

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**

10 JULY 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Sutherland (in the Chair), Miss Blissett, Chatterjee, Child, Peat, and Wilkes; Ms J. Whittaker and Mr R. Welsby (The Bowes Museum).

Also in attendance: Councillor Blissett; one member of the press.

Officers: Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Woodward (Deputy Clerk).

13. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Moorhouse.

Resolved – That the apologies be noted.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Constitution (Members' Code of Conduct) (Minute 12/May/17 refers), Members were asked whether they had any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion. None were declared at this juncture.

15. DURHAM WILDLIFE TRUST

Jim Cokill, Director of Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT), presented information about the work the Trust was already undertaking in Barnard Castle and surrounding area and the aims for the future. DWT had carried out access improvements and habitat restoration work in Deepdale Wood and worked with Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership. They were seeking partnerships, support and resources. Opportunities existed but funding was an issue. DWT wanted to expand in Barnard Castle, in particular encouraging younger people youth groups and schools to get involved. They had an existing membership base and volunteers in and around the town. DWT was keen to develop a nature reserve i.e. an area of open space and building for storage with access to facilities.

Resolved – That potential funding and groups of young people be identified with a view to developing a joint funding bid.

16. PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING – 22 MAY 2017 - MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes be accepted as a correct record.

17. POPPY APPEAL

As part of the 1940's weekend celebrations and pursuant to Minute 61 (i)/Nov/2016, a collection for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal took place. A total of £884.06 was raised through a street collection on the Sunday and indoor collection boxes from various events and activities over the weekend. A letter of thanks had been received from the Royal British Legion.

A permit request had been submitted to Durham County Council to collect for the Poppy Appeal at the 2018 1940's event weekend.

Preparations for the commencement of the 2017 Appeal in October would start shortly.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted;
(b) That thanks be extended to all those involved in the arrangements, with particular thanks extended to Claire Atkinson, Master William Atkinson, Allan Jones, Iris Hillery, Marie Yarker, Cllr Miss Blissett and Cllrs Blissett, Chatterjee and Harrison; and
(c) That thanks be given to office staff, in particular, Mrs Farren, Services Officer for preparation and organisation.

18. MAYORAL EVENTS

There were no events to report. Arrangements for the Mayoral Christmas Card competition were discussed. It was proposed that the competition be run along the same lines as 2016, using the Teesdale Mercury as a medium for selecting winners from a shortlist put out to public vote.

Resolved – That it be delegated to the Clerk, in conjunction with Town Mayor, to set criteria, theme and arrangements for 2017 Mayoral Christmas Card competition.

19. 1940s EVENT – 23 TO 25 JUNE 2017

(i) Evaluation and review

Submitted – draft notes from 1940s Event Task & Finish Group meeting held on 4 July, which focused on evaluating the weekend. The event was a success and overall, comments received were extremely positive. Recommendations were referred to this Committee for decision making relating to the 2018 1940s weekend, scheduled to be held 22 to 24 June. It was proposed that the 1940s Task & Finish Group needed to be more streamlined to take pressure away from the office.

Resolved – (a) That the draft notes be received;

(b) That thanks be given to all staff and volunteers involved in making the weekend a success;

(c) That a meeting be held with shop owners on Tuesday 1 August to discuss issues, ideas and suggestions for 2018 1940s weekend;

(d) That portable seating be hired in 2018;

(e) That there be more 1940s music for dancing and that music be extended into early Saturday evening;

(f) That a three-pass flypast be applied for, at a cost of no more than £100;

(g) That the town council work closely with the Methodist Church to co-ordinate timing of musical entertainment on Sunday morning (24 June 2018);

(h) That the town council discusses expanding the Parade and Remembrance Service at The Bowes Museum with Rev. Canon Alec Harding;

(i) That no fashion show be held during the event, instead fashion show/ evenings be hosted by M & Co. leading up the 1940s weekend;

(j) That participants with vintage vehicles attending 2017 event, be given priority to display their vehicles on Scar Top in 2018, amending SAG as required;

(k) That all schools be approached to get involved in evacuee experience on Friday afternoon (22 June 2018);

(l) That terms of reference be produced for 1940s Task & Finish Group, with clear roles and responsibilities, to be brought for approval to next Partnership Committee on 2 October.

(ii) Aviation Day – 23 June 2017

It was reported that the 22nd Teesdale Aviation Day Service took place at 11am on 23 June in the Galgate Garden of Remembrance.

Tony Galley, one of the co-founders, made the opening address followed by a Service of Commemoration led by the Reverend Canon Alec Harding. Representatives from RAF Leeming, RAFA, Barnard Castle School Combined Cadet Force, the Morritt and members of the Town Council attended and laid wreaths alongside the Town Mayor and other co-founder Mr John Yarker. The Vintage Pipers played the Piper's Lament and Andrew Nicholson the Last Post and Reveille. Refreshments were provided following the service at Andalucía Café.

It was agreed at Council (Min 36(2)(b)/June/17) that the 23rd Teesdale Aviation Day would take place on Friday 22 June 2018. This date had been cascaded to those involved and an application had been submitted to the RAF Air Events Team to request RAF participation.

Thanks was extended to all those who participated with the arrangements, with particular thanks to Allan Jones for the complimentary loan of the PA system.

- Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted;
(b) That thanks be given to all those involved and, in particular, to Allan Jones;
(c) That thanks be given to Mrs Farren, Services Officer, for preparation and organisation;
and
(d) That the town council organises the Teesdale Aviation Day Service for 22 June 2018 and that it be programmed into 2018/19 Events programme with budgetary allocation.

20. DEVELOPING A PERFORMANCE AREA

Cllr Chatterjee tabled a proposal to explore opportunities providing young people with a performance area/ stage that they could use at a minimal cost or even cost free. Initial discussions had identified two bands willing and able to perform. It might be possible to convince more to participate. The Committee considered the opportunity of using the performance area outside Woodleigh in the longer term and what the town council might need to do to make it a better variable weather venue. Power was to be switched on to the performance area at end July.

- Resolved** – (a) That Councillors Sutherland and Chatterjee assess the capacity of the performance area in terms of canopy options, to be considered at Partnership Committee in October 2017; and
(b) That contact be made with the TCR HUB to explore opportunities for co-operative promotion of regular musical performances.

21. THE BOWES MUSEUM UPDATE

(i) 125th Anniversary

At the last Partnership Committee meeting on 22 May, it was resolved that ideas for spend of £2,000 to support The Bowes Museum's 125th anniversary be brought to this meeting. It was proposed that an event be held, which would benefit the town, lasting over several days, leading up to The Bowes Museum's Christmas Market weekend 16 and 17 December. The Bowes Museum would lead on the event, with participation from the town council.

- Resolved** – That The Bowes Museum develops a working group, with Councillors Sutherland and Wilkes nominated to attend as representatives of the town council.

(ii) Louveciennes Friendship Link

As previously reported, pursuant to the proposed friendship link with Louveciennes, further information was provided by Caroline Peacock, High Sheriff of Durham. Friends of The Bowes Museum had recently entertained a very brief, informal visit by M and Mme Gonneau (who owned and had restored the Château du Barry in Louveciennes that was in the past the home of the Museum's founders, John and Joséphine Bowes). They were accompanied by M and Mme Chrétien also from Louveciennes. Philippe Chrétien was the equivalent of a local councillor with responsibility for twinning arrangements. Louveciennes was already twinned with Meersburg in Germany and Vama in Romania, but their twinning with Radlett in Hertfordshire had come to a mutually agreed end and they were now interested in setting up a new British link.

The historical link between Louveciennes and Barnard Castle had prompted this recent visit, which went extremely well. It was reported that the visitors especially enjoyed the current Bowes Museum exhibition about Joséphine Bowes and seeing some of the Louveciennes documents that were held in the Archives. A historical booklet was proposed based on the material in the Archives, together with a conference.

The Friends of The Bowes Museum were now hoping that a more formal delegation would come from Louveciennes, either towards the end of this year or early next year. This was an opportunity to promote more partnership working and links with schools.

It was considered appropriate for the Chair of Partnership, on behalf of this committee, to discuss opportunities with Caroline Peacock (and others) to formulate a specific proposal for consideration at a future meeting.

Resolved – That the Chair of Partnership meets with representatives of the Friends of the Bowes Museum and The Bowes Museum, to consider what other opportunities exist to develop the prospective friendship link around the proposed timing of the next visit.

22. BARNARD CASTLE ENGLISH HERITAGE

The custodian of the Castle, Gayle Rafferty, attended the meeting to introduce herself as a prelude to possible future partnership working. There was a general feeling that the Castle was separated from the town and more joint working was needed. It was reported that English Heritage was working to become an independent charity; policies and procedures were being reviewed to give more decision making to site managers. There were no events scheduled at the Castle for 2017. A community day was in the early stages of planning.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

23. CHRISTMAS LIGHTING

It was reported that existing lighting purchased by the town council in 2015 now required repair. Six sets of icicle lights were partially lit, with one set completely out; replacement was recommended. In addition, four strings of Christmas tree lights were completely out and two strings partially lit; replacement was recommended. The total cost of replacement was £498.62, with faulty equipment safely disposed of by Christmas Plus (the town council's current Christmas Lighting contractor).

In addition, costs for 2017/18 (the final season of the three year contract with Christmas Plus) to cover installation, dismantling, testing and storage would be £4,079.

Committee noted that final approval of the 2017/18 budget had reduced the Christmas Lighting budget to £5,500 (decrease of £1,000), Council Min 85(d)/Jan/17 refers. There was now a shortfall of £505.46. The Christmas Support Fund earmarked reserve had a balance of £222.16.

There was likely to be a significant underspend in Grounds Maintenance, part of Floral and Open Spaces budget, due to ongoing delays in transfers of management of open spaces from Durham County Council. Members considered a recommendation to Services Committee, for onward referral to Resources Committee, that an appropriate virement be made from Floral and Open Spaces budget to Christmas Lighting budget.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted;
(b) That replacement of existing faulty Christmas lighting be approved at a total cost of £498.62 out of the 2017/18 Christmas lighting budget, with faulty equipment disposed of by Christmas Plus;
(c) That the balance remaining in the Christmas Support Fund Earmarked Reserve be used to part fund repairs to existing lighting displays; and
(d) That it be recommended to Services Committee, for onward referral to Resources Committee, that the shortfall of £505.46 be funded by a virement from Floral and Open Spaces Budget to Christmas Lighting Budget; and
(e) That the 2018/19 Christmas Lighting Budget be increased to £6,500.

24. BARNARD CASTLE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS (BCCL) UPDATE

It was reported that the next fund raising event was to be an Italian Buffet at Vivo on 19 September with Toni Sedgewick singing and playing the guitar. Tickets cost £16 and were available from BCCL group members.

BCCL was looking into the possibility of having a large tree decorated with white cylinders that had the effect of falling snow.

The next meeting was to be held at The Old Well on 8 August at 6.30pm. New members were most welcome.

BCCL proposed that it was given responsibility for the future organisation of Christmas Lighting in Barnard Castle beyond the 2017/18 display, including rigging, derigging, storage, testing and general management of the Christmas Lights, for an initial period of three years, starting Christmas 2018/19.

To maintain the display at the level of 2016, it was estimated to cost £8,500 per year. Therefore the contract would be on the condition that £6,500 would be donated annually to BCCL. The remaining amount would be raised by BCCL. Members noted that the budgeted amount for 2017/18 had been set at £5,500, a reduction of £1,000 from £6,500 in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

It was further proposed that if the town council entered into a Service Level Agreement with BCCL for the amount of £6,500 a year, it would enable BCCL to look at the possibility of becoming a charity and gaining additional benefits.

BCCL also offered to buy the redundant street light motifs from the Town Council for a price of £65.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and
(b) That it be recommended to Council that a Service Level Agreement in the terms proposed is entered into with BCCL from Christmas 2018, to be considered in the budget preparation for 2018/19.