

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**21 MAY 2018**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Peat (in the Chair), Miss Blissett, Chatterjee, Child, Mrs Thompson and Hallimond (from item 6(iii)).

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

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

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

None.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE 2018/19 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

**Resolved** – That Councillor Child be elected as Vice Chair of Services Committee for the municipal year 2018/19.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 10/May/18 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.

**4. SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING – 9 APRIL 2018 – MINUTES**

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

**5. ALLOTMENTS**

**(i) General update**

It was reported that there were no vacant allotment gardens.

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

On 26 April, the Council hosted a very informative Allotment Officers Forum organised by the National Allotment Society Northern Region (Minute 81 (i)/April/17 refers). Cllr Peat and the Services Officer (Civic) were amongst the delegates in attendance.

Reminder letters were sent out at the beginning of May to those tenants who had not returned their annual rental payments and renewed their Allotment Tenancy. So far, all but four had responded to the reminders. In line with the Tenancy Agreement, failure to respond to the reminder letter by the set deadline would result in a 'Notice to Quit' being issued.

It was reported that rats were being dealt with on Harmire and Demesnes sites. Durham County Council tree officer had no concerns about works to trees on the Demesnes site.

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

## **(ii) Allotments Improvement Action Plan**

The last phase of path work improvements at the Raby Avenue site (Minute 56(ii)/Dec/17) was successfully completed at the end of April. Spare hard-core was available following the repairs and had been used to fill potholes leading to the cemetery.

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

## **6. 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 six play areas, including Scar Top for the first time, on 5 April. Various issues were identified, requiring action.

**Resolved** – (a) That the actions be noted; and  
(b) That play area repair quotations be considered in exempt session, item 17, below.

### **(ii) Green Lane Playground Improvements**

Pursuant to Minute 88(ii), when it was resolved that revised quotations be sought from local construction companies for a simple cycle track around the existing play area, enquiries had been made with potential suppliers to examine options to install a multi-use path, which would include provision for primary age children learning cycling proficiency. Suppliers had been asked to comment on how this might be achieved through a (roughly) elliptical perimeter track, approximately 140m in length. At this stage, the Clerk was seeking to establish a specification on which quotations might be invited. Further discussion and information sharing would be needed with residents.

### **(iii) Disposal of Fallen Tree**

A tree in the field at Green Lane, which fell in the high winds earlier in the year, had been cleared and sawn into logs. The brash had been disposed of appropriately. It wasn't economically viable to sell the amount of lumber left commercially and to do so would incur VAT and complicate the council's accounts for Play Areas. However, donations could be accepted for the logs.

### **(iv) Tens Field**

It was reported that reseeded of the area at the bottom of Tens Field, which had been the site of drainage works undertaken by Barratt Homes in the Winter, had now had a layer of topsoil added and had been reseeded at the start of the close season. Remedial work to the fencing installed at the same time was still required.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted; and  
(b) That the lumber taken from the fallen tree at Green Lane be disposed of for a donation to the town council's play areas.

## **7. DELIVERING DIFFERENTLY**

There had been no change on the position reported to full council on 14 May.

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

## **8. MINI GOLF – 2018 SEASON**

The 2018 season commenced on Friday 30 March and had been open 10.30am to 4.30pm for two weeks during the school Easter holidays and every weekend and bank holiday. High season commenced two weeks earlier than anticipated, on 12 May, due to the good weather.

Expenditure to date totalled £1,221. Net ticket sales for the year to date totalled £1,632.50.

Cleaning of the course felt was discussed. It had been given a thorough Hoover and power wash for the second time. A heavy duty outdoor wet/dry cleaner was proposed to reduce cleaning and maintenance costs and future proof the course felt.

**Resolved** – (a) That the information be noted; and  
(b) That estimates be sought for a suitable outdoor wet/dry cleaner to be presented to Services Committee on 16 July 2018.

## **9. WEDNESDAY MARKET**

In the six weeks from 4 April to 9 May inclusive, total rental receipts had been £900, an average of £150 per week. There was one new trader. One charity had benefitted from the free charity pitch. The waiting list stood at six.

Pursuant to Minute 78(ii)/Feb/18, when it was resolved to purchase a market stall with walk-in tables under the Durham County Council (DCC) market scheme, DCC had requested quotations for a suitable stall. Two quotations from suppliers were presented, based on the specification agreed. DCC would fund 50% of the cost of the market stall.

**Resolved** – That approval be given to purchase a market stall from Trader Supplies at a maximum net cost of £300 (with 50% funding from DCC to be reclaimed following purchase).

## **10. FLORAL AND OPEN SPACES**

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

Summer planting by Elm Ridge Gardens Ltd was planned to take place week commencing 11 June. Hanging baskets had been ordered for the hanging basket 'tree' outside the post office on Galgate.

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

## **11. DOG FOULING**

The town council's supplies of dog poop bags was running low. During 2017/18, 10,000 poop scoop bags were purchased at a cost of £179, including carriage. To date, these had been available for free from the town council office, mini-golf kiosk and police station in Wilson Street. Members considered whether to purchase further supplies from the 2018/19 budgetary allocation of £300 and quantified the bags that should be given to the public on request. Members were reminded that any bin could be used to dispose of used bags.

**Resolved** – That a maximum of three bags be given out per person on request.

## **12. PUBLIC SEATS**

A public seat had been recently refurbished on Scar Top following a donation and a Memorial Plaque installed.

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

### **13. WAR MEMORIALS**

Progress on the repair works to the Town War Memorial would be reported at the Committee meeting in July.

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

### **14. INFLUENCE CHURCH 'NO STRINGS'**

The town council resolved to support the Influence Church's 'No Strings' volunteer project in June 2018 (Minute 34(b)/July/17 refers). A potential date would follow after a meeting of the 'No Strings' project on 22 May.

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

### **15. DURHAM WILDLIFE TRUST**

Following the update provided to the last meeting, additional information had been requested of Mark Dinning of Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT) to give an update on this programme. In particular, DWT had been asked if it had identified any materials which would be advantageous for the town council to purchase from its contribution. No response had been received to date.

**Resolved** – That Cllr Child be tasked with making enquiries on the status of the Durham Wildlife Trust project.

### **16. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF ITEM 17, 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 in respect of item 17, below.

### **17. PLAY AREAS REPAIRS QUOTATIONS**

Submitted – a report seeking to determine a recommendation from Services Committee for works to repair various items of play equipment at all six play areas for onward referral to full Council on 18 June. As the contract value was over £5,000, approval must be determined by full Council.

**Resolved** – That it be recommended that Park Lane Playgrounds be awarded the work to carry out repairs to play equipment at all six play areas at full Council on 18 June.