

## **AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – DECEMBER 2018**

The Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 13 November 2018 at 6.00pm in the Town Council Office, Fourways 2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

### **PRESENT:**

Cllrs Craig Weir, (Chair), Cllrs H Lewis, M Horn, I Parks, K Morrison, J Watson  
H Shepherd – Minute Taker, G Turner – financial adviser

The Chair informed that the meeting was being recorded for administrative and transparency purposes.

### **182. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr T Hinton.

In the absence of a reporter from local press it was agreed to send expanded items from the minutes to formulate a press release.

### **183. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members are requested to advise Council of any Declarations of Interest appertaining to the following Agenda Items:

183.1 Cllrs Parks, Lewis and Weir declared an interest in Allotments.

### **184. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)**

There were two members of the public present.

184.1 Presentation from Danielle Gourlay and Edmund Collin.

Danielle and Ed met two years ago when working on a project together for adults with mental health issues. Danielle has also had various roles in the past working with adults dealing with many different social and mental problems. Ed wishes to use his own experience of Aspergers to help others.

The pair would like to set up a wellbeing programme, based around gardening, to be driven by the individuals who are taking part. The aim of the 'Seeds' Project, is to give individuals a range of activities they can choose from which are geared towards improving their health, increasing their knowledge and skills, and raising their aspirations and confidence. Horticulture is being increasingly seen as a successful therapy for many mental health problems.

The project would be set up as charitable enterprise. Participants will be able to receive training on areas such as caring, mental health and gardening. It may be possible later down the line for the participants to use these skills to gain paid employment. The project is looking for an allotment within the Amble area, from which to be based.

Cllr Weir spoke about the ATC's raised bed allotment scheme which was initially set up as a similar project but lack of funding and interest from the public, has resulted in the decision to close this area. This particular space is not a possibility. However, it may be possible to approach the Amble Allotment Holders Society to be placed on the waiting list for a vacant allotment.

ATC is very supportive of this proposed community venture and Cllrs suggested they make a recommendation to the AAHS that the project is considered for an allotment in January when rents are renewed and sites vacated.

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Cllr Weir gave some advice about the set-up of the project to speed up processes in the initial stages.

Cllrs agreed that if an allotment was available, development and maintenance would need to be started in January. The progress of the allotment and the project should be reviewed after 12-months before the lease renewal would be granted. The project developers agreed to these stipulations.

Venues for indoor workshops were also discussed. ATC are happy to give advice about possible venues that could be explored. There are also other projects in development that could be linked with this one.

Cllrs agreed to support the project by contacting AAHS in the first instance about the possibility of the SEEDS developers meeting with the AAHS and discussing the availability of an allotment.

Clerk

184.2 Northumbria Police Report  
The report was reviewed and noted.

### **185. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL**

185.1: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November, items 162-180.3  
Item numbers 162 – 180.3 were approved as a true record.

### **186. CO-OPTION VACANCY**

Although one person has expressed an interest, no formal application forms have been received yet so the submission date has been deferred to 3<sup>rd</sup> January, for a decision to be made on 10<sup>th</sup> January. If there are no applications by this date, there will be further deferral.

Cllrs discussed the regulations around balloting and the endorsing of candidates. Advice has been sought from NALC to ensure that the correct procedures are being followed.

### **187. CLERK'S REPORT:**

RECOMMENDATION – That the Council notes the contents of the report and consider actions where necessary.

187.1 Clerk's Report  
A report was submitted and accepted.

### **188. CHAIRMANS COMMUNICATION and REPORT**

#### **188.1. Chairman's Report**

The Chair attended Remembrance Saturday and Sunday events, the Christmas Parade and a Civic Event at County Hall. The Chairman's Reception took place last week and he will attend two further events before Christmas including a Pantomime.

#### **188.2. Vice Chairman Report**

Cllr Lewis attend the Parking Meeting and the meeting detailing the proposed landscaping of the roundabout which will be discussed later in the agenda.

### **189. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:**

#### **189.1 To receive a report from County Councillor Clark:**

A report was not received from Councillor Clark.

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### **189.2. To receive a report from County Councillor Watson:**

Cllr Watson was disappointed to read in The Ambler, the report about the Syrian Refugee families as it draws attention to where they live and he did not feel it was necessary for this information to be disclosed.

NCC will meet with JCSC to look at how they can progress with refurbishment proposals. JCSC has also lodged a proposal for funding for Special Education Needs. £1.5m has been dedicated to education in the Amble area from S106 funds arising from the new developments. Other Cllrs expressed concerns about how this funding will be apportioned, and in particular, how much will be dedicated to JCSC.

Cllrs requested clarification about the wording of the allocation of S106 money, as the wording suggests that it may only be for primary children and SEN.

JW

Cllr Weir suggested that JCSC should be made aware of the breakdown and specifics of the funding proposals so they are able to plan for the future, especially with the prospect of capacity issues.

Car Parking discussions continue.

### **190. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS:**

#### **190.1 To receive the report of Councillors who represent ATC on outside bodies (Cllr Reports)**

Cllr Weir has attended a range of other meetings concerning: The Amble Inn planting plan, ATC precept/budgeting, land sales, Litterbugs and CCTV.

Cllr Watson expressed that the Amble Lights are good but feels that the Christmas Tree should be larger in a town of this size. He suggests erecting a large Christmas Tree in the Town Square in future. Members were concerned about the cost of this and the logistics. He is sure that there would be local sponsorship available for this.

Cllr Weir advised that there is already a fir tree in the Town Square which does have a power supply nearby. It could be possible to light this one and continue to have a smaller tree in the High Street Garden.

Cllr Lewis suggested asking the Christmas Lights Committee if there are any plans to light this tree in the future and if not, ATC could consider this. Cllr Watson proposed that this should be done professionally. This is to be discussed further at the next meeting.

Clerk

Cllr Parks attended the November meeting of NALC and Cllr Watson's Civic Carol Service on behalf of ATC.

### **191. FINANCIAL REPORT:**

#### **191.1 To consider voucher numbers for payment 267 - 314 and receipt vouchers 123 - 148**

Payments and Receipts were accepted. Cllr Weir declared an interest in voucher 279.

#### **191.2. Bank Reconciliation**

The reconciliation was accepted. The remaining Santander account is now closed and the balance has been transferred. The Santander accounts no longer need to be reported on.

G Turner reported that Peter Basnett has confirmed he will continue as the internal auditor for the

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foreseeable future.

### 191.3. YTD figures

The year to date figures were noted. There are a few funding pots in need of adjustment. Cllr Lewis will meet with the Clerk to amend these.

Clerk/HL

### 191.4. Grant requests

Hospice Care North Northumberland

Cllrs received a grant request for £1,000.00. It was confirmed that a grant of £500 was given in February 2018. This was after further information about the direct impact of their work in Amble was provided.

The proposal is for care in homes and for care homes and although Councillors are supporting of this work, they would again like to know what the direct impact on Amble has been since the last grant was awarded.

Clerk

The decision will be deferred to January.

## 192. AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

191.2 Minutes were agreed from item 80 – 92.1.

Cllrs will discuss whether or not to keep the tractors and trailers at the next amenities meeting. In the meantime, Cllrs are considering whether an alternative storage area could be sought nearer the town square.

Cllrs

For information:

Braid Seat – a member of the public had offered to replace the damaged seat however money has been raised by other means and the seat may be replaced by Acklington Prison.

Former complaint to alleged damage to memorials. The complainant has encouraged the public through social media, to check their own memorials.

A further concern has been raised about damage to a memorial. Photographs have been taken by a member of staff. This is not a stone memorial but a temporary marker and which therefore is not meant as a long-term option. A letter explaining this will be sent to the complainant.

Cllr Watson confirmed that the damaged dog bin at the end of Rotary Way will be replaced by Warkworth Parish Council.

The next meeting of the Amenities Committee takes place on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> January and there will be no site visit.

## 193: PLANNING COMMITTEE

### 193.1 Planning Outcomes for November 2018

The planning outcomes were noted.

### 193.2 To note the update from Robert Wilson

A few issues had been raised by ATC, with the Gloster Hill development concerning dust and working hours. The response explained when or not the planning department can get involved in enforcement of conditions. Cllr Horn advised that there is still a remaining concern about drainage. NB Clark have submitted a variation plan for approval but there is no sign that this has been approved. Cllr Watson suggested that Cllr Horn should attend the regional planning meeting

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as it may be a good opportunity to speak to someone about this.

A member of the public attended a recent NCC planning meeting and spoke on behalf of 'Love Amble' against the three housing developments, expressing environmental concerns, which were re-visited and passed by the committee. There is concern that this member of the public uses different names and 6 Dilston Terrace as her address.

An Amble resident will be submitting a breach of planning to NCC regarding a neighbouring property. Any residents needing assistance with the completion of County Council online forms should be advised to seek help at the Library whose staff deal with NCC issues as part of their remit.

For information only; Cllr Watson advised of a current resident dispute in Oswald Street concerning access.

The Bunkhouse Development has not been completed signed off yet.

### **194. AGENDA ITEMS:**

#### **194.1 To discuss and agree the budget and precept proposal for 2019/20**

G Turner explained the spreadsheet detailing the proposed budget and how it has been developed. The proposed budget would mean a 6.31% increase in precept because of the tax base. For the same level of Council Tax paid, we receive more income due to extra properties so this now only means an increase of 3.4% (£4 per annum). Cllr Dargue expressed concern about the budget for CCTV. Cllr Lewis confirmed that the cost is a minimum of £5000/annum to run the CCTV (including maintenance and 24/7 cover, electricity charges and internet charges.)

Cllr Watson agreed to approach NCC and request that the electricity charges per lamppost are reduced.

JW

Cllr Weir thanks all those who had been involved in the development of the budget. Cllrs were given the opportunity to consider the proposals further.

Cllr Dargue asked if a provision has been included for the possible future development of a Peace Garden in West Cemetery. It was confirmed that there is considerable budget available within the general budget for Cemetery Development. Similarly, there is provision for cycle routes in the town however it would be preferred that this was funded through S106.

Clerk

Cllrs resolved to accept the proposed precept of £199,360.00 for 2019/20. The figures will be submitted to NCC.

#### **194.2 To agree a Council representative to the Events Committee**

Cllr Lewis has stood down from the Events Committee and Cllr Weir asked for a volunteer to officially represent ATC in her place. Cllr Lewis stressed the importance of having a representative, as the Events Committee is legally administered through ATC. There was some discussion about whether or not this person would be the minute taker. Cllrs feels that this should not be the case and it should be up to the committee to nominate a minute taker and if this is not taken up, then the Chair should take this responsibility.

Cllr Horn agreed to take up this position in the interim but on condition that he will not be taking the minutes. The Events Committee would be informed that he is ATC's representative.

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### 194.3 To discuss moving the flag pole

It has been proposed that the flag pole should be re-positioned so it is better placed in relation to the new Peace Sculpture. Cllrs reviewed photographs of the proposed area for repositioning. An estimate has been received from a local contractor to carry out the work. Cllrs voted on the proposal to move the flagpole. x5 in favour, x2 against and therefore passed.

Clerk

Cllrs preferred to move this to the nearby gravel area and permission to carry out this will be sought from ADT as land owners. ATC will also need advice from the Conservation Officer as to whether their permission to move it needs to be obtained.

Clerk

### 194.4 New certificate for ATC Awards

Drafts of a revised certificate are currently being developed. Quotes are to be sought for the provision of x500 certificates.

### 195.5 Presentations of Honorary Freeman Awards

A letter of thanks was noted from Robert Arkless.

Cllr Morrison said there were concerns that The Ambler was not made aware of the Award presentation. Cllr Weir confirmed that representatives from both The Ambler and The Gazette were invited to attend the event as guests and that neither had been given advance notice of the presentation as Cllrs did not feel this was necessary and wished to retain the element of surprise for the recipients.

## 195. COMMUNICATIONS:

### 195.1 Invitation to St. Mary's Church, Morpeth. 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Noted. Cllr Weir attending

### 195.2 NALC ENews: 13/11. 28/11, 5/11

Noted

### 195.3 Invitation to attend and speak at the Annual St Cuthbert's Church Carol Service on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 6 p.m.

Noted. Cllr Weir attending

### 195.4 Request from BBC for information on Christmas Light spend

The BBC are conducting a survey about expenditure on Christmas Lights. ATC have responded appropriately.

### 195.6 Financial Advice for Local Councils

Noted

### 195.7 To note the email regarding the planting of trees in Amble

The sender had suggested that the trees obtained by Amble WI could be planted on the braid. Cllrs were unsure that this is a suitable location for planting but had already asked NCC about this. The trees remain in the care of NCC. There is concern about who will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the trees. Clerk to ensure that a response has been sent to the sender explaining that ATC were awaiting a response from NCC but there were still several considerations to be discussed.

Clerk

### 195.8 To discuss the Walk Safe to School initiative

Cllrs are supportive of the initiative and have asked to be kept involved about the project. Cllr Dargue would like safe cycling to be promoted more, especially as the volume of traffic in Amble is going to increase considerably. ATC did help to supply hi-vis clothing last year but there needs to be more cooperation and joined up working to make projects like this work better. Cllr Weir will mention this at the next school meeting.

CW

### 195.9 To note the letter from NCC for the reintroduction of car parking charges

Noted. This does not concern Amble.

### 195.10 To note the email from Tom Lloyd re England Coastal Path

Noted. Cllr Lewis suggested that this should be forwarded to the NCC as all of the points raised

Clerk

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are valid but are things which could come from monies obtained by NCC from S106 agreements for coastal works. Mr Lloyd to be informed that his comments would be forwarded to NCC with that suggestion.

### **195.11 Recovery of costs for traffic management and support services**

A consultation will take place concerning charges for extra refuse collection and other services for events. NCC may seek to recover the costs of supports services for events held, apart from Remembrance Day services and Armed Service events, from 1st April 2019. This includes road closure orders. NALC is drafting a response expressing their concerns about the impact on small parishes and towns. NCC have advised that it is not possible to provide a breakdown of the proposed charges at present. Cllrs dispute this and are concerned that these charges could kill community events. There was a discussion about the necessity of road closures and official stewards for events and it was confirmed that these are legal requirement for most events. NCC reminded of the introduction of charges around the preparation and advertising of road closures from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. ATC will also submit a response of their concerns about this . Agreed HL will draft this for the Clerk to send to NCC with a copy to NALC.

Clerk/HL

### **195.12 Pest Control**

Cllr Lewis advised that there is still a big problem with pigeons on the war memorials and does not feel that it would be appropriate to use more bird spikes as these would look unsightly. Cllr Lewis proposed looking at installing a sound deterrent. Other options will be considered too. It is important that the War Memorials are preserved so Cllrs will continue to address this issue.

Cllrs

### **195.13 Remembrance Weekend feedback**

Cllrs Watson feels that is should be noted in the minutes how successful the weekend of events was. Many members of the public expressed their thanks for the event, both in hand written letters and on social media. Many people expressed how proud they were of what had been achieved in Amble. All volunteers from the community were thanked; Cllrs were grateful to all staff who worked tremendously hard; and a special thanks also to The Rotary for their help with marshalling.

## **196. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:**

RECOMMENDATION - That the Council note the information items.

### **176.1 To note the outcome of the Internal Audit findings**

Noted. Members expressed their thanks to the staff and consultant for a job well done.

### **176.2 To note the minutes of the Parking Group held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018**

Noted. Cllr Lewis advised that changed Sustrans cycle route signs are now in place.

### **176.3 To note the Legal Deposit Receipt for books sent to the British Library**

Noted

### **176.4 To note the increase of charges to the Website Hosting costs**

Noted and accepted.

### **176.5 To note the proposed works to the A1068/South Roundabout landscaping plans and public statement**

Cllrs Weir and Lewis attended a meeting recently where plans were advised about the planting scheme. Hedging will be planted where the new fencing is around The Amble Inn. The mounds will be grassed and spring bulbs will be planted. More trees will be removed from the land owned by Advance Northumberland but other new trees will be planted. There should not be a problem with Amble Inn or Advance Northumberland maintaining the Coal Truck planter. Advance Northumberland will maintain the whole area going forward. Cllr Horn advised that there is also planning permission for an interpretation board. Permission for the planting plan has already been passed by NCC and preparatory works will begin soon.

### **176.6 To note the Christmas and New Year office arrangements**

The office will be closed from Monday 24th December to Tuesday 1st January inclusive. The Town Clerk will deal with any urgent queries and will be paid for as previously agreed. Cllrs Weir and Lewis will also be on standby.

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### 197. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

The next Meeting is to be scheduled to take place on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public will be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda due to their sensitive nature.

### PUBLIC VERSION OF PRIVATE

#### 198: MINUTES –

##### 198.1: To approve the Town Council minutes of 8 November, items 178-181.3 and Amenities Agenda Item 92.1

Approved.

#### 199. PRIVATE REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

##### 199.1 Coastal Sculpture Trail

Cllrs Watson and Weir attended a meeting with the Coastal Community Team with regards to the proposed sculpture coastal trail. There was some discussion about the types of birds, about the budget and plans for long-term sustainability.

#### 200. AGENDA ITEMS

##### 200.1 Retrospective approval required for the payment of staff overtime for work carried out during Remembrance Weekend.

Cllrs thanked staff for their hard work and agreed to the payment of overtime.

##### 200.2 To note the Draft Heads of Terms for proposed land sale

These were noted and agreed with the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk delegated to continue with negotiations

##### 200.3 Potential sale of land and agreement to request plans of area

This was noted and agreed with the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk delegated to continue with negotiations

##### 200.4 To implement agreed staff salary increase

Cllrs agreed to follow the NALC Guidelines for staff salaries as is already agreed in staff contracts.

Clerk

##### 200.5 To discuss the future maintenance of the Memorial Gardens

Cllrs agreed to start discussion with the Management Board of Amble Development Trust, about taking over ownership although this request has been turned down before. This however, is not to include the Town Square.

Cllr Morrison raised concern about the access to the Memorial Garden from the TIC, if the permission that the proposal for a beer and cheese facility is granted. This will be kept in mind when licencing laws come into play.

The meeting ended at 9pm

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### **ACRONYMS**

**NCC – NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL  
CCT – COASTAL COMMUNITIES TEAM  
CAN – COMMUNITY ACTION NORTHUMBERLAND  
ATC – AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL  
ADT – AMBLE DEVELOPMENT TRUST  
PTA – PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

Chairs Signature.....