

## **Alnwick Town Team**

Minutes of the meeting of Alnwick Town Team held at 5pm on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at The Pavilion, Alnwick Garden.

**Present:** Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Chairman), Mark Brassell (MB) (Alnwick Garden), David Lovie (DL) (Civic Society), Philip Angier (PA), (Local Living), Sgt. Sharon Wilmore-Greaves (Northumbria Police), Tim Kirton (ATC)

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

Apologies were received from Elizabeth Jones (EJ) (Alnwick in Bloom), Dave Campbell (DC) (Northumberland County Council), Cllr. Gordon Castle (GC), and Carlo Biagioni (CB) (Chamber of Trade)

### **2. Sgt. Wilmore-Greaves re. Alnwick Christmas Lights Switch-on and Lantern Parade**

SWG advised that at last year's events many members of the public had commented to police officers that it was a pity that more shops, cafes, etc. were not open so that the large numbers of people present could do shopping and buy refreshments. SWG asked whether it would be possible for the Town Team to encourage such opening for this year's events and asked whether the annual Alnwick "late opening for Christmas shopping" could be done on the same evening.

There was general support for this suggestion from the meeting.

PA advised that Local Living had had preliminary discussions with hot food vendors who could be located around the Market Square provided that these did not cause any obstruction. A PA system will also be required.

SWG said that she would assign a piece of work to a colleague to encourage support through the Shopwatch programme.

MB expressed his support and advised that this year's Lantern Parade would be slightly different; once Spark had completed their performance there will be two videos shown on large screens in the Market Place, one featuring The Alnwick Garden and the other featuring Alnwick generally; Mark had called for ideas from the Town Team for the general Alnwick video earlier this year and if Town Team members wanted to provide further ideas now they would need to be very quick as the videos are about to go to production.

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

These were approved as a true and correct record.

### **4. Matters Arising**

**CCTV:** SWG reported there had been a reduction in trouble in the Market place following the switch on of the new CCTV system. The cars which had been a source of anti-social behaviour in the Market Place had relocated mainly to the car park on The Peth where littering had consequently become a problem. The Chairman said he had received complaints from residents of The Peth about noise from speeding cars. SWG said she had given a fellow officer the task of finding an alternative location for the cars to assemble.

SWG also explained that the Designated Public Spaces Order which effectively banned certain anti-social activities was being replaced by the new PSPO which should be more effective against vehicle disorder, drinking in public places, etc. This will enable the issuing of vehicle related ASBOs and enable police officers and NCC Community Safety Officers to issue fines for any anti-social activity covered by the Order. Northumberland County Council is drawing up a Market Towns Order to cover several such towns; drafting of the order will be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 after which there will be a process of

consultation, adoption and the putting up of the required signage. DL asked that he be informed as this process progresses and SWG agreed to this. **Action: SWG.**

**Item 5:** The Chairman expressed his thanks to Mark Brassell for the loan of chairs for the Music Festival.

## **5. Updates**

### ***a) Town Council (Tim Kirton)***

**Willowburn Industrial Estate:** At their meeting with the Town Council the Willowburn IE businesses asked ATC to meet with NCC and Arch and also with representatives of Northern Commercial (owners of the Alnmaritec site) to determine what their intentions are on the future of their sites following the refusal of planning permission for housing. The Willowburn businesses also expressed concerns about the poor state of the estate generally and the lack of good signage at the front of the site publicising their businesses and asked ATC to lobby for investment at the site for industrial and commercial uses but not housing.

Accordingly, ATC had been trying to set up a meeting with NCC and Arch but this had been difficult owing to key staff at NCC being on annual leave for a month however a meeting is likely to be held late in September or early in October.

Northern Commercial plan to appeal the planning refusal but when this appeal will be submitted and whether it will include Harris and Sheldon as partners in the planning application or just be by Northern Commercial, is still unknown. There is unlikely to be any decision on such an appeal until well into 2018.

PA advised the meeting that James Jackson at Northumberland Estates had advised that some empty units at Willowburn Industrial Estate may be demolished to avoid business rates and as a result Local Living may need to relocate to another unit at the site.

**CCTV:** The only camera still to be connected is that near to Alnwick Playhouse, which has been delayed owing to the lead at the contractor being on holiday, this is expected to be completed tomorrow, Thursday September 14th.

MB advised that their new CCTV system had attracted spiders whose webs could obstruct images however a spray is available to stop webs from being created and he strongly recommended using this, MB will advise TK of details. **Action: MB**

**Fingerpost signage:** Delivery of the two new fingerposts and the map lectern has been further delayed owing to the foundry being moved and delivery is now expected at the end of September/early October. Repainting of all the other fingerposts is complete.

**Business Forum Meeting, August 22<sup>nd</sup>:** This was a great success with just over 40 businesses attending. Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP had addressed the meeting on Brexit and its implications and responded fully to a wide range of questions from the audience which had been submitted prior to the meeting and several more from the floor on the night. Mrs. Trevelyan agreed at the end of the meeting to return in a year's time on August 21<sup>st</sup> to review progress with items raised at this meeting.

The next Business Forum meeting will almost certainly be held on Tuesday November 21<sup>st</sup> with registration at 5.30pm for a 6pm start; the subjects and venue are to be arranged.

### ***b) Alnwick Garden (Mark Brassell)***

- The latest Alnwick Garden Magazine was circulated by MB.

- MB reported that The Alnwick Garden had won the Large Visitor Attraction of the Year award at the inaugural Northumberland Tourism 2017 Awards and there is a feature in the Magazine about this.
- The Garden is currently preparing for its Halloween events. This Year's Garden Christmas Market will be held in the Courtyard and the path from The Alnwick Garden to the town will be lit up.
- MB advised that with the exception of August when they were up by 9% on last year, visitor numbers for the Garden were slightly down; the poor summer weather had probably been influential in this.
- Spend was also slightly down.

**(c) County Council**

No report as DC and GC on holiday

**(d) Chamber of Trade**

No report as CB is away

**(e) Local Living/Alnwick Markets**

PA reported strong, vibrant weekend trade in August but indifferent trade midweek.

PA circulated literature about the Food Festival this coming weekend; there will be a good range of traders and more interaction with goodies and giveaways. Alnwick Cocktail Hour is selling well.

The main Christmas Market will be on the weekend of December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**(f) Alnwick in Bloom**

Elizabeth Jones had submitted apologies for absence but had sent in a written report which had then been circulated to all present two days previously; this was received.

TK advised that Elizabeth Jones had telephoned him just before this meeting had started, to advise that Alnwick town and Alnwick railway station had both won Gold Awards at Northumbria in Bloom. This was warmly welcomed and congratulations were expressed.

**6. Any Other Business**

MB reminded the meeting that the "Forensic Investigation" event is being held this weekend on the 16th, this will include a "Murder Mystery" set in the Poison Garden of The Alnwick Garden which has been specially written by Ann Cleeves, writer of the "Vera" novels and television programmes. The event will also include a book signing session by Ann Cleeves who has just launched her latest novel, The Seagull.

DL advised that the "Alnwick Heritage Heroes" book will be launched on November 3<sup>rd</sup>; DL will issue invitations to the TT members.

The Chairman reported that NCC have commissioned a parking survey; consultations take place at the end of September and should include the Town Team members as stakeholders.

**7. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 11th October 2017 at 5.00pm (**please note this earlier time than usual**) at The Pavilion, Alnwick Garden. MB invited all to take part in a round of Crazy Golf at the new facility before the meeting proper starts at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm