

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2013 in  
the Committee Room, Clayport Street, Alnwick at 7.45pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs S Patience (Chairman), P Broom, C Goodfellow, D Farrar, M Harrington, S Mavin, R Roberts, A Symmonds.

**In attendance:** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk., Cllr G Mavin (Alnwick Market item)

**RA 13/24. Apologies:** Cllr, S Allcroft.

**RA 13/25. Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Symmonds declared a pecuniary interest in the Alnwick International Music Festival. Councillor Harrington declared a pecuniary interest in the Alnwick Round Table Fireworks display. Councillor S Mavin declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Alnwick Food Festival event and Councillor Farrar declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 5 (planting proposals for 2014/15) as he is a member of the Alnwick in Bloom committee.

**RA 13/26. Alnwick Market**

Philip Angier and Steve Ellerby from Alnwick Markets attended to outline how the Market operates. They explained how Local Living, who were established in 2005, operates the Alnwick Market on Thursday & Saturday and the monthly Farmers Market, under a licence from Northumberland Estates. This requires them to pay over £6,000pa They outlined their prices for the various markets and gave comparisons with other towns. Stall prices were broadly comparable but it was believed that Morpeth had recently reduced their prices. Discounts/incentives were given for new traders. They felt the market was good in summer, but falls off when the weather changes, the most successful stalls sold fish, fruit and vegetables and other foods. Feedback from market stall-holders indicated they would like to see more footfall. Councillors suggested trialing a flea market or second hand market or looking to change the day of the Farmers Market as areas for possible improvement. Philip asked for any other suggestions to be forwarded to him. The Chairman thanked Philip and Steve for their presentation.

**RA 13/27. 2013/14 Budget Update**

The Clerk circulated a copy of the 2013/14 budget as at 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013. This showed expenditure of £4,589 on events, £2,594 on projects and £21,474 on services and assets. The sections were discussed. Overall an underspend on the year was likely although most of the underspend was earmarked, for example on the Ratten Row water supply renewal.

**RESOLVED: the budget be noted.**

**RA 13/28. Green Batt Gardens**

The Clerk outlined that the Gardens belonged to Northumberland Estates and were leased to Northumberland County Council. With the approval of the Estates they were now looked after by an Alnwick in Bloom group of volunteers. The grass was not cut by Northumberland County Council. Northumberland Estates are happy for a sign to be erected welcoming people to the garden. It was suggested that the clerk circulates possible wording for approval.

**RESOLVED: To note the update and the Clerk circulates a proposed sign for approval.**

### **RA13/29. Consider funding applications for 2014/15 events**

Applications had been received from the Alnwick Spring Show, Alnwick International Music Festival, Alnwick Food Festival, Alnwick in Bloom, Alnwick Christmas Lights and the Alnwick Round Table Firework Display.

Councillors considered the applications received in turn.

**RESOLVED: to pay a grant of £500 to the Alnwick Spring Show.**

**RESOLVED: to make budget provision of £4,000 to the Music Festival.**

**RESOLVED: to make budgetary provision of £2575 for Alnwick in Bloom and to offer assistance with the invoicing of the hanging basket scheme if this is advantageous to local businesses.**

**RESOLVED: to make budgetary provision of £2,200 for the Alnwick Christmas Lights.**

Accounts had not been submitted for the Food Festival and whilst Councillors were supportive of the event, they wished to see accounts prior to finalising a grant. Accounts were also not available for the Firework display, and whilst the Round Table does not prepare separate accounts for this event, Councillors felt they need to have a better understanding of the event costs and income before making a decision. It was agreed to look at these two applications again at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: To consider the applications from the Food Festival and Round Table when more financial information is available.**

### **RA 13/30. Planting Proposals for 2014/15**

The Clerk outlined to the Committee that only one full quote had been received for the planting and watering required in 2014/15. This quote was for £11,349.56 and was from Northumberland County Council. Whilst this was about £2,000 more than in 2013/14 there was a view that the 2013/14 figure had been much lower than expected. It was agreed to have discussions with the County Council regarding any possible reasonable reductions.

**RESOLVED: That the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of Committee has discussions with the County Council regarding their quote with a view to securing some reduction, prior to acceptance.**

### **RA 13/31. Budget Proposals 2014/15**

Councillors then considered the total proposed budget for 2014/15, including the figures already agreed on the previous agenda items. The budget proposals mainly followed the previous year and included £5,000 for play area replacements. A total Committee draft budget of £53,205 was agreed, to go forward to the overall Council budget and precept.

**RECOMMENDED: That the Recreation and Amenities Committee draft budget for 2014/15 be £53,205**

### **RA 13/32. Updates on allotments, play areas and the new website.**

The clerk gave an update on the allotments. Good progress was now being made at St Georges these are all now let except for one plot which still needs cleaning out. Fencing works was in progress. At Ratten Row the gate and fence has been fitted to prevent unauthorised access and fly-tipping. It was confirmed that no works had yet been progressed on a new water supply but it was decided to see if the Town Council's digger could be used. It was also confirmed that new allotment agreements would be issued with the rent demands. In respect of play areas, Northumberland County Council had confirmed that brickwork and hard landscaping could be removed at Glovers Green and Cawledge

View play areas and prices were being sought for replacement play areas. Website content was being prepared and a training session was being arranged in early December to start loading up the information.

**RESOLVED: To receive the updates**

**RA 13/33. Any other business**

The Chairman updated the Committee on potential toilet improvements. NCC were looking to make capital budget provision for the refurbishment of public conveniences, and it was understood that priority would be given to the Alnwick Shambles toilets. It would not be known if this budget provision was available until February when budgets were finalised.

The meeting closed at 9.54 pm