

AMENITIES COMMITTEE – JANUARY 2019

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 24 January 2019 at 18.00 in the Town Council Office, Fourways 2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

PRESENT: Cllrs H Lewis (Chair), I Parks, C Weir, C Butler. Michael Forrest- AAHS
H Shepherd (minute taker).

The Chair explained that the meeting was recorded for the benefit of accuracy.

93: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies were received from Cllrs Dargue and Morrison and were accepted.

94: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr Lewis, Weir and Parks declared an interest in allotments.

95: PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)

In accordance with Section 1(d-g) of the ATC Standing Orders members of the public present may address the Council at this point on the agenda. The Council/Committee reserves the right to respond or debate the issue at a later date.

95.1 Amble Allotment Holders Society Report

Michael Forrest attended on behalf of the AAHS.

Tenant rents were renewed from 1st January and approximately x80 tenants are still to pay but they have until the middle of February to do so.

The previous Secretary has now formally been replaced by Simon Baxter (official admin) and Paul Kielty (allotment arrangements)

There have been two reports of gates being kicked in but nothing was taken from the first allotment and some coal and logs was taken from the other. The tenants have not reported the incidents to the police despite being advised to do so by the AAHS committee.

Seed Project

Cllrs asked if anything has progressed with the request that was received by the Seed Project to acquire an allotment for a community gardening project. Mick was not aware of the Seed Project but is sure that Mr Baxter will be dealing with it. Mick will go back and ensure that this request has been addressed. TC to contact the Seed Project to ask if they are now in contact with AAHS and remind them that this is the ideal time to make a request if they have not acquired an allotment already.

TC

Weed killing

It has been pointed out to NCC that weed killing needs take place up the East allotments walkways and this is planned for February. Weed killing should be undertaken 3 times per year.

Vehicles

Cllr Lewis is concerned about the amount of vehicles driving up the pathways when a lot of money was spent to repair the walkways, between ATC and the AAHS. Mr Forrest

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agreed there was a concern.

Cllr Lewis reminded that collapsible bollards are installed had been discussed with AAHS previously and advised that this will be included for discussion on the next agenda. It was suggested that this was mentioned to the AAHS Committee for their thoughts. If bollards are installed, ATC will ensure that the allotment hut has keys should they be needed and the emergency services would have keys too so they are able to gain access. In the meantime, NCC will be asked if it may be possible to fill the current potholes.

TC

TC

Tree surgery

Cllr Lewis reported that a dead tree near the substation has been removed by NCC before it encroached on the allotments.

96: CLERK'S REPORT & MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:

Noticeboard

The Town Centre noticeboard has been delivered and is now waiting on installation. A decision is required on the header board and this has been listed as an agenda item for discussion. Cllrs confirmed the location of the board.

Trees / Shrub Planting on the Braid

NCC are unsure of the suitability of the ground on The Braid for planting trees and shrubs along the public right of way. We are awaiting further advice regarding the suitability of the ground.

Cllr Butler advised that some of the trees that have been donated by WI are now being planted at Hauxley Nature Reserve so we will need to establish how many are left over.

CB

If ATC are advised there are trees remaining, then NCC will be contacted and asked if any can be placed along the Right of Way over the Braid to make it more attractive so as to encourage parking at the Braid as highlighted in the report produced by Martin Podeyn- Sustainable Transport in Amble.

TC

TC

WW Parish Council will need to be advised of any plans going forward.

West Crescent tree planting

As far as the Clerk is aware, no one has been in touch further about the planting of a tree.

Mapping

Mapping - ongoing. We now have Section M and Ma mapped out and need to cross reference Ma to check for accuracy. Section N is still outstanding. The TC will acquire an update on data input into already mapped areas.

TC

West Cemetery tree work

Work to remove broken branches and limbs on two Poplar and one Sycamore was complete in December by NCC. The invoice is to follow shortly.

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97: Cemeteries

West Cemetery Update

97.1 Approval of Memorial Inspection Policy

A new policy has been developed based on current procedure guidance from NCC. Notices regarding inspection procedures are currently displayed in West Cemetery noticeboards. A notice will need to be displayed on the gate of the East Cemetery, 6 weeks prior to any work being carried out. The policy was accepted.

TC

97.2 Quotes for the removal of scrub

Quotes are being sought from NCC and other contractors for the opening up of the land between the spoil area and the allotment boundary to enable the removal of the scrub and rubbish behind the fence. NCC have indicated that this work may have to be carried out at a weekend if they are contracted. A new boundary fence would then need to be erected and also a new section adjacent to the cremated remains. This would lead to an increased spoil/nursery area. Cllrs were asked to delegate the decision to the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk once quotes are received so this work can be progressed, which was agreed up to £2000.

TC

97.3 To note planting arrangements with NCC

Cllr Lewis advised the committee of the planting agreements across the town.

97.4 Update on SLA

In the main, the SLA agreement is going well and there have not been many complaints around the town from the general public. One or two small things have been pointed out but there is nothing of great concern. The cost for 2019/20 will increase by 4.9%.

TC

97.5 Amendment to rules re: temporary markers on grave plots

This need to amend the rules has arisen due to a recent complaint about a temporary marker. The suggested wording was agreed. TC to update the rules and the abridged version, also point this change out to the funeral directors and ask them to advise clients of this at the time of providing a temporary marker.

97.6 Grave surrounds for religious reasons

Following the NALC report about a recent court case involving a Muslim burial in a lawn section and the specific request to install a grave surround to prevent the grave being walked on as in that person's belief; although defeated, Cllrs feel there is a need to be aware that as Amble is becoming more of a multicultural society it may be necessary to consider a policy to allow for specific religious requests. It was suggested that Cllr Park makes further enquires through NALC as to whether specific policies will be developed for different religions and whether other councils are considering designating special arrangements within their grounds. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

TC

98. Play Area

TC

Paddlers Park

98.1 Update on communications with NCC

NCC are still waiting for a response to their proposal to fresh Air Fitness. Cllrs request

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that NCC push for a response as a matter of urgency to allow time for the installation of any new equipment soon . Cllrs would like to discuss the replacement with Komplan who have supplied adequate play equipment in the past.

TC

TC to contact the local rep to show him what pieces we are considering removing and ask for suggestions and prices for replacement pieces. Meeting to be arranged as soon as possible. Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk delegated to deal with this within budget restraints.

TC

98.2 Dolphin graphics

TC is to review the guarantee and if they are covered ask for replacement; if not covered, establish how much it may cost to have these redone, and perhaps compare with the cost of a local artist using appropriate materials.

TC
HS

99: Town Furniture

99.1 To agree the quote for header board refurbishment

A quote is currently awaited for the refurbishment of a header board but have been advised that this will be no less than £80 due to the nature of the work entailed. Cllrs agreed to delegate £150 for this work. HS is to oversee the installation of the new board.

HL

100: Communications

100.1 Dog bins

A complaint from Paw Perfection regarding used dog bags not being disposed of properly was noted. An appropriate response has already been sent.

Cllr Lewis will add some information about dog bins in a future news page in the Ambler.

TC

100.2 Request for use of Raised Bed

A query has been received regarding the use of one of the raised beds in West Allotment. The TC will make the enquirer aware that the Council has taken the decision to not rent out the beds in the future due to a lack of interest from members of the public. It was suggested that the enquirer could be put in touch with the Seed Project. TC to check that email addresses can be exchanged between those involved.

101: AGENDA ITEMS

101.1 Memorial Gardens: Update on the relocation of the flagpole re planning permission and ADT response

TC

ADT have agreed to the proposal to relocate the flag pole.

NCC have suggested that a pre-planning application should be completed however Cllrs feel that this work may be 'permitted development' under a section quoted in the Department for Local Government's guidance to Flying a Flag (Advertising) and therefore agreed that the TC should notify NCC that we are intend to go ahead with this under deemed permission.

HS

Cllr Weir and the Clerk were asked to meet with the contractor to confirm the requirements of the job before work begins.

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It was noted that Clls Weir and Lewis will be meeting with ADT to discuss the ownership and maintenance of the Memorial Garden.

101.2 To discuss and agree the proposed cemetery fees for 2019/20

The contractor for grave digging has suggested a small increase across the board for his fees which will cover tax, fuel increases. Cllrs agreed to this proposal.

Cllrs discussed proposals for ATC Cemetery fees for 2019/20. NCC fees have been used as a comparison and current ATC fees are well below NCC's current fees. Councillors agreed to an approx. 5% increase on the standard fee for interments and rights of burials to allow for inflation in the costs of general maintenance and a £5 increase on search fees and re-issue/transfer of deeds. A new charge for the installation of a vase installed at the same time as a memorial is to be added. A copy of the new charges will be attached to these minutes after ratification of full council.

101.3 Life Belts / Rings at the Paddlers Park

Cllrs are aware that the life ring at the Paddlers Park is missing however it is the responsibility of NCC to provide these. It is believed there should be three rings along this section of coast- at Paddlers Park, behind the East Cemetery and Wellhaugh Point TC to contact NCC and ask if the rings can be checked and replaced if necessary.

TC

102. INFORMATION ITEMS

102.1 To note the continuation of rolling programme for new litter bins

NCC have suggested that the two current wheelie bins on the pathway at the Leazes Street car park are replaced with wheelie bins and housing container. However, as these will be too large for the pathway they have suggested that the Harbour Commission is approached for permission to position these on the inside of the car park wall. Cllr Lewis advised that it will cost at least £500 more to purchase 2 bins with housing. Cllr Weir suggested asking if the Harbour Commission would also consider sharing the cost. Alternatively, if WHC agree to the new location, would NCC provide the wheelie bins if ATC fund the housing. It was agreed that the TC should approach the Harbour Commission in the first instance.

TC

HL/
HS

It was noted that Cllr Lewis and the Clerk will continue to oversee the annual rolling programme of bin replacements around the town and report back on the changes.

103: DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date will be held at 6pm Thursday 28th March with a site visit to West Cemetery prior to the meeting at 5 pm.

PUBLIC VERSION OF PRIVATE

104: AGENDA ITEMS

104.1 ASB in West Cemetery

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Further incidents have been reported about anti-social behaviour to one particular grave in West Cemetery. The plot owner has reported all incidents to the police and remains in contact with local officers but it is doubtful that the actions justify the use of a mobile camera at this point. It was suggested that the plot owner keeps a written log of the incidents if he is not doing so already. Cllrs also suggested that NCC operatives are made aware of this so they are able to keep an eye on the plot in question whilst they are working in the cemetery

TC

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.