

Alnwick Town Team

Minutes of the meeting of Alnwick Town Team held at **5.30pm on May 2nd 2018** at The Pavilion, Alnwick Garden.

Present: Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Chairman), Carlo Biagioni, Linda Wood-Mitchell and David Taylor (Chamber of Trade), Cllr. Gordon Castle (GC), Philip Angier (Local Living), David Lovie (DL) (Civic Society), Eileen Blakey (EB) (Alnwick in Bloom), Tim Kirton (TK) (Alnwick Town Council)

1. Apologies for absence

Mark Brassell (The Alnwick Garden)

2. Minutes of the last meeting, held Wednesday 5th April 2018

Approved as a true and correct record.

3. Matters Arising

TK updated the meeting on his investigations into the possibility of reviving the voluntary position of Town Crier; having discussed this with the Town Clerk it was felt that publicity within the Northumberland Gazette at this stage would be premature because a new volunteer Town Crier would need to be provided with a Livery (uniform) and a small budget to undertake duties and to fund membership of the Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers. TK had tried to contact the Guild to obtain advice but emails have not been responded to and the Guild website has no phone contact numbers.

- CB said he would ask the Chamber of Trade members whether they would contribute to such a budget but he thought it unlikely. **Action: CB**
- It was suggested that the Music Festival might make a contribution if the Town Crier were involved in that event.
- GC said NCC Community Chest might be able to fund the Livery to some degree but speculated that ATC would need to be the main funder for a revived Town Crier and this would need to be taken to ATC for approval.
- It was agreed that TK should determine costs and forward these to TT members for their comments. **Action: TK**

4. The Great Exhibition of the North Alnwick days: August 11th and 12th: Update

GC advised that Jonathan Justice had taken on the role of co-ordinator for August 12th's events. GC also said that Robert Brookes the battle re-enactor is not available that date; the Northumbrian piper Beverly Palin can attend but will require payment, which NCC Community Chest cannot provide.

5. Town Centre Working Group meeting, April 10th – feedback and actions

TK reported that the inaugural meeting had been held on April 10th at which two sub-groups had been formed, one dealing with the Town Centre generally including empty retail space and the second dealing with the Market Place specifically. The first meetings of both sub-groups had been held immediately afterwards and various issues and action points agreed. The Town Centre Sub-Group would next meet at 6.30pm on May 9th, the Market Place Sub-Group would next meet at 6.30pm on May 22nd.

After some discussion at this Town Team meeting it was agreed that a week of town centre bollard, railing and signage repainting would, in principle and subject to confirmation by ATC, be held from Monday 4th June until Friday 8th June inclusive; The Chamber of Trade, ATC and any other interested parties would invite volunteers to undertake repainting from 6pm every evening that week. CB asked that ATC provide all paint, brushes, turps, etc. TK reminded the meeting that bent or damaged bollards needed to be addressed by NCC before they could be painted.

CB reported that there had been no progress yet with the repairs to the Corn Exchange clock, the reason being Kevin Thompson is not answering the calls from the Irish company

6. Bus Station Meeting, April 11th – feedback

TK reported that at the Bus Station meeting on April 11th Arriva and Morrison's reported that the start of the improvement and repair works has been delayed because the new lease for the bus station is still yet to be signed. The meeting made it clear to Arriva and Morrison's that works are needed to be completed in time for the season on June 1st.

GC reported that a formal petition with regard to the Bus Station has been received by him and GC must give a reply by May 24th; TK to advise Arriva and Morrison's of this. **Action: TK**

7. Updates:

a) Alnwick Garden – Mark Brassell

No report as MB was absent owing to family sickness

b) Alnwick in Bloom - Eileen Blakey

The interim report-back from Northumberland in Bloom had been very positive. 112 hanging baskets have been sold not including those for Northumberland Hall or lamp-posts and sales are now closed.

c) Chamber of Trade - Carlo Biagioni

CB has spoken to the firm refurbishing the flats at the Corn Exchange and they have said they will repair and replace the woodwork in the clock, as required. The same firm also says it is keen to undertake improvements works to the steps and immediate area, and behind Glendale Paints. GC agreed to speak to Kevin Thompson about his plans for the Corn Exchange former cinema building with a view to determining what he is proposing and when action may be forthcoming. **Action: GC**

CB reported that various designs by students at the Duchess Community High School for the Column Field Arch would be appearing in the Northumberland Gazette shortly; a letter of thanks had been sent by CB to the students for their work.

The Mormon Church has offered to undertake town clean-up works on 19th May and has also been asked to participate in the bollard painting w/c June 4th.

CB reported that the CoT's "Keep Calm and Don't Litter" posters had been placed in shops around the town and called for litter droppers to be issued with fixed penalty notices and publicly named. GC said that Community Enforcement Officers will from now on issue fixed penalty notices to litterers.

DT said that the Town Council should use the CCTV system to identify and prosecute litterers. GC responded that by law CCTV images cannot be viewed by ATC but only by

the Police, who have more serious matters to deal with and increasingly scarce police resources.

AS advised that ATC's Policy and Resources Committee had suggested an anti-littering poster competition around schools but stressed this needs to be co-ordinated. AS also emphasised that it is not just schoolchildren who need to be targeted as adults were also guilty of littering.

LWM circulated copies of a leaflet about "Loving Alnwick"; this is a not-for-profit Community Hub that has been created to work in co-operation with the Chamber of Trade, other organisations and local residents, utilising a hands-on collaborative approach to enhance neighbourhoods and improve amenities for Alnwick by bringing people together with a common interest. It aims to prioritise community issues for residents and will work with those agencies/organisations to improve the outcomes in the development of social, economic and environmental projects. DT said that Jewson's are offering grants of £250 for projects such as this and that the MP for Carlisle has funds for the Borders.

d) Civic Society – David Lovie

1400 Heritage Heroes booklets have been issued, responses received have been very positive. The booklet has been reviewed in "The Northumbrian" magazine. It was agreed that a copy of the book should be sent to contacts in Canada and to Alnwick's three twin towns.

Action: DL and TK

M.R.G. Conzen's son has been in touch about the booklet and been very complimentary. Students of Conzen have expressed great interest and field trips to view the Alnwick townscape are being arranged.

The Civic Society Newsletter is about to be issued, featuring a quiz on redundant street signs and names. AS advised, in response to a question, that the Alnwick Town signs on South Road and just north of the Lion Bridge are both away for repair.

e) Local Living/Alnwick Markets – Philip Angier

PA reported that April's markets were far better attended than those in March. The move to a Friday market seems to be working and Saturday's market is looking healthy. Taste of the North is coming up on 23rd and 24th of June.

The new Markets Manager is Graeme Nicholson.

f) County Council – Cllr. Gordon Castle

GC reported that he had again raised the issue of replacing the Chapel Lane lantern with NCC; GC has offered to pay for this from his Members' scheme.

GC said it is likely that the application for retail on land adjacent to Arcinova will be considered at the NCC Planning meeting on the first Tuesday in June (this would be June 5th). The Chamber of Trade will speak at that meeting. GC said that an independent Impact Study has been undertaken and will be issued. GC also said that if the application is approved he will ask for Section 106 money to be allocated to improve public transport around the town.

g) Town Council – Tim Kirton

TK reported that the application for the renewal of “Coach Friendly Status” for Alnwick had been approved by the Confederation of Passenger Transport and Alnwick is the only town in the whole of the north-east of England to hold this status, which is prestigious amongst coach operators. TK expressed thanks to Mark Brassell at The Alnwick Garden for his input with the application forms.

CB responded that The Alnwick Garden would be the only beneficiary of having Coach Friendly status, Alnwick Town would not benefit at all and there are over 20 empty shop units in Alnwick. GC expressed his disappointment with CB’s reaction to what was actually a very positive piece of news for Alnwick.

TK reported that the first Alnwick Master Planning meeting had been held on 17th April, organised by Northumberland County Council. The Master Planning meetings will from hereon be known as “Alnwick Forum” meetings and will essentially be concerned with the future uses of Northumberland County Council and Alnwick Town Council held land and property, as such the Forum will not have a wide membership but other organisations will be invited to attend meetings as and when the subject matter is appropriate.

TK reminded all that the Public Inquiry into the 2017’s application by Northern Commercial and Harris and Sheldon for housing at Willowburn Industrial Estate will be held in July. A second planning application in 2018, by the same applicants but for 25 fewer houses, at Willowburn would be considered at NCC Planning Committee shortly and in anticipation of a possible refusal of this second application the applicants have asked that this could also be considered as part of the July appeal. The Planning Inspectorate is considering this.

7 Any other urgent business

None

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

In view of various Town Team members being unable to attend on June 6th and the proposed repainting of bollards, etc. from June 4th to June 8th inclusive it was decided to postpone the next Town Team meeting to **5.30pm on June 13th 2018**, venue to be Alnwick Garden Pavilion

The meeting ended at 7.05pm