

# AMENITIES COMMITTEE – May 2016

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 18.00 in the Town Council Office, Fourways 2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs H Lewis (Chair), J Dargue, M Horn and K Morrison with the Clerk; Miss E Brown.

Actions

## 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies had been submitted from Cllrs Cassidy and Weir – these were accepted.

## 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS: None.

## 3: PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes) None.

### 3.1: Amble Allotment Holders Society Report – Members were not in attendance.

Members requested a site visit of the allotments be raised with AAHS. Members were still extremely concerned regarding the number of structures when plots should be 90% cultivatable. The Allotments lease would be reviewed pending meeting with a solicitor to include numbering on gates, contact details etc.

A letter should be sent to AAHS querying their public liability arrangements and requesting contact details for the full Committee. The letter would also inform that Members would like to attend the next AAHS site inspections and that the Council are currently reviewing all Council leases with our tenants, we will provide further information on this in due course.

## 4: CLERK'S REPORT & MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:

**The contents of the Clerk's Report were noted and any matter arising were considered.**

**4.1: Receipt of Oak trees from AAHS –** The offer of the 6 oak trees had been accepted. Attempts would be made to contact Michael Forrest to establish whether the trees were still available.

**4.2: Items from the last site visit –** The stocks and stores disposal requirement were to be done ASAP.

**4.3: Comments from East Cemetery site visit –** The site visit did not take place.

**4.4: Town Historic Trail info boards update including way markers –** Contact would be made with Sodexo for an update on the progress of the way markers, thanks would also be sent for the cultivation of the plants.

**4.5: Planting update –** The priorities for planting for the bank holiday weekend were the planters on the Wynd, Rivergreen and the coal tub at the south entrance along with the High Street garden.

**4.6: Community Litter Pick –** The litter pick was attended by Two Councillors, the Clerk and 1 member of the public. The weather was extremely poor.

**4.7: West Cemetery soil storage –** This not been progressed yet, it was suggested that it could be located on the reclaimed allotment land and then screening would not be required.

**4.8: West Cemetery footpath improvements –** Quotes were awaited for improvements.

**4.9: Community Awards/Garden Awards –** It was agreed to add the community and garden awards to the Town Council agenda

**4.10: Paddlers snagging list –** Members of the Town Council carried out a site visit at Paddlers Park and have identified the issues which the Clerk forwarded to NCC regarding:

- the double air walker and the rower, grass mats at balance beams being but by grass cutting machinery
- footpaths - weeds growing through the footpath where it has been laid over the existing footpath
- Water pump – Leak from pump, winter plate whereabouts, 'brown marks', the sluice gates
- Grass –Members were alarmed to see that the ground exposed is solid and does not appear to have been prepared for the laying of turf. It is the same at the tunnel too.
- Schedule of overspend - whilst the Council agree the contractor had the site looking good for the Royal visit and appreciate the hard work that went into this, some of the items were carried out because the original work, in the Councils opinion, was not up to an acceptable standard and therefore should not have been included in extra costs.

A response had been received from NCC to reply to these issues which the Council found unsatisfactory. The issues would continue to be pursued.

## 5: COMMUNICATIONS:

**5.1: Mrs Sim – Recent visit to West Cemetery –** A complaint had been received regarding 1 grass cuttings and daffodils leaves left grave spaces and memorials at the cremated remains section. The Clerk had explained that in a 10 acre cemetery the Council did not have the resources to clean each and every memorial stone and that this is the responsibility of the deed holder, Occasionally

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the Operative would use the blower to clear around the memorials. Another concern was raised regarding the locking of the gates at weekend, making it difficult for those with disabilities to visit

**5.2: Richmond Town Council – Natural Burial Grounds** – A query had been received regarding the creation of a natural burial ground. Cllr Lewis provided a response as she had been involved in the creation of the Amble Natural Burial ground.

### 6: AGENDA:

**6.1: To consider the report of the bus shelter survey** – The survey was requested of all shelters after a report of a child being hurt from a falling stone in the bus shelter on Acklington Road. Only minor repairs were identified which would be tasked to the seasonal operative.

**6.2: To consider quotes for replacement of bins on the promenade** – A quote had been received for 5 x 360L bins that houses wheelie bins and were gull proof. It was agreed to purchase 5 of these bins to replace 3 bins on the promenade at Bay View, the bin next to the Harbour toilets and also the bin at Island View car park. The internal wheelie bins would be purchased separately.

**6.3: To consider a trial period of leaving the cemetery gates unlocked** – It was agreed that while the seasonal worker is employed, the gates would be opened at weekend.

**7: INFORMATION ITEMS:** None.

### 8: DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting date will be held at 6.00pm on 30th June in the Council Office.

**It was agreed 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

**9: Seasonal Worker Update** – The Clerk informed that the NCC contract would unlikely be in place until end of June as the advert had only gone out on 23rd May with a closing date of 9th June. Due to this the Clerk had instructed NCC to change the term of the contract to 16 weeks from 24 to reflect the delay in a start date.

For the interim period, the Clerk had created a 4 week fixed term position under the employ of ATC for an Operative to carry out enhanced services on behalf of the Council as this was essential with the bank holiday and tourist season upon us. The operative would work 9am-1pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday returning for an hour between 4.30pm and 6.30pm on these days to check bins and lock public toilets.

The employed Operative is a former NCC Neat team worker who comes highly recommended and An agreement had been made with NCC for the use of a van, the Town Council would cover the insurance costs of this, the operative would also have access to the Amble Depot.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

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### PRIVATE

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For the interim period, the Clerk had created a 4 week fixed term position under the employ of ATC for an Operative to carry out enhanced services on behalf of the Council as this was essential with the Puffin Festival and bank holiday weekend. The operative would work 9am-1pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday returning for an hour between 4.30pm and 6.30pm on these days to check bins and lock public toilets.

The employed Operative is a former NCC Neat team worker who comes highly recommended and would be paid at Band 3 SCP 14; this would be reviewed for satisfactory performance at end of contract and backdated to SCP16. An agreement had been made with NCC for the use of a van, the Town Council would cover the insurance costs of this, the operative would also have access to the Amble Depot.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm