

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on
Thursday 24th May 2018
in the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors P Broom (Chair), B Griddale, M Harrington, G Mavin, S Patience, M Swinbank, A Symmonds and G Watson.

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

RA 18/01 Apologies

Cllrs Edge and Fletcher.

RA 18/02 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Edge, Patience and Swinbank declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 5a) Play area work

RA 18/03 Minutes of last meeting – matters arising not on the agenda

17/42 The Town Clerk advised that he and NCC had undertaken a survey of bollards in the town centre and NCC had agreed to straighten 5 and replace a further 3.

The Chamber of Trade have volunteered to help the Town Council re-paint the bollards. The Town Council and volunteers would paint the bollards black and the gold trim would be painted by the contractor who did the fingerposts.

Councillor Patience asked if Grannies request to be part of the Your Welcome Scheme had been considered. The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that access down the side of the building was not good. The Town Clerk advised that officers would undertake a complete review of the premises once the refurbishment works were completed.

17/43d The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that she had spoken to Northumbrian Water about the Refill Scheme who are keen to support the Town Council promote the scheme. She will send an email to request further details of how the scheme can be promoted to businesses and organisations in Alnwick. The item will be added to the next agenda for discussion.

RA 18/04 Working Group Membership for 2018/19

The Town Clerk took councillors through the current list of member of each of the three working groups:

Communications - Councillors Edge, Griddale, Harrington and Swinbank.

RESOLVED: Membership for 2018/19: Councillors Edge, Griddale Harrington and Swinbank.

Allotments – Councillors Edge, Patience and Swinbank.

RESOLVED: Membership for 2018/19: Councillors Edge, Patience and Swinbank.

WWI – Councillors Broom, Edge, Griddale, Symmonds.

Councillor Watson asked if he could join the WWI working group.

RESOLVED: i) To add Councillor Watson to the members of the WWI working group; ii) Membership for 2018/19: Councillors Broom, Edge, Griddale, Symmonds and Watson.

The Town Clerk advised that an email would be sent to the members of each working group with the Terms of Reference.

Budget Update

2017/18 Budget Total expenditure for year was £75,217.86 and income was £5,356.53. He explained that items in red in the Notes column were the headings where budget would be carried over into 2018/19.

2018/19 Budget The Town Clerk circulated a copy of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Income and Expenditure for 2017/18 and 2018/19 as at 23rd May 2018 and highlighted the following:

EXPENDITURE**EVENTS:**

FOOD FESTIVAL - grant now paid £600.

SPRING SHOW – grant now paid £200.

NORTHUMBERLAND PRIDE – grant now paid £1,000.

PROJECTS:

PUBLIC TOILETS – £854 for Initial toilet cleaning contract.

Councillor Broom asked how often the extra clean which the Town Council paid NCC to undertake took place. He also asked if the broken new toilet seat could be replaced. The Town Clerk advised that the extra clean took place every day between April and September.

ASSETS & SERVICES:

DOG BIN/LITTER BINS – four new bins purchase at £1149.22.

SEATS – paint purchased to repaint Market Place seat £38.32.

REPLACEMENT PLANTERS – 12 new planters purchased for the Cobbles £6242.00.

FINGERPOSTS / LECTERN MAPS – 2 new fingers bought £245.00.

UNALLOCATED – Litter pickers £59.25.

INCOME

£5,356.53 made up of allotment rents (£4194.50, insurance refund £112.03 and fingerpost contribution £1,050).

The Town Clerk explained that the budget of £4k in 2018/19 is mainly to pay for town leaflets. He had been asked by the Chamber of Trade if the Town Council would contribute towards the cost of re-printing their Good Food Guide. The initial print run of 5,000 had been well received at the Tourist Information Centre as there is currently no other free leaflet which includes a map.

The reprint would cost £430 and the Chamber of Commerce are asking the Town Council for £215.

Councillor Symmonds felt that this was no different to other trade leaflets that the Town Council had been asked to contribute towards in the past. He cited the B&B leaflet which the Alnwick Tourism Association had asked the Town Council to contribute towards. He said that he could not support the request for the same reason that it was a trade leaflet and did not include all cafés and restaurants.

Councillor Harrington agreed with Councillor Symmonds that it was a business leaflet and should not be paid for by the Town Council.

Councillor Watson felt that the Town Council should promote the town and proposed supporting the request.

Councillor Mavin advised that the Alnwick Town Leaflet had contributions from the main attractions in the town which helped to pay for printing.

Councillor Patience asked if there was any Town team budget left. The Town Clerk advised that there was and it could be used, as it was for improving footfall in the town.

Councillor Patience suggested the Town Team consider using some of their remaining budgeted to contribute towards the re-print of the Good Food Guide leaflet.

**RESOLVED: i) To refer the request for funding a re-print of the Good Food Guide to the Town Team;
ii) To accept the 2017/18 budget update.**

RA 18/06

Updates on:

a) Flagpole

The Town Clerk advised that the current planning application for a Civic Flagpole had 11 people who support and 6 who objected.

He had received a phone call from NCC advising that they had given more time for comments to be submitted. He also advised that a petition, organised by one individual, and which contained 619 signatures had been sent to NCC. He added that having checked some of the people on the list, who were known to officers, some had not fully understood what exactly they were signing and others were told that if flagpole was put up then they would no longer be able to lay poppies.

Councillor Patience suggested checking the validity of the petition with NCC and notifying them that there have been complaints from residents as to how the signatures were collected.

Councillor Harrington said that he was happy to get a petition together with signatures of people supporting the application. Councillors Broom and Watson were also happy to get signatures.

The Town Clerk advised he would speak to the Planning Officer as soon as possible.

Councillor Broom advised telling the Planning Officer that every Councillor on the Town Council supported the application and that the Town Council could get a petition of support if this would be useful.

The Town Clerk advised that if the Planning Application went to NCC's North Area Planning Committee the Town Council would speak in support of the application.

Councillor Broom reiterated that the flagpole was important as it would be part of the commemoration of the end of WWI.

b) Allotments

The Town Clerk reported that work had started on installing the new water pipes. The Cemetery Superintendent and Town Handyman were helping as this reduced the costs. He explained that although the water supply was still on it may need to be switched off for a short time but that stand pipes would be put in.

He advised that there were currently a few vacant plots and that he was working through the waiting list.

Councillor Watson said that the lack of a water supply at St Georges was a real problem and asked if the Town Council would consider installing water.

Councillor Patience felt this should be reviewed.

Councillor Watson asked if the rents at Ratten Row were being increased to cover the cost of the new water supply. He felt that rent levels should not be linked to water supply. The Town Clerk advised that there was a standard cost of an allotment with water which was £47.

Councillor Broom suggested that portable water containers be considered at St Georges.

Councillor Patience felt the issues around water supplies should be discussed by the Allotment Working Group along with an Allotment Association at Ratten Row.

c) Play Area Works

BIKE TRACK – The Town Clerk reported that work had started on the access and parking for the bike track.

BULLFIELD COMMUNITY ORCHARD PLAY AREA - The Town Clerk reported that a grant of £3k had been secured from Community Foundation.

ALNWICK NORTH – The Town Clerk advised that NCC had written to the Town Council asking about a possible transfer of the Zip Wire to the Town Council. NCC had previously asked and had been told that the Town Council would only consider taking responsibility for the Zip Wire once repairs were done. He advised that he could ask for the costs of the repairs that needs undertaking.

Councillor Watson felt that if the cost was too much then NCC or the Town Council could replace it with something else.

Councillor Symmonds said he needed more information but his opinion was that the Town Council did not want to take over responsibility for the Zip Wire.

Councillor Watson felt that if the Zip Wire was removed the young people could be asked what alternative equipment they would like to have.

SWANSFIELD PARK – The Town Clerk reported that there had been some anti-social behaviour which had caused damage to the main wetpour surface. He also reported that one of the self-closing gates was damaged and no longer closed.

He advised that the main central area would need to be re-laid and that this could cost around £10k which would be paid for out of the endowment.

Councillor Broom asked if a CCTV camera could be installed in Swansfield Park.

Councillor Patience said she was concerned about safeguarding young children and the lack of Community Support Officers.

Councillor Broom felt that equipment for older children needed to be installed possibly like that being put into the Community Orchard.

Councillor Watson asked if, as the football club had mentioned families were bringing their children to play on their pitches, an area could be laid out as a football pitch with goal posts.

The Town Clerk reported that, at the Masterplanning meeting, NCC had offered the Town Council several sites.

d) Memorials

ROBERTSON PANT

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that the Condition Survey had been undertaken on April 19th by Adams Napier. The initial report had been received which had reported that there was no visible structural movement and the masonry is generally fair condition. Most noticeable is the outer face of the masonry which is friable and crumbling especially around the joints which is allowing water to penetrate. The stone has been weakened by stone cleaning leaving it susceptible to accelerated corrosion and decay.

She reminded councillors that Robertson's Pant is Grade II listed so an LBC would need to be submitted for any proposed work. NCC's Conservation team have advised that a Pre-App is submitted with the proposed methods and materials which they will comment on this and make suggestions as to changes if necessary.

WAR MEMORIAL

Cherry picker and driver ordered (£360) and Paul Foster will undertake the works. The original budget was £4k but we costs should be around £1,300 including two additional days' work by Paul.

An LBC planning application will be submitted to cover all the potential maintenance work that may need doing over the next 3 years. Work can then be undertaken on a regular basis each year including work to the column and ground level sections.

Graciela Ainsworth will be asked for a price for re-waxing the statues and lamp which will be included in the 3-year work schedule.

Councillor Broom asked if NCC could be asked what type of bulb the light on the War Memorial used.

HOTSPUR STATUE

Work will be undertaken by Graciela Ainsworth at a cost of £2,314.90 (agreed at the last meeting). As the weather needed to be warm the work is programmed to be done in June. Once done, a date will be agreed to undertake a one-day re-waxing in 2019/20.

RESOLVED: To accept the updates.

RA 18/07

Litter Campaigns

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had sent out Councillor Watson's email regarding a schools' litter poster competition. Councillors Broom and Edge were in favour but Councillor Symmonds was concerned that schools were inundated with poster competitions. Councillor Symmonds also felt that as NCC were responsible for litter campaigns he would like to see how they plan to tackle the issue with litter.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had been researching litter schemes in other areas and issued examples and images of some which had proved successful.

Voting with litter - In Edinburgh and London, double slot 'ballot' bins were installed. These gave people the chance to vote with their rubbish. E.g. Batman or Superman? In London the campaign focused on one busy street reducing cigarette butt littering by 8%.

Bin it for Good - Birmingham City Council & Keep Britain Tidy turned litter bins into charity collection tins so the more litter in the bin, the more money for charity. This resulted in 30% littering reduction in the streets with charity bins.

Dunna Chuck Bruck - this litter reduction scheme in Shetland which has been around since 1986 and uses local 'lingo' to promote the issue of litter with locals.

Leithers Don't Litter – used several ways to highlight the issues of littering:

Advertising professionals and residents used creative twists on advertising slogans, highlighting how big-brand packaging becomes litter.

Running regular litter picks and awareness sessions with schools and youth groups.

Used educational stickers, posters and litter templates (sprayed temporarily on the ground) where litter is an issue such as in parks.

Another success was their 'adopt a street' campaign for local businesses or groups.

Councillor Swinbank reported that NCC run a LOVE Northumberland campaign. He also reported that NCC had issued 300 fines county-wide last year for roadside littering.

Councillor Harrington reported that some town centre bins fill up very quickly and that larger bins at certain locations might solve some of the litter problem.

Councillor Swinbank thought that businesses could be asked to contribute to the cost of the larger bins.

The Town Clerk advised that Newcastle City Council have replaced all their bins with larger ones which hold a wheelie-bins.

Councillor Mavin felt that some of the heritage bins in the town centre could be replaced with larger bins.

Councillor Patience asked if any planning approval had conditions about bins. The Town Clerk advised that he had not seen any.

The Town Clerk advised that officers would look at the types and possible locations of larger bins which could be used and speak to NCC Neighbourhood Services about which bins get full quickly.

Councillor Swinbank thought a copy of NCC's bin emptying schedule would be useful. He also asked about the bins on lampposts and whether the Town Council replaced these. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council did replace when necessary.

Councillor Harrington advised that permission was needed to have signs on the bins.

The Town Clerk advised that officers would put together a proposal for the school litter competition which would be emailed to councillors.

Councillor Mavin reported that in London tubular cigarette bins are provided by the councils which the pubs empty themselves.

RA 18/08 Any Other Urgent Business

The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had received a complaint about the signage on the toilet doors at the Shambles. Because the signs are on the doors these are not visible when the doors are open causing an issue for some people, especially visitors. The resident asked if the Town Council could look at an alternative location for the signs or have additional signage away from the doors.

Councillor Harrington asked if anyone knew who was doing the work on the Cobbles. Councillor Broom advised that the company was called Kelly Construction and they are working on behalf of NCC and would be there for two weeks.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm