

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 24th March 2016  
in the Mechanics Institute, Percy Street, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors P Broom (Chair), P Edge, M Harrington, A Shilton, M Swinbank and A Symmonds.

**In attendance:** W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk, Tim Kirton Project and Funding Officer. Carlo Bagioni, Alnwick Chamber of Trade.

**RA 15/40 Apologies**

Councillors P Holt, G Mavin, S Mavin and S Patience.

**RA 15/41 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**RA 15/42 Budget Update 2015/16**

The Town Clerk circulated a copy of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Income and Expenditure as at 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016. This showed expenditure of £12,889 on events £7,028 on projects and £47,304 on assets & services. Income was £4,295, all of which is from Allotments rents. The Town Clerk noted the following:

**PROJECTS:**

Peters Mill Bridge - £500 unspent. Councillor Harrington updated and it was agreed that the stones would be assessed for transporting to the site.

Town Promotion – The leaflet had now been produced and distributed. Initial feedback was good and special thanks must go to George Mavin for progressing this.

Communication Project - The Town Clerk advised that there was £4,000 unspent on notice boards and suggested that if this remained unspent after 2016/17, it could be transferred to other projects.

Litter Bins – 3 more new litter bins ordered (combined dog/litter bins).

Proposed Flag Pole- The Committee had previously expressed a desire to erect a new flagpole in the Column field. A location had been identified and a mock up photo was circulated for consideration. Councillors were supportive.

**RESOLVED: To make budget provision of £750 plus planning application fees for the project, in 2016/17.**

**ASSETS & SERVICES:**

Seats / benches – 5 new seats ordered. Provisional locations identified (Column Field x 2, Oaks Roundabout, Pottergate Gardens, and Willowburn Avenue. The Clerk suggested the Pottergate Garden seat could be a Queen's Birthday

commemorative seat, councillors were supportive of this. Still awaiting feedback from bus companies and NCC on suggested bench locations.

**RESOLVED: To agree the locations of the new seats as outlined including the commemorative seat.**

Public Conveniences – The Clerk outlined that the NCC had quoted £4,742.01 for an additional clean of both sets of toilets in the town. This would be the clean at the end of the day, after which the toilets would be locked. The Town Council had made a budget provision of £4500 towards this. Councillors discussed the service standards and the need for the cleaning specification to be made available and also the need to highlight to NCC that random checks would be undertaken.

**RESOLVED: to proceed with the additional clean of both sets of toilets between April and October (7 months) at a cost of £4,742.01.**

Hanging Baskets – Last year the Town Council had funded the hanging baskets at the Bus Station. For 2016/17 Morrisons have offered to pay 50%. Councillors were in agreement to fund the other 50%.

**RESOLVED: To agree to fund 50% of the cost of the hanging baskets at the Bus Station in 2016/17.**

**RESOLVED: To receive the budget update.**

#### **RA 15/43 Update on the Your Welcome Scheme.**

A paper had been circulated with the agenda, Tim Kirton outlined the work undertaken to find suitable premises. A total of £1500 (for 3 new premises had been included in the budget. Councillors discussed the premises and felt that Costa and the Queens Head should be progressed under the scheme. Some of the other premises had drawbacks with access or availability. Councillor Broom highlighted the possibility of using the Alnwick Gate (Blue Bell) as this was near to the Bus Station. Tim Kirton said he would visit to assess. NCC had suggested that if the Town Council is paying establishments under the scheme then the agreements etc. should come from the Town Council. The Clerk highlighted a small budget may be needed for signage.

**RESOLVED: To include Costa and The Queens Head under the Your Welcome scheme and to give delegated authority to the Clerk in consultation with the Committee Chairman to proceed with the Alnwick Gate (Blue Bell) if it is seen as an appropriate facility.**

#### **RA15/44 The Queens 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations**

Tim Kirton reminded Councillors that the Queen celebrates her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2016. A number of events are planned during the year, including on her birthday on April 21<sup>st</sup>. A weekend of events to celebrate the Queen's birthday and, unofficially, the Duke of Edinburgh's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday, will take place on June 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>. This will include a large street party in the Mall to which 10,000 people will be invited. Communities across the country had been encouraged to have local events/street parties to mark the event. The Alnwick Town Team had considered

this at their meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March and it had been suggested that a traffic free weekend be organised within the town in June, to enable the streets to be used for parties, market stalls, entertainments, etc. Carlo Bagioni (Alnwick Chamber of Trade), supported the need to try to do something special in the town, but this may not need to cover the whole town centre. Councillors discussed the proposal and the majority indicated they would be happy for the Town Council to lead on this project provided there is a real appetite and buy-in amongst town businesses to actively participate in the delivery of this. Tim Kirton was asked to gauge the likely support and organise the meetings to progress if necessary. The Clerk also explained that the Town bunting could be hung for the weekend and over the summer, but this would need planning. If the bunting is to be hung and an event planned then a budget of up to £1,500 may be needed. Councillors Harrington, Swinbank and Symmonds volunteered for any project group that may be formed.

**RESOLVED: To determine the level of interest from businesses towards a town centre traffic free weekend or alternative celebration.**

## **RA 15/45     Updates on Play Areas**

### **a)     Draft play area audit**

Tim Kirton had circulated the first draft of the Play Area Audit – this was a piece of work required under the Neighbourhood Plan Community Action Plan. Tim highlighted key areas and the background to the analysis. Councillor Swinbank asked about including Section 106 funding and the availability of data on the areas where children lived. The need to look at the provision of equipment for older children in Swansfield Park was also discussed, as was the need to check the Alnwick North MUGA surface. Tim agreed to look into these issues.

**RESOLVED: To circulate the draft audit to all Committee members requesting comments, with a view to bringing a final draft to the next meeting for approval.**

### **b)     General updates**

The Clerk highlighted the following: Glovers Green -the Community Orchard Committee are considering the possibility of a play area on their site. Swansfield Park -larger area of wet pour will need to be provided for one piece of equipment. Allerburn Lea – quotes to be sourced for a new piece of equipment also a further request made for a gate on the play area. Councillors considered the request for the gate a felt that it may be possible to review the entrance position to the play area. The Clerk agreed to look at this.

**RESOLVED: To receive the update.**

## **Updates on Allotments**

### **a)     Ratten Row meeting.**

## **RA 15/46**

Tim Kirton briefed Councillors on the allotment holders meeting. This had been reasonably well attended and had been positive. Whilst many were interested in an allotment association, at this stage there were few volunteers for committee membership. Visits were being planned to allotment sites in Ashington and Newbiggin.

### **b) General updates.**

The Clerk reported that 134 plots out of 138 plots were currently let and that there were only 6 residents now on the waiting list. Outstanding rent was now £455. NCC were looking into the possibility of cameras/surveillance to help prevent fly tipping at Ratten Row. A quote had been received from Northumbria Water for the water supply connection at St Georges, and a quote would need to be obtained for the pipework and tap installation. Assuming that allotment holders were in favour and rents were increased by £20 per annum for water supply, then the payback for the likely investment would be in the region of 10 years. It was agreed to obtain allotment holders views and make a final decision on this at the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: To receive the update.**

## **RA 15/47 Any Other Urgent Business**

It was confirmed that Bob Hodgson from NCC was attending the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.19pm