

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on
Thursday 26th July 2012 in the
Council Chamber, Clayport Street Alnwick at 7.00pm.**

Present: Cllrs S Patience (Chairman), S Allcroft, J Bell, D Farrar, B Grisdale, M Harrington, K Moore, R Roberts and A Symmonds.

In attendance: W Batey, Chief Officer and Town Clerk.

RA 12/9. Apologies: None.

RA 12/10. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

RA 12/11. Website and Notice Board Updates

The clerk outlined that Tagish who were the preferred new website designer had got into administration. The company had indicated that the website part of the organisation (Tagish Web Solutions) were hoping to be separated off and allowed to continue trading but there had been no recent contact saying this would happen. Councillors considered the position and in general they favoured seeking new quotes, this could include Tagish Web Solutions, if they were in a position to quote.

RESOLVED: to seek new competitive quotes for the Council's website.

Progress still needed to be made on a new notice board. It was reported the Civic Society were interested in a joint project with the Council. Some councillors commented on the Morpeth Town Council notice boards, which looked good. The absence of a notice board in the town with good clear community information was highlighted and it may be that community information should also be included.

RESOLVED: Councillors Patience and Grisdale, together with the clerk to meet with the Civic Society to discuss their suggestions.

RA 12/12. Play Areas

The clerk reported that Northumberland County Council had not yet handed over the zip wire at Alnwick North to the Town Council. This was to be subject to remedial work before handover. At present Northumberland County Council have still not agreed to transfer the play area at Swansfield Park. This play area is the subject of ongoing discussions regarding an endowment paid by the developer. The clerk reported that some repairs were required at the Alnwick North play areas and parts had been ordered. Councillor Bell raised the condition of one of the Glovers Green play areas and a letter she had received about the slippery safety surface which had resulted in a fall. The clerk explained the difficulty with the play area which was shaded by trees and the need to perhaps look at alternatives. The play equipment in the Glovers Green and Cawlege View areas are very dated and consist of single pieces of equipment and it is not known how much use they actually get. It was agreed that residents should be surveyed to get their views about retention or removal and how they would like to proceed.

RESOLVED; To note the position regarding the transfers from Northumberland County Council and the clerk to organise a survey of residents in the Cawledge View and Glovers Green areas regarding the future of the play areas.

RA 12/13. Allotments Update

The clerk reported that information was still outstanding from the County Council regarding the St George's allotments before the transfer to the Town Council could take place. St James's allotments were fully let whilst Ratten Row still had some overgrown vacant areas

which could be let. The water supply renewal works still need to be progressed. It was agreed to hold a meeting with allotment holders at Ratten Row in the autumn to update them on outstanding works.

RESOLVED: to receive the allotments update.

RA 12/14. Jubilee Tree Planting

Three walnut trees to mark the Queen's Jubilee were on order these are to go in the Column Field, Swansfield Park and the Community Orchard and advice was being taken from the County Council regarding the planting. The County Council have agreed to assist with the planting. The Chairman asked that all councilors be informed of the planting timetable. It was also reported that the 3 new jubilee seats were also on order.

RESOLVED: to note the update and all councilors to be informed of the planting timetable.

RA 12/15. Any Other Business

- a) Councillor Allcroft raised the poor condition of the plants in the floral clock flowerbed. The plants had been planted by the County Council at the end of their planting season to improve the appearance of the town, but this bed did not appear to have been maintained. This bed was not part of the planting schedule agreed with the Town Council and was not a bed that the Town Council was paying for. Councillors felt that action was required to improve this bed, as it was council owned and in an important location. It was suggested and agreed that delegated authority be given to the clerk, in consultation with the Mayor to replant/improve the Floral Clock Bed with a budget of up to £500. It was also agreed to set up a working group of all committee members to consider how floral bed planting is delivered in the future.

RESOLVED: The Clerk be given authority, in consultation with The Mayor, to organise the improvement of the Floral Clock flowerbed at a cost of up to £500 and a planting working group, consisting of all committee members be established to consider planting options for 2013.

- b) It was proposed and agreed to add Councillor Farrar to the allotments working group.
c) Councillor Grisdale asked if an update could be received about proposals for this year's Alnwick Ambassadors scheme.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm