

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 28th January 2016  
in the Mechanics Institute, Percy Street, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors P Broom (Chair), P Edge, D Farrar, M Harrington, P Holt, G Mavin, S Mavin, S Patience, R Roberts, A Shilton, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

**In attendance:** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk, J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer and Philip Angier, Local Living.

**RA 15/33 Apologies**

None.

**RA 15/34 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Swinbank and Shilton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 3. Feedback on the 'Taste of the North' festival 2015 (food festival) and proposals for 2016/17. Councillor Patience declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda item 5. Alnwick Bike Track Project.

**RA 15/35 Feedback on the 'Taste of the North' festival 2015 (food festival) and proposals for 2016, by Philip Angier (Local Living)**

'Taste of the North' 2015 - Philip reported that the title had not included Food or Festival as Taste allowed a wider programme including craft and music.

Good weather had meant good footfall and it had made a small profit of £241 after paying all costs.

General Markets 2015 – Philip reported that some markets had suffered due to the bad weather and some had been cancelled for the same reason.

2016 – Farmers market are being returned to Fridays.

There would be three feature weekend events:

- June 25<sup>th</sup> / 26<sup>th</sup> Taste North
- Sept 17<sup>th</sup> / 18<sup>th</sup> Alnwick Food Festival
- Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> Christmas Market

He also reported that there would also be Craft Markets held at weekends.

Philip also advised that their bid had got through Round 1 of LEADER and Stage 2 should be considered in April 2016.

Local Living were discussing with the Food Festival committee about taking over the running of the Food Festival from 2016 and that the festival would be publicised at the tourism fairs in March.

Councillor Farrar asked about the equipment the Food Festival owned and its transfer to Local Living. Philip advised that they owned 'A frame' type stalls and

that they would be transferred as part of the agreement but would still be free to charities.

Councillor G Mavin asked if the transfer took place would the Food Festival hand back the £750 they had been paid from the Taste of the North event. Philip advised that the Food Committee have around £3,000 and would use the money to pay bills that Local Living forward to them until the money is spent.

Councillor Patience asked how this process would work if the Food Festival Committee were standing down. Philip advised that the Committee would still be able to process payments.

Councillor Edge asked what scale the new Food Festival would be on. He added that he felt the Taste of the North event had been very successful. Philip advised that it would be somewhere in between the size of the Taste of the North and the Food Festival in 2014. Chefs demos were a possibility but it would probably take around three years to get the right balance.

Councillor Holt said she was concerned in the past about the geographical area stallholders had been invited from. Philip advised that there would be more local producers at the Taste of the North event (from within 50 miles of Alnwick). He added that it was necessary to go further afield to get variety.

Philip advised that the Town Council could support the events in three ways:

- a) To be the 'fallback' owner/controller should Local Living cease to operate or withdraw from Alnwick food festivals.
- b) To write an assurance, in writing, that the Town Council would, in principle, expect to continue its present support arrangements for the Food Festival.
- c) To appoint two nominees to a sub-group for the Food Festival (needs to be done at Full Council).

Councillor Symmonds left the meeting in his capacity as Chair of the Alnwick International Music Festival.

Councillor G Mavin thought the requests seemed ok as long as there were no financial liabilities.

Councillor S Mavin advised that Councillors S and P Allcroft had been the Town Council's representatives on the previous Food Festival committee.

Councillor Patience was happy to propose all three requests for approval.

Councillor G Mavin agreed with the wording of the requests.

**RESOLVED: To support the three requests for support from Local Living.**

## **RA 15/36 Budget Update 2015/16 (incl on-going projects/outstanding works)**

The Town Clerk circulated a copy of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Income and Expenditure as at 27th January 2016. This showed expenditure of £12,889.93 on events, £5,803.99 on projects and £48,304.23 on assets &

services. Income was £4,250 at this point, all of which is from Allotments rents. The Town Clerk note the following:

**EVENTS:**

Everything that needed to be spent had been spent. This included an additional £970 for the Tour of Britain.

**PROJECTS:**

Not much activity since the last meeting.

Town Promotion – Leaflets are awaiting confirmation from Alnwick Castle and expect to go to the printers by January 29th. The cost will be £1.9k for 30k leaflets distributed to 820 outlets to be targets by the end of February.

Councillor G Mavin advised that NPD had offered to distribute 5,000 folders into holiday cottages for an additional £500.

Councillor Swinbank asked if there was a way of knowing how effective it had been. Councillor G Mavin advised that it wasn't. He added that Alnwick Castle add a discount code which is used to book tickets.

Councillor Symmonds reported that Andrew Duff who does the publicity for the Music Festival felt the music festival didn't use it enough.

Councillor Farrar asked if the 5,000 was the number of folders or cottages. Councillor G Mavin advised that he wasn't sure.

Councillor Farrar felt that they could target cottages close to but not in Alnwick.

Councillor G Mavin advised that the leaflets would target day tripper areas.

Councillor Shilton felt that the leaflets needed to be ready to distribute to the accommodation providers at the Tourism Fairs in March. She suggested that the Town Council take a stand or perhaps have leaflets on someone else's.

Councillor Harrington agreed the leaflets should mainly capture the local area.

Councillor G Mavin advised that the leaflets would be distributed in the four main areas between Berwick and Durham.

Councillor Symmonds endorsed Councillor Shilton's comments about maximising the distribution days.

Councillor G Mavin advised that if the distribution days were to be covered an additional £5k leaflet would be needed at a cost of £150.

Councillor Patience asked who would man the stand and suggested asking Local Living to take the Alnwick Town leaflets on their stand.

Councillors agreed to wait to until the outcome of the first print of leaflets was known before deciding about the folders.

Communication project – No expenditure to date as awaiting suggestions for additional noticeboards. One suggestion had been close to The Playhouse.

WWI Roses / Shrubs – still to be bought and planted.

Litter bins – six new litter / dog bins have been bought.

Public Toilet Refurbishment – The Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council need to agree the three additional locations for the Your Welcome Scheme in Alnwick. He advised that Town Council officers would carry out some research in to possible locations and report back to the next meeting.

Councillor Symmonds asked if the Town Council knew what they would get for their extra budget for toilet cleaning. The Town Clerk advised that he had asked for proposal / costings.

Councillor Broom asked if the toilets were open again. The Town Clerk said he wasn't sure.

Planting bulbs – Expenditure of around £270 to date with approximately £130 remaining. Councillor Edge reported that he had spoken to NCC about planting trees at Willowburn Roundabout. NCC Officers were positive as they felt it would potentially slow down oncoming traffic. He advised that seven trees plus guards would cost about £90.

Councillor Harrington asked if the roundabout was large enough to accommodate seven trees. Councillor Edge said he would select small types such as Rowan and Birch.

#### **ASSETS & SERVICES:**

Wages/PAYE – transferred in from Finance & Policy budget. Expenditure includes month 9 salary.

Playground Expenses – expenditure includes repairs to equipment, wet pour repairs and gate repairs. Also includes cost of team swing basket, basket swing and ball joint (ordered).

Ronbertson's Fountain – includes  $\frac{3}{4}$  water bills and  $\frac{4}{4}$  electricity bills although there could be a 5<sup>th</sup> payment for electricity dependant on dates of bills.

Seats / benches – still unspent budget of almost £3,000. Awaiting feedback from bus companies and NCC on suggested locations.

**RESOLVED: i) To accept the budget update; ii) To allocate an additional budget of £150 for 5,000 extra town promotion leaflets; iii) To purchase seven trees and guards for the Willowburn Roundabout using money from the Bulb Planting budget.**

#### **RA 15/37 Alnwick Bike Track project**

Councillor Patience left the room for this item.

The Town Clerk advised that in November 2012 Alnwick Town Council had agreed to take on the lease for the land from Northumberland Estates. Gallery Youth were a partner in the project and the scheme was designed by Groundwork North East. Planning permission was obtained in August 2015.

He issued the heads of terms he had received from Northumberland Estates for councillors to review. He reminded councillor that SITA need planning permission and a lease in place before considering funding and that as

Northumberland Estates needed to give notice to their tenant they now want the Town Council to sign the lease. He advised that the recommendations from this committee would be taken to the Full Council meeting in February.

He reported that £30k had already allocated from Section 106 funding which the Town Council had been asked to hold for the project, as well as other funding from County Councillors and the Youth Hostel (£1k).

There were two clauses in the lease that needed review:

9. Public Liability Insurance – Northumberland Estates will accept wording suggested by the Town Council.

17. Assignment – need to add something about reasonableness of assigning.

Councillor Swinbank asked how much the relevant Public Liability Insurance would be. The Town Clerk advised that he would find out.

The Town Clerk highlighted clause 13. Termination of Lease and reminded councillors of the potential cost of removal and reinstatement of the site.

Councillor Symmonds asked what happened if something happened to Gallery Youth. The Town Clerk advised that there was no plan B but that the Town Council could take over the management of the project.

Councillor G Mavin asked what the cost of the project was. The Town Clerk advised that the cost of the project was between £80k - £90k.

Councillor G Mavin asked what if the project overruns the budget. The Town Clerk advised that this was down to Groundwork.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the Town Council would take over if Gallery Youth ceased before the building work on the project was undertaken. The Town Clerk said that they possibly would, but the Town Council would need to consider this.

Councillor Farrar suggested that the land could be handed back with minimal work to make good. The Town Clerk advised that it would be down to the timescales of when things happened.

Councillor Farrar asked what would happen if the Town Council sub-let the site to an organisation who then fold. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council would still be the lessee.

Councillor Swinbank asked who would own the equipment. The Town Clerk advised that there would be no equipment on site.

**RESOLVED: To accept the update and take forward to the Full Council meeting in February for approval.**

## **RA 15/38 Updates**

### **a) Allotments**

St James's - The Town Clerk advised that there was outstanding rent for one allotment and one person had given up their allotment. He also advised that there is a small waiting list of three people.

Ratten Row – The Town Clerk advised that there was just under £400 owing in allotment rent. He also advised that there is a waiting list of 5-6 people.

He also reported that there was an Allotment meeting at Ratten Row on February 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss a number of items including fencing.

St Georges – The Project & Funding Officer advised that he has started looking at Allotment Associations and water supply.

He confirmed that the access to the water supply had been identified and that he had met with Northumbrian Water who have given him the spec for the water pipes. The Town Council would need to organise the work being undertaken. He advised that he was preparing the spec to go out for quotes.

He also advised that the application to Northumbrian Water had a fee of £108 but that this would be deducted from the final bill. The Town Clerk added that the application needed to be put in and the fee paid before quotes were obtained.

Councillor Roberts asked if there would be one central standpipe. The Town Clerk confirmed that there would be and that as the site would be metered thought needed to be given to security and locks.

## **b) Play Areas**

The Town Clerk gave an update:

Glovers Green – he advised that a meeting had taken place with Friends of Bullfield Orchard to discuss re-siting a play area on the edge of the orchard. He also advised that the Project & Funding Officer was looking for funding for this.

Allerburn Lea – money in the 2016/17 budget is for a new piece of equipment.

Swansfield Park – large amount of wet pour repairs need to be undertaken. He advised that this costs around £70 per sqm. Quotes would be obtained early so the work could be undertaken in 2016/17.

Councillor Farrar reported that there was still an issue at Cawledge View with people putting their own pieces of equipment into the play area. The Town Clerk advised that they would be removed and stored at the cemetery.

Councillor Roberts felt that notices could be put up in the first instance.

Councillor Patience asked if equipment for older children had been looked at again. The Town Clerk advised that the Project & Funding Officer would look at possible funding for this.

Councillor Swinbank reminded councillors that there was CAP in the Neighbourhood Plan for the Project & Funding Officer to review all play equipment around the town. The Town Clerk advised that this was due to be undertaken shortly.

**RESOLVED: To accept the updates.**

## **RA 15/39 Any Other Urgent Business**

Councillor Holt thanked the Project & Funding Officer for contacting Geoff Paul at NCC with regard to Enterprise Zones.

Councillor Swinbank advised that he had emailed the Town Clerk and Recreation & Amenities committee chair asking if there should be more liaison between the Chair of Recreation & Amenities and NCC Officers. He felt that quarterly meetings to discuss items such as litter picking would be useful.

The Town Clerk advised that Bob Hodgson from NCC could be asked to the Recreation & Amenities meeting in March.

Councillor Swinbank felt that a smaller meeting might be more conducive and could focus on issues in Alnwick.

Councillor S Mavin advised that issues were supposed to go through the County Councillors.

Councillor Patience felt that there was already a structure for dealing with issues with NCC Officers.

Councillor Swinbank felt it would only focus on local services in Alnwick.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council already had meeting with NCC Officers (Alex Bennett and Kevin Bartlett) on a quarterly basis where issues from committees were put agendas.

Councillor G Mavin felt that a smaller meetings would be a big job for NCC if they had to meet with all Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor Farrar felt it was important that positive as well as negative comments were passed onto NCC.

Councillor Broom felt that comments for NCC officers / staff should be passed through the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council officers already had a good relationship with many local NCC staff who covered Alnwick.

The Town Clerk confirmed that a list of questions could be sent to Bob Hodgson ahead of the meeting so he came prepared with the necessary answers.

Councillor G Mavin felt that county councillors need to get all the information form Town Council meetings / committees. Councillor Patience advised that County Councillors do get copies of the Town Council minutes. Councillor Farrar asked if the minutes could be sent out sooner as the county councillors did not attend every committee meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.04pm