

Alnwick Town Team

Minutes of the meeting of Alnwick Town Team held at **5.30pm on Wednesday June 5th 2019** at The Gardener's Cottage, The Alnwick Garden.

Present: Cllr. Lynda Wearn (Chairman), Philip Angier (Local Living), Elizabeth Jones & Eileen Blakey (Alnwick in Bloom), David Lovie (Civic Society), Tim Kirton (Alnwick Town Council), Mark Brassell (The Alnwick Garden), Lisa Aynsley (Chamber of Trade).

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Gordon Castle (NCC) who was on holiday

2. Minutes of the last meeting, held at 5.30pm on Wednesday May 1st 2019

Agreed as a true and correct record.

3. Matters Arising not on the agenda

TK was still to circulate to Town Team members the Northumberland Rivers Trust letter to Alnwick Civic Society regarding community consultation on proposed fish passes at five weirs on the River Aln around Alnwick.

Action: TK

4. Future High Streets Fund (Heritage): Heritage Action Zone proposal

TK and DL reported that Historic England are making £40million available for the creation of new Heritage Action Zones (HAZs) via the Future High Streets Fund (Heritage). Competitive applications to create new HAZs must be submitted by noon on July 12th so deadlines are extremely tight. ATC and the Civic Society are looking into applying for this fund but the eligibility criteria are complex and the active participation of the County Council and its Conservation and Buildings Officers would be essential. The Civic Society and ATC were due to meet representatives from the County Council on the following Monday, 10th June.

5. Town Crier Update

TK reported that the vacancy had been publicised. The closing date for Expressions of Interest is June 24th.

6. Alnwick Forum (ATC/NCC) update (TK)

Richard McKenzie of NCC had advised the Town Council that the recent feasibility study into an Alnwick Park & Ride has concluded that it is very unlikely to generate sufficient revenue from the bus service to cover its operational costs, so the park and ride is considered unviable. Key issues affecting this are the free car parking in the town and the lack of bus lanes from the proposed car parks into town.

Richard McKenzie also advised that the Narrowgate pedestrianisation trials are likely to start in mid to late July

7. Future of Alnwick Town Centre Groups

TK reported that Investing in Alnwick had requested an extension of the deadline for comments on this consultation paper from May 31st to June 30th, owing to many liA members being on holiday. Alnwick Forum had agreed to this request so the deadline for comments from all consultees is now June 30th.

8. Updates

a) County Council – Cllr. Gordon Castle

No report as GC had given apologies for absence.

b) Local Living – Philip Angier

PA said that the Saturday Market is looking reasonable and the Thursday Markets will be returning soon.

PA left the meeting at 6.30pm for another appointment.

c) Alnwick in Bloom - Eileen Blakey and Elizabeth Jones

Hanging Baskets: A total of 98 hanging baskets have been sold this year but AiB are exploring the possibility of the new shops coming on board slightly later than usual.

Working parties will be active on 12th June – Bus Station; 19th June – Pinfold; 26th June – Greenwell Road; 3rd July – Pottergate; Saturday 22nd June & 13th July - Green Batt Garden. All working parties are from 10.00 a.m. to approximately 12 noon.

Children's Painting Competition: Judging will take place on Tuesday 18th June, there is likely to be a bumper entry. CPC Awards Ceremony is on 3rd July where the winning children will be presented with postcards of their paintings. The Mayor agreed to make the presentations. With the kind permission of the Alnwick Garden AiB would like to try to sell postcards of the winning paintings through the retail outlets within the Garden.

Shop Window Competition: Now launched, the theme this year is "The 50th Anniversary of the first Moon Landing". Judging will be on Monday 8th or Tuesday 9th July, and competitors are asked to keep their displays until after the Northumbria in Bloom judges have been and seen their entries. Prizes: 1st - £50; 2nd - £25 and 3rd - £15 presented at our Awards Presentation evening at The Pavilion, Alnwick Garden on Friday 11th October 2019 at 6.00 for 6.30p.m., to which The Mayor has been invited.

Garden Competition: The entry form will be in the Gazette next week with some exciting new classes for children to enter. AiB have tried to attract children in the past but have always failed with this competition.

Northumbria in Bloom competition judges visiting Alnwick on 16th July. There are a maximum of 10 Special Awards to be judged on the day along with the town and may also have 2 Fee Paying entries taking advantage of the new system.

Councillor Peter Broom has initiated a 2nd Town Council Clean-up for this year on Sunday 14th July, the weekend before the NiB judging. Also, in default of any action repeatedly requested of BT, Cllr. Broom has also offered to clean their phone boxes around town; another indicator of a town's civic pride is the state of its telephone boxes.

Work has started on NiB's spring judging advisory points, concentrating at first at the bottom of Barter Books/Wagonway Road.

The 'Floral Clock' at Column Cottage has been planted up by NCC using the theme of the first men landing on the moon 50 years ago on July 20th, this theme is supported by AiB's window competition.

Pottergate Garden: it has been seen that the new descriptive board is being frequently approached by visitors. It is planned to fill the unattractive sump at the back under the cotoneasters with a toning gravel.

Bus Station trees: As he has heard nothing back from Arriva since early April, NCC Trees Officer Barry Wilson may initiate enforcement procedures but he will try to raise a progressive response by giving an 'action by' date first.

Kelso in Bloom twinning: a meeting with Kelso's provost and their 'In Bloom' team. has had to be postponed due to ill health on their members' part.

The project to install mosaics at Greenwell Lane has a £100 shortfall. MB said that he would provide sponsorship for this project.

d) Chamber of Trade – Lisa Aynsley

The proposal mentioned at the last Town Team meeting for the CoT to bid for NCC Community Fund had proved impossible given the very short (12 day) turnaround period for applications, however it was proposed to work up a proposal for a town centre cultural attraction to have ready on the shelf for future funding.

Traders had reported a successful Bank Holiday period and noted that the new temporary car park at the former DCHS site had been full over the weekend of June 1st-3rd.

The Chamber had held positive discussions with Northumberland Estates regarding the developments at the edge of the town.

The Chamber is continuing to investigate the possibility of a town Wi-Fi system

LA to speak to Nicola Davidson at The Alnwick Garden regarding the Lantern Parade at the end of the year.

The Chamber would also wish to discuss with The Garden and any other interested parties a proposed Halloween Festival in the town; The Alnwick Garden is arranging Halloween events and the Chamber would like to build on this for the town's traders as this is always the quietest time of year for them.

It was agreed that LA, MB, TK, PA and The Mayor meet as a Working Group (along with any other interested parties) to discuss events in the town between now and the end of the year.

Action: LA, MB, TK, PA and The Mayor

e) Civic Society – David Lovie

Some Alnwick Heritage Heroes Project: The Project has been shortlisted for a 'Volunteer and Community Project' Award, 2019 by the Association for Heritage Interpretation, the premier national Heritage Interpretation professional body. There are two other candidates for this award and the CS will learn of the result at a gala dinner on 10th October.

Another Historic Alnwick Walk: The CS will be taking 14 French Exchange Students and leaders from DCHS around historic Alnwick on 4th July.

Street Clutter Survey: Further tweaking and research has been done and the Survey is ready for work on site however, the timing of this may be deferred if it is to be included in the Alnwick HAZ proposal.

Alnwick Shop Front Design Guide: The Guide prepared for Alnwick District Council in 1995 needs to be reviewed to make it a more comprehensive conservation document like the current Hexham Design Guide which is currently used by the NCC in assessing current applications. It will also increase the chances of it too being adopted by NCC as non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance in the new Local Plan for Northumberland. We have already carried out a survey of our members and friends to test the validity of our 1995 design principles. However, this too may need to be re-programmed if it is also to be included in the HAZ proposal.

f) The Alnwick Garden – Mark Brassell

April had been phenomenal for The Alnwick Garden which had enjoyed its best Easter week ever. The Garden has a packed line-up of events for the summer and is involved in the NCC “Discover Our Lands” project, visiting the House of Lords and publicising The Garden while there.

The Alnwick Garden has doubled its Education Team and is looking for partnerships with other social groups.

There will be small changes to the Garden Shop this year with further changes planned for next year.

For Christmas and Halloween there will be bumper cars and a snow playground connected to an ice machine creating real snow, for children. The Light Show will also be bigger and better.

MB will be taking part in the annual Sleepout on November 18th in aid of homeless charities; Mark welcomes the participation of any other CEOs in the sleepout.

g) Town Council – Tim Kirton

All TK's updates covered earlier in the meeting.

9. Any other urgent business

None.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

5.30pm on **Wednesday July 3rd 2019 at The Gardener's Cottage** in The Alnwick Garden.

The meeting ended at 7.30pm