



**Minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on
Thursday 28th June 2018
at the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors S Allcroft (Chair), G Castle, J Humphries, G Mavin, M Swinbank, A Symmonds and G Watson.

In attendance: W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk.

FP 18/01 Apologies

Councillors Broom, Grisdale, Patience and Wearn.

FP 18/02 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Castle declared a non-pecuniary interest in County Council matters and in Item 7. Grant Application from Alnwick Lions.

FP 18/03 Minutes of the last meeting - matters arising not on the agenda

FP17/48 The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council's insurance had been renewed with Zurich Municipal.

FP 18/04 Budget update 2018/19

The Town Clerk went through the circulated budget as at 27th June 2018. He reminded councillors that the figures in red on the budget were the budget figures carried over from 2017/18. He highlighted the following lines of expenditure:

RENT / ROOM BOOKINGS – expenditure is for 2 months of meetings.

INSURANCE – figure was a reduction on the 2017/18 insurance figure but more items would be insured.

TOWN TWINNING – expenditure of around £360 to date for the Civic Reception for the Bryne Band. There is a Civic Reception for visitors from Voerde, Alnwick's German twin town, Thursday August 16th.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION – still awaiting landlord's approval for the Town Council to occupy the room in Greenwell Lane.

N PLAN / COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN / OTHER COUNCIL PRIORITIES – figure includes new bus shelter at Wagonway Road but this will be covered by a payment of £5k from Cussins.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the Town Council were still planning to pay for maps and signs once the works at the bus station were completed. The Town Clerk confirmed that they were.

RESOLVED: To note the update.

FP 18/05 CCTV Update

The Project & Funding Officer reported that, as part of the agreed annual review of the CCTV system, Alnwick police have given the Town Council a list with their preferences for 12 additional cameras in Alnwick. The list includes two Number Plate recognition (NPR) cameras plus additional cameras to cover blank areas in the town centre and additional cameras for the market place.

He explained that the Town Council agreed to provide £3,000 per year to put into a repairs and renewal fund and, if this is not spent, it would be used to renew the system after five or six years.

He advised that there is £2,000 left from the original budget allocated for the installation in 2016-17.

The Council also has £3,500 allocated in 2018-19 (and subsequent years) for

maintenance of the camera system including four inspection and cleaning visits per year.

He advised that the total available budget is £11,500 of which £3,500 is needed for maintenance purposes leaving £8,000 available to spend. He explained that the total cost of 12 new cameras asked for by the police would be £10,008 with the NPR cameras accounting for approximately £4,980.

There would also be the need to purchase a new 4k monitor to show HD images which would cost £454 plus a new keyboard at cost of £225.

Councillor questions:

Councillor Watson felt that the police should be advised that the Town Council have half the budget to use in 2018/19.

Councillor Swinbank asked if he knew how many times the CCTV system the police have used the system. The Project & Funding Officer advised that he didn't.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the maintenance cost would increase if the number of cameras was increased. The Project & Funding Officer advised that it would.

Councillor Castle reported that the footage from the CCTV system does work and had worked to get people to change their plea. He added that the NPR camera at Barter Books was very effective especially in relation to accidents.

Councillor Mavin asked if there were still any mobile cameras in Alnwick. He also asked if the Police & Crime Commissioner had any budget that could be put towards the cost of any new cameras.

The Project & Funding Officer advised that all mobile cameras belonged to NCC.

Councillor Allcroft suggested asking the police if they have any budget which could be used towards the costs of the new cameras.

Councillor Castle advised that it was important not to make people aware of the locations of the NPR cameras.

RESOLVED: The Town Clerk and Project & Finding Officer to advise the police that the Town Council will pay for a maximum of 6 more cameras with a priority given to NPR cameras.

FP 18/06

Draft Flag Policy

The Assistant to the Town Clerk issued a Draft Flag Policy which she had drafted. She took councillors through the sections of the policy. She asked councillors to consider Appendix I – Alnwick Town Council Plan which listed the days on which specific flags would be flown and provide their feedback.

She summarised the guidelines issued by the British Flag Institute regarding basic design, colours, layout, logos and lettering and issued a summary document of the main points.

Councillor Watson felt it was a good policy and that he was happy to change the flags when needed.

Councillor Symmonds felt that the amount of time that would be potentially spent changing the flags need to be looked at.

Councillor Castle felt that the default flag should an Alnwick flag. He felt that there could be a list of volunteers to raise and lower the flags.

Councillor Swinbank suggested that two people take the decision on when the Union flag would be flown at half-mast.

Councillor Castle felt this could be the Mayor and Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk asked councillors to give a steer on when the Union flag should flown.

Councillor Symmonds advised speaking to a flag manufacturers about the specifications for the flags including possible materials.

RESOLVED: i) To receive the policy and give feedback to the consider the Alnwick Town Council Plan and give feedback to the Assistant to the Town Clerk on when the Union Flag should be flown; ii) To recommend the flag policy to the August Full Council meeting for approval.

FP 18/07

To consider a grant application – Alnwick Lions

Councillor Castle explained that he and Councillor Moore had committed £4k from their small scheme fund towards the Lions project.

Councillor Castle left the meeting.

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that the grant application from The Lions for a wall in Swansfield Park had been reviewed at the previous meeting when further information had been requested. A plan had now been submitted showing the extent and location of the proposed wall in Swansfield Park. He confirmed that the cost of the wall would be £37k for brick and £47k for stone.

Councillor Mavin said the wall would discolour very quickly as the area was very shady. He also questioned why the Lions had decided to construct a wall and felt that the costs seemed very high.

Councillor Watson agreed with Councillor Mavin about the cost and asked if individuals undertaking a relevant training scheme could be asked to build the wall.

Councillor Humphries agreed with Councillor Watson.

Councillor Symmonds said he had no enthusiasm for the project and felt that the Town Council's money could be better spent. He felt there could be health & safety issues with the walls and may attract anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Allcroft asked if the police had been consulted about the proposed project.

The Town Clerk explained that it unclear from the application who the wall would belong to and who would be responsible for its maintenance.

Councillor Swinbank felt that any grant the Town Council gave to the project should only be small.

RESOLVED: To notify The Lions that the Town Council are unable to support the project with a grant.

FP18/08

Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Mavin advised that NCC's leaflet stated that there would be 200 seats in the Market Place and wondered who would be funding them now that the Music Festival was not going ahead.

Councillor Symmonds advised that NCC had been told that seats would not be available and that the plan was to have a pop up picnic area around the stage.

Councillor Mavin asked if the £5k money from NCC for the Alnwick element of the Great Northumberland Exhibition of the North could be used for seating.

Councillor Mavin advised that The Gazette had reported on the car park issues but had not reported all the facts correctly. He felt that the Town Council needed to respond

when stories are inaccurate or misleading.

Councillor Watson felt that the Mayor and Town Clerk should respond to The Gazette.

The Town Clerk advised that some of the car park suggestions had come from the Chamber of Trade including limiting the parking outside Costa.

Councillor Swinbank advised that he was concerned that the ideas which had come out of the Borderlands event held at Alnwick Garden would be presented to NCC as ideas from Alnwick without going through the Town Council or Civic Society. He felt this would not properly represent Alnwick.

Councillor Symmonds said he was appalled at the whole process especially with representatives of the Chamber of Trade and Love Alnwick and that there should have been a major consultation between NCC and Town and Parish Councils. He advised that the type of projects that Borderlands needed to be capital plans.

The Town Clerk advised that he would contact NCC about the lack of consultation with T&PCs. He suggested that he contacted NCC about their plans for Borderland and that the Project & Funding Officer gave a report to Full Council.

The Project & Funding Officer advised time was imperative and that projects need to be transformational so small projects such as the Cobbles were not suitable. He advised that the Scottish Government were setting up a Forum to organise Borderlands in Scotland.

The Town Clerk advised that the main area were Transport, IT and Connectivity.

Meeting closed at 8.13pm