

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

24 FEBRUARY 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Peat (in the Chair); Councillors Deacon, Hinchcliffe and Yarker; Councillors Robinson and Watson.

Also in attendance: One member of the press.

Officers: Mr King (Clerk) and Mrs Plant (Assistant Clerk).

54. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES:- None.

55. 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.

56. SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 16 DECEMBER 2013 – MINUTES

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

57. ALLOTMENTS

It was confirmed that the 2014/15 Allotment Tenancy Agreement and Allotment Rules, issued to all allotment tenants with their allotment rental requests which start on 1 April 2014, were in hand.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

58. PLAY AREAS

(i) Dawson Road Wheelchair Swing

It was confirmed that, following the decision to allow the Dawson Road Improvement Project Earmarked Funds being used towards the purchase of a piece of play equipment suitable for children in wheelchairs (Council Minute 77(v)/Dec/13 refers), The Clique had generously contributed £5,000 towards the project and in addition, to make up the shortfall, a funding application had been submitted to the Fields in Trust Inclusion Fund. The outcome of that application was awaited.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(ii) Ten Fields Lease Renewal

It was confirmed that Fields in Trust were currently reviewing a proposed new lease between this Council, Barnard Castle Football Club and Fields in Trust for the rental of Ten Fields. Once approved, the new lease would consequently be submitted to the football club and the council for overall approval.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

59. MINI GOLF

Details of the 2014 Mini Golf season were submitted, including the opening times and the fact that there was an intention to pursue the possibility of extending the main summer opening (7 days per week) from 6 weeks to 9 weeks subject to the availability of the attendants. It was confirmed that two of the four attendants were returning for a second year and that the vacant posts had been advertised with interviews to be carried out week commencing 3 March by the Town Mayor and the Clerk.

It was also reported that investigations were being made into the mini golf kiosk becoming an official leaflet distribution outlet to be stocked by Visit Durham on a regular basis at no cost to the council.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

60. FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES

(i) Lower Galgate Flower Beds

Submitted – Pursuant to Committee Minute 41 (f)/Nov/13, a report providing an update in respect of the investigations made into the creation of permanent flower beds being installed in the lower Galgate area and sought Members' views as to whether the project was considered viable for progression taking into account the fact that there were difficulties because of utility cabling in the vicinity and that whilst the stone was considered reusable, to prepare it so that it was suitable for the construction of flower beds, that process would actually cost more than to buy new stone fit for purpose.

Resolved – That the creation of permanent flower beds being installed in the lower Galgate area be considered unviable and that the scheme be no longer progressed.

(ii) Galgate Greens Improvement Project

Submitted – A report providing an update in respect of the up to date costs that had been established to carry out part of Phase 1 of the Galgate Greens Improvement Project and sought members' views in respect of the project's progression, including whether the revised improvement works were aesthetically appropriate and another improvement option submitted for consideration. Discussion ensued and it was deemed more suitable to carry out overall improvement works to the two greens involved in Phase 1 individually, albeit it was acknowledged that this was likely to prolong the completion of the overall project.

It was noted that the land ownership issue would continue to be pursued with Durham County Council.

Resolved – (a) That improvement works be carried out to the green north of the Garden of Remembrance.

(b) That the two 'odd' bollards on the green to the south of the Garden of Remembrance be removed.

(iii) Weed Control

It was confirmed that Durham County Council had subsequently responded to the Committee's issues in respect of weed control in the town (Minute 42(h)&(i)/Nov/13 refers) and the details were provided.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(iv) Public Seats Holding Account

A summary of the overall Public Seats budgetary situation was provided and it was highlighted that, as there remained a small sum of money in the Public Seats 2013/14 budget from a recent memorial bench scheme donation, it was recommended that this underspend, and future Public Seats underspends, should be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account. This would allow a build up of funds towards public seating repairs and maintenance in the future.

Resolved – That it be recommended to the Resources Committee, at its meeting on 24 March, that the Public Seats 2013/14 under spend, and future Public Seats under spends, be transferred into a Public Seats Holding Account.

61. DOG FOULING

(i) General Update

Pursuant to Minute 37(i)/Nov/13, it was confirmed that the additional dog waste bin that was to be installed at an appropriate location near Green Lane CE Primary School had been installed on the green area at the junction of Dale Road and Churchill Road.

Discussion ensued and it was considered that the footpath from Vere Road to Fife Road would benefit from the installation of a dog waste bin and that the council should get involved with Litter Free Durham and Durham County Council's Big Spring Clean campaign again.

Resolved – (a) That Durham County Council be requested to install a dog waste bin along the footpath from Vere Road to Fife Road.

(b) That, it be recommended to the Council meeting on 24 March 2014, that this Council organises a team of volunteers to carry out a litter pick on Saturday, 5 April 2014 as part of the Big Spring Clean 2014.

(c) That the information be noted.

(ii) Dogs Trust Visit

Pursuant to Minute 37(ii)/Nov/13, it was confirmed that the 'Dogs in the Community' event would take place on Saturday, 1 March 2014 in conjunction with the Dogs Trust. The event details were outlined.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

62. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF MINUTES 63 AND 64 BELOW)

Resolved – That, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 §1(2), the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter referred to at Minutes 63 and 64 below, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

63. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT 2014/15

Submitted - A report regarding the annual awarding of the contract for the Council's grounds maintenance works. It was confirmed that the Council's Auditors were satisfied with this Council's current arrangements as 'best value' was being obtained rather than entering into a tendering process. Specific references were made to the current contractor's consistent local support service and his competitive rates.

Resolved – That Robson Horticulture Ltd. be appointed to provide the Council's grounds maintenance work for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

NOTE – Cllr Yarker declared an interest in respect of Minute 63 and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

64. FLORAL DISPLAYS 2014/15 TENDERING PROCESS

Submitted – A report to determine which competent companies should be asked to submit quotes for the 2014/15 planting to provide the Town with an 'all year round' floral display and the scheduling of the works.

It was noted that a special Services Committee meeting would require convening so that any subsequent quotations received could be considered and the preferred contractor determined.

Cllr Robinson requested that consideration be given to the 'Veg Out in Barney' boxes being included in the overall floral display watering service.

Resolved - (a) That the following businesses be asked to submit quotations for the overall floral display contents for the 2014 summer and 2014/15 winter/spring:-

- (i) Elm Ridge Gardens Limited, Darlington;
- (ii) Paddock Farm Nursery, Dalton on Tees; and
- (iii) Sam Turner & Sons, Piercebridge.

(b) That a special Services Committee meeting be scheduled on Monday, 7 April 2014 to commence at 6.00 p.m. in the town council office to consider the floral display planting quotations.

(c) That the Summer floral displays be replanted week commencing 2 June 2014.

(d) That the cost of watering the 'Veg Out in Barney' boxes be established and submitted for consideration at the special Services Committee meeting at (b) above.