



## BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL Special Full Council meeting held on Thursday 26 March 2026, at 5:30pm, in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House, Blyth, NE24 2AS.**

### **Present:**

**Councillors:** D Swinhoe (Mayor), RA Baker (Deputy Mayor), D Campbell, D Carr, A Cartie, BW Elliott, TE Elliott, D Johnson, C Jones, D Nicholson, K Nisbet MBE, M Peart, N Rolls

### **Officers:**

M Wilkinson (Town Clerk), E Brown (Deputy Town Clerk), E Mullen (Democratic Services Officer)

### **Members of the Public: 4**

<b>Min No</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>  Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs B Erskine, M Nicholson & J Woods
<b>2</b>	<b>Disclosure of Interests and Grant of Dispensations</b>  None.
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 17 February 2026 for approval.</b>  RESOLVED: The minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 17 February 2026 were agreed and subsequently signed by the Chair as a true record.

<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Community Funding Policy</b></p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk explained that a revised draft policy had been circulated to Members and gave an overview of the changes in a report. Changes also include moving community funding decisions into the public part of the meeting, apart from where there is a request from the applying organisation or a specific reason why it should be considered in Part 2.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to adopt the recommendation to exercise the powers of The Local Government (Religious etc. Observances Act 2015 within the Community Funding Policy.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Community Funding Policy.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Project Shield</b></p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk introduced this item. Since writing the report for this meeting it was in the press that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has given some funding to partner groups of Project Shield. When seeking clarification from Northumberland County Council, they said that no funding from the Office has been finalised yet, but if the project went ahead, it would be a lighter touch version of the current Project Shield.</p> <p>Blyth Town Council does not have any allocated budget for this project; and funding if the Council was to support Project Shield would need to come from balances.</p> <p>Cllr Peart proposed that the decision on supporting Project Shield be deferred until the Council find out more information about the funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This was seconded by Cllr BW Elliott.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to defer this item to a future meeting.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Committee Membership &amp; Representation on Outside Body</b></p> <p>It was RESOLVED unanimously to adopt the revised committee membership.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED unanimously to appoint Cllr Rick Baker to represent the Council on NALC.</p> <p><i>Cllr R Baker left the meeting.</i></p>

<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Office Accommodation</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk gave an overview of the report, which was prepared by the Principal Officer, summarising the recommendations from the Office Accommodation Working Group.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to agree the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A set of objectives governing the search for and assessment of properties which may form alternative office accommodation, as recommended by the Accommodation Working Group.</li> <li>2. That £15,000 is earmarked for consultancy services related to properties, to be used as required.</li> <li>3. That public consultation is undertaken at an appropriate point.</li> <li>4. That consultation is undertaken with community groups/charities to determine the scope and nature of the space to be given over to community use.</li> </ol>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The Annual Meeting of the Council will be held on <b>Thursday 14 May 2026</b> in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House. Public Question Time starts at 6:00pm and Council will commence directly afterwards.</p>
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Part II</b></p> <p>It was RESOLVED that pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960; that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that the press and public be excluded, and they were instructed to withdraw.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>UK Town of Culture 2028</b></p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the Council formally agree to submit their expression of interest for UK Town of Culture 2028.</p>
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Office Accommodation</b></p> <p>Following the Council’s agreement to the revised objectives of the Office Accommodation Working Group, the Town Clerk gave the Council further details of discussions that had taken place with the landlord of a potential property of interest and answered Members queries.</p>

The meeting closed at 18:21pm

**Members of the Council:**

D Swinhoe (Mayor)	D Johnson
R A Baker (Deputy Mayor)	C Jones
D Campbell	D Nicholson
D Carr	M Nicholson
A Cartie	K Nisbet MBE
B W Elliott	M Peart
T E Elliott	N Rolls
B Erskine	J Woods