



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Arms Everytne House, Blyth, on Thursday 29 May 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Town Councillors

D Swinhoe (Mayor), D Carr, B Erskine, D Johnson, C Jones, K Nisbet MBE,
D Nicholson

Apologies

Councillors: RA Baker, A Cartie, M Peart, W Ploszaj, N Rolls, and J Woods.

Officers in Attendance

Malcolm Wilkinson, Town Clerk
Elaine Brown, Deputy Town Clerk

Also, in Attendance

Members of the public: 2

Meeting

The Mayor, Councillor D Swinhoe welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes from the previous Annual Town Meeting held on 30 May 2024 were agreed and approved a true record by those present.

The Mayor asked the members of the public if they wished to ask any questions to the council, there were no questions.

Cllr Swinhoe reflected on his new role as Mayor of Blyth; reminding those present that the role of Mayor is apolitical, and the role is a civic representation of all sections of the community and wants to empower community cohesion, giving the residents of Blyth a stronger voice.

Identifying and supporting the community is an important part of the role, the Mayor wants to champion by empowering and celebrating the achievements of groups and individuals in the town who bring people together to build a sense of belonging.

The Mayor spoke of the many exciting projects that are ongoing in Blyth; regeneration developments including new cultural, educational, leisure and residential projects including the revitalisation of the Market Place and improved connectivity and transport in Blyth.

The Mayor reflected on the challenges specific to Blyth and the wish to support initiatives that tackle economic deprivation and unemployment, including collaborating with local businesses and Northumbria Police to extend CCTV provision and implement strategies to reduce antisocial behaviour, fear of crime and health inequalities which are significant in Blyth.

The Mayor expressed the need to engage further with local business to understand their needs and to foster an environment that supports their growth and success, as well as recognising the vital role that local voluntary and community organisations play in the town's wellbeing.

Questions were invited from members of the public present and Councillors.

A member queried if it was still an objective of the Town Council to support community events. The Chair confirmed this as correct. A resident shared with the Council an upcoming free family fun day at Isabella Football Pavillion to take financial pressure off parents at the beginning of the school summer holidays, and to give the children something to do. The Mayor praised Blyth Interact & Rota Kids for the organisation of the event. The Town Clerk reminded members that any community events seen on social media should be shared with the Officer team to post on Blyth Town Council social media.

One member asked the Chair, and those newly elected members present at the meeting if they have any plans as to how they want to see the council run in the next 4 years. One newly elected member explained that at the moment they're building their understanding of how the Town Council runs before rushing into the implementation any plans. The Chair echoed that the new members do have a lot to go over to find out how to make Blyth a better town for everyone. The member who raised the questions responded by commenting that he had no problems with the way the Council has been run previously.

One member expressed that feedback from residents is not so much “how do we build and progress”, more ‘can we sort fundamental issues first’ such as litter, anti-social behaviour and e-bikes and e-scooters. The Town Clerk reassured those present that the Council have Police Liaison meetings where local issues can be put forward to the police by councillors including anti-social behaviour and e-bikes. The Town Clerk gave a brief overview of Operation Shield which recently started in Blyth, a scheme to help tackle antisocial behaviour.

Another member explained to those present that the police rely on intelligence to help solve anti-social behaviour and that the police rely on residents and councillors to give them information to help, as without intel the police can’t do their job to tackle it.

Another member spoke about their work with Northumberland County Council regarding littering and fly-tipping and that they’re trying to find new ways to resolve litter issues.

The Chair was asked what his top 3 objectives would be for the town of Blyth. The Chair summarised that listening to residents should be a priority, getting out in the community to help people and pointing them in the right direction for support as well as hearing all Councillors views when conducting meetings, ensuing communication across all political parties.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 6:45pm and thanked all for attending.

Signed