

## **Alnwick Town Team**

Minutes of the meeting of Alnwick Town Team held at 5pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 at 5pm at The Cottage, Alnwick Garden.

**Present:** Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Chairman), Cllr. Gordon Castle (GC) and Dave Campbell (DC) (Northumberland County Council), Mark Brassell (MB) (Alnwick Garden), Carlo Biagioni (CB) (Chamber of Trade), David Taylor (DT), Elizabeth Jones (EJ) (Alnwick in Bloom), Tim Kirton (TK) (Alnwick Town Council)

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Philip Angier (PA) (Local Living) and Tommy Mattison (TM) (Freemen of Alnwick)

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

The minutes were approved as a true and correct record.

### **3. Matters Arising**

MB advised that the Lantern Parade will go ahead in 2017, probably on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November to avoid any clash with the Christmas Lights switch-on. This will mark the start of the festive season and the Parade will effectively publicise what is going to be going on during the season. GC noted that the stage will still be up on November 18<sup>th</sup> from the Christmas Lights switch-on on the 17<sup>th</sup> so this will save money.

### **4. Fingerpost Signage: comments and suggestions from the Town Team**

TK reported that he had received comments and suggestions for the fingerpost signage from MB and The Alnwick Garden had pledged to fund the new signs they are requesting. TK reminded all Town Team members that their comments and suggestions are welcomed.

**Action: Town Team members to email their comments and suggestions for changes and additions to TK as soon as possible.**

The Town Council has a limited budget for fingerpost signage repairs in 2017-18 but TK advised that there may be Leader funding available towards additional fingerpost signs provided that these were part of a wider project to create say a new town trail or perhaps a phone app; the Leader Co-ordinator Ivan Hewitt had advised that elsewhere a local school had been involved in creating such an app and TK would investigate this further.

TK to investigate whether there are "heritage" fingers available made in fibreglass rather than aluminium, which might be cheaper.

DT advised that he and CB had met with an NCC officer who dealt with signage and thought he may be able to provide input for this; **DT to advise TK of the NCC officer's name.**

MB said that the fingerpost signs located on the corner of Greenwell Lane and Bondgate Without, close to The Playhouse, will need to be of the highest quality as they will be passed by 500,000 visitors to The Garden every year.

DT suggested that consideration should be given to replacing fingerposts with information pods.

## **5. Updates**

### ***(a) County Council:***

DC reported:

Playhouse: A deal has been agreed with the Playhouse Trust and currently Heads of Terms are being agreed. Completion of works at the Playhouse is now scheduled for summer 2018.

Allerburn House: NCC is about to complete the sale of the site to Arch. The planning application for housing at the site has been approved.

Willow burn Depot/new Fire Station: completion of both delayed by one month to the end of April. The old fire station is up for sale and two offers have so far been received, both are being considered.

10 Bailiffgate: a surrender of the NCC lease is currently being negotiated.

Former Duchess High School: Buildings to be demolished shortly.

### ***(b) Town Council:***

**Visit by Jude Leitch and new European Structural Investment Funds:** TK reported that Jude Leitch of Northumbrian Tourism had met with MB, CB and TK and suggested possible future tourism funding through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). TK had attended two workshops on EAFRD on February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> and had produced a summary of what was available, which was circulated at the meeting. (This will also be circulated electronically). EAFRD offers up to 40% EU capital (no revenue) funding for projects which create growth in the local rural economy, create jobs, extend the tourist season, develop tourist attractions and infrastructure and have wider benefits for the tourism economy. There is a two-stage applications process with Expressions of Interest followed by full applications. Bids are open now. Further information and guidance is available from TK.

**CCTV:** TK advised that a winning quote had been selected and Listed Building Consent will be applied for over the next week; the design of the cameras and other equipment needed to be known before the LBC application could be submitted. LBC approval is expected by mid-late April with installation being completed by late April/early May 2017.

**Neighbourhood Plan:** No further progress from NCC with regard to the date of the referendum.

**Willowburn Industrial Estate:** There was no further information on the proposed amendment to the Core Strategy to deallocate Willowburn for industry and allow housing on the site. There was also still no information from NCC as to when the planning application for housing would be considered by NCC's Planning Committee but this must happen soon otherwise the applicant could claim non-determination. GC said that if the amendment to the Core Strategy is not adopted by the time the application for housing is considered then that application will be appraised as an application for housing on an industrial site.

**Lectern maps:** TK advised the Town Council is still awaiting receipt of funding from two of the sponsors but this is expected imminently. The lecterns will then be powerwashed and the maps installed.

### ***Chamber of Trade:***

CB advised that this year's Alwick Raffle and Gala Night had raised £5,000. The White Swan had provided the venue and food free of charge. The Chairman of the Town Team expressed thanks to and congratulated everyone involved in what had been a very good evening.

CB alerted the Town Team to the reassessment of business rates which the Chamber feel will hit Alwick very hard. The Chamber has written to the local MP to express concern and formally object to the rises being mooted.

## **7. Any Other Business**

MB advised that The Alwick Garden's event calendar for 2017 will be circulated at or before the next Town Team meeting.

AS advised that Alwick Town Council has said that it has no comment to make on the planning application for the proposed Alwick Garden Play Village until more detail is forthcoming. MB said that there is a lot more development work required before the details of the proposal come forward.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 6.20pm.

## **8. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 5pm at The Cottage, Alwick Garden.