

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**9 APRIL 2018**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Peat (in the Chair), Miss Blissett, Child, Chatterjee, Hallimond and Mrs Thompson.

**Also in attendance:** One member of the press.

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

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

None.

**85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with this Council's adopted 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.

**86. SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 19 FEBRUARY 2018 – MINUTES**

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

**87. ALLOTMENTS**

**(i) General update**

It was reported that there were two vacant allotment gardens, which were in the process of being re-tenanted.

One new application had been received since the last meeting; the waiting list currently stood at twelve.

2018/19 Tenancy Agreements and requests for payment had been sent out to all tenants.

The water supply at all sites was turned off on 20 December 2017 as a precaution against inclement weather. For many years Northumbrian Water had turned the allotment water supply on and off at no cost. Due to changes within the water industry, the provider remained Northumbrian Water but the retailer was now Wave. The town council had been informed that charges would now be £97.00 net per site to turn the water off and the same cost again to turn the water back on, resulting in a potential net cost of £970 per annum. This did not take into account additional instances when the water supply might need to be suspended temporarily.

As an interim measure, due to the imminent start of the growing season, the Clerk along with the Chair of Services Committee, made a decision to purchase a suitable tool at a cost of £14.00 to turn the supply back on. Unfortunately, due to the extreme weather experienced this winter, a number of problems arose since 28 March, when the water supply was turned back on. Repairs to the relevant standpipes were in the process of being carried out. Members were presented with options for the future.

There was no change on the Avian Influenza situation. A Prevention Zone remained across the whole of England. The situation would continue to be monitored.

The Council would be hosting the next National Allotment Society Northern Region Officers Forum on 26 April 2018 (Minute 81 (i)/April/17 refers). So far, thirteen delegates had confirmed attendance. Two allotment sites would be viewed: Raby Avenue and The Demesnes.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted; and  
(b) That the town council undertakes to switch off/on the water supply at allotment sites using staff or volunteer resources – with any risk of damage falling to the council.

**(ii) Allotments Improvement Action Plan**

The last phase of path work improvements at the Raby Avenue site (Min 56(ii)/Dec/17 refers) was due to commence on 1 March. Unfortunately, due to adverse weather, the work had had to be postponed. The improvements would now take place on 19 and 20 April 2018.

Quotations had been received for the proposed tree works on The Demesnes site, considered under item 96, below. Permissions would be needed from Durham County Council before work proceeded.

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

**88. PLAY AREAS**

**(i) Repairs and Maintenance**

It was reported that Park Lane Playgrounds had carried out the first quarterly inspection of the town council's play areas on 5 April. This included Scar Top Play Area for the first time. There were a number of issues to be addressed as part of ongoing maintenance. Various play equipment repairs and maintenance had been completed at Dawson Road and Bouch Way Play Areas.

Pursuant to Minute 74(ii)(b)/Feb/18, discussions had been held with two contractors deemed suitable to undertake play area maintenance and repairs. Members were informed that to employ a contractor on a zero hours contract would exceed the play area budget. A self-employed contractor's costs exceeded the town council's current Grounds Maintenance contractor rates. It was felt that neither option was financially viable.

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

**(ii) Green Lane Playground Improvements**

Following discussions with a play provider, Kompan, in pursuit of an estimate of undertaking the work necessary to create a bicycle training track at Green Lane, a potential scheme design had been suggested and was shared with Members. Three Committee Members had visited Green Lane Play Area to familiarise themselves with the site and the proposed scheme.

It was likely that a scheme of this kind would require a budget of up to £50,000 to achieve. Members noted that the town council was awarded £8,143 of neighbourhood funding for Green Lane in December 2016. Confirmation on the continued availability of this would be required from Teesdale Action Partnership (TAP). Additional sources of funding would have to be obtained from charitable and community funding providers. At that scale, if the idea was pursued and once funding had been identified, three formal tenders would need to be considered and a contract awarded at full Council.

Planning permission and approval from Fields in Trust would also be required. It was deemed that a simple cycle track around the existing play area would suffice.

Members were reminded that the provision of football goals to Green Lane was also agreed as part of the potential improvement scheme. Again an initial estimate had indicated that to supply and fit a set of goals (16' x 7') a budget of approximately £1,000 would be required. Members felt that it would be difficult to site football goals and accommodate the cycle track.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted;  
(b) That residents' views be sought for one or two full size football goals versus five a side goals and a possible location identified;  
(c) That, depending on the outcome of discussions with residents, a revised estimate for five a side goals be considered at a future Committee; and  
(d) That revised quotations from local construction companies be sought for a simple cycle track around the existing Green Lane play area.

## **89. DELIVERING DIFFERENTLY**

Progress had been made with respect to the proposed lease for Woodleigh Grounds. Correspondence was received from Stuart Timmiss (DCC Head of Planning and Assets) on 21 March. As part of the process of transferring open space, the land was advertised for two consecutive weeks on 16 March and a further advert issued on 23 March.

Durham County Council anticipated completing this lease on 14 April. The final version would then need to be considered (and approved if appropriate) by the Town Council after this date.

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

## **90. MINI GOLF – 2018 SEASON**

The 2018 season commenced on Friday 30 March, with operating arrangements as approved at Services Committee on 19 February. A detailed report would be given at the next Services Committee.

Installation of power and associated electrical works was completed at end March ready for start of 2018 season.

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

## **91. WAR MEMORIALS**

Pursuant to Council Minute 122(b)/Mar/18, when approval was given for repair works totalling £775.00 to be carried out to the Town War Memorial funded out of the War Memorials budget, an order for works had been placed with Glasper Tunstall Stonemasonry. Work would commence in June.

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

## **92. WEDNESDAY MARKET**

### **(i) Update**

In the eight weeks from 7 February to 28 March 2018 inclusive, total rental receipts were £705, an average of £88 per week. There had been two poor trading weeks due to inclement weather. The waiting list stood at four.

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

### **93. FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES**

#### **(i) Floral Displays 2018/19**

Summer bedding plants had been ordered for the Gateway bed. It was prudent that arrangements for winter planting of the Gateway bed were reviewed. There was further discussion of this item in exempt session.

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

### **94. BIG SPRING CLEAN**

The town council participated in the Big Spring Clean throughout the town on 24 March 10am to 12noon. In total, 28 people took part and collected 26 bags of rubbish, two tyres and a cone.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted; and  
(b) That thanks be given to those volunteers that participated.

### **95. DURHAM WILDLIFE TRUST**

Pursuant to Minute 101/Jan/18, when £1,000 as part of 2018/19 budget was approved to support an environmental project in the town, an email was received on 31 March from Mark Dinning, Head of Conservation at Durham Wildlife Trust. The Living Landscapes Officer, Laura Tedstone, had been developing volunteers to work across sites. Most time had been spent in Deepdale Woods. A spring and summer programme was being developed, which would deliver habitat, access and engagement works across all sites. Information will be brought to a future Committee meeting.

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

### **96. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF CONTINUATION OF ITEMS 87(ii), 88(i) AND 93(i) 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 matters referred to at continuation of item 87(ii), below.

#### **87(ii) ALLOTMENT IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN – Tree Works Quotations**

Submitted – a report considering the allotment tree works quotations on The Demesnes site and seeking to determine which contractor should be appointed to undertake the work.

**Resolved** – (b) That tree works contract on the Demesnes allotment site be awarded to Thom Robinson Arboriculture at a net cost of £760.

#### **88(i) PLAY AREAS – Repairs and Maintenance**

No further discussion was required.

#### **93(i) FLORAL DISPLAYS 2018/19**

Submitted – a report considering quotations for floral displays in 2018/19 and seeking to determine which contractor should be appointed to undertake the work.

**Resolved** – (b) That the 2018/19 floral display contract be awarded to Elm Ridge Gardens Ltd at the sum of £1,812.08.