

AMENITIES COMMITTEE – MAY 2018

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 31 May 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, K Morrison

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

A site visit of the East Cemetery and Paddlers Play Park took place prior to the Amenities Committee.

53: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Action

Cllr J Dargue, V Smith - apologies accepted
Amble Allotment Holders Society

54: DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:

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

55: 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.

55:1 Amble Allotment Holders Society Report

Cllr. Lewis brought other Councillors up to date with various correspondence between ATC and the AAHS and read the report that was provided in response to queries from the Town Clerk.

56: CLERK'S REPORT & MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM:

All matters are within Agenda Items to be discussed

56.1 Allotments

Cllr. Weir and Cllr. Horn carried out an inspection of the allotments on 1st May and noted a number of issues concerning individual allotments which were communicated to the AAHS Secretary however no response has been received.

There are no major concerns about pot holes and weeds although there were some concerns about items protruding through fences.

Cllrs suggested there may be a need to install bollards to prevent vehicle access and it was suggested that this and other concerns regarding building rules and regulations which are not being adhered to, should be discussed with the AAHS.

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Cllrs Lewis and Weir suggested that the Chair, Secretary & Treasurer of the AAHS could be invited to meet with Cllrs Weir, Lewis and Parks to talk through the various ongoing issues.

VS

56.2 Cemeteries

East Cemeteries Site Visit Update

Cllr Morrison reported that a member of the public is concerned that the wild flower area is not being tended to correctly and that the wild flowers are being choked by the grass which should have been trimmed in Spring.

Cllr Lewis will contact the member of public and explain that they are following guidelines of the Wildlife Trust but will also take any advice on board they can offer.

HL

A number of maintenance actions will be requested with NCC as part of the SLA.

VS

Quotes will be sought for the painting of the gates.

VS

West Cemetery SLA

Cllr Lewis has a number of concerns such as moss removal has not been carried out on pathways, graves with kerb sets have not been weed killed (although this was agreed as part of the SLA), shrubs need to be kept on top of, grass needs to be cut weekly and the compound grass needs strimmed.

Cllrs also have concerns about the use of the skip which seems to be being used for rubbish other than from the cemetery.

Cllrs continue to carry out various work to tidy up the mortuary.

ATC would like clarification from NCC about how man hours are being organised.

Complaint regarding the removal of floral tributes from Amble West Cemetery

Cllrs noted the complaint from Ms Gail Jobling on behalf of her mother. A letter of apology/acknowledgement was agreed. A letter is also to be written to funeral directors to alert them of the complaint and to ask for their support in ensuring that the cemetery rules are understood and that advance notice should be given by families if any items are to be retained following the interment.

VS

Cemetery Assets Update

A number of items have been donated to NCC. A list has been retained and is to be passed to the Clerk for filing and information.

A number of people have expressed an interest in acquiring the small John Deere tractor and hand cutter. Cllr. Lewis suggested inviting the public to view the items, through social media with sealed bids to be taken, by an agreed date.

VS

Hand tools – There was suggestion to keep a small amount in storage and donating the

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remaining tools, hedge cutter and strimmer to Pride in Amble.

Outside store – Pride of Amble invited to make an offer on the outside store.

White water container – to ask if any use to NCC.

Future plans for the mortuary and compound are to be included on the next agenda VS

56.3 Play Areas

Paddlers Park Site Visit Update

A number of maintenance issues were noted at the site visit that took place prior to the meeting which will be raised with the responsible parties.

Cllr Weir proposed that the Coal Truck flower bed is relocated due to continuous vandalism. The proposal is to move it to opposite Spurelli's and ask Mr Spurr to sponsor it and take responsibility for its maintenance.

Cllrs agreed to retain the coal truck in situ for this season and will reconsider at the next amenities meeting to allow some thought into what can be put in its place. VS

A report is to be prepared about the ongoing issues with the fitness equipment and then a meeting is to be arranged with NCC to discuss the report (prior to any meetings with Fresh Air Fitness). VS

Water Feature

Cllrs Lewis and Weir will discuss this ongoing problem with NCC to establish what further action needs to be taken.

Fresh Air Fitness Equipment update

Further issues with rusting were identified at the site visit which will be reported to Fresh Air Fitness.

Philip Drive Park

Spare parts have been ordered as required by ROSPA report and quotes have been acquired for the completion of repairs required VS

56.4 Town Furniture

Bus shelter

Cllr Morrison pointed out that there is an area of the wall that has not been painted. Cllrs agreed that the artist responsible for the upkeep of the mural can be asked to complete this small job. KM

The shelter floor needs to be cleaned, repaired and then Acrylic Floor Paint applied. Quotes are to be sought for this work. VS

Seats

Island View Old Boat Seat – seek price from NCC to remove VS

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56.5 Planting

Cllr Lewis talked through the planting plan to be suggested to NCC which was accepted by the Committee.

57: COMMUNICATIONS

NCC – weed control letter noted

58: AGENDA ITEMS

58.1 2018 Amble Parish Garden Awards

The date for judging was agreed as the Monday 2nd July – Cllr Parks and Horn agreed. 9.30 a.m. start to be confirmed with The Alnwick Garden judge.

The date for the Awards Evening was suggested as the evening of Tuesday 10th July, 6 p.m.

Cllrs to be reminded at the next Council meeting that nominations need to be in by 27th June. Last year's long list is to be sent to Councillors for information (in their wards)

VS

Amble Parish Garden Awards to be included as an agenda item for next Full Council.

VS

Secret Garden completed is to be launched and promoted online.

VS

Civic Awards (children and adult groups) – Cllrs were asked to think about nominations for these awards.

ALL

58.2 Litter Bins in new estates

Cllrs agreed that any new developers should be made aware of the Council's preference for multi-use litter bins to be installed in new estates (rather than dog bins). A letter will be drafted to current developers.

VS

58.3 Litter Picks

Litter Pick dates – the Committee agreed that it might be beneficial to coordinate future picks with planned Litterbugs meetings.

It was suggested summer picks would take place before the Colony Festival, before Youth Project in September and before Remembrance Sunday.

VS

58.4 "A Boards" for litter picks

It had been suggested that an A board should be purchased to advertise the meeting place for litter pickers. Cllrs did not feel this was necessary but suggested more clarity when confirming meeting points on posters/social media eg "*Meet at the Town Council Noticeboard*"

VS

58.5 SLA Update

Most would agree that the Town is looking a lot tidier although their remains to be a

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number of problematic areas:

- The TIC toilets need more attention including a deep clean.
- A number of complaints have been received about weeds under the Town seats.
- North View pathway is almost impassable due to overgrown foliage. This needs to be raised with Tesco as well as NCC.
- Tesco rubbish cages are regularly blocking the pavement and look unsightly. This needs to be raised at ATC meeting.
- Broken glass is often found on The Mound and needs to be checked and cleared regularly.
- Weed killing process – update to be obtained from NCC

58.6 Memorial Insurance

Stone Masons have expressed they are unclear about the requirements to provide insurance to their clients when purchasing stone memorials.

Cllr Lewis will draft a further letter to Stone Masons to explain in more detail, the nature of the insurance that is required for stone memorials.

HL

58.7 Reservation Policy for Plots

Cllrs discussed the policy for reserving plots in advance and agreed to propose amendments which will be ratified at the next Amenities meeting.

Cllrs suggested that plots should be reserved for your lifetime (rather than 10 years).

Once the interment takes place, a 10% discount will be made to the interment fee applied at the time.

Reservations will be permitted for natural burials only because they can't be more than single depth.

Any amendments agreed with be applied to plots already purchased.

VS

58.8 Query to erect a Memorial headstone before cremated remains interment

This request will not be permitted as reservations for cremated remains will not be permitted.

VS

58.9 Tree Assessment

The report was circulated and noted and the Committee agreed that any actions required can be taken forward by the Town Clerk and Chair and Deputy.

VS/HL
CW

58.10 New Bus Shelter – Church Street

It was proposed and agreed that, if feasible, a bus shelter, similar to that of the High St Bus shelter, is to be purchased and installed at the bottom of Church Street.

VS

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58.11 New seat for the top of the Wynd

It was proposed and agreed that a new seat should be purchased for the top of The Wynd and the current seat from can be moved to replace the Boat Seat at Island View.

The Council was advised that a member of the public would like to purchase the seat in memory of a family member. The Council were happy with this proposal.

VS

59. INFORMATION ITEMS

None

60. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting date will be held on Thursday 26 July at 6 pm in the Council Office.

An inspection of the Allotments will take place prior to the meeting from 5 p.m.

Cllr. Morrison gave advance apologies for the next meeting.

PUBLIC VERSION OF PRIVATE

61: AGENDA ITEMS

61.1 Grave Contract – Soil and Spoil Removal Costs

Discussion has taken place with the grave contractor with regards to additional fees for the removal of soil and spoil. Cllrs decided that the charges needed to be absorbed by the gravedigger for the time-being as they were included in the terms of the contract and furthermore, because our charges are agreed and fixed and are subject to audit.

Cllrs did however agree to review the charges, 6-months into the contract. A letter to be drafted.

VS

Some soil has been stored in the compound for use by NCC for topping up graves.

61.2 Painting of West Cemetery Gates

Cllrs agreed that this work can be carried out and quotes are to be sought.

VS

61.3 Disposal of John Deere Tractor

As discussed earlier.

61.4 Allotment Rent Review

This is to be discussed further at the meeting with AAHS but Cllrs agreed there is a need to draw up a more adequate lease that will be more explicit about rental fee increases.

VS