

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 15th December 2011 in the  
Council Chamber, Clayport Street Alnwick at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs S Patience (Chairman), B Grisdale, E Blakey, M Harrington, S Allcroft, B Hewison.

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

**RA 11/21. Apologies:** Cllrs Bell, Roberts, Watson and Walton.

**RA 11/22. Declaration of Interests**

Councillors Blakey and Allcroft declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 4 regarding planting and item 8 in respect of Alnwick in Bloom.

**RA 11/23. Current Budget position 2011/12**

The clerk circulated a copy of the expenditure and estimates for 2011/12 as at 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011. Expenditure for the year was projected to be £31,700; this is £8,700 under budget and was mainly as a result of not proceeding with any playground improvements. Within the overall budget, expenditure on events will exceed the initial budget due to additional costs arising from the Queen's visit and the Olympic torch visit, both of which were approved by Council. Expenditure on a new website will now not all occur in 2011/12 and will be split over two years.

**RESOLVED: to receive the budget update.**

**RA 11/24. Floral Bedding Proposals 2012/13**

The clerk updated the Committee on the floral bedding proposals. The County Council had originally indicated that the cost of planting in 2012/13 would be £11,718. However it now appeared that this cost could be reduced by £710 if The Oaks roundabout flowerbed was planted with sustainable planting. The county council had now agreed to pay for the hanging baskets on the Northumberland Hall which were estimated to cost about £1,000. This left a cost to the Town Council of some £10,000. Discussions with County Council officers indicated that some of this cost was for the watering and feeding of the hanging baskets and planters in the town. Councillors felt that costs associated with hanging baskets for businesses should not be met by the Town Council and that the County Council should be asked to justify the figures further and look at options to reduce the cost to the Town Council. It was proposed to make budget provision of £9,000 for planting in 2012/13.

**RESOLVED: To include in the 2012/13 budget, £9,000 for planting.**

Linked to this agenda item was the support for Alnwick in Bloom in 2012/13. Councillors were supportive of the work that the In Bloom Committee undertake and agree to increase the budget for 2012/13 to £2500 (including the In Bloom entry fee)

**RESOLVED: To include in the 2012/13 budget an increased grant to Alnwick in Bloom of £2,500.**

**RA 11/25. Play area proposals 2012/13**

Discussions with County Council officers had indicated that they expect the Town Council to take on responsibility for the Alnwick North play areas adjacent to the Community Centre from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. Councillors were of the opinion that any outstanding repairs must first be completed and they felt that an appropriate warning notice should be situated near to the zip wire equipment regarding its proper use. Discussions also indicated that play equipment at Swansfield Park would also become the responsibility of the Town Council. The clerk informed the committee that he understood the developer had made budgetary provision for

the future maintenance of the park after the initial 5 year lease, and he would be looking to establish the exact amount, which he believed was in the region of £200,000.

**RESOLVED: To note the current position.**

**RA11/26. Proposed Budget 2012/13 and proposed precept**

Recreation & Amenities budget proposals for 2012/13 split against the main budget headings were circulated by the clerk. These were amended to include the earlier decisions regarding floral bedding and Alnwick in Bloom. Each budget line was discussed and agreed, this included grants to the Food Festival, Music Festival and Christmas lights at the same level as in 2011/12. It was agreed to reduce the water charges in respect of Robertson's Fountain (this is currently only the standing quarterly charge), by discontinuing the supply. The agreed committee budget was £48,013, split between events £15,000, £7,163 for projects and £26,050 on assets and services. The budget included an additional £14,625 arising from the transfer of services and functions from Northumberland County Council. It was proposed that the Recreation & Amenities committee precept for 2012/13 be £48,000, an increase of £7,597, on 2011/12.

**RESOLVED: The 2012/13 estimates and the precept requirement of £48,000 go forward to council for the 2012/13 budget setting process.**

**RA11/27. Queens Diamond Jubilee- June 2012**

The Queens Diamond Jubilee is being celebrated on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2012. Budget provision of £500 had been included in the 2012/13 budget (minute RA11/26). Councillors discussed a number of possible ways in which to mark the occasion, these ranged from lighting a beacon to planting 60 trees and organising a strawberry festival. It was proposed to hold a working group meeting, to which all committee members would be invited, on Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm, to discuss this further.

**RESOLVED: A working group meeting takes place on Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, to progress ideas further.**

**RA11/28. Festival of Alnwick proposals- June 2012**

A verbal update on the organisation of the festival was given by the clerk. A multi-agency committee has been set up to organise the festival which is planned to run from Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June. The Olympic Torch is due to arrive in Alnwick on 14<sup>th</sup> June and an evening event is planned in the Pastures. Various sub groups have been formed which are looking at festival activities relating to sports, schools, arts, community and street entertainment. An evening event is also being planned for Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June, in the Alnwick Garden, to close the festival. Various fundraising and sponsorship initiatives are being planned by the Festival Coordinator.

**RESOLVED: To receive the update and a further update be given at a future council meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.55pm