

## **AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018**

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 27 September 2018 at 18.00 in the Town Council Office, Fourways 2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

**PRESENT:** Cllr H Lewis (Chair), I Parks, C Weir, M Horn, J Dargue,

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

A site visit of the West Cemetery was carried out prior to the meeting.

### **Update from visit to West Cemetery.**

NCC to be advised that the area in front of the new fence is ready to be prepared and grass seeded.

Clerk

Compound/office gate lock need attention as would not open.

Clerk

1 x tree in the compound needs assessed. If NCC are not able to carry out the work then the tree surgeon is to be engaged due to urgency.

Clerk

The battery of the John Deere tractor is not holding its charge. Clerk to check if this was tested during the last service. Councillors to be advised of the cost of the last service.

Clerk

### **71: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies received from Cllrs Morrison.

### **72: DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:**

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

Cllr Weir declared an interest in Pride in Amble.

### **73: 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.

#### **73:1 Amble Allotment Holders Society Report**

Michael Forrest, Chairman, attended on behalf of AAHS. He explained that many allotment holders do not realise that Amble Town Council are the land owners and therefore do not understand why the Council is involved in the running of the allotments.

Many tenants (at least 82) have not returned their signed Allotment rules for 2018. Many are not interested in paperwork. They just want to get on with their allotments.

Cllr Lewis expressed appreciation that the Committee is continuing to work towards rectifying some of the current problems.

Cllr Weir asked if the AAHS still produces a newsletter, and if not, whether it might be a good idea to reinstate this as a means of communicating with tenants. ATC would be happy to print the newsletter, as has been offered in the past. The ATC crest could be included on the newsletter to try to raise awareness of their ownership.

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

Mr. Forrest advised that Lee Taylor has resigned from the post as secretary and Simon Baxter will take over this role. Paul Kielty will be assisting him. Mr. Forrest will make this suggestion to them and also that Simon may like to come for a chat with Councillors in the future.

Cllr Lewis asked if tenants with gas bottles and flammable liquids have displayed warning signs on their gates yet. Mr. Forrest advised that the signs are now available from the allotment hut and he will make a push for tenants to get this done asap. Cllr Dargue suggested that these could be given out when people are purchasing items from the shop or paying their rent. The Allotment hut is ticking over, mainly selling bird supplies, at the moment.

There were suspicions in the past about connections being made into the West Allotment water supply. Michael confirmed that this problem does seem to have been resolved and water bills are not as high as they were at that time.

Mr. Forrest confirmed that water supplies will be switched off in October when the clocks go back and will be switched back on in the Spring, when the clocks go forward.

Mr. Forrest said there are currently 4 tenants facing eviction, one of which has been actioned. Further inspections will take place in the coming weeks. If a real effort has not been made by the end of November then further evictions will be made. There is a waiting list of around 18 at the current time but some holders are expected to give up their tenancies voluntarily at the end of this year.

It is surprising how little damage resulted from the recent storms.

Amble Councillors advised that there are many strawberry plants in the raised bed area which allotment holders are welcome to help themselves to.

Cllrs are happy to attend future meetings of the AAHS.

### **74: CLERK'S REPORT & MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:**

All matters are within Agenda Items to be discussed

Clerk

#### **74.1 Allotments**

Update from the Site Visit

Update and notes from the meeting with AAHS on 16<sup>th</sup> August

#### **74.2 Cemeteries**

##### **West Cemetery Update**

- Update on works by NB Clark  
Cllrs are very satisfied with the fence that has been erected and agreed a letter of thanks be sent
- To agree fencing work and discuss quotes received  
Cllrs discussed the quotes provided by contractors. Cllrs agreed on a 6ft fence and preferred contractor.

Clerk

Clerk

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

- Trellis for the back of the memorial wall  
Cllr Lewis has been seeking prices from garden centre and local contractors have also been consulted. NCC said they would attach the trellis if ATC would supply it.

Further prices to be sought online. Cllr Weir will seek prices from local suppliers.  
Delegated to Clerk and Cllr Weir up to £50

Clerk  
CW

- Section N – Headstone Plinths

The suggested layout, provided by Blyth is to be circulated to Councillors and estimates to be sought from NCC Highways for further discussion. Cllr Horn expressed concern that if ATC install the plinths, they will become responsible for the headstones if they become detached from the plinth. It is believed the long plinths have predrilled holes for memorial attachment.

Clerk

Other ideas are to be discussed, such as a kerb to mark a clear line for memorials. Last row of section M is now being used but there are also some possible random single depth spaces in that section at end of rows towards the tree line. It is estimated therefore, that the new section may be required within the next two years.

- Update of roofing repairs  
The contractor who agreed to carry out the work has been unresponsive to calls and messages for a number of weeks.  
As this work is not urgent, Councillors agreed to put this on hold at the moment.
- Tree damage due to storms  
Cllrs agreed retrospectively to the necessary removal of a tree in the West Cemetery which was a danger to the public.

Cllrs agreed for a survey and necessary remedial work to be carried out on the damaged tree in the compound area.

Clerk

### East Cemetery Update

- To agree works to East Cemetery Walls and quotes received  
Quotes were considered and agreed.
- To discuss the East Cemetery Wildflower requirements

Strimming will take place during October with lifting of the cut after a week to allow seeds to drop. ATC has been advised that there is no need to scarify. It has been suggested that we test scattering of yellow rattle on a smaller area. NCC have agreed to scatter the seed. It was agreed to buy seed and do this on a quarter of the width starting at the back of the cemetery

Clerk

- Noticeboards. There has been a problem with the notices which were printed on

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

the incorrect material but this is being resolved.

### 74.3 Play Areas

#### Paddlers Park

##### **Update from the meeting with NCC**

##### **Update on meeting with Fresh Air Fitness**

Nothing to report at the moment but do need to keep on top of this.

The anti vandalism screw will need to be returned to the water pump. This was taken off by NCC and therefore should be put back by them.

Clerk to email Mike Jefferies to get an update on his discussions with Fresh Air Fitness and Sutcliffe Play. Also, can he confirm what any action is to be taken for the leaking valve? Paul Jones to be copied in. Cllrs needs clarity on what is needed to allow time to order what is needed in February for installation And testing in March.

Clerk

NCC is to be asked to keep an eye on the area where the yellow tape is as the tape will wear away when the equipment is being used.

Clerk

#### **74.4 Philip Drive**

Little Bo Peep – advise BECK not to fit the wooden strips until March.

Clerk

### 74.5 Town Furniture

#### **Update on works to Church Street Bus Shelter Wall**

Mr. Sample has looked at this and advised that he cannot use the same material for the wall as the floor. Sample to be asked for suggestions and quotes for long-wearing fix. Cllrs agreed to delegate to the Clerk and Chair up to £150 for the cost of this.

Clerk

#### **Update on the bus shelter for Church Street**

The approximate date for installation is WC 15<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **Update on the new seat at The Wynd**

The seat was donated and installed at the top of The Wynd. NCC fitted this onto two paving slabs leaving soil and leaves in between which was not acceptable. Highways have agreed to re-pave the area underneath. The donor has agreed to wait until the work is finished before the plaque is fitted.

Clerk

In the meantime, NCC have fitted another flag and have tarmacked but the job does not look satisfactory either. Photos to be taken to assess. NCC to be contacted.

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

### 74.6 Planting

#### Purchase of shrubs for West Cemetery spoil area and natural burial site

Cllr Lewis advised of the planting plan. The trees and shrubs have been ordered and will be delivered end of October.

Cllr Lewis has done a lot of research with other Councils about the wildflower and the supplier and particular mix was recommended. A small amount will be ordered to test.

It was agreed that wildflower seed could be spread over the spare strimmed area next to the spoil area. This could make be a nice area for a peace garden in the future.

One shrub has been planted in the natural burial area by a plot holder and we need to ensure that this remains in situ. NCC to be given a chart with the plots used for interments where shrubs would need to be planted. The whole of the section and the next section to be seeded with wildflower seeds.

Sodexo have brought on Aubretia from seed, for the planters at the Wynd and Dilston Terrace. Additional dwarf tulips and wallflowers have also been ordered. Other wallflowers brought on from seed will be distributed in beds and planters as discussed with NCC.

Cllrs

Cllr Dargue asked how the SLA with NCC is running. Meetings take place every 6-weeks when problems are discussed and in between there is an online reporting system which lists each job and progress can be tracked. Councillors are encouraged to report any issues straight to the Clerk who can action them through the reporting system. Although there were some teething problems, the agreement seems to be working well and communication is good.

Cllr Lewis would like an analysis of work to see what has been spent on resourcing, also taking into account, work carried out through the SLA and additional work that is not included. NCC feel that this is not a straightforward measurement as we need to look at the wider picture and the enhancement of the town as a whole, due to the agreement. However, Cllrs agree that we need to justify future budgets to the community, there should be a means of financial measurement. Some Cllrs do question if two operatives are required over winter months.

Clerk

As 2019/20 budget discussions will begin in November, it is important that this is discussed before then. Bill Pringle was going to be bring this up with Bob Hodgson and it will be discussed up again at the next Partnership meeting.

### **75: COMMUNICATIONS**

#### 75.1 Memorial complaints at Amble West Cemetery

One complaint has now been rectified the other is ongoing. Cllrs agreed on a proposed statement utilising some phrases presented by Cllr Lewis should it be required. The complainant has not yet proved they are holder of the plot deeds.

It has been reported that a headstone has fallen which was only put in place in March.

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

The plot holder has been informed that the memorial mason must undertake any repairs, which should be free of charge, as their workmanship should be guaranteed.

### **76: AGENDA ITEMS**

#### 76.1 Future of the raised bed area

Cllrs have been maintaining the beds and have been trying to encourage the public to take them on for the last 4 years with little success. Only 7 of 20 beds are currently let (4 Cllrs and 3 other tenants). Cllr Lewis proposed ceasing the letting of the area as it is not a viable project. It was suggested that the raised beds would be left in situ at present. NCC could weed kill the beds that are not being used now and in future, would maintain the area and weed kill 3 times per year as part of the SLA.

Cllrs agreed to the proposal.

Currents tenants will need to be informed in writing of the decision. Cllr Lewis suggested wording for the communication to which Councillors agreed.

Clerk

#### 76.2 Remembrance Day arrangements

We are waiting to hear back from Churches Together with regards to the blessing of the Clock Tower on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November. Fundraisers have been invited to both the Saturday and Sunday afternoon events. It was suggested that a general message is put forward to ask for people to come forward who may have made individual donations so a record could be kept.

Remembrance Day service invitations have been distributed. The PA system has been agreed. Cllr Dargue would be keen to have a test run but Cllr Weir and Lewis feel that this is not necessary as this is a professional sound technician.

Mr and Mrs Boswell will provide tea and coffee before and after the service.

The cadets will have better instruction with regards to the leading of the parade.

All licences have been applied for. The Town Clerk will be meeting with Northumbria Police to discuss all events next week.

Cllr Lewis has tried to source lighting for the Braid path from NCC but they are not able to supply any. Portable lights have been suggested. Cllr Horn offered to park his vehicle next to the bridge and shine his vehicle lights. Cllr Horn has another portable light that can be used further down the track. Cllrs agreed to purchase 2 lights up to £60 if Cllr Horns lights are not suitable.

Clerk

The set up of the PA has also been discussed and agreed with the sound technician.

RNLI, Coastguard, Fire Brigade to be made aware by the Town Clerk.

Clerk

A meeting will have to be held in advance with volunteer marshals to agree times and areas needing covered.

Cllr Weir to ask if the First Aid station can be situated inside the Coquet Yacht Club.

CW

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

Town Clerk to flag up with Ruth Bendall, that the Council is still awaiting to receive permission from NCC to use their land to hold the event. Clerk

Cllr Lewis advised that there is a suggested catering list for Councillors, for the event in the Parish Hall. It is highly likely that Councillors will need to be prepared to return to the hall after the fireworks, to finish clearing up. Cllrs

Town Square toilets will be open and NCC have agreed to their operatives litter picking for free. This job may need to be completed the following day as well as on the night.

### 76.3 To seek and agree retrospective approval to amendments to the Cemetery Fees and Charges

We had omitted scattering of ashes charges from the 2018 and an enquiry was received from a funeral director. Previous charges were £180 (£115 resident).

As we no longer have a permanent operative in the cemetery, Cllr Lewis feels it would more respectful if funeral directors would agree to do this, following preparation of the ground by the gravedigger.

Suggested in a designated area £100 (£70 resident). The gravedigger confirmed his charge therefore the proposed fees would cover gravedigger and admin fees. Clerk

As the law says that we must record all burials and therefore if a request is received for a general place (not on a plot), then it was suggested that this area would be in the treeline between the drive to the natural burial area and section M but this would need to be plotted and this area should be called Section S. Clerk

### 76.4 To discuss the future of the water supply at West Cemetery during winter at Amble West Cemetery

Cllrs agreed that the water is to be turned off over the winter months. Cllr Lewis proposed dates of 1<sup>st</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> March. Cllrs agreed to the proposal. The public is to be informed through posters at the cemetery and social media and the website. Clerk

### 76.5 To discuss and agree the purchase of a new Town Noticeboard or suitable repair to existing one

The quote for the purchase of a new board, with double door, to be attached to the current frame, was not accepted by Councillors.

The current board has been looked at by two local contractors who do not feel that the board can be repaired in a way to make it safe to use however, it was suggested that the fencing contractor is asked for his opinion on this. Clerk

Quotes are also to be sought for a smaller replacement - wall mounted where the previous board was mounted, size and similar style to West Cemetery noticeboard. Black in colour. Board size to be decided on by ATC staff. Clerk

Cllrs agreed to a new board and delegated a budget of up to £1000 for this.

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2018

76.6 Post collection and assistance dogs signage

Clerk

The quote provided for the specified work was agreed.

### **77. INFORMATION ITEMS**

77.1 Notes of meeting with Northumbria Water

The meeting notes had been circulated and were noted.

77.2 Email to NCC Planning Officer re Trash Gate

Cllr Lewis informed Councillors of the response received from the Planning Department. ATC needs to confirm their boundary line for the cemetery extension. Cllr Horn reported that the survey has been carried out (although ATC was not informed that this was taking place). Cllr Lewis feels that although the developer has indicated they are happy to discuss the survey report, it is unlikely that ATC will be able to view the full survey.

Clerk  
CW

Cllrs agreed for the Chair to meet with Stephanie Linnell as per her suggestion – Town Clerk to arrange this.

### **78. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting date will be held on 29 November 2018 at 6.00pm

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

### **79. PRIVATE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no private items for discussion.