

**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on
Thursday 23rd November 2017
in the St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick at 7.00pm**

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

In attendance: W Batey, Town Clerk; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer.

RA 17/23 Apologies
Councillors McDougall and Symmonds.

RA 17/24 Declarations of Interest
Councillors Broom and Watson declared a non-pecuniary in Item 7a) Events – 2018/19 grant applications; Councillors Edge, Patience and Swinbank declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 5a) Play area works and Councillor Watson declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 5b) Allotments.

RA 17/25 Minutes of last meeting – matters arising not on the agenda
RA 17/20 Councillor Patience asked of there was any progress regarding the bin near Willowburn Sports Centre. The Town Clerk advised that the manager of Willowburn Sports Centre had not been in work but that he would visit him.

RA 17/26 Budget Update 2017/18
2017/18 – The Town Clerk circulated a copy of the Recreation & Amenities Committee Income and Expenditure for 2017/18 as at 21st November 2017 and highlighted the following lines on the budget:

EXPENDITURE

EVENTS:

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – a small amount still to pay.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS – a grant will be paid this year.

TOUR OF BRITAIN – under budget. Will spend £500.

PROJECTS:

PETER'S MILL BRIDGE PROJECT – a quote for £500 has been received to complete the project.

TOWN PROMOTION – 50,000 leaflets printed in 2016/17. The remaining budget is to cover the cost of a reprint in early 2018.

Councillor Mavin advised that he would like to use some of the budget to have more translations of the leaflet done. The Town Clerk advised that this could be covered by the budget for 2017/18.

Councillor Patience asked which languages would be done next. Councillor Mavin advised that a Spanish translation would be next and that a Norwegian version was being produced by Alnwick's Twin Town in Norway, Time Kommune.

COMMUNICATION PROJECT – nothing spent so far but will be used for the list produced by the Communication Working Group.

WWI ANNIVERSARY INCLUDING PLANTING – nothing spent so far but will be used for the list produced by the WWI Working Group.

LECTERN MAPS – no expenditure as yet but the new lectern map has now arrived.

ASSETS & SERVICES:

DOG BINS/LITTER BINS - £800 added from seats budget.

STAGING PARTS – some replacement needed (for health & safety reasons) including screw fixing handles at £8 each.

FINGERPOST SIGNS – new fingerpost has been received.

INCOME

£656.03 made up of allotment rents (£544) and Insurance refund (£112.03).

RESOLVED: To accept the 2017/18 budget update.

RA 17/27

Updates on:

a) Play Area Works (Councillors Patience and Swinbank left the meeting)

BULLFIELD COMMUNITY ORCHARD PLAY AREA - The Project & Funding Officer reported that the Award for All Grant had not been successful. This was due partly to the potential users (i.e. children their parents) not being involved in the choice of equipment. He reported that the SUEZ application was still to be submitted and that children and parents should be consulted before this was done.

The current lease is being redrafted to give Alnwick Town Council a sub-lease.

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that this was a £18,370 project and with £20k unallocated in the play area budget some could be allocated to this play area project.

RESOLVED: To allocate a budget of up to 1/3rd of the cost (£6,123) to the play area project.

The Town Clerk advised that grant applications for the bike track project may also benefit from having an allocated budget from the Town Council.

Councillors Patience and Swinbank re-joined the meeting.

Councillor Swinbank asked if there was an update on the gate for Allerburn Lea play area. The Town Clerk advised that he had the details of the gate and that is needed to be ordered and installed.

b) Allotments

The Project & Funding Officer reported that a quote for £10k had been received from James McLean for a new water supply at Ratten Row. He advised that this cost could be reduced if the Town Council dug some of the trenches themselves with Town Council equipment or using equipment from James McLean.

Councillor Mavin felt it might not be good value for money if the lease was only for one year at a time.

Councillor Harrington felt that it would be better if James McLean did the whole job.

Councillor Broom asked if water meters could be installed on each row enabling the Town Council to easily identify where any leaks were.

The Town Clerk advised that the allotment rent letters for Ratten Row and St James's would go out the following week and that there would be a collection day at Alnwick North Community Centre.

RESOLVED: To give delegated authority to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of Recreation & Amenities to agree the quote, subject to assurances from Northumberland Estates regarding the lease.

c) Fingerposts

The Project & Funding Officer reported that Furnitubes had delivered the new fingerpost and that the fingers had been painted in the same gold as the existing ones.

He advised that the new fingerposts were for Pottergate near the Hotspur Statue and outside M&Co. He advised that he would speak to NCC about installation.

d) Seat and bins replacements

The Town Clerk gave an update:

Bins – three new bins have been installed at Taylor Drive, outside the dentist opposite the War Memorial and at the junction of Green Batt and Dodds Lane.

Seats – a heritage seat will be installed in Column Field facing towards the Garden. He advised that the Lions might pay for this as they were looking for a seat to mark their centenary.

e) Flagpole discussions

The Town Clerk reported that he had met with the Planning Officer and Conservation Officers from NCC to discuss the possible locations for a Civic Flagpole.

The Planning Officer had advised that he felt that the original proposed location would detract from the Tenantry Column.

Alternative locations were suggested and the Town Clerk gave a handout showing a mock-up of each one:

Column Field (1st location) – at the left-hand side of the entrance to Column Field. The dog bin and sign would be removed to lessen the street furniture in the area.

Column Field (2nd location) – at the right-hand side of the entrance to Column Field but not in line with the Tenantry Column.

Oaks Roundabout – prominent location but no space for Armed Forces ceremonies.

Market Place – could be located at the left-hand side of the Market Place to balance with the Market Cross.

Councillor Mavin felt that 2 flag poles in Column Field may detract less from the Tenantry Column.

Councillor Patience asked if the flagpole had to be white. The Town Clerk advised that the manufacturers had advised that 99% of the flagpoles they supply are white and that 75% have a gold finial.

Councillor Harrington felt that two flagpoles could be located either side of the raised flowerbed.

Councillor Swinbank advised that a flag protocol would be needed.

RESOLVED: To meet with the planning officer with a view to a submitting a planning application for two flagpoles in Column Field.

f) Memorials

Robertson's Pant - The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had made a request to Northumbrian Water to test the water in the Pant. She had also tried to contact several plumbers and was waiting for South End Plumbers, who had undertaken the work last time, to arrange a meeting to get a quote for the reconnection work. She advised that she was looking for a suitable grant that could be applied for which could be from the Drinking Fountain Association or the Heritage Lottery (Sharing Heritage). She added that she needed to find out if Drinking Fountain Association provided grants to local authorities. Councillor Patience suggested that the Civic Society could be asked if they would submit the grant application.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk also advised that a Condition Survey would be needed before any grant application could be made and that she needed to check if a grant had already been given for the previous works.

War Memorial – pointing to the column still needed to be undertaken. The quote from Paul Foster had been accepted but the quotes for the scaffolding had come in at £4,000. This had meant that the total costs exceeded the budget. Paul Foster has been asked if an access tower is suitable for the work. The work will be scheduled for completion before the end of March 2018.

Hotspur Statue – Steven Lunn has been asked to suggest someone who can undertake the waxing to the statue. It is not desperate as the statue is in good condition. Councillor Watson offered to find the contact details for the company who made the original statue and undertook the original waxing. He also reported that the brass plaque with the details about the statue had become unreadable.

RESOLVED: To accept the updates.

RA 17/28

Bus shelter – to consider offer from Cussins

The Town Clerk advised that Cussins were happy that the Town Council install a bus shelter at an alternative location and would fund £5k towards this. They had also agreed that the money could be used for another amenity if the Town Council thought that was more appropriate. He advised that two new bus shelters had already been installed and that the next identified location was outside Barter Books.

Councillor Swinbank felt that the new bus shelter should be installed at the bus stop near Barter Books and that Cussins be notified of this.

Councillor Broom felt that the bus shelter label could say funded by Cussins.

Councillor Broom reported that the bus shelter at Greensfield had been badly scratched and wondered if this could be covered with advertising posters.

RESOLVED: To order a bus shelter for the bus stop outside Barter Books and notify Cussins.

RA 17/29

Consideration of 2018/19 budget including a) events – 2018/19 grant applications, b) projects including tourism leaflet and communications, c) assets and services including town centre planters and public toilets.

a) events – 2018/19 grant applications The Town Clerk advised that there had been two new grant applications from 'The Big Sing' and 'Northumberland Pride'.

The following grant applications were discussed and agreed:

The Big Sing – 2017 requested to cover cost of stage and awning which would cost around £400. He advised that there was spare budget in the Tour of Britain budget line. He added that they were raising money for the Community Centre in Alnwick.

RESOLVED: To give a grant to the 'Big Sing' for 2017 and 2018 to cover the stage costs.

Food Festival / Taste of the North

Councillor Swinbank felt that Local Living do a very good job with the two festivals.

RESOLVED: To give a grant of £2,000 to Local Living for both events in 2018.

Alnwick International Music Festival

Councillor Patience reported that a 3-day event had been suggested rather than the week long one currently held.

Councillor Gridale felt that it would be a mistake to change the duration of the festival.

Councillor Swinbank said he would not change the event and that suggested the same grant as the previous year.

Councillor Edge suggested increasing the grant by £150.

RESOLVED: To give a grant of £4,800 to the Alnwick International Music Festival for 2018.

Alnwick in Bloom

Councillor Broom advised that some of the grant was used to subsidise the hanging baskets on shops in the town.

Councillor Harrington said that however much money the Town Council gave them it would not be squandered.

Councillor Patience felt that sustainable planting was preferred and should be encouraged.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council could pay the Northumbria in Bloom entry fee giving AiB £200 more grant.

RESOLVED: To give a grant of £3,555 to Alnwick in Bloom for 2018.

Alnwick Christmas Lights

RESOLVED: To give a grant of £2,500 to the Alnwick Christmas Lights for 2018.

Alnwick Spring Show

RESOLVED: To give a grant of £500 to the Alnwick Spring Show for 2018.

Lantern Parade

RESOLVED: To give a grant to cover the stage costs if the event takes place in 2018.

Northumberland Pride – a new event involving a parade and event at the Alnwick Rugby Club. They have received a grant of £5k from NCC's Community Chest fund.

Councillor Fletcher thought the event was a very good idea and that the Town Council should support it.

RESOLVED: To give a grant of £1,000 to Northumberland Pride for 2018.

b) projects including tourism leaflet and communications

Remembrance Sunday – The Town Clerk advised that he had increased the budget to £800.

Councillor Harrington felt it was a very good event and very well organised.

Flagpole project - Councillor Harrington felt that the budget information could be included in the Planning Application to enhance it. He also felt that the budget be increased to £1,200 cover the cost of two flagpoles.

Tree and bulb planting – Councillor Mavin thought that the area around Willowburn could be planted. He suggested an increase in the budget to £500.

c) assets and services including town centre planters and public toilets.

Additional Grass Cuts - The Town Clerk advised that he had increased the budget slightly for additional grass cuts. Councillor Swinbank suggested contacting Bill Pringle at NCC to ask if there would be any increase in 2018/19.

Planters – additional budget allocated to replace the 12 planters on the Cobbles. Some needed repairing and once done they could be used elsewhere in the town as single storey planters.

Councillor Patience asked of the new planters could have wheels on them to enable them to be moved around the town.

RESOLVED: To accept the changes to the Recreation & Amenities budget for 2018/19 amounting to £111,965, and recommend it to the Full Council.

RA 17/30

Any Other Urgent Business

Councillor Edge asked if there was any update on the Lindisfarne site being a public accessible green space. Councillor Grisdale advised that Swansfield Park Primary School are keen to use it but that the type of facility it was, needed defining.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm