

Welcome

The town Mayor, Cllr Dalrymple opened the meeting at 18:04. He introduced himself, welcomed everyone in attendance and reminded those present that only registered electors in the parish of Whitby had the right to vote and speak at the meeting. The notice of the meeting was then read out.

1. Notes of previous Town Meeting

Mr Ward asked if the notes from the previous Town Meeting had been sent out and seen by anyone.

The Mayor responded that they had been sent to the two Town Councillors who had called the Town meeting. He asked Cllrs Barnett and Abbott what they had done with the notes they were given.

Cllr Barnett responded that he had done nothing with the notes as he believed it was Whitby Town Council's job to distribute documents for the meeting.

Ms Stango asked that in future the agenda and notes for Town meetings be published on the Town Council's website and proposed that the review of the previous meeting's notes should be postponed until the next Town Meeting which was approved unanimously by the meeting.

2. Notice of Motion for Town Poll

Cllr Barnett moved the motion: "Should the present members of Whitby Town Council resign en-masse to facilitate the democratic election, by ballot of a fully mandated representative Town Council for Whitby?"

He spoke about the opportunity afforded the town by local government reorganisation and also about the economic and social decline of Whitby.

Ms Broad asked a question regarding the public being able to speak at Town Council Meetings. The Mayor responded by explaining how WTC had recently changed its standing orders to allow members of the public to speak on any issue at full council meetings.

Ms Appleton spoke about the lack of information available about the Town Council's activities and the decisions it makes and how this limits the public in being able to engage with council meetings.

Mr Ward spoke about the importance of the Town Council. He said he wanted WTC to be Whitby's voice to the new unitary authority.

Cllr Wild asked Cllr Barnett to read the motion out.

The Mayor read the motion out.

Cllr Wild asked if the movers of the motion were accusing Cllrs of being elected illegally.

Cllr Barnett answered "No."

The Mayor asked those moving the motion what they thought would be different about holding elections now compared with the uncontested ones held 2 years ago.

Mr Bradley spoke about how he believed the situation had changed due to local Government Reorganisation and how he wanted a strong council. He also spoke about the issues facing the town such as the closing of Eskdale school.

Mr Ward then responded to the Mayor's question. He said it would be different because it the election would be promoted by community groups and media outlets.

Mr Derrick talked about the General Election hustings he attended as a candidate and about his hope that fresh elections would lead to the problems facing the town actually being discussed publicly.

Cllr Turner spoke about her personal commitment to the town as a councillor and the unlikelihood of these extraordinary elections being competitive.

Ms McCrone spoke about the Whitby Community network and wanted to reassure everyone that the WCN didn't want to replace the Town Council and that the motion for a Town Poll hadn't come from the WCN.

Cllr Jones spoke against the motion. He talked about the financial repercussions for the Town Council if there was to be both a Poll and seven bye-elections. He also spoke about concerns over the extraordinary elections not being competitive. He then affirmed his intentions to stand in the election if it went ahead.

Cllr Barnett spoke about how he believed democracy doesn't have a cost. He spoke about issues surrounding the Town Deal.

The mayor stated that the Town Poll would be paid by local tax payers via the Town Council.

Ms Davis asked for clarification on the suggestion that councillors were elected illegally.

Cllr Croft spoke about factionalism on the Town Council and his dismay at a lack of communication amongst councillors.

The Mayor for those in attendance and entitled to vote to make it known if they supported the motion. 11 electors announced their support, surpassing the requirement of 10 electors in order to hold the poll.

[Names and addresses supplied]