



**Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting held on  
Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018  
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 A Symmonds.

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

**RA 17/31 Apologies**  
None.

**RA 17/32 Declarations of Interest**  
Councillors Edge, Patience and Swinbank declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 5a) Play area works.

**RA 17/33 Minutes of last meeting – matters arising not on the agenda**  
None.

**RA 17/34 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 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and highlighted the following lines on the budget:

**EXPENDITURE**

**EVENTS** – All expenditure complete except for grant for Christmas Lights.

Councillor Broom asked about the Lantern Parade budget. The Town Clerk advised that the budget had been to install the stage but that this had not been needed as the stage had been left up from the Christmas Lights switch on, the night before.

**PROJECTS:**

PUBLIC TOILETS – the bill for cleaning is still to come in.

TREE / BULB PLANTING – no expenditure to date. Councillor Edge reported that he had been given permission by NCC to plant 12 fruit trees in a few locations around the town.

Councillor Patience advised that Rotary had a target for planting trees.

Councillor Harrington advised that the Cobbles used to have many more trees as pictures on Alnwick Memories will show.

Councillor Broom thought that more trees could be put into the Market Place.

The Town Clerk advised that the existing planters around the town centre have been budgeted for replacement and that the old ones will be reconditioned and reused.

**ASSETS & SERVICES:**

SEATS – more seats are to be ordered. There may be a contribution from Alnwick Lions.

REPLACEMENT PLANTERS – the budget for 2018/19 is to replace 12 planters at a cost of £6960. The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that she had spoken to the supplier and they had offered a 10% discount so the planters should come in under budget.

Councillor Swinbank asked about bus shelter repairs. The Town Clerk advised that the bus shelter in Alnmouth Road would be repaired when the weather improves.

### **INCOME**

£5,230.53 made up of allotment rents (£4068.50, insurance refund £112.03 and fingerpost contribution £1,050).

**RESOLVED: To accept the 2017/18 budget update.**

**RA 17/35**

**Updates on:**

#### **a) Play Area Works**

ALNWICK NORTH – The Town Clerk advised that the basket swing needed repairs and that the supplier had visited and will quote for work.

Councillor Broom advised that he had been approached by a resident about the zip wire at Alnwick North. The Project & Funding Officer advised that Kompan (the supplier for the basket swing parts) will give a quote for the repairs needed.

The Town Clerk advised that the zip wire belongs to NCC and that the Town Council have offered to consider taking on responsibility for it, if it is put into good working order. There had been a survey done and lots of work was needed including to the surface underneath.

Councillor Patience advised that the zip wire needed proper signage.

SWANSFIELD PARK – Councillor Grisdale reported that he had a complaint about water running from the ground in Swansfield Park.

The Town Clerk advised that there was possibly a spring which ran when there was heavy rain.

Councillor Harrington said that it had been a dry are so there might be a problem with a leaking pipe. Officers will ask NCC to investigate.

BULLFIELD COMMUNITY ORCHARD PLAY AREA - The Project & Funding Officer reported that the Community Foundation grant application was being revised so that The Friends of Bullfield Orchard will be the applicant.

#### **b) Allotments**

The Town Clerk reported that £4068.50 had been received for allotment rents with £800 to chase. There are a number of vacant plots at Ratten Row and St James's and there are people on a waiting list.

The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that she will update the allotment poster and put together a press release. She will also ask the Alnwick Spring Show if they can put something into the Spring Show Programme about the vacant plots.

The Project & Funding Officer reported that James McLean had agreed to renew the water supply, with the Town Council supplying some labour when available – this could save up to £2k. The Town Council are awaiting approval from Northumberland Estates but the work could start on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

The Town Clerk advised turning off the water whilst the work was being done. Allotment holders will be written to explain the work programme.

#### **c) Fingerposts**

The Project & Funding Officer reported that all the new fingerposts had been installed and that two additional fingers had been ordered which would take 6 weeks to arrive.

Councillor Swinbank asked if there was a budget for signage at the bus station. The Town Clerk advised that there was some money in the Recreation & Amenities budget but as the bus station is a CAP in the Neighbourhood Plan it could fall under the Finance & Policy budget.

Councillor Symmonds asked if, as the banners on the Northumberland Hall had refused permission, the Town Team money could be used for bus station signage.

Councillor Edge asked if any publicity about the fingerposts was planned. The Town Clerk advised that this would be done once all of them were completed.

Councillor Broom asked if some of the other street furniture could be painted such as the bollards. The Town Clerk advised that the bollards are owned by NCC but that they would be happy for the Town Council to paint them.

Councillor Harrington thought that the contractor who painted the fingerposts could be used. The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council could paint them black and the contractor could do the gold painting.

Councillor Broom advised that some of the heritage bollards were in a very bad state.

Councillor Mavin advised that the cost should be obtained before a decision was made.

Councillor Patience thought that Town Team money could be used to do this.

The Town Clerk advised that there could be underspend on the fingerpost budget so the remaining money could be used to paint some bollards.

**RESOLVED: To use any underspend in the Fingerpost budget to paint town centre bollards.**

Councillor Symmonds felt that an action plan, schedule and costings should be drawn up for the year.

**RESOLVED: To draw up an action plan, with timescales and costings, to repaint town centre bollards in 2018/19.**

#### **d) Seat and bins**

The Town Clerk gave an update:

Bins – three new bins have been installed. There has also been a request for a dog bin at Summer seats.

Councillor Swinbank felt that more bins were needed between the Taylor Drive roundabout and the A1.

Seats – the Town Clerk advised that he had spoken to the manager of Willowburn Sports Centre about new bins.

#### **e) Flagpole discussions**

The Town Clerk issued a handout of mock-up of 5 possible locations for a Civic Flagpole:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Location A | 2 flagpoles - either side of the path leading to the Tenantry Column.  |
| Location B | 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. |
| Location C | At the right-hand side of the entrance to Column Field but not in line with the Tenantry Column.   |
| Location D | Near to Denwick Lane, in front of and to the left of the lectern map and not in line of sight with the Tenantry Column.                  |

Councillor Patience liked the idea of 2 flag poles.

Councillor Harrington liked location D.

Councillor Swinbank felt that as two flag poles would need two different flags this could confuse the issue so preferred one flag pole.

Councillor Symmonds agreed that one flag pole would be preferable and that location D was his preference.

**RESOLVED: i) To send the proposed flag pole in location D to the planning and conservation officers to get their view; ii) To work with the planning officer with regards to the colour; iii) To submit the planning application for one flagpole in Column Field.**

#### **f) Memorials**

**Robertson's Pant** - The Assistant to the Town Clerk reported that she had made a request for a water test and she was awaiting an appointment with Alnwick Plumbing and Heating to inspect the pipes.

Alnwick Civic Society has been asked if they would be the applicant on the grant application form to The Drinking Fountains Association who give out grants to charities of up to £2,000. Three companies have been asked to quote for a condition survey.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the fountain was listed. The Assistant to the Town Clerk advised that it was Grade II listed so any work would need Listed Building Consent.

Councillor Symmonds said that the need to provide drinking water had become more prominent since the suggestion regarding Robertson's Fountain was made and it was to be developed to encourage more people to use it rather than buying bottled water.

The remaining works to **War Memorial** column were due to be completed in September 2017 but due to the high cost of the scaffolding this was put on hold. The contractor, Paul Foster, has suggested doing the work in April when the weather will be better.

Councillor Watson kindly provided the Development Trust information on the **Hotspur Statute** including lots of images of the production. Quotes are being obtained for the re-waxing.

**RESOLVED: To accept the updates.**

#### **RA 17/36**

#### **Volunteer workforce for snow/ice clearance**

Councillor Broom reported that there had been very icy roads and footpaths during the previous two weeks and that residents in some areas of the town had been unable to leave to their houses.

Councillor Harrington explained that Councillor Watson had organised equipment after the heavy snow in 2010.

Councillor Broom advised that a resident in Belle Vue Gardens had kept the road clear. He felt that the Town Council could support other residents to do the same.

The Town Clerk advised that the NCC North Area Local Council meeting had suggested Town & Parish Councils should have a dialogue with NCC about current gritting routes and location of gritting bins. He added that there are T&PCs who do volunteer schemes and they could be contacted for information, as well as talking to our insurance company.

Councillor Harrington was aware that some T&PCs had contractors on standby to move snow. He felt that a co-ordinator should be appointed.

Councillor Mavin advised that one contractor had bought snow clearing equipment for his existing machinery.

Councillor Swinbank reported that he had seen a gritting lorry once on Chapel Lands but had not seen anything for 6 days. He felt there could be an issue if volunteers were to clear the snow as it was a job that NCC should be doing.

Councillor Patience felt that the priority should be the footpaths.

Councillor Harrington said he remembered when shop keepers used to clear the pavements themselves.

Councillor Broom felt that NCC should notify businesses that it is ok for them to clear pavements without risk of claims.

**RESOLVED: To contact NCC Officers to review gritting routes and location of grit bins and to investigate further snow and ice clearance volunteer schemes.**

**RA 17/37**

**Any Other Urgent Business**

Councillor Harrington reported that the signs for The Maltings had been increasing around town.

Councillor Patience asked about the clutter on pavements as she had been aware of some problems. Councillor Harrington advised that the police can speak to business owners in extreme circumstances.

Councillor Broom felt that no yellow housing development signs should be allowed in the town.

Meeting closed at 9.02pm