

## **Alnwick Town Team**

Minutes of the meeting of Alnwick Town Team held at 5pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at The Cottage, Alnwick Garden.

**Present:** Cllr. Alan Symmonds (Chairman), Philip Angier (PA) (Local Living), Dave Campbell (DC) (Northumberland County Council), Mark Brassell (MB) (Alnwick Garden), Carlo Biagioni (CB) (Chamber of Trade), Tim Kirton (TK) (Alnwick Town Council)

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr. Gordon Castle, Elizabeth Jones (EJ) (Alnwick in Bloom), David Lovie (DL) (Civic Society), and Tommy Mattison (TM) (Freemen of Alnwick)

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017**

The minutes were approved as a true and correct record.

### **3. Matters Arising**

None.

### **4. Parking**

CB advised that the Chamber of Trade is becoming increasingly concerned about parking in Alnwick; the current parking arrangements work well for about seven months of the year but not for the busiest five months, with visitors having great difficulty in finding parking spaces. The Chamber had noted that some cars were parked all day and not moved. The Chamber intends to meet with NCC's Parking Officer Lynne Ryan about this and to invite comments from the public through an article in the Northumberland Gazette.

The Chairman commented that it was always agreed that there would be a review of car parking in Alnwick a few years after the introduction of free parking; TK advised that the Town Clerk also felt the time was now right for a meeting with NCC Parking about provision.

CB suggested a possible extension to car parking at Greenwell Lane "C", parallel to the Iceland delivery area where there is green space. CB also suggested the provision of a multi-storey car-park in Alnwick as he had heard of proposals by NCC for multi-storey parking elsewhere in Northumberland.

DC said that Alnwick is not in line for an NCC-built multi-storey car park; such provision would be good but there is a shortage of suitable land for such a building in Alnwick town centre. Any such development would also have to be in keeping with the local landscape.

CB noted that the school field next to the Bowling Club is occasionally used for parking and asked whether this could be utilised more. DC confirmed that the school does let out the field for parking at certain times of the year (e.g. during the Music Festival) but the field would need to be "hired" for parking and appropriate payment made.

CB pointed out that there are designated places for car parking for the retail units at the McCarthy Stone Adam Court development which had never been used because the retail units had never been let; he wondered if these might be made available for general car parking. DC suggested that it would not really be practical to have general car parking traffic going in and out of Adam Court.

It was agreed that the Chamber of Trade should request a meeting with NCC Parking and ATC at which three possible solutions should be discussed, namely:

- Extending Greenwell Lane
- Provision of a multi-storey car park
- Use of the School Field

DC advised that it would not be sufficient for Alnwick to simply request a multi-storey car park; NCC Parking would want the Alnwick representatives to identify at any meeting where in Alnwick such a development could be built.

## **5. Updates**

### ***(a) County Council:***

DC reported:

- Playhouse: Proceeding; Heads of Terms should be agreed soon, it will then go to Legal.
- Allerburn House: NCC has completed the sale of the site to Arch. The Gordon Smith memorial tree has been moved to the Column Field, although remedial works need to be done to the Column Field where grass was damaged in the process of planting the tree.
- The new Highways depot will be completed by the end of April 2017.
- Discussions are still taking place with a potential buyer for the old fire station.
- Former Duchess High School: Buildings to be demolished shortly, hopefully.

### ***(b) Town Council:***

TK reported:

- **CCTV:** The Listed Building Consent application for all the cameras has been submitted and it is hoped that approval will be received by early to mid-May, immediately after which installation should take place.
- **Neighbourhood Plan:** The referendum will take place on Thursday June 15<sup>th</sup> 2017; the Town Council will arrange suitable publicity for the Neighbourhood Plan prior to polling day.
- **Willowburn Industrial Estate:** No further information has been received from NCC on the proposed amendment to the Core Strategy to deallocate Willowburn for industry and allow housing on the site. There was also still no information from NCC as to when the planning application for housing would be considered by NCC's Planning Committee.
- **Lectern maps:** TK advised that three of the new town centre lectern maps had been installed, i.e. those in the Market Place, in the Column Field and at The Castle Barbican. The fourth will be installed, probably on a new cast metal lectern, at a location in Bondgate Within which is yet to be confirmed but probably either on the cobbles close to the Robertson's Fountain or on the pavement opposite "Your Move". A photograph for the Gazette is being arranged to mark the contributions of the sponsors to the new maps.

The meeting discussed a suggestion that the fourth lectern map should be placed on the corner of Greenwell Lane and Bondgate Without close to the Playhouse, as an important gateway into the town centre; TK pointed out that the four maps represented and were designed around each of the four "quarters" of the town - the fourth map was for the Bondgate Within Quarter and placing it in Bondgate Without would mean it would be outside its "Quarter" and none of the features described on it would actually be visible from Bondgate Without. It was suggested that perhaps a fifth such map could be located as part of the Playhouse conversion for the TIC in 2018.

TK was asked as regards progress with the Northumberland Hall vertical banners. **Action: TK to contact the Town Clerk as to progress with the Northumberland Hall banners and their planning permission and email all Town Team members with the latest position.**

***(c) Chamber of Trade:***

CB asked how many new car parking spaces would be provided at the Maltings (Dispensary Street) flats, now approaching completion.

**Action: As Secretary to the Town Team, TK to ask Arch the above question and report back to the Team.**

CB asked if anyone was aware of a proposal for flats in the former Corn Exchange building. DC confirmed that he was aware that proposals were being investigated by the owner but stressed that no planning application had been made.

**(d) Local Living**

PA reported that:

- The Tourism Fair held at Willowburn the previous week had been very busy in terms of exhibitors and there may be a capacity issue for next year's fair. There had been a good "vibe" amongst the accommodation providers.
- The Easter Market is a little later than usual this year but there has been much social media chatter about the event.
- Footfall so far this year has been not bad but it is appreciated that these are early days.
- There is a lot of interest in tables at the Food Festival and at Taste of the North.

The Chairman congratulated Local Living for what had been an excellent Tourism Fair with a dynamic and an energy which made the visit exciting. The Chairman also congratulated the exhibitors. The Chairman felt that the cuisine of Alnwick has improved several fold over the last few years and he expressed his pride that Alnwick offers so much to so many people.

**7. Any Other Business**

CB reported that Carlo's had been featured in The Sunday Times newspaper a few weeks previously.

MB advised that an event titled "Forensic Investigation", would be held at The Garden on September 16<sup>th</sup>; this would include a book launch and signing event by Ann Cleeves, author of the Vera Stanhope novels now televised as "Vera" on ITV. The book signing will be followed by a poison garden tour and, on the evening, a murder mystery event.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 5.50pm.

**8. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 5pm at **The Pavilion**, Alnwick Garden.