April 2009. It was also confirmed that, even if the Clerk's CiLCA qualification portfolio was submitted in April 2009, a decision was

References were also made to the format of the Annual Report and the prospective delay in the assimilation of services from the Unitary Authority. Consequently, it was suggested that a Quality Status submission in the June/July 2009 period was more realistic.

Consideration was given to the 10 Quality Status tests and discussion centred on the Communication and Community Engagement Test, within which there were 9 discretionary criteria out of a total of 17. Members were also provided with a summary of the CiLCA qualification tests and the resultant necessary production of documentation to be approved by full Council was highlighted.

**Resolved** – (a) That the appreciation of this Committee be conveyed to the office staff for their commitment to 'temporarily' solving the Newsletter situation.

(b) That it be recommended to the Editorial Board that Councillor Mrs Dixon be asked whether she can provide any help in the production of forthcoming Newsletters.

(c) That the Editorial Board's revised recommended schedule for forthcoming Newsletters of October 2008, January 2009 and April 2009 be endorsed, subject to the Board taking measures to ease the situation for the office staff.

(d) That it be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2008 that a revised target of June/July 2009 for the submission of this Council's Quality Status application be agreed.

(e) That further information be sought on the discretionary criteria in the Communication and Community Engagement Test of the Quality Council scheme, with a view to the criteria to be tackled by this Council being finalised (for submission to full Council) at the Committee meeting scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2008.

JRW.

## 15. PRODUCTION OF TOWN PLAN

Pursuant to Committee Minute 11(b)(i)/Jun/08, it was reported that whilst the proposed in-house seminar, on the production of a Town Plan, the Quality Council scheme and local government re-organisation, had been agreed in principle, determination of the date remained outstanding. It was confirmed that an initial fact-finding exercise would have to be carried out and the acquisition of examples of best practice elsewhere was essential. The mechanics of the various processes (particularly those involving Councillors) and the level of priority to be given to the overall task were also referred to.

**Resolved** – That the overall situation be noted.

## 16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING ISSUES

Pursuant to Committee Minute 11(b)(vi)/Jun/08, it was confirmed that this Committee had been allocated the responsibility for the examination of relevant detailed local government re-organisation issues. In this connection, discussion took place at the meeting on options for the future administrative arrangements associated with the Parish Forum and the Residents and Travellers Forum.

**Resolved** – That every effort be made to work with other medium to large parish councils within the Teesdale area to ensure that the future support arrangements for the Parish Forum and the Residents and Travellers Forum are determined as soon as possible.

## 17. PROCEDURAL AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

Pursuant to Committee Minute 11(b)(iv)/Jun/08, it was reported that a plan of action had been determined in respect of the consideration of procedural and policy documents by various Committees, albeit that all such documents would have to be referred to full Council for final approval. It was further reported that a number of envisaged employment and health and safety documents would not have to be produced because of the small number of Council employees.

**Resolved** – That every effort be made to finalise all procedural and policy documents by 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009.

## 18. TRAINING PROGRAMME

Pursuant to Committee Minute 11(b)(v)/Jun/08, further consideration was given to the issues involved in planning a co-ordinated approach in respect of this Council's annual and long-term training programmes. It was reported that the revised Quality Status scheme included a requirement to produce a Statement of Intent on training for both staff and Councillors.

**Resolved** – That draft training programmes be produced by the Clerk on the lines now indicated.

## 19. CLEANLINESS OF TOWN

Pursuant to Council Minute 75/Sep/08, it was confirmed that the issues raised in Mr Swainston's letter in the Teesdale Mercury, regarding the state of cleanliness in Barnard Castle, had been referred to this Committee as the most appropriate Committee to undertake a co-ordinated and progressive approach in this matter. The relevant responsibilities of Durham County Council and Teesdale District Council were discussed and it was generally agreed that challenges should be made as and when considered imperative.

**Resolved** – That the relevant audit report and work schedule be sought, as a matter of urgency, from Durham County Council and Teesdale District Council respectively.

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2008**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes and Mrs Hamilton.

**26. APOLOGIES:** - Councillors Blissett and Cooke.

**27. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2008**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**28. CODES OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES –  
A CONSULTATION**

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 144/Dec/08, this Committee had been authorised to review the above consultation document in detail in order to present recommendations to Council. It was considered that the proposed changes would enhance the Members' Code of Conduct and bring clarity to employees by the introduction of a separate Code of Conduct for local government officers.

**Resolved** - That a report containing this Committee's recommendations on the above consultation be submitted to the Special Council meeting scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.

**29. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING ISSUES – AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS  
– FURTHER CONSULTATION**

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 139/Dec/08, this Committee had been authorised to review the additional consultation document in respect of Area Action Partnerships issued by Durham County Council. Discussion arose around proposals in the document that still required clarity which should be sought in this Council's response to the consultation.

**Resolved** - That a report containing this Committee's recommendations on the above consultation be submitted to the Special Council meeting scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2008

**30. QUALITY STATUS - GENERAL UPDATE**

Due to the absence of the Clerk, an update was unable to be given.

*GR Watson  
9/2/2009*

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2009**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Peat.

**31. APOLOGIES:-** Councillor Blissett.

**32. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2008**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**33. QUALITY STATUS - GENERAL UPDATE**

The Clerk reported that his CiLCA submission was still planned for April/May 2009, subject to certain criteria being finalised which included the production of a Grant Awarding or Donation policy and a Member and Officer Training Programme. The introduction of public participation in Council meetings was still outstanding and Members were advised that should the 'Power of Well Being' be sought, at least 80% of Members must undertake the relevant training.

It was confirmed that work on the Discretionary section was well advanced with nine out of seventeen requirements already met and with further requirements being worked towards.

The Clerk expressed concern that should any two of the nine previously elected Members of this Council cease to be Members (for whatever reason), to fill the vacancies by co-option would not allow the Council to apply for Quality Status as more than one-third of Councillors (five out of twelve) would then be co-opted and not elected. However, to fill such vacancies by election would cost the Council approximately £1,500.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**34. TRAINING PROGRAMME 2009/10**

The Clerk outlined various training available for Councillors and Officers which included the 'Power of Well Being', 'Being A Good Councillor', technology updates, 'Essentials for Parish Clerks' and 'Working with Your Council'. It was confirmed that HM Revenue and Customs held regular training sessions which were relevant for the Second Service's Administrator and were free of charge. It was suggested that a third of each training budget be held back for courses which were offered at short notice. It was also reported by the Clerk that the Society of Local Council Clerks' Regional Conference (to be held in June 2009) would be appropriate for two of this Council's officers to attend.

Members considered that details of training undertaken as part of their role as District Councillor's should be sought from Teesdale District Council and a 'Training Register' produced.

**Resolved** – (a) That a draft 2009/10 Training Programme be produced (incorporating proposed training and associated costs) and reviewed at this Committee's meeting scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2009 for onward transmission to the Council meeting scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2009.

(b) That Teesdale District Council be contacted to ascertain all training sessions that Members of this Council have attended in their roles as District Councillors.

### **35. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – DRAFT POLICIES**

It was confirmed that, at Council Minute 169/Jan/09, the Modernisation Committee had been given delegated powers to review three full draft policy documents and respond to Durham County Council accordingly. It had also been agreed at that Council meeting that Councillor Peat attend the Hackney Carriage Public Consultation meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2009.

1) The Hackney Carriage Draft Licensing Policy raised concerns in respect of the drivers' minimum age of 18 years old, the implications of the Council's knowledge and locality tests, where the vehicle testing stations would be located and the proposed fare structure.

**Resolved** – That Durham County Council be informed that this Council agrees with the draft policy on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire, subject to the following comments:-

- (a) the transitional arrangement date should be extended for the compliance of the colour of the vehicles;
- (b) the minimum driving age be set at 21 years old, with 3 years' minimum driving experience; and
- (c) the standardising of fares be phased in.

2) The Statement of Licensing Policy draft raised concerns with regards to the enforcement procedure and whether policing would be adequate.

**Resolved** – That Durham County Council be informed that this Council agrees with the draft policy on Licensing, subject to the following comments:-

- (a) it be clarified how the policy will be enforced;
- (b) it be confirmed that the Police are satisfied with the policy; and
- (c) the policy be reviewed after one year.

3) The Gambling Licensing Policy draft raised concerns regarding the control of the enforcement arrangements.

**Resolved** – That Durham County Council be informed that this Council agrees with the draft policy on Gambling Licensing, subject to the following comments:-

- (a) it be clarified how the policy will be enforced; and
- (b) the policy be reviewed after one year.

### **36. TWO-WAY PROTOCOL WITH OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Pursuant to Council Minutes 165 and 166(1)/Jan/09, the Committee Chairman had asked for communications and general links with other organisations to be discussed further. The Barnard Castle Vision was highlighted but Members agreed that views would be expressed at the briefing meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2009. Discussion ensued on the future of the Teesdale District Parish Forum and the options available, including direct links with the Area Action Partnerships and the proposal of the County Durham Association of Local Councils to set up Local Council Committees (Council Minute 167(2)/Jan/09 refers).

**Resolved** – That the Clerk attend the Teesdale District Parish Forum, scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 to discuss future arrangements with a view to determining a way forward from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009.

### **37. ECONOMIC SITUATION**

Pursuant to Council Minute 165/Jan/09, the Committee Chairman had asked for further discussion on the ongoing economic situation and the potential effect on Barnard Castle businesses. It was confirmed that a letter had been sent to the Barney Guild, albeit in respect of non-financial support initiatives, a response was still to be received, but Members considered that additional partnerships could be forged.

**Resolved** – That it be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2009 that a supportive partnership with relevant local organisations be sought.

### **38. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee Chairman had requested that consideration be given to the prospective planning process following local government restructuring. It was reported that the Unitary Authority had announced that as from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009 the co-ordination of the planning application process would be undertaken at a 'local level', albeit that that level would be an amalgamation of Teesdale, Weardale and Sedgefield. Committee Members considered that such a change provided an ideal opportunity for this Council's Members (particularly those on the Planning Committee) to receive relevant training on planning issues and policies.

**Resolved** – That planning training be incorporated within the draft Training Programme for 2009/10 to be produced for the Committee meeting scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2009 (see Minute 34 above).

GR Watson  
23/3/2009

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH, 2009**

**PRESENT:** - Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke and Peat.

**39. APOLOGIES:** - Councillors Blissett and Mrs Hamilton.

**40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with standard local government procedures, Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

**41. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**42. QUALITY STATUS - GENERAL UPDATE**

Pursuant to Minute 33/Feb/09, the Clerk reported that he had attended the CiLCA qualification final mentoring session and had now to submit the portfolio of evidence for assessment. However, contrary to a previous instruction from the Council, it was made clear that the associated work would have to be carried out outside normal working hours.

The submitted report contained details of specific documents required for the Quality Status submission, most of which had already been produced and the remainder of which were in the course of production. It was considered that the Quality Status workload would have an effect on timescales for other Council projects.

**Resolved** – That it be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 that the Clerk be authorised to take time off in lieu for any out-of-office hours accrued during the completion of the CiLCA portfolio.

**43. TRAINING PROGRAMME 2009/10**

**Submitted** - Pursuant to Minute 34/Feb/09, a report outlining a suggested Training Programme for 2009/10. The report included the background to the introduction of such a Programme, outlined the criteria adopted and summarised the perceived training needs of both Councillors and officers. The main issues discussed at the meeting were as follows:-

- (i) recognition that, ideally, a third of the budget should be retained for training opportunities which occurred during the year but that a totally flexible approach was paramount;
- (ii) in-house training was to be organised wherever possible (with staff in attendance);
- (iii) combined travelling arrangements should be a priority for Members and officers;
- (iv) the adoption of a full team approach where practical; and
- (v) the deferment of some of the training requirements beyond 2009/10.

*JR Watson*  
22/6/2009

**Resolved** – That the following be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2009:-

(a) Training Programme 2009/10

New Councillors	'Being a Good Councillor' Module 1 (Roles and Responsibilities)
All Councillors (and staff)	'Being a Good Councillor' Modules 2 and 4 (Powers and Duties and Management and Meetings) Power of Well Being Planning Matters
Clerk	CiLCA; Power of Well Being
Assistant Clerk	Society of Local Council Clerks' Regional Conference, Essentials for Parish Clerks, Working with Your Council
Services Administrator	Society of Local Council Clerks' Regional Conference, Technology Update
( ) Second Services Administrator	HM Revenue and Customs Training

(b) 2009/10 – Subject to funding, but probable deferment until 2010/11

Councillors	Chairmanship Training (six modules) Member/officer relationships Risk Assessment Community Engagement Planning Portal update Freedom of Information and Data Protection
Staff	Finance for councils with budgets of under £200,000 Allotments Writing Successful Funding Applications

(c) 2010/11 Onwards

( ) All Councillors (and staff)	'Being a Good Councillor' Module 3 (Budgets and Precept) 'Being a Good Councillor' Module 5 (The Council and the Community)
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**44. TWO-WAY PROTOCOL WITH OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

**(1) Barnard Castle Vision**

In respect of the briefing meeting with the Barnard Castle Vision team on 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2009, Members considered that the meeting had been useful but agreed that further communication improvements could be made. These were being investigated by the Clerk.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**(2) Teesdale District Parish Forum**

Pursuant to Minute 36/Feb/09, the Clerk had attended the Teesdale District Parish Forum meetings on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 and 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 which considered replacement arrangements for the Teesdale District Parish Forum. The Clerk submitted a report at that meeting and attendees supported the recommendation of a Teesdale Local Councils' Committee which would be independent of Durham County Council and Area Action Partnerships. The Clerk was to attend a Special meeting of the County Durham Association of Local Councils on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2009. A further meeting of the Parish Forum would finalise future arrangements.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**45. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURING ISSUES, INCLUDING ASSET TRANSFERS**

Members were advised that Teesdale District Council had still not responded to this Council's asset transfer application. It was therefore anticipated that no asset transfers would be completed by 'vesting day'. It was confirmed that the Barnard Castle Vision appeared to have withdrawn its interest in a joint bid for various asset transfers.

**Resolved** – That further efforts be made to move the asset transfer process forward.

**46. ECONOMIC SITUATION**

Pursuant to Minute 37/Feb/09, it was confirmed that the letter sent to the Barney Guild in January 2009, albeit in respect of non-financial support initiatives, had still to receive a response and therefore no further action could be taken.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**47. ENQUIRIES FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC AND ARRANGEMENTS FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL, 2009**

The Clerk informed Members that this Council had not yet been advised of any new contact arrangements from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009. It was hoped that Durham County Council would distribute those details to members of the public and, until otherwise advised, this Council's office staff would continue to direct appropriate enquiries to the existing Teesdale District Council telephone number.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**48. DATES AND TIMES OF MODERNISATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS DURING MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/10**

Submitted – A report on the prospective meeting arrangements of the Modernisation Committee during the Municipal Year 2009/10, scheduled to fit in with the standard six/seven-week cycle of Council meetings, the 2009/10 dates of which had been agreed at Council Minute 194/Mar/09.

**Resolved** – (a) That the schedule of Modernisation Committee meeting dates during the Municipal Year 2009/10 be as follows:-

**2009**

11<sup>th</sup> May  
18<sup>th</sup> May  
22<sup>nd</sup> June  
28<sup>th</sup> September  
9<sup>th</sup> November  
14<sup>th</sup> December

**2010**

8<sup>th</sup> February  
22<sup>nd</sup> March

(b) That, with the exception of the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2009, the official starting time for all the Committee meetings listed be 7.00 p.m.

*GR Wilson*  
*22/6/2009*

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**11<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2009**

**PRESENT :-** Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton, Peat and Watson.

**1. APOLOGIES :-** None.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/10**

Councillor Watson was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Watson be appointed Chairman of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2009/10.

**3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/10**

Councillor Cooke was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Cooke be appointed Vice-Chairman of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2009/10.

**4. DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS – MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/10**

Submitted - A schedule of the dates and times of Committee meetings during the Municipal Year 2009/10, as determined at Committee Minute 48/Apr/09.

**Resolved** – That the information be received.

**5. EDITORIAL BOARD – REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERSHIP – MUNICIPAL YEAR 2009/10**

A nominated representative was sought from this Committee to become a member of the Editorial Board for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

**Resolved** – That Councillor Watson be nominated as this Committee's representative on the Editorial Board for the Municipal Year 2009/10.

*JR Watson  
22/6/2009*

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE, 2009**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Peat.

**6. APOLOGIES :-** Councillor Blissett.

**7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with standard local government procedures, Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

**8. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**9. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**10. QUALITY STATUS – GENERAL UPDATE**

Pursuant to Committee Minute 42/Mar/09, the Clerk reported that collation of the CiLCA qualification portfolio documents was ongoing but it was considered that the majority of the work would not now be completed until the July/August recess period. It was therefore acknowledged that a revision to the Quality Status submission timescale was required and it was envisaged that this would now be the Autumn of 2009.

Members acknowledged the efforts being made to complete the portfolio whilst ongoing workloads competed for time and appreciated all the hard work that officers put into the support operations of this Council.

**Resolved** – That the revised Quality Status submission timescale of Autumn 2009 be noted.

**11. PROCEDURAL ISSUES**

At the Council meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2009 (Minute 24/Jun/09 refers), it was agreed that the Modernisation Committee should be authorised to examine a number of procedural issues. Discussion ensued regarding a perceived need to have a process in place for the election of the Town Mayor, with the option of two-year Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral terms being investigated. The effect of co-opted Councillors not being able to stand for election also needed to be considered.

*GR Watson*  
22/6/2009

Discussion also ensued regarding informal meetings, rules of debate at meetings, the Members Code of Conduct and the need to generally review and update the Council's Standing Orders.

**Resolved** – (a) That the Clerk submit a Mayoral election process report to the next Committee meeting scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.

(b) That Members individually review the Council's Standing Orders, to identify any changes required and issues to be addressed, to the Clerk by the end of July 2009 in order that a report can be produced and submitted to the next Committee meeting.

## **12. TWO-WAY PROTOCOL WITH OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Pursuant to Committee Minute 44/Mar/09, discussion ensued as to how Members who represent the Council on outside organisations should report back to Council following meetings that they attend of those organisations. It was acknowledged that certain organisations would require special consideration due to the nature or sensitivity of their business or project.

**Resolved** – That a general protocol involving outside organisations be submitted to the next scheduled Committee meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.

## **13. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (in respect of Minute 14 below)**

**Resolved** – That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to at Minute 14 below on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Parts 1 and 7 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

## **14. FUTURE ROLE OF MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

Members discussed the future role of the Modernisation Committee, following proposals made at the special informal meeting of Councillors on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2009, and it was considered that this Committee was of value to the Council and should therefore be maintained.

**Resolved** – That, in any revised decision-making system, the Modernisation Committee be retained.

GRWalson  
28/9/2009

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**28<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2009**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Peat.

**15. APOLOGIES:** - Councillor Blissett.

**16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with standard local government procedures, Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

**17. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**18. REVIEW OF FUTURE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCIL**

Submitted – Pursuant to Council Minute 44/Jul/09, a report outlining the various considerations that would need to be addressed in the review of the future role of the Town Council. Specific references were made to the potential production of a corporate plan, linking the review with the Quality Status scheme and the seeking of guidance from comparable town councils. It was generally considered that all potential areas needed to be considered, that the allocation of tasks to individual Councillors was to be encouraged and that a provisional timescale for implementation following the Annual Council Meeting in May 2010 should be targeted.

Discussion ensued regarding the main component parts of the review and it was considered essential that this Committee formed two Working Groups to carry out of the perceived tasks.

**Resolved** – That an additional meeting of the Modernisation Committee be scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2009 at 7.00 p.m. to determine the membership of the Working Groups and the allocation of tasks.

**19. COMMUNICATION IMPROVEMENTS**

Submitted – A report outlining the need to review the Council's communication processes, with particular reference to a possible project to improve this Council's website which could include various new features, such as forums and online polls. The potential costs surrounding the design, build and implementation of such a website were outlined. It was also reported that there could be a possibility of acquiring a 'gov.uk' domain name which was perceived as a more professional image for the Council.

**Resolved** – That the new website project be recommended to the Finance Committee for inclusion in the 2010/11 budget.

*JRWatson*  
*27/10/2009*

## 20. 2010/11 BUDGET

Members were asked to consider items for inclusion in the Council's 2010/11 training programme and any other prospective items that could be considered during the 2010/11 budgetary process, other than the website project at Minute 19 above. Discussion ensued on prospective media management training and it was agreed that this was more appropriate once the review of the Town Council had been undertaken.

**Resolved** – (a) That a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Modernisation Committee reviewing the current training situation and recommending a training programme (with associated costs) for 2010/11.

(b) That the report at (a) above include chairmanship skills, all remaining modules of 'Being a Good Councillor' and further training in respect of planning policies and applications.

## 21. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION – ASSET TRANSFERS AND SERVICES DEVOLVEMENT

Discussion ensued on the continuing delays in respect of the sorting out of asset transfers and services devolvement by Durham County Council.

**Resolved** – That this Council is to continue to pursue the issues of asset transfers and services devolvement with Durham County Council.

*GR Watson*  
*21/9/2009*

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER, 2009**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Cooke, Mrs Hamilton and Peat.

**22. APOLOGIES:** - Councillor Blissett.

**23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with standard local government procedures, Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

**24. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.


**25. TRAINING**

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 20/Sep/09, a report updating Members on how the 2009/10 training programme had progressed to date and providing a recommended training programme for 2010/11 with an associated budget. It was highlighted to Members that the proposed Chairmanship training would require a degree of selectivity because of the associated cost of the course per delegate.

**Resolved** – (a) That it be recommended to the Finance Committee meeting scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2009 that, in line with the resolution (b) below, the Training budget for 2010/11 should remain at £1,500.

(b) That the following 2010/11 training programme be recommended to the Council meeting scheduled for 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2009:-

<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Course</b>
All Councillors	Power of Well Being
	Chairmanship Training (six modules)(selective)
	Planning Portal update
Councillors (and staff)	'Being a Good Councillor' Module 4 (Management and Meetings)
	'Being a Good Councillor' Module 5 (The Council and the Community)
Clerk	Power of Well Being

 9/11/09

Assistant Clerk To complete Working with your Council

Services Administrator Technology Update

Second Services Administrator HM Revenue and Customs Training

Subject to 2010/11 funding, but probable deferment until 2011/12

All Councillors Member/officer relationships  
Risk Assessment  
Community Engagement  
Freedom of Information and Data Protection

Staff Finance for councils with budgets of under £200,000  
Allotments  
Writing Successful Funding Applications

## 26. REVIEW OF ROLE OF TOWN COUNCIL

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 18/Sep/09, Members were supplied with lists of the main issues that were considered integral parts of the forthcoming review of the role of the Town Council. Notwithstanding the fact that at the last meeting of the Committee, it had been agreed that the Working Groups should be formed to carry out the associated tasks, further consideration was given to the option of the Modernisation Committee carrying out the whole of the review in Committee format. The frequency of meetings was also discussed.

**Resolved** – (a) That the previously decided option of carrying out the review of the role of the Town Council by means of the Working Groups be discontinued and that the whole review be undertaken by the full Modernisation Committee.

(b) That the Modernisation Committee meeting scheduled for Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2009, be brought forward to commence at 6.00 p.m.

(c) That an additional meeting of the Modernisation Committee be scheduled for Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 at 6.00 p.m.



A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date 9/11/09 written in a similar style.

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2009**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett, Cooke Mrs Hamilton and Peat.

**31. APOLOGIES:** - None.

**32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with standard local government procedures, Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

**33. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**34. REVIEW OF ROLE OF TOWN COUNCIL**

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 30/Nov/09, a report on the next stage of the Modernisation Committee's review of the Town Council. Whilst the first of the review meetings had concentrated on the role of Councillors in its various forms, the review of that specific subject had not been completed at that meeting. Therefore, to aid Members in their deliberations and as an exception to the rule, detailed information was provided on decisions made at the previous meeting which gave Members the opportunity to agree additional recommendations on previously discussed subjects.

To complete the specific review of the role of Councillors, discussion took place on the roles of Committee Chairmen, areas of responsibility for individual Councillors, links between Councillors and officers, the payment of allowances, the acceptance by Councillors of decisions once made, adherence to the Members' Code of Conduct, the importance of training and who in reality was 'in charge of the Council'.

Members were also requested to give some advance attention to future review subjects, including the decision-making structures of the Council and the procedures at Council and Committee meetings.

**Resolved** – (a) That recommendations, as now determined, on the following subjects be included within the final review document:-

- (i) the holding of regular meetings between the Clerk and the Town Mayor/Deputy Town Mayor;
- (ii) role specifications for all Committee Chairmen positions, fully recognising that each role will be different;
- (iii) areas of responsibility for all Councillors;
- (iv) a protocol for the working arrangements between Councillors and officers;

- (v) the need to eventually investigate the payment of allowances to Members but not at this stage;
- (vi) efforts to be made in respect of the younger generation becoming part of the Council's operations;
- (vii) the acceptance by Councillors of all decision which are accountable;
- (viii) the logging of breaches of conduct at meetings; and
- (ix) the general importance of training for Councillors and officers.

(b) That the following issues be discussed during relevant future parts of the review:-

- (i) the need for extensive delegation in the decision-making processes of the Council;
- (ii) the adherence to a rule that Council meetings only consider policy matters; and
- (iii) where practical, all Members to stand when addressing the Council and to speak to the Chair.

JR Watson

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MODERNISATION COMMITTEE**

**14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2009**

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Watson (in the Chair); Councillors Mrs Bailes, Blissett, Cooke and Peat.

**35. APOLOGIES:** - Councillor Mrs Hamilton.

**36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with standard local government procedures, Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if the need arose during discussion. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

**37. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING – 19<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2009**

**Resolved** – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

**38. REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCIL**

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 34/Nov/09, a report on the next stage of the Modernisation Committee's review of the Town Council. This stage concentrated on meeting procedures based on this Council's Standing Orders and aimed at specifically examining Standing Orders 1 to 51 inclusive, 64 to 66 inclusive and 70 and 71. It was considered prudent that the Finance Committee should review those parts of Standing Orders which referred to financial matters and also the Council's Financial Regulations. It was also reported that a review at national level of Standing Orders for local councils was nearing completion and it was likely that the finished document would be available before this Committee's review was complete. Therefore, Standing Orders would need to be revisited at that time.

Discussion ensued on a number of detailed issues, including whether a dress code should be established at Council meetings, the public participation slot at Council meetings being included within this Council's Standing Orders and whether the review could be realistically completed by the provisional target implementation date. Members were also advised of recent correspondence from Durham County Council in respect of the use of Teesdale House by this Council for meetings.

By the close of the meeting, the Committee had only completed examination of Standing Orders 1 to 17. It was therefore confirmed that the next Committee meeting would need to complete the Standing Orders review.

**Resolved** – (a) That recommendations, as now determined, in respect of this Council's Standing Orders 1 to 17 inclusive be included within the final review document.

(b) That the support of Barnard Castle's County Councillors be sought in respect of negotiations with Durham County Council in respect of the use of Teesdale House by this Council for meetings.

(c) That an additional meeting of the Modernisation Committee be scheduled for Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 at 6.00 p.m. and the meeting scheduled for Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2010 be rescheduled for Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> February at 6.00 p.m.

(d) That it be recommended to the next scheduled Council meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2010, that a revised timescale for the implementation of the review should now be September, 2010.

JRWatson. 10/02/2010