

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

10 JUNE 2013

PRESENT:- Councillor Peat (in the Chair); Councillors Deacon, Mrs Grady, Harrison (Minutes 4 to 15 inclusive), Hinchcliffe and Yarker.

Also in attendance:- Councillor Watson (Minutes 9 to 15 inclusive).

Officers:- Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Plant (Assistant Clerk)(Minutes 9 to 15 inclusive).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

Councillor Peat was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

Resolved – That Councillor Peat be appointed Chairman of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2013/14

Councillor Mrs Grady was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations.

Resolved – That Councillor Mrs Grady be appointed Vice-Chairman of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2013/14.

3. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES – None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 72(a)/Sep/12 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. There were no declarations of interest at this juncture.

5. DATES AND TIMES OF SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Submitted - A schedule of the dates and times of Committee meetings during the Municipal Year 2013/14, as determined at Council Minute 135(1)/Mar/13.

Resolved – That the information be received.

NOTE – It was agreed at this point of the meeting that items 6, 7 and 8 be deferred due to the Notes not being circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

6. FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES WORKING GROUP MEETING – 27 MARCH 2013 – NOTES

7. DOG FOULING WORKING GROUP MEETING – 29 APRIL 2013 – NOTES

8. ALLOTMENTS AND PLAY AREAS WORKING GROUP MEETING – 29 APRIL 2013 – NOTES

NOTE – It was agreed at this point of the meeting that, in accordance with Council Minute 135(1(d))/Mar/13, 'Service Champions' would be determined prior to the discussion of each Service item.

9. ALLOTMENTS

Allotments Service Champion

Resolved – That Councillor Yarker be appointed as the Allotments Service Champion.

(i) Improvements Action Plan

Submitted – The Allotments Improvements Action Plan for Members to prioritise those improvements to be carried out during 2013/14, including details of the Allotment Improvements Holding Account. It was noted that, as previously agreed, projects that alleviate health and safety risks should be given the highest priority.

Resolved - That, in respect of the Allotments Improvements Action Plan the following improvement projects be carried out:-

- (1) Raby Avenue Allotment Site – Further Path Improvements:-
- (2) Demesnes Allotment Site – Path Improvements between plots 24 and 25.
- (3) Harmire Road Allotment Site – Progress drainage solutions.

(ii) Harmire Road – Plot 1 Flooding/Drainage

Pursuant to Council Minute 9(2)/May/13, it was confirmed that Durham County Council's Flooding & Drainage department had been contacted for assistance to investigate drainage solutions and associated costs and a response was awaited.

It was also confirmed that a written request had been made to Stephen Maude to reinstate the boundary embankment, in line with his verbal undertaking of 23 November 2012.

Resolved - That the information be noted.

(iii) Crook Lane – Plot 6 Drainage Issue

Pursuant to Council Minute 9(3)/May/13, it was confirmed that work was currently in progress with students from Teesdale School working under the auspices of Teesdale YMCA. It was anticipated that the work would be completed within the next few weeks, when the plot would then be re-tenanted.

Resolved - That the information be noted.

(iv) The Demesnes – Unallocated Area

Pursuant to Council Minute 3(3)/Sept/12, it was confirmed that this area had been transformed into a communal wildlife flower/herb area contained in raised beds. Tenants had worked in conjunction with the Council on the project by providing both the labour and plants for the beds. The area would be further enhanced in the future by the addition of wood chips around the raised beds area.

Resolved - That the information be noted.

(v) 2013/14 Annual Tenancy Agreement/Rental

It was confirmed that the 2013/14 Tenancy Agreement had been issued to all tenants at the end of March and that all agreements and associated rentals had been received.

Resolved - That the information be noted.

(vi) Allotment Waiting List

It was reported that the current allotment waiting list consisted of 42 prospective tenants and that an annual review of the list was in progress to ensure all those currently on the list still wished to be so.

Resolved - That the information be noted.

(vii) The National Allotment Society – North East Region Allotment Officers' Forum

It was reported that the forum had taken place on 23 May 2013 at Shildon Town Council and was attended by Services Administrator, Mrs Farren. It provided a good opportunity to network with other local authorities and exchange best practices.

Resolved - That the information be noted.

10. DOG FOULING

Dog Fouling Service Champion

Resolved – That Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor) be appointed as the Dog fouling Service Champion.

It was confirmed that, pursuant to Council Minute 9/May/13, the offer of ordering poop bags had been communicated to Teesdale local councils and that sufficient time was being allowed to collate any responses and that distribution points for poop bags in the town were currently being sought.

It was also confirmed that Durham County Council's Civic Pride Team had, on behalf of this Council, been in contact with Newcastle University to establish whether 'the eyes' poster could be used to develop a new anti-poop poster/sign. It was noted that, whilst this was acceptable, it was on the understanding that, as the 'eyes' initiative was an ongoing social experiment, there was a requirement to monitor any improvements in the dog fouling issue when the poster/sign was in place. Quotations were being sought for the manufacture of the signs.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

11. PLAY AREAS

Play Areas Service Champion

Resolved – That Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor) be appointed as the Play Areas Service Champion and that Councillor Deacon shadows.

Marwood Drive – Pursuant to Council Minute 9(4(a))/May/13, it was confirmed that the CCTV survey had been carried out on Marwood Drive's land drains and a scope of works report with associated costs was awaited.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

12. MINI GOLF

Mini Golf Service Champion

Resolved – That Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor) be appointed as the Mini Golf Service Champion.

A summary of the 2013 Mini Golf Season was provided, including the facts that, the season commenced on 1 June following practical completion of the replacement course 'A Journey through Teesdale' being achieved by the due date of 31 May 2013, four Mini Golf Attendants had been employed, the Town Mayor had carried out a 'Ribbon Cutting' ceremony on 23 May and that the planning for the formal 'Grand Launch Event' for 20 July was in progress.

Pursuant to Partnership Committee Minute 10/May/13, consideration was given to a charging policy and Terms of Hire for the course to be hired by groups outside normal operating hours and regard was given to the different types of groups who may wish to hire the course.

Resolved – (a) That a charge of £30 per hour (or part thereof) be set for groups wishing to hire the mini golf course between the hours of 5.00pm and 9.00pm during term time and 6.30pm and 9.00pm during school holidays;

(b) That a concessionary charge of £15 per hour (or part of) be set for registered charities; and

(c) That supervised school parties (of up to 30 pupils) be able to use the course, free of charge, but subject to a written agreement, for practical lessons on weekdays, during term time.

(d) That investigations be made into the course fencing being made rabbit proof.

13. FLORAL & OPEN SPACES

Floral & Open Spaces Service Champion

Resolved – That Councillor Peat be appointed as the Floral & Open Spaces Service Champion and that Councillor Mrs Grady shadows.

(i) Galgate Greens Improvement Project and Castle Walls Bulb Planting Scheme – Update

Pursuant to Floral and Open Spaces Working Group Note 42/Mar/13, it was confirmed that the funding application submitted to the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership's Community Initiative Fund in respect of the Castle Walls Bulb Planting Scheme had been successful. It was noted that, as the bulb planting would not be carried out until November, further progression of this project would commence in September.

It was also confirmed that the application to the same fund in respect of the Galgate Greens Improvement Project had been unsuccessful. It was noted that investigations were being made into other funding options that might be available.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(ii) Floral Displays

It was confirmed that Sam Turners Limited had replanting the tubs and that Lowfield Gardens had commenced the associated watering service.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(iii) Garden of Remembrance

Pursuant to Council Minute 150/Apr/13, it was confirmed that delivery of the bins had been delayed and would not now be received until the beginning of July. The new memorial plaque had been delivered but, as this element of the project was considered to be the 'icing on the cake', it would be installed prior to a small unveiling/project completion celebration.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(iv) Memorial Bench Scheme

It was confirmed that since the inception of this Council's memorial bench scheme (Council Minute 148(4)/Apr/13 refers), seven benches had been, or were currently in the process of being, refurbished.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted.

(b) That investigations be made into the use of HMYOI Deerbolt's offender pre-release scheme to revamp benches such as those off Scar Top that are not part of that areas overall improvement scheme.

14. CASTLE FLOODLIGHTS

There was no update to report at this time in relation to this service.

15. WAR MEMORIALS

War Memorial Service Champion

Resolved – That Councillor Blissett be appointed as the War Memorials Service Champion.

It was noted that, in accordance with the grant funding received and subsequent Council Minute 156(c)/Mar/10, the 2013 inspection would be carried out before the end of July 2013.

Resolved – That the information be noted.