

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**25 JULY 2016**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Peat (in the Chair), Mrs Grady, Harrison, Mrs Thompson and Yarker.

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Sutherland; One member of the press.

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

**18. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Hinchcliffe.

**Resolved** – That the apologies be accepted.

**19. NORTHUMBRIAN WATER – RAINWISE – PRESENTATION**

Brian Ford, Project Manager, was unable to attend the meeting. The new project, working together with communities to manage surface water proactively, would officially launch in September.

**Resolved** – That Northumbrian Water attend next Services Committee on 17 October to present information about Rainwise.

**20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 17(b)/May/16 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. Councillor Harrison declared an interest in respect of item 22.

**21. SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 6 JUNE 2016 – MINUTES**

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

**22. ALLOTMENTS**

**(i) General update**

It was reported that the allotment waiting list stood at 17; including two new applications received since May. There were currently four vacant gardens. Viewings were currently taking place.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**(ii) Insurance Claim**

The rectification work at Raby Avenue had now been completed and re-imburement had been received from the insurance company on 25 July.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**(iii) Allotments Improvement Action Plan update**

Pursuant to Minute 30(iii)/Oct/15 water regulation compliance was now complete and it was reported that work would now be starting on costings for path improvements as previously resolved.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted and;  
(b) That an update on allotment path improvements be submitted to Services Committee on 17 October.

**(iv) Bee Keeping**

The town council had received a few enquiries about keeping bees on allotment sites. The 2016/17 Allotment Rules stated that bees may only be permitted on The Demesnes and Harmire Road sites. Members were keen to review this rule for 2017/18 and to review the possibility of keeping bees on all allotment sites.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted and;  
(b) That the Allotment Rule on bee keeping be reviewed at Services Committee on 17 October and a plan submitted of all allotments sites to identify appropriate allotment gardens for bee keeping.

**23. PLAY AREAS**

**(i) Repairs and Maintenance**

Monthly inspections were continuing at all five play areas. There were no issues to report.

An update on the insurance claim at Green Lane play area was requested, pursuant to Minute 6(ii)(b)/Jun/16.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**(ii) Gate Licences**

Following survey undertaken by the Deputy Clerk and Services Officer, the annual gate licences for 2016/17 had now been issued to run from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2017. These licences facilitated direct access onto the playing areas managed by the town council.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**(iii) Green Lane TAP application**

Pursuant to Minute 17(a)/Jun/16, an application was submitted for TAP funding, to provide a perimeter track, goal posts and associated equipment for the Green Lane Play Area. The Clerk had attended the TAP Transport and Environment Task and Finish Group on 11 July to present further information about the proposed project and answer questions. Members noted that the fund was oversubscribed and that a decision was awaited.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**24. SCAR TOP PLAY AREA/ MINI GOLF FREEHOLD ASSET TRANSFER**

There had been no further information. It was noted that the wooden fort still had not been repaired by Durham County Council.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**25. MINI GOLF – 2016 SEASON**

The mini golf course continued to attract good visitor numbers (weather permitting) and during July two private hires had taken place.

It was noted that the course continued to be available for free use by schools during term time and groups and organisations outside normal operating hours at concessionary rates.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

## **26. WAR MEMORIALS**

It was confirmed that the annual War Memorial inspections would be carried out by the Town Mayor and Services Officer during August. An update would be presented to the next Services Committee meeting scheduled for 17 October 2016.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

## **27. PUBLIC SEATS**

It was confirmed that maintenance work on benches within the Remembrance Garden and on Scar Top was now complete.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

## **28. DELIVERING DIFFERENTLY**

Durham County Council's legal section had provided the Town Council's solicitor with a specimen draft lease. The Town Council's solicitor had advised that to produce a single lease, with a breakdown of the areas to be leased as a schedule, would be more costly than individual leases. Some progress had been made in specifying the ownership of structures on the Galgate Greens, which were already maintained by the Town Council. This information was not known by the county council. News was awaited of progress from county council solicitors in pursuing the freehold transfer of the Greens.

Pursuant to Partnership Committee in July (Minute 30(ii)/Jul/16 refers), Barnard Castle Christmas Lights (BCCL) had secured TAP funding for power to Galgate Greens. This would enable festive lighting to trees on Galgate Greens, as well as a source of power for Teesdale Aviation Day Service and future town council events. BCCL would be responsible for all standing charges for power and all costs associated with the power on the greens. Durham County Council's Asset Management did not object to the proposed installation on the condition that, if the proposed asset transfer did not take place for any reason, then DCC had the right to request the removal of the power supply. The risk of the freehold transfer not proceeding was very low. Given that the town council already maintained existing structures on the Galgate Greens, it was prudent that the town council took on liability for the power supply equipment, once installed.

Councillor Peat and Mrs Grady declared an interest and took no part in voting.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted; and  
(b) That the Town Council takes on liability for management of the power supply equipment on the Galgate Greens.

## **29. WEDNESDAY MARKET**

It was noted that in the seven weeks from 1 June to 13 July, total rental receipts were £1,189; an average of £170 per week. Two new traders had joined the market. It was noted that there had been long-term absences due to illness and occasional poor trading days due to inclement weather. Members were keen that the market be promoted.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

## **30. FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES**

### **(i) Floral Displays 2016/17**

Seven hanging baskets had now been sponsored on the hanging basket 'tree' outside the post office on Galgate, with sponsors acknowledged. It was noted that the hanging

baskets were beautiful. Members were keen to ensure that any income from sponsorship and sale of hay bales from Upper Demesnes Haymeadow, was invested in development of the town's floral displays.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted and;  
(b) That any underspend in Floral Displays budget at end of the 2016/17 financial year be earmarked for 2017/18 floral displays.

**(ii) Interpretation Board – Roman Ford Picnic Site**

Pursuant to Minute 13(ii)/Jun/16, a second draft of text with panel mock-up was circulated for Members' comments. The panel had been re-named 'Roman Way Picnic Site' to reflect current archaeological interpretation of the site. David Mason, County Archaeologist, had speculated, based on a reasoned basis, that it was more likely that the Roman river crossing would have been a bridge. Contributions had also been made from Caroline Hardie (archaeological consultant), George Chaplin (who led the archaeological investigation reported on the Brigantes Nation website), Keith Alexander (local sculptor), The Fitzhugh library and Charles Lilley (former gas works engineer). Overall, members were impressed with the draft panel.

**Resolved** – That Members' comments be noted.

**(iii) Upper Demesnes Haymeadow – 'Meander round the Meadow'**

It was reported that sixteen people had attended the event on 9 July, led by Dr Margaret Bradshaw, with a demonstration of scything by Mr Neil Diment, and the opportunity to 'have a go.'

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**(iv) Gateway Bed – Dig for Victory**

Following the success of the 1940s weekend in June and the resolution by full Council to hold a second 1940s weekend on 23 to 25 June 2017. 'Veg Out in Barney' had requested that the Gateway bed be planted out again as a 'Dig for Victory' bed.

**Resolved** – That the Gateway bed be planted out as a 'Dig for Victory' bed by 'Veg out in Barney' as part of the 1940s weekend in 2017.

**31. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

As outlined at item 28, above, until progress on the draft lease terms relating to the areas of open space to be transferred to the town council from DCC was made, an advert for the specification agreed by this committee at its meeting in April ought not to be placed.

**Resolved** – That the information be noted.

**32. TOWN WEEDING PROJECT**

On Saturday 11 June, approximately 40 volunteers from the Influence Church's 'No Strings' project tidied up areas surrounding Woodleigh Grounds, Scar Top, County Bridge, Former Sculpture Garden and Remembrance Garden on Galgate, as well as sanding and staining various benches.

**Resolved** – (a) That a thank you card be given to the Influence Church and;  
(b) That the Town Council supports the Influence Church's 'No Strings' project in June 2017.

### **33. DOG FOULING**

The Durham County Council Neighbourhood Protection Team update for Teesdale and Weardale revealed that during April 2016 there was one, local investigation of dog fouling.

It was reported that the town council's stock of dog poop bags was running low. These were currently stocked at the Town Council's offices in Woodleigh and at the mini-golf kiosk, as well as at the Police Station. Members were reminded that Durham County Council refused to distribute dog poop bags at its customer access point (Minute 62/Feb/16 refers). It was noted that the dog fouling budget for 2016/17 was £300 and that there had been no spend to date. It was reported that local dog friendly cafes might be interested in stocking dog poop bags.

Pursuant to Minute 16(b)/Jun/16, Councillor Rowell had submitted information to this Committee for consideration. A specific dog fouling area in the town was deemed not practical. Durham County Council (DCC) already had an on-line reporting tool [www.durham.gov.uk/dogfouling](http://www.durham.gov.uk/dogfouling) and DCC's wardens could issue fines.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted;  
(b) That approval be given to order additional supplies of dog poop bags from 2016/17 dog fouling budget, as and when necessary; and  
(c) That DCC Civic Pride be contacted regarding current anti-dog fouling initiatives.

### **34. DEMESNES PUBLIC MEETING**

Pursuant to the Committee's decision at its last meeting (17b/Jun/16), it was reported that a public meeting would be held in Woodleigh (or at a larger venue if greater numbers were suggested) on Wednesday 7 September at 6:30pm. Properties bordering the Demesnes would be leafleted and publicity would be circulated over the next four weeks.

The purpose of the meeting would be to gather the views of residents on the use of the Demesnes, to gauge the extent to which there was considered to be anti-social behaviour associated with the area and to look at the threats and opportunities posed by the space and its management. The local police had already confirmed attendance and it was hoped that other interested parties would be able to attend and that the meeting would consider the role of the town council in managing the space in the event that the transfer from Durham County Council took place (Item 28, above).

**Recommendation** – (a) That the information be noted; and  
(b) That members attend the meeting on 7 September to hear the views of residents on the Demesnes.