

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

12 DECEMBER 2016

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

Also in attendance: One member of the press.

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

54. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE, OF APOLOGIES

None

55. 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.

56. SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 17 OCTOBER 2016 – MINUTES

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

57. ALLOTMENTS

(i) General update

It was reported that there were no vacant allotment gardens at this time. The waiting list stood at fourteen with one new application received since October.

A routine site inspection would take place in early 2017.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(ii) Allotments Improvement Action Plan – Path Improvements

The successful contractor for the path improvements work had been informed and whilst a commencement date had not yet been agreed, the work would be completed prior to 31 March 2017.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

58. PLAY AREAS

(i) Repairs and Maintenance

It was reported that monthly inspections of all five play areas managed by the town council were continuing and there were no issues to report. However, no written reports had been received from Durham County Council since June 2016.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(ii) Dawson Road – Request from Youth Council

At its meeting in November, Council resolved that a lighting project for Dawson Road MUGA be referred to Services Committee in partnership with Youth Council (Minute 68(b)/Nov/16).

There was currently no revenue provision for a lighting scheme of this type. It was suggested that work should be undertaken on two fronts to better quantify what might be possible and affordable in this location. Firstly, a letter should be circulated to all properties adjoining the Dawson Road play area to canvass local views both about the current use of the play area and MUGA and about the potential for lighting of the MUGA. Secondly, research should be undertaken to identify potential funding sources for any development of the play area. Members wanted to work with the Youth Council to explore potential schemes, subject to final agreement of a constitution for the Youth Council. Councillors Peat and Harrison volunteered to hand deliver letters and talk directly to residents bordering Dawson Road. It was suggested that the new Quad Hub might wish to be involved.

Resolved – (a) That the views of residents bordering Dawson Road regarding the use of the play area and the potential for lighting the MUGA should be canvassed; and
(b) That a report on available funding sources to invest in developing Dawson Road play area should be prepared and shared with the Youth Council.

(iii) Green Lane Improvements Funding Offer

Members were informed that a decision in respect of the offer of funding for playground improvements at Green Lane was required. The offer and conditions relating to the need to gain appropriate prior approvals from Fields in Trust were circulated to Members. It was noted that match funding of £1,857 was required from the town council's play area budget 2017/18, which could include staff time.

Resolved – That approval be given to accept the grant offer from the Durham County Council Neighbourhood budget of £8,143 to fund playground improvements to Green Lane play area.

59. DELIVERING DIFFERENTLY CONSULTATION

The issue of asset and service transfer was considered by Resources Committee and Full Council in November. A consultation event was to be held in the Dawson Room on 14 December 10am to 4pm to enable residents to receive information on the proposed transfers, the costs of maintenance of these areas and the costs and benefits of bringing management of these areas under the town council's control. The event would seek public views to be put before Resources Committee and Full Council in determining the 2017/18 Budget. Members were encouraged to attend. The information would also be on the town council's website. Members discussed hosting a second consultation day in January.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and
(b) That a second consultation event be arranged on Saturday 7 January 10am to 2pm in the Dawson Room, Woodleigh.

60. MINI GOLF – 2016 SEASON REVIEW

Received – a report providing members with a review of the 2016 mini golf season. The total number of rounds played was 7,040 (57 visitors per day on average). There had been 128 operating days over a period of 32 weeks. Members were reminded that as 2017 would be the fifth operating season for the course, quotations were being sought to re-felt the holes for consideration at full Council on 23 January (Minute 42(c)/Oct/16 refers).

Resolved – That the information be noted.

61. WEDNESDAY MARKET

(i) Update

In the seven weeks from 19 October to 30 November, total rental receipts were £954, an average of £136 per week. During this period there were two exceptionally poor trading days due to snow and high winds.

It was reported that on 19 October, Durham County Council's Markets Supervisor carried out an audit of the town council's market policies and procedures, which were found to be correct and complete under the terms of the licence.

(ii) Barrier Renewal

The town council acquired 18 market barriers from the county council on taking over the market in March 2016. Eight of these were damaged, to the extent that tubular sections had been flattened and vertical bars were missing, reducing the strength and stiffness of the barriers. It was appropriate to replace these barriers, with the purchase funded from the market receipts; that fund currently stood at £3,969 net.

Prices had been sought from three suppliers for Fixed Leg Galvanised Crowd Control Barriers.

Resolved – (a) That the information be noted; and
(b) That approval be given to purchase ten replacement market barriers (2.3m) from First Fence at a cost of £227.90 excl. VAT, to be funded from market receipts and to dispose of damaged barriers as scrap metal.

62. FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES

(i) Floral Displays 2016/17

Elm Ridge Gardens carried out winter planting on 18 October. The Galgate Workers had planted out the Gateway bed with winter bedding plants and raked up leaves on Woodleigh Grounds.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(ii) Interpretation Board – Roman Way Picnic Site

Pursuant to Minute 30(ii)/July/16, the new interpretation panel had been installed. A press launch would be organised in early January 2017.

Resolved – That the information be noted.

(iii) Operation 'Spruce-Up'

It was reported that Durham County Council had launched a 14 month environmental programme targeting selected areas across County Durham. The pilot project aimed to refresh the appearance of main streets/centres of several towns/ villages across the County. Programme areas would include one village or town from each of the 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) and DCC would work with AAPs, local councillors, residents, businesses and town/ parish councils to choose areas. One town/village, would receive a spruce up per month. The campaign was launched on 21 November in Spennymoor.

The "spruce up" combined the Council activities of highways, street cleaning, regeneration, grounds maintenance and others for a thorough tidy up. In addition, for each area there would be programme of community engagement.

It was emphasised that the initiative in no way impacted on “business as usual”. If a parish area was not selected in the pilot, it did not prevent collaborative work such as spring cleans, in bloom assistance or grounds maintenance partnerships.

More information was available via DCC Civic Pride Team or online at www.durham.gov.uk/spruceup

Resolved – That the town council registers interest in Operation ‘Spruce-Up’.

63. DOG FOULING

Pursuant to Minute 33/July/16, a further 6,000 poop scoop bags had been purchased to replenish the town council's stock at a net cost of £120.

Resolved – That the information be noted.