

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I HEREBY GIVE YOU NOTICE THAT a meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Prospect House, Hexham on Monday 1 September 2014 at 6.45 pm, when the following items will be discussed:-

A G E N D A

1. Council will hear residents on any matters they may wish to raise in regard to Hexham.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. To agree minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4 August 2014 enclosed.
4. Matters arising, if any.
5. Deputy Mayor's announcements.
6. Declarations of interest. [see memorandum enclosed]
7. Accounts for Payment [see list enclosed].
8. To comment on Planning Applications received [see list enclosed].
9. To note and consider correspondence received.
10. Local Transport Plan 2015-16. Minute 6199 refers. To agree any further requests and three priorities. For current requests database - see file Hexham.xls [Excel] attached to email.
11. To review arrangements for commenting on planning applications. See recommendation attached.
12. To review arrangements for the signing of cheques. See recommendation attached.
13. To consider Councils response to the NCC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Consultation. [Circulated to Councillors on 20 August 2014].
14. To consider response to the invitation from NALC to its AGM. [Circulated to Councillors on 23 August 2014].
15. Proposal by Cllr T G E Gillanders that Council donate £300.00 towards the costs of Hexham Orpheus Choir promoting a WW1 anniversary concert in Hexham Abbey, as RECOMMENDED by the Community Engagement Committee [Minute 122].
16. Christmas 2014. Cllr G M Graham to report on roller skate rink proposal and funding requirement.
17. Proposal by Cllr P E Oliver that Council approve a Signage Survey. See proposal detail attached.
18. Any urgent matters at the Chairman of the meetings discretion. *[Matters to be raised under this item should be written out [if possible] and handed to the Chairman of the meeting or the Clerk of the Council before the meeting begins].*

Derick Tiffin,
Clerk of the Council
26 August 2014

Hexham Town Council
Council Office, St Andrews Cemetery
West Road, Hexham NE46 3RR Tel: 01434609575
[Email: clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk)
www.hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk
Hagenda0914

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 4 AUGUST 2014

6173. WWI. In memory of everyone who had lost their lives in World War 1, it being the 100th anniversary of the declaration of World War 1 on August 4th, the meeting stood for a minute in silence.
6174. PUBLIC COMMENTS. A member of the public present commented that:-
The possible move of the bus station to Loosing Hill car park together with proposed housing developments in the town could mean the town's infrastructure could not cope with the increased traffic of cars and busses.
6175. AUGUST COUNCIL MEETING. Cllr T Cessford, the Deputy Town Mayor then opened the Council meeting. Present were: Councillors D Clegg, T G E Gillanders, J V R Hare, J M Graham, G C Ferguson, D Kennedy, Mrs. I C Brook, C Cessford, Mrs. C Hanley, Mrs. C R Homer, Dr. Mrs. K F Rose and P E Oliver.
6176. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Cllrs. T Robson.
6177. MINUTES. It was AGREED the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7 July 2014, having been circulated, be signed as a true record subject to amending Minute 6145a, the date quoted should be 15 June 2014 not July.
6178. MATTERS ARISING:
- a. MAYORAL CHAIN CASE. Minute 6144e refers. A second quote received from Andy Bates Leatherwork had been for £1380.00. It was AGREED the original quote of £245.00 by Robert Ford Leatherwork be confirmed.
6179. DEPUTY MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS. Over the last few weeks he had:
- a. Attended the County Council bus station options drop in consultation on 11 July 2014.
 - b. The Northumbria in Bloom Judges had visited Hexham on 15 July and Cllr J V R Hare had supported him by agreeing to accompany the Judges on their tour of the town. Cllr J V R Hare reported the Judges had been pleased with everything they saw and in particular he referred to the Special awards class which had included entries by the Carntyne garden; Market Street, Middle School vegetable garden; Spital Golf Club; Wydon Water and the Railway station. The station had had a particularly excellent display. Thanks must be given to the Hexham in Bloom Group for all their hard work in coordinating the Towns entry.
 - c. A Council employee had recently retired after 23 years exemplary service and a presentation to him and his wife from Councillors had been made by Cllr Mrs. I C Brook.
 - d. County Councillors Mrs. C R Homer and C Cessford had recently held a meeting with Northumberland County Council Officers to consider the effect of free parking. A survey of all parking areas had been undertaken and another survey will follow after the end of school holidays. Cllr Mrs. C R Homer expressed her thanks to all who had assisted with this survey. The results will be taken forward to the County Council and will also be considered by the Town Plan 2020 Committee. Cllr Mrs. C R Homer will be suggesting the NCC provides more car park direction signs and also better maps on the NCC web site which will also be linked to the Town Council and Community Partnership web sites.
 - e. WW1 – 100th anniversary. He had attended Hexham Abbey for a special Service arranged by the Lieutenancy Office to mark the declaration of WW1. The Abbey was completely full and to all who had taken part he expressed his thanks. Accompanied by the Clerk he had held a Minutes Silence at the War Memorial at 11.00 am.
 - f. Finally he urged everyone to join with the Royal British Legion in lighting a candle between 10.00pm and 11.00pm this evening as part of a nationwide mark of Remembrance.
6180. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllr T G E Gillanders declared a personal interest in planning application 14/01932.

6181. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT. It was AGREED to authorise payments in accordance with the list[s] circulated and attached hereto.
6182. PLANNING APPLICATIONS. It was AGREED there were no objections to the planning applications received in accordance with the list[s] circulated and attached hereto. Cllr T G E Gillanders having declared a personal interest in application 14/01932 took no part in the discussion and voting thereon.
6183. CEMETERY RUNNING COSTS. The Clerk reported on his discussions with Northumberland County Council regarding the current situation where Councils running their own cemetery are being charged, in addition, for the cost of cemeteries being run by Northumberland County Council. He reported it now seemed Northumberland County Council agreed this is unfair treatment and it is going to calculate its own cemetery running costs in order to be able to make a proportionate refund to Councils running their own cemeteries, such as Hexham.
6184. FLY A FLAG FOR THE COMMONWEALTH. Commonwealth Day 2015 is on 9 March 2015 and the Council is requested to fly a flag on that day. It was AGREED the Community Engagement Committee should consider this matter and decide any support required.
6185. CHARITY CRICKET MATCH. It was noted a charity match in aid of Tynedale Hospice is to be held on 17 August 2014 at Tynedale Cricket Ground and everyone is welcome to attend and to support the Hospice.
6186. NEW FIRE STATION. Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service propose a new fire station is built on land at Hexham Hospital. A site visit will be arranged for Councillors to view the proposals [*This will take place at 6.30pm on 2 September 2014*].
6187. ROAD CLOSURES. It was noted road closures will take place on:
- a. Tyne Green road on 28 August 2014
 - b. Portland Terrace between 15 – 19 September 2014.
6188. BUS STATION PETITION. A copy of a petition to Northumberland County Council had been sent to Council by Ms. A Pickering and she asked it be circulated to Councillors for information. The Clerk further advised the County Council had recently stated it was ‘working towards a wider information event’ and this should be announced in a week or so.
6189. TYNE VALLEY RAIL LINE. The Government intends to designate the Tyne Valley line as a Community rail service. This should bring more funding and other gains to the line and the stations along it. The consultation ends on 5 September 2014 and any comments are to be emailed to simon.hankin@dft.gsi.gov.uk Councillors may view information under Community Rail in the rail section of the Department for Transport's web site.
6190. RIVER BANK SIGNAGE. It was noted Hexham Canoe Club was becoming concerned at the misuse of the river, particularly near the weir. The weir is very dangerous yet river bank signage is inadequate. It was AGREED to press Northumberland County Council to take urgent action to improve signage pointing out the danger.
6191. NEW MINISTER. Councillors were being invited to the Welcome Service for the new Minister at the Trinity Methodist Church. Details will be circulated and should any Councillor wish to attend they should respond before the 22 August.
6192. FIRST ANNUAL TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL CONFERENCE. The Council is invited to send two representatives to this event taking place at County Hall, Morpeth on 25 September 2014. It was noted County Councillors will be invited in any event. It was AGREED Cllr J M Graham would attend if it was possible for him to do so.
6193. JOINT NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL AND TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL MEETING. It was noted there will be a joint meeting on 14 October 2014, venue to be confirmed, but probably Prospect House. The meeting is intended to allow attendees to have discussions with highways, neighbourhood services, finance and planning. The Council is allowed to send two attendees but no Councillor present was able to attend.
6194. FREE PARKING – COMPLAINT. A Market Street business had again complained that lack of trade due to the lack of parking available for customers will close the business unless some action is taken. It was noted the Town Plan Built Environment Working Group is currently considering this subject and it was also AGREED the Town Council Planning and Infrastructure Committee should consider this matter at its next meeting.

6195. NOTICE BOARDS. It was AGREED the Town Council notice board at the Moot Hall will be refurbished. It was also noted the notice board opposite, that has been vandalized is owned by Northumberland County Council. The County will be advised about the damage and the need to repair it.
6196. ROAD CLOSURES. The following closures were noted:-
- a. Portland Terrace – 15 to 19 September 2014.
 - b. Tyne Green Road – 28 August 2014.
6197. LIME TREE FELLING. Council was advised a lime tree on the Sele, considered to be potentially dangerous, would need to be felled by the County Council. Felling will be in two stages on 5 August and 15 August. The adjoining footpath will be closed during this work.
6198. EILANSGATE PRE-PLANNING CONSULTATION. Jomast Developments proposes to make a planning proposal for housing on land at Eilansgate presently owned between Hexham Golf Club Ltd and Tynedale Cricket Club and had requested the opportunity to present its initial proposals. Neil Westwick of Nathaniel Litchfield & Partners gave a short presentation and answered questions from Councillors. It was noted the access off Eilansgate was deemed a problem at previous consultations but after recent ground surveys is now being investigated and will also be discussed with the Highway Authority. In addition the developers are considering the percentage of affordable housing required [perhaps 30%] and possible light pollution from the tennis courts floodlights. Any application for planning at this stage will be outline and it will not be until early 2015 before detailed plans can be put forward. Councillors emphasized the highway investigations must include traffic conditions at all times, particularly on match days and the like when lack of parking was a problem.
6199. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN. As the agenda insert showing the list of current LTP requests had not been available to be circulated with the agenda it was AGREED this subject be deferred until the September meeting. Councillors are asked to list any additional highway requests they want to add; to amend any current requests that are no longer required and to say which three requests are to be classed as priority.
6200. HERITAGE OPEN DAYS. The request that £250.00 be donated to Hexham Heritage in support of its Heritage Open Day plans was considered and a donation of £250.00 was AGREED.
6201. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. The Clerks recommendation the Council should adopt revised Financial Regulations was considered and it was AGREED the draft Regulations be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It was noted while the Committee could make recommendations it is the Council that must agree whether to adopt revised Financial Regulations.
6202. FOOTPATHS. It was AGREED to request Northumberland County Council attend to the overgrowth almost blocking the footpath along the Hexham to Corbridge road and in addition the tree overgrowths along the Allendale Road footpath.
6203. ROAD SIGNS. Similarly it was AGREED to request Northumberland County Council attend to various road signs that are obscured by overgrowths.
6204. NEXT MEETING. The next meeting of the Council will be held on 1 September 2014 at 6.45pm in the Council Chamber, Prospect House, Hexham.

Chairman

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 3 September 2012 Councillors must declare if they have a disclosable interest in any matters under consideration.

To do so Councilors must use one of the following statements:-

1. "I have a disclosable pecuniary interest in.....
[for example:-] Agenda item 3, Planning application number 14/1234".
[NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraphs 11&15 apply].

2. "I have a disclosable personal interest in.....
[for example:-] Agenda item 4, Grant aid application by Hexham Youth Initiative
[NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraph 13 applies].

Councillors should familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct regarding the definitions of [A] pecuniary interest and [B] other personal interest and their obligations when declaring any such interests.

To ensure Councillors interests are correctly minuted please use one of the above statements when declaring an interest.

[NB. Should a Councillor wish to take part in the consideration and voting on a matter or matters in which he/she has a disclosable interest then they may request a dispensation be granted to enable them to take part in the discussion and voting on it but at least 10 days' notice must be given for any dispensation request.]

Derick Tiffin,
Clerk of the Council

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 1 SEPTEMBER 2014

Payments are authorised by LGA1972s14;s144;s145;s214;s215 or PCA1957

Payee	Detail	Amount	VAT	Net	Cheque number	Ref.
Safe Secure 24	Alarm systems 24 hour monitoring	15.60	2.60	13.00	Ddb	7380
Staff wages	September	8120.05	0	8120.05	107657/62	6020
HMRC	Paye 6	2109.92	0	2109.92	107656	6020
Northumberland CC	Pension contributions Sept.	1523.59	0	1523.59	107663	6030
Rickerby Ltd	Hand protection cream	16.25	2.71	13.54	107665	7300
Ecoffins UK LLP	Caskets	2046.00	341.00	1705.00	107666	7340
F.E.P. Hexham Ltd	Light tube and starter	7.53	1.25	6.28	Ddb	7380
Easyhire Ltd	Excavator hire [water leak]	278.52	45.19	233.33	107667	7400
Purdy's skip hire	One lift QBras allotments	170.00	28.33	141.67	107668	7020
Dale garage	Diesel	139.81	23.30	116.51	Ddb	7310
Dale garage	Diesel	116.72	19.45	97.27	Ddb	7310
Dale garage	Diesel	146.68	24.44	122.24	Ddb	7310
Dale garage	Diesel	77.03	12.84	64.19	Ddb	7310
HSBC	Charges	43.66	0	43.66	Ddb	5060
Orange EE	Account July	145.33	24.22	121.11	Ddb	5010
Orange EE	Account August	148.11	24.68	123.43	Ddb	5010
Costco Ltd	Birdfood	41.94	0	41.94	Ddb	7330
Hexham Heritage	Donation [Minute 6200]	250.00	0	250.00	107669	5100
Stacy Towler	Town Plan project [July]	140.00	0	140.00	107670	6040
W & M Thompson Ltd	Topsoil	214.24	35.71	178.53	107671	7330
David Dixon	Propane	54.50	2.60	51.90	107672	7310
Mole Trading Ltd	Grass seed	137.00	0	137.00	107674	7330
Jewson Ltd	Duct tape	7.51	1.25	6.26	107675	7330
Paperchase	Stationery	12.25	2.04	10.21	107676	5030
Viking	Stationery	209.25	30.50	178.75	107677	5030
Ice magic international Ltd	Hire of rink [1 st installment Balance £3771.00 + VAT]	1257.00	0	1257.00	107678	5130
PWLB	Loan instalment	4951.69	0	4951.69	Ddb	7360
Philip Sewell	Dairyman account	31.49	0	31.49	107679	7330
J P Westall Ltd	Repairs to water main to cemetery	8913.36	1485.56	7427.80	107680	7400
Stokoe Roger	Bookkeeping	420.00	70.00	350.00	107681	6000
BT Business	Accounts	409.16	68.19	340.97	Ddb	5010
Towns Alive	Renew benchmarking survey fee 2015 [Community Engagement minute 115]	350.00	0	350.00	107682	7860
TOTAL		32504.19	2245.86	30258.33		

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 1 SEPTEMBER 2014

MAYORS ALLOWANCE - ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Payee	Detail	Cheque amount	VAT	Net of VAT	Cheque number	Ref.
Balance at	010914	2402.34				5080

INCOME – AUGUST 2014

RECEIVED	DETAIL	CREDITED	INVOICE	DATE	REF
Various	Cemetery charge	747.00	Hd14/51	060814	4010
Various	Cemetery charge	3685.00	Hdw14/52	060814	4010
Various	Cemetery charge	145.00	Hd14/53	060814	4010
Various	Cemetery charge	331.00	Hd14/54	060814	4010
TOTAL		4908.00			

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY
COUNCIL FOR COMMENT ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2014

Reference	Description	Applicant
14/02357	3 internally illuminated fascia signs and 4 non illuminated fascia signs for internal retail pod at Tesco Store Hexham	Tesco Stores Alemouth Road Hexham
14/02365TPO	Crown reduce by 3-4m oak two trees at West Riding West Road Hexham	Mr Davies
14/02339	3 part illuminated signs 2 non illuminated signs 1 totem sign at ATS Euromaster Haugh Lane Estate Hexham	ATS Euromaster
14/02271	Demolish existing extension, construct garden room, porch to side, dormer to attic and construct new log shed at 5 Windmill Hill Hexham	M Rowson
14/01976	Change of use from shop to hot food takeaway and install flue at 4 Battle Hill; Hexham	M Rezale
14/02446LB	Change of use from shop to hot food takeaway and install flue, kitchen, servery at 4 Battle Hill, Hexham	M Rezale
14/02425	Internal alterations and insertion of roof lights for change of use to two residential units at Old Grammar School Hallgate Hexham	R Winfield
14/02426LB	Internal alterations and insertion of roof lights for change of use to two residential units at Old Grammar School Hallgate Hexham	R Winfield
14/02543& 14/02544LB	Consent for use as venue for arts, crafts and antique fairs at Old Grammar School Hallgate Hexham	R Winfield
14/02699	Erection of 3 dwellings and access track and new access off highway at Orchard Gap Allendale Road Hexham	A Carr
14/02380	Grass Crete hard standing between boathouse and club house, fencing and access ramp at Tyne Green Clubhouse Hexham	NCC

***** These applications already returned with 'no comments' under delegated authority.**

NOTE: Any objections made on applications must be 'material planning reasons.' There is no definitive list but examples are:-

National planning policy.

Policies in adopted and emerging regional and local development plans.

Suitability of the site for the proposal.

Visual appearance of the proposal and relationship with the surrounding environment.

Landscaping issues:- lack of light; over shadowing; over development.

Building materials and height:- scale; design; layout in comparison with neighboring developments.

Impact on listed buildings; conservation areas or their settings.

Effect on residential amenity of neighbours.

Local needs of area such as employment, commercial or social facilities.

NB All planning applications [and the decisions thereon] are now on line at <http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications>.
If Hexham Town Council objects to an application listed above the objection is lodged online.

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2014

The consideration of planning applications

The Council considers planning applications that are received from Northumberland County Council every month as an agenda item.

However because applicants for planning applications have to have the decision made within a time limit set by Government the Planning Authority has to set a time limit for all organisations consulted to lodge their comments or objections. This limit is currently 21 days though it has been suggested it may be reduced to 14 days. Consequently very often applications are received by the Council that cannot be dealt with by Council without exceeding the 21 day time limit.

At present any such [mid-term] applications are considered by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and their comments, if any, are then submitted to the planning authority. If they consider any are 'controversial' they may call a special meeting of the Council in order to consider them.

I do not consider this is the best way to deal with planning applications and I RECOMMEND all [mid-term] planning applications are considered by the Planning and Infrastructure Committee. The Committee has considered this suggestion and has AGREED it is prepared to consider and comment upon any mid-term applications when they are received. Probably the Committee will normally meet mid-month to consider usual Committee matters [as may be required] plus any planning applications that have to be commented upon before the 21 day time limit expires.

Derick Tiffin,
Clerk of the Council
31 August 2014.

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL - 1 SEPTEMBER 2014

Cheque signing and Standing orders

Whether or not the Council adopts the Financial Regulations that have been recommended, I RECOMMEND the Council adopts a more formal arrangement for the signing of cheques and approval of invoices.

All accounts have to be agreed by the Council before payment [with some exceptions] and all Councillors have been authorised by the Council to be a cheque signatory. In law all cheques must be signed by two Councillors.

Currently cheques are signed at or after a Council meeting and by my requesting two Councillors to sign the cheques. It is not always easy to 'catch' two Councillors present and able to sign and therefore a more formal cheque signing arrangement is needed.

Two of three [or more if felt necessary] named Councillors need to be available on the Monday morning preceding the Council meeting to attend at the Council office in order to inspect and initial invoices, to sign cheques and to initial cheque stubs. The list of accounts for payment can then be issued with the remaining agenda documents. Should there be any queries on an invoice they can be dealt with.

.....
STANDING ORDERS

I advise Council that due to recent legislation, in particular the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, The Local Government Transparency Code 2014 and the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 it will be necessary for the Council to review and adopt revised Standing Orders which will include matters relating to this Act, Code and Regulations. The NALC will be issuing revised standing orders in due course and when I have them they will be placed before the Council for it to review and adopt.

Meanwhile Council may wish to note, as I advised Council in 2013, the Council already fulfills its obligations under The Local Government Transparency Code 2014.

Derick Tiffin
Clerk of the Council

30 August 2014.

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

CLLR P E OLIVER - PROPOSAL TO COUNCIL - 1 SEPTEMBER 2014

HEXHAM TOWN ROAD SIGNAGE SURVEY

‘A road signage survey is to be carried out as part of the transport requirements analyses by the Town Plan Built Environment and Transport Working group to determine the necessity and suitability of current road signage, initially in the Hexham conservation area. The Town Plan Built Environment and Transport Working has spoken to Northumberland County Council officers about the signage survey and were advised that the County Council cannot carry out the survey themselves (on the grounds of cost). If the group members were to conduct it they would have to use an approved form (by NCC) to record results, but NCC could not provide this to us. Consequently, any template we use to record data for formal submission to a NCC Highways Inspector to request recommended actions must have prior approval by them before submissions could be accepted.

A template [attached] has been devised within the BE&T group and I **PROPOSE** the Town Council agrees that this survey template is suitable for submission to NCC and to request that it is declared acceptable by them to record Hexham signage survey data, plus recommendations, collected by the Town Plan Built Environment and Transport Working group.’

CLlr P E Oliver
26 August 2014

[Survey template follows]

SIGNAGE SURVEY – PROPOSED TEMPLATE

Built Environment and Transport Group : Hexham Vision 2020 and Town Plan 2014-15 June 2014

Background

It is generally agreed that there is too much signage in, and on the immediate approaches to Hexham. This is confusing to or ignored by motorists, obstructs pavements, creates obstacles for the visually impaired, for mobility scooters and for pedestrians with trolleys, baby buggies etc, and detracts seriously from the attractive historic character of Hexham. It was proposed that a survey of signage be undertaken to determine which signs are not mandatory and could be removed or, if mandatory, could be relocated. Northumberland County Council says such a survey would be costly and it is unwilling to undertake it. It was therefore agreed with NCC that the survey could be performed by Hexham Town Council. For the survey report to be considered by NCC it is necessary that NCC approve the template of the survey. NCC would not provide a template so it was agreed that HTC would draw one and submit it for approval. This is the template for approval by HTC prior to submission by HTC to NCC and is an example of a partially completed survey.

The Built Environment and Transport Group has agreed to undertake the full survey of road signage within Hexham’s Conservation Area with the ultimate goal of **de-cluttering our pavements** for walking, **making the roads less confusing** for drivers and enabling for tourists and residents alike, a **greater appreciation of the historic streets and buildings**.

Guidance for those performing the survey

We suggest that you carry out the survey of the streets you have been assigned *with someone else*. Please take a photograph of each sign to submit with this form, and indicate the desired outcome for each sign: removal/ relocation/ renovation. Remember to look at signs on buildings as well as signs on poles, geographic directional signs as well as warning and other signs. Many signs can be placed less obstructively on a building or lighting column instead of a sign pole. Remember the pole that was placed within 20cm of an existing lighting column outside the beautiful Nicholson Portnell building! After our protestations, this was taken down and the sign attached to the lighting column instead.

Start with the mindset that everything should be stripped away and only necessary signs should be replaced. Your main criterion when assessing each sign is to ask yourself “Does this sign assist in making this street work better?” as well as “Is this sign readable?” Note that Give Way signs at T-junctions are no longer necessarily required: local authorities are asked to make a judgement as to whether the road markings, level of street lighting and the general context of the T-junction are sufficient to alert drivers to stop.

The proposed action should be to remove, relocate or repair.

REFERENCES

There are a number of manuals and other documents used by local authorities to justify the need for signs, their location and design. These documents are sometimes misinterpreted resulting in unnecessary signage and clutter. Other documents give guidance on minimising signage and clutter. Listed below are some of these documents.

Traffic Signs Manual 2008 **Chapter 3 Regulatory Signs**

This document has been used to justify signs, e.g. the Disc Zone signs, but it is not mandatory as is made clear in its introduction below. Note particularly that the purpose of regulatory signs is to ensure that drivers clearly understand what restrictions or prohibitions are in force. The purpose is not to enforce penalties so the rigid spacing of such signs and the erection of poles solely for enforcement cannot be justified by reference to this Manual.

1.Introduction

General

1.1 The Traffic Signs Manual is intended to give advice to traffic authorities and their agents on the correct use of signs and road markings. Mandatory requirements are set out in the current version of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions; nothing in the Manual can override these. The advice is given to assist authorities in the discharge of their duties under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Part 2 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. Subject always to compliance with the Directions, which, except in Northern Ireland, are mandatory (see para 1.4), it is for traffic authorities to determine what signing is necessary to meet those duties, although failure to follow the Manual's guidance without good reason might well lead to

enforcement difficulties. In particular, adjudicators might consider such failure to be evidence that the signing was unclear. Traffic authorities should always remember that the purpose of regulatory signs is to ensure that drivers clearly understand what restrictions or prohibitions are in force.

Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

It does not say whether any signage is necessary or desirable. It is relevant only after it has been decided, rightly or wrongly, that a sign or road markings will be put up in place. In these circumstances it lays down where such signs and road markings can be placed and their design..

Manual for Streets 2

Manual for Streets 2 has quite a different approach to street design than the guidance extracted above: it aims to create a sense of place, and to recognise that a street has many different functions, not only for vehicular movement. Streets are used for walking, meeting, talking, shopping, and many other functions. Too often, the only consideration has been to get traffic through streets with the greatest possible efficiency, to the detriment of all other (more vulnerable) road users – pedestrians, cyclists, children. The principles behind MFS2 are for decluttering and helping all road users to safely share the road space. Specifically, MFS2 advises fewer “give way” signs, signs on only one side of the road instead of both sides, and generally making the streets safer and more attractive places for people on foot, those using public transport and bicycling.

OBSERVATIONS

There is a proliferation of small regulatory signs, some on their own poles, stating the restrictions associated with yellow lines etc. These are placed at rigid intervals intended to prevent drivers avoiding penalties on the grounds that signage is inadequate. Many of these signs are on poles containing no other sign and contribute to clutter, damaging the appearance of a Conservation Area. The Traffic Signs Manual 2008 (see above) requires only that such signs ensure that drivers clearly understand what restrictions and prohibitions are in force. It is therefore the local authority’s (NCC’s) decision whether to put up such signs. Where it decided to put up such signs the local authority must clearly identify the benefits and why they justify the expense and clutter of relevant signage.

SIGNAGE AUDIT

The signs noted below are intended to inform those on, leaving or entering the subject street.

1. West Road: junction with Eilansgate to junction with Allendale Road

Sign ref.no.	<u>Location of sign or pole</u>	<u>Meaning/Description of sign</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Reason for change</u> (including, if poss. references to specific sections of documents such as Traffic Signs Manual, Traffic Signs Regulations & Gen. Directions 2002, Manual for Streets 2)
1	<u>WEST ROAD</u>			
1.1	Near junction with Eilansgate.	3 x "ADVERSE CAMBER" signs	Remove	Outdated & unnecessary on 30mph road. Does not cause drivers to slow down. Does not make the street work better.
1.2	Junction with Leazes Lane	GIVE WAY (lit)	Remove	Unnecessary. The context makes it clear that drivers are approaching a "T" junction.
1.3	Junction with Leazes Lane	SKID RISK – 10MPH	Remove	This is a temporary sign that was not removed. It cannot now be seen by drivers.
1.4	Junction with Glen Terrace	20mph mandatory Reversed with 30mph sign	Remove	There is no purpose to be served in making a short cul-de-sac a 20mph street. It is not possible to exceed this speed on such a short street.
1.5	Junction with Woodbine Terrace	20mph mandatory Reversed with 30mph sign	Remove	Ditto to above. We all know that the speed limit is 30mph unless otherwise specified, so why specify 30mph?
1.6	Portland Gardens	Street name sign	Relocate	This sign would be

				more visible and better placed appropriately on buildings. Permission should be sought from building owners to do this
1.7	Junction with Leazes Terrace	Damaged guardrail and 20mph sign	Remove both	As above. There is no reason this junction warrants guardrailing which serves to make traffic less careful of pedestrians and cyclists more vulnerable.
1.8	Shaftoe Leazes Terrace	Guardrail	Remove	As above.
1.9	Junction with Crescent Avenue	New Houses	Remove	These 4 houses have long since sold.
1.10	Junction with Crescent Avenue	GIVE WAY (lit)	Remove	Many contextual indications that this well-lit junction is a "T" junction – e.g. stone walling opposite!
1.11	Outside Police Station	'Staggered junctions' sign	Remove	The junctions are well lit and easily visible without being told they are there. Hexham is a town with street lighting, not a dark piece of countryside.
1.12	Outside Police Station and No 3 Shaftoe Leazes	2 x CLEARWAY signs	Remove	One of these signs was long hidden in garden shrubbery. The concept of a "clearway" is outdated – and there is bonafide parking just further on along Hencotes.

				The entire length of the street has double yellow lines – indication enough that stopping is disallowed.
1.13	Junction with Allendale Road	Empty pole	Remove	A naked pole serves no purpose
2	<u>HENCOTES</u>			
2.1	Temperley Place	Street name sign	Relocate	Owners should be asked for permission to place the sign on their wall to prevent further clutter and poles on the footway.
2.2	Junction with St Cuthbert's Lane	GIVE WAY Humps for ½ mile	Remove	Neither sign adds to the working of the street. The context and road markings make it clear that the junction is a "T" junction, and the humps are clearly visible. The sign faces the bushes, not traffic.
2.3	Hencotes, near St Cuthbert's Tce	1 x empty pole	Remove	It is a naked pole serving no purpose
2.4	Hencotes at junction with St Cuthbert's Tce.	'No through road' sign	Remove	It is clear that this well-lit street is a cul-de-sac. This sign is unnecessary. It is also obscured by foliage suggesting nobody believes it to be useful.
2.5	Adjacent to nos. 19 (Sisterson News) and 15 (The Computer Shop)	2 x parking restrictions signs on poles	Relocate	Attempts should be made to place these either on adjacent walls or adjacent lighting columns. This will reduce the excessive clutter of

				poles on a relatively narrow footway in this stretch of Hencotes.
2.6	Adjacent to no.3	Parking restriction on a pole	Relocate	Although the footway is relatively wide, this sign would be better placed on a building wall reducing clutter. (Note for Wendy: I was with the NCC official when he spoke to the owner of no.3 who preferred a pole where it is. T)
3	<u>BATTLE HILL</u>			
3.1	south side - outside Carntyne	1 x empty pole	Remove	It is a naked pole serving no purpose
3.2	South side near no.28, (H.L.Caris & Son, Clocks)	Station direction sign	Remove	Sign is not needed. The pole is severely corroded through at its base and is dangerous.
3.3	Junction with Beaumont and St Wilfrid's Road (and other locations)	Disc Zone signs	Remove	A Disc Zone made as a Controlled Parking Zone may require such gateway signs but one made, as Hexham's is, by a Parking Places Order does not. A PPO does require signs near each individual bay and these have been provided. The Traffic Signs Manual has been given as the reason for the erection of these signs but it is not mandatory. Its

				<p>introduction para.1.1 states clearly that it “is intended to give <u>advice</u> to traffic authorities to assist authorities in the discharge of their duties under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Part 2 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. <u>it is for traffic authorities to determine what signing is necessary</u> to meet those duties, although failure to follow the Manual's guidance without good reason might well lead to enforcement difficulties.” Hence none of these zone signs is required yet they have been erected in a Conservation Area.</p> <p>In addition the boundaries of the Disc Zone as set by the signs exclude the Loosing Hill and Wentworth car parks where discs are required. The Disc Zone signs are unnecessary and incorrect. The simple solution is to remove them all.</p>
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3.4	Junction with St Wilfrid's Road	GIVE WAY	Remove	Context and road markings indicate that junction requires drivers on St Wilfred's to give way. The sign is unnecessary.
3.5	Junction with Beaumont Street to East of Benson's Monument	1 x GIVE WAY 2 X NO ENTRY	Repair	The No Entry signs are losing paint and need to be replaced. The Give Way signs are unnecessary because there is adequate road marking. They too are in poor condition. They could be removed or, if it is preferred to repair and keep them, then they must be located on the reverse side of the No Entry signs.
3.6	Junction with Beaumont Street	Tourist (brown) sign to Queen's Hall, Abbey and coach drop-off	Replace	This sign is unnecessarily large. It should be redesigned to be smaller and to fit on one pole. Its two poles and that for the unnecessary Disc Zone sign are together an obstruction and unsightly clutter.
3.7	Junction with Beaumont Street	2 x Cycle Byway signs	Consult with cycling groups	These signs have been superseded by routes such as Cycle 72 route, and may not be at all useful for cyclists.
3.8	South side by Greggs Sports, Gibson House	School and parking restriction signs		
3.9	Battle Hill	TOILETS	Remove	There are no toilets

	opposite St Mary's Chare			on St Mary's Chare and no sign redirecting to toilets on St.Mary's Wynd. This sign is misleading and potentially very embarrassing. It and its pole should be removed.
3.10	Opposite Eastgate	Cyclists direction sign		
3.11	On Eastgate	GIVE WAY (illuminated)	Remove	Obstructs extremely narrow footway. Road markings including yellow box and many other contextual clues indicate that this is a "T" junction.
3.12	Battle Hill at St Mary's Chare	2 x PEDESTRIAN ZONE	Remove or Relocate	There are two parking restriction signs on a single pole showing different restriction times. It seems one refers to parking on Fore Street, the other to parking on Battle Hill. To remove the potential for confusion the smaller one applying to battle Hill should be either removed or relocated.
3.13	North side at Fore Street	Finger post		
4	<u>PRIESTPOPPLE</u>			
4.1	Junction with Broadgates	No cars, motorcycles except for access	Remove/Replace	Replace with "no through road" symbol added to Broadgates Street

				sign.
4.2	Priestpople opposite Broadgates	8-7 no parking	Remove/Replace	Place on wall and remove pole from footway
4.3	At bus station	Finger post		
4.4	Priestpople near Loosing Hill	2 x Disc Zone signs	Remove	These signs place the Loosing Hill car park outside the Disc Zone yet signs within the car park refer to it as a Disc Zone. These Disc Zone signs are therefore incorrectly placed. In addition they are unnecessary (see comment against Sign ref. XXX). The simple and correct action is to remove them.
4.5	Junction with Argyle Terrace	2 x one-way No M'cycles/cars Access Only sign	Relocate	All these signs could be mounted on a single pole at the location of the existing one-way sign posts so reducing clutter. (The Access Only signs are mis-aligned and not clearly visible to motorists. They need attention.)
4.6	CCTV sign		Remove	Unnecessary, adds to general clutter.
4.7	Orchard House	Parking restriction	Relocate	This sign would be better placed on a building wall, e.g. of The Hexham Fish Bar, so reducing clutter
4.8	Maiden's Walk roundabout	9 x THIS IS A ROUNDABOUT signs	Remove all	Several of these are facing the wrong way or facing into shrubbery. There

				are lines on the road indicating drivers need to give way.
4.9	Loosing Hill car park	Have you displayed?	Remove	This sign is at the vehicular exit to the car park, so will not warn people walking from their cars. There is adequate warning adjacent to the pedestrian exits.



Sign 1.1 West Road

Sign 1.5 West Road

Sign 1.12 West Road

WorkCategory	RequestID	ReportedDate	ReportedBy	RequestDetail	Remarks	Location
<i>Local Safety Schemes</i>						
	05107	31/03/2011	Lee Milton	Shoppers parking for long periods preventing access for deliveries, ambulances and refuse wagons. Wants either Double Yellow Lines or Resident Permit Parking		Priestlands Lane - Hexham
<i>Minor Improvements</i>						
	03440	10/08/2014	Hexham Town Council & Cllr Cath Homer	Junction improvements, including possible new roundabout.	Also requested by Cllr Homer.	Battle Hill/Beaumont Street/St Wilfrid's Road junction, Hexham
	05450	07/11/2012	Mrs Storey, 30 Cockshaw Court Hexham	Dropped kerbs		West Road, Hexham - to get to the cemetery.
	05472	05/02/2013	Road Saefly Officer	Dropped kerbs	To help define the crossing point as parked cars using the newsagents are blocking it making it unsafe. Also benefits wheelchairs/pushchairs.	At existing SCP site, Hencoates, Hexham
	05494	06/02/2013	Resident via NHT Survey	Improved road markings	Drivers in middle of the road.	Causey Hill, Hexham
	05495	06/02/2013	Resident via NHT Survey	Remove cobbles in the road that are used as an informal pedestrian crossing	Pedestrians often mistakenly believe they have right of way over vehicles.	Outside Hexham Abbey
	05524	13/06/2013	Resident - Mrs Louise Cowie	Request for more parent & child parking spaces.		Hexham car parks, specifically Wentworth
	05529	18/06/2013	Resident	Additional restrictions in front of the Railway Station.		A6079 Station Road, Hexham
	05633	01/11/2013	Sandy Rutherford - Managing Director	sandy.rutherford@hexham-courant.co.uk Tel: 01434 602351 Request for more public toilet signs		Hexham
	05641	08/11/2013	Lysa Bacon - Cllr Cessford	Request for yellow lines at the entrance to Bowman Drive, Hexham. Lysa Bacon Broadway House, Hexham NE46 3BQ. Tel: 01434 607635. lysa.bacon@gmail.com		B6351 West Road and Bowman Drive junction, Hexham
	05707	19/03/2014	Daniel Fraser - Parking	Request for parking restrictions at the entrance to Wentworth car park onto Priestpopple		Chisholm Place, Hexham
	05722	01/05/2014	Mr Bernhoeft - Resident	1 Hextol Terrace, Hexham NE46 2DF, Tel: 07793 280174 Parking issues		U8293 Hextol Terrace, Hexham
	05726	01/05/2014	Mrs Smith - Resident	Request for additional warning signs, due to accidents.		U8296 Yarridge Road, Hexham
	05744	08/05/2014	Mr Gregson - Resident	7 Kingsgate, Hexham NE46 3QY Case ID: 101002529142 Parking problems & problems with long vehicles ignoring signage		Kingsgate, Hexham
	05750	08/05/2014	Mr A Waters - Resident	3 Dukes Road, Hexham NE46 3AW, tel: 0774778422 Case ID: 101002520868 Dangerous junction possible parking restrictions needed Hexham Town Council are also concerned about this junction, case id: 101002563791		Junction of Spittal Terrace & Eilansgate, Hexham The eastern section of Haugh Lane - PC
	05792	30/05/2014	Mrs Vause - Resident	2 South Rigg, Hexham cars parking on the junction of Millfield Terrace & Eilansgate, Hexham		Junction of Millfield Terrace & Eilansgate, Hexham
	05800	04/06/2014	David Robson - Owner	Down to Earth Garden Centre, Tyne Mills Industrial Estate, Hexham Request for parking restrictions at the junction to Down to Earth		U8291 Tyne Mills, Junction to Down to Earth Garden Centre, Hexham

	05831	10/08/2014	Hexham Parish Council	Difficulties crossing the road near the Homebase roundabout from one side of the road to the other heading towards Station Road, Hexham. Requestes this is drawn to the attention of the Civil Enforcement Officers in Hexham.	The arrival of the roundabout to Homebase, is causing difficulty for pedestrians to cross from one side of the road to the other. Also two vehicles are permanently parking on the footpath alongside the roundabout.	Station Road, Hexham
	06027	25/07/2014	Chris Roy-Toole	Concern regarding carriageway profile along B6295 regarding to hazards		B6295 Allenheads
	06045	06/08/2014	Mary Gallon - Resident	Concern for parked cars causing an obstruction to bridge		Glovers Place Hexham
	06085	18/08/2014	HexhamEast	Improvements to		Loosing Hill Junction
	06086	18/08/2014	Hexham East	improvements to junction		Beaumont street, Battle hill, St Wilfrids Junction
<i>Pedestrian Crossings</i>						
	05327	08/09/2013	Hexham Town Council	Request for footpath improvement and crossing facility		From junction of B6351/Eilansgate to Quatre Bras
	05433	12/11/2012	Mrs Mary Kane	Request for crossing or pedestrians crossing warning signs.		U8289 Denelands / C283 Peth head junction. Signs in advance of this junction
<i>Speed Limits</i>						
	05333	10/08/2014	Mr Douglas, Peth Head, Hexham Parish Council	Request for a 20mph Speed Limit		C283 Dean Street and Peth Head, Hexham
	05595	04/09/2013	Councillor Homer	20mph speed limit	Also requested by Hexham Town Council	Hexham town centre including Woodlands and Dean Street.
<i>Traffic Regulation Orders</i>						
	05332	13/04/2012	Mr Douglas, Peth Head, Hexham	Request for Weight Restriction		C283 Dean Street, Hexham
	05598	04/09/2013	Councillor Homer	Increase disabled parking bays		Hexham town centre
	05600	04/09/2013	Councillor Homer	Remove parking restrictions		St Nicholas Road, Hexham
	05601	04/09/2013	Councillor Homer	Restrictions on traffic in winter		Hallstile Bank, Hexham
	06068	12/08/2014	Resident of St Oswald's Road	Residents parking		St Hilda's, St Oswald's & St George's Roads, Hexham.