

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – February 2017

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday 9 February 2017 at 6.00pm in the Town Council Office, Fourways 2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

PRESENT:

Cllrs J Dargue (Chair) T Barton, I Hinson, M Horn, H Lewis, Morrison and J Watson with Miss E Brown, Town Clerk

2 members of public were present.

1 member of the press and PC Donaldson from Northumbria Police

Action

181. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R Arckless – Illness, Cllr C Weir - Holiday. The apologies were accepted.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Cllr Watson noted that he is now a Harbour Commissioner.

183. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes in total)

Mr Walters – Bisley Road – Mr Walters was doubtful that Arriva would get any passengers on the recently rerouted X20 Service at the Persimmons site. Due to the increased use of the bus stop on Church Street he stated he would like to see a bus shelter installed here. Members agreed that practicality of the footpath here would need to be investigated.

Cllr Dargue informed that this item was listed later on the agenda and concerns had been expressed along with suggestions for route alterations.

It was agreed to move the agenda item 193.2 forward.

Cllr Lewis informed that she had been in correspondence with Arriva and expressed the Council's dissatisfaction at the fact the west end of the town was cut off however as the Arriva x 18 services this route Arriva do not believe the X20 route is required here, noting that the X 20 cannot keep to time overall. New bus stops were to be installed at Philip Drive/Priory Park, Font Burn/Hauxley Way & Health centre. It was suggested that if the bus travelled from Percy Drive and around the Persimmons roundabout stopping at the new bus stops it could provide better servicing to the west of the town. This was being considered by Arriva.

Mr Walters also suggested that lane directional markers be added to the South roundabout. Members informed that this should be raised with Highways rather than the Town Council.

Stephen Drew – Youth Service - Mr Drew provided an update, Chris Atoney supporting Youth Project on Friday evenings but Stephen would be taking over this role from March. Youth Services are in regular communications with Amble Youth Project; strong positive communications established with school, due to attend an assembly at JCSC next week, details of Youth Project will be shared with the school.

Stephen was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

PC Donaldson – PC Donaldson informed of 3 thefts from gardens in early February around the town, seems to be an annual occurrence possibly by travelling criminals. Attempts to re-establish a Shop watch scheme were being discussed with local businesses and this was due to be discussed at a meeting with Amble Business Club. Hoped to be up and running by spring and quarterly meetings commenced. Increased police presence where possible is being encouraged whether by foot, car or bike.

A restructure of Sergeant's was noted and Members commented that they were very impressed by the work of Sergeant Wilmore-Grieves.

PC Donaldson was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 18.24

Chairs Signature.....

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184. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL

184.1: The minutes of the meeting were agreed with amendments.

185. CLERK'S REPORT:

The Council noted the contents of the report and considered actions where necessary.

185.1: **ATC meeting dates to Youth Service**, dates had been forwarded and it was encouraging that representation continued to attend Council meetings.

185.2: **Query on number of houses built in Amble since 2011** – NCC planning department claimed 115 were built between April 2011 and December 2016 although noted that it could be altered as information filters through. Members disputed that this was correct and requested the Clerk contact the Council tax department for the figure they hold

Clerk

2% of dwellings in Amble were also noted to be holiday properties; both NCC and ATC were not concerned with this percentage at present but would watch and monitor this in the future as currently there was no cap in place.

185.3: Notes of Parking & Traffic Flow meetings held 21st December and 18

January – Notes had been circulated in draft form and any amendments would be made at the next Parking meeting which was due to be held on 22nd February.

185.4: **Amble signage Audit** – This is still ongoing

185.5: **Repairs to War Memorial** – The Clerk noted a community fundraiser for the War Memorial had been planned tomorrow evening at Amble Club, Bede Street featuring band Prelude and the entrance fee was £2 per head. Cllr Watson suggested The Council provide a raffle prize, a WW1 commemorative mug and also a copy of 'In Memory of the Fallen' this was agreed unanimously. The Mayor noted her apologies for the event but Cllr Lewis as Deputy Mayor would attend along with Cllrs Horn, Morrison and Watson. The Clerk had received the survey report with recommendations from the conservation accredited engineer and had forwarded to the War Memorials Trust upon receipt. The War Memorials Trust were consulting with Historic England due to the report containing several recommendations that included structural changes such as replacement of the roof or creation of an access hatch. The Clerk expected to hear back from the War Memorials Trust within 2 weeks time but they had informed that it was likely Historic England would recommend that the repairs go out to tender via a conservation builder. It was noted that next panel meeting to consider applications by War Memorial Trust was due to be held 31st March and then 30th June.

Members acknowledged every endeavour would be made to meet the March deadline as if it was not done until June it was a possibility the repairs would not be done by November.

The Clerk informed that she had been informed that the Clock works had reduced to approx. £12,000 although written confirmation was awaited. It was noted that the other repairs would likely have increased due to the extent of the recommendations in the report.

Cllr Lewis queried whether the advance service agreement for the Clock was being extended by a year due to the clock not working. The Clerk would investigate.

Clerk

Members discussed the possibility of removing the mechanism and changing to an electronic digital system. Whilst Members were unsure whether this would be supported by the public it would be investigated.

185.6: **Website refresh** – This was ongoing, the Clerk was reviewing all content. It was noted that the content was looking scrambled. The website developers would be asked to put a notice on the website informing that the website was currently under construction.

Clerk

185.7: **Togston Square Plaque** – Permission from the homeowner had been received. It was requested the wording be circulated to Members prior to any work being done.

Clerk

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185.8: Amble Beginners Running Group – It had been confirmed that Active Northumberland were to start a beginners' running group from Monday 27th February at 6.30 pm meeting at the Sports and Community Centre (former Boys Club) The first session was free but there would be a £1 charge per week thereafter. The sessions would be in the format of Couch to 5K and supported by Coach Paul Yeadon. The Mayor commented how delighted she was that this was happening.

Cllr Watson noted for information that the running track belonged to JCSC rather than the Welfare.

185.9: Report on ATC/Sodexo meeting held 7th December 2016 - This had been circulated to Members.

185.10: Bailifgate Museum – A donation was made after January Council meeting inviting a representative to a future meeting; an acknowledgment was received inviting the Mayor to visit the Museum for a guided tour. The Mayor would request a reciprocal meeting on her visit.

Dargue

185.11: Co-option Policy – This was deferred to the next meeting.

185.12: Paddlers Park Wet pour replacement update – Quotes were still awaited, the original quotations did not include the lifting and disposal of the existing wet pour and the disposal of the rubber crumb was quite costly as it was required to go to landfill. This was therefore ongoing.

Clerk

185.13: Precept request submitted to NCC at £174,950; this was noted for information.

185.14: WW1 Working party notes 1st February 2017 this was noted and agreed with an amendment.

185.15: Community Governance Review – The Senior Democratic Services Officer had made contact and was now able to make a start on the review and had requested that the proposed boundary alterations be marked out. Whilst the process of the review would likely be postponed until the new Council were in place. It was agreed, that the suggested change would be circulated to Members for information and the item would be returned to the March meeting

Clerk

186. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:

To receive the communications and report of the Chairman pertaining to Council Business:

186.1: Cllr Dargue read out her report covering attempts to promote an Active Amble which had been achieved via the official launch of the town History Trail, the launch of the Walking Football initiative which had been grant supported by the Council and run by Tiny Woods Academy, and now the positive steps to start up a beginners' running group.

187. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

187.1: County Councillor Arckless' report had been circulated by email to Members prior to the meeting; it covered the Core Strategy, County Council budget and local issues such as the X20 service and Queen Street upgrade. A copy is available to the public upon request.

187.2: County Councillor Watson was still receiving calls of concern about the access to the Acklington Road site for the proposed 500 houses development; he noted he intended to attend the NCC planning meeting (date not yet known) regarding this to state his objections regarding access.

Cllr Watson understood that at a recent Business Club meeting statements were made by County Councillors Scott Dickinson and Alan Hepple regarding things that were to happen (new school, area of parking) in Amble that he was not aware of as County Councillor for the area nor as a Town Councillor and also items of commercial sensitivity relating to Arch. He proposed that the Town Council write a letter stating their disappointment that as the elected body of the town they heard this via a third party. This was seconded by Cllr Lewis and agreed.

Clerk

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Cllr Watson would also be pursuing this in his capacity as County Councillor.

189. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS: The report of Councillors who represent ATC on outside bodies (Cllr Reports)

189.1 NALC County Committee Sat 14 January 2017 – Cllr Horn; this was circulated by email prior to the meeting and were available on request.

189.2: Amble Youth Project – Cllr Morrison; these were circulated prior to the meeting and were available on request. Clerk

189.3: Community Alcohol Partnership – Cllr Morrison; these had been circulated prior to the meeting and were available on request.

190. FINANCIAL REPORT: (Finance)

Cllr Lewis requested that financial information especially regarding expenditure and grants was circulated in advance of the meeting as per legal requirements

190.1: Voucher numbers 265 – 296 were approved for payment and receipt vouchers 110 – 127 were noted for information.

It was noted that the SLA agreement costs were included within payments; the cost would be checked against what was agreed. Clerk

Cllr Dargue declared an interest in voucher 283 for telephone expenses whilst carrying out Council business. It was noted her contract had now been charged to avoid future charges.

190.2: The bank reconciliation to date was provided for information with a total adjusted bank balance of £232134.11.

190.3: The YTD was studied and noted for information.

190.4. Grant requests –

i) Amble Women’s Institute – Cllr Lewis proposed a grant of up to £250 towards public address system, projector and hi-vis vests for walking groups, this was seconded by Cllr Watson and agreed. Clerk

ii) Broomhill WI – General funding request – The Clerk had explained that a grant request was currently pending for the Amble WI. As this group was outwith of Amble it was proposed by Cllr Dargue that this request would not be supported and contact details provided for the Parish Council of the area. This was seconded by Cllr Lewis and agreed. Clerk

It was suggested the payment of annual standard grant requests be discussed at the Annual Meeting. AGM

191. AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

192.1: The minutes of the Amenities Management Committee meeting held 26 January 2017 were agreed with amendments.

191.2: To consider retrospective approval of litter pick dated 11th February – The date of the litter pick had been brought forward to 11th February, this had been advertised.

Three future dates for litter picks were suggested and after discussion it was agreed they would be held Saturday 8th April 10.00-12.00 Wednesday 24th May at 18.00- 19.00, Saturday 12th August 10.00 – 12.00.

Cllr Barton proposed up to £25 is made available for chocolates to be given as prizes for participants of the litter pick to be drawn via raffle. This was seconded by Cllr Horn and put to the vote with 3 in favour and 3 against and 1 abstention. The Chair was requested to use her casting vote and voted in favour so the motion was carried. The Clerk would prepare all documents and purchase the chocolate. Clerk

191.3: Retrospective approval for the purchase of 5 x litter bins; this was proposed by Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Dargue and agreed.

191.4: The next meeting of the Amenities Management Committee would be held at 6pm on Thursday 23rd March 2017.

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192: PLANNING COMMITTEE

192.1: To consider for approval and adoption the minutes of the meeting held 17 January 2017; on the proposal of Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Morrison the minutes were agreed.

Cllr Lewis proposed an addition to the comment re: Planning Application 16/04305/OUT- Residential Development of approx... 500 dwellings, land south of James Calvert Spence College, Acklington Road, Amble.

In support of this, we draw the committee's attention to Northumberland County Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2016 for this site (0001):

'Comment on Suitability:Single access point from Acklington Road could serve a limited development. Improvements to Acklington Road may be required, pending further assessment. New roundabout and localised road widening may be required. Potential development in conjunction with site 0022 for improved access which could serve a greater number of dwellings. Agent has confirmed that there is no intention to phase development with sites 0022...'

Site 0022 is the field bordered by this site, the Persimmon's site, Moorhouse Farm and the A1068- thereby enabling direct access to the South roundabout of the A1068.

'Potential Number of Dwellings: 250'

'Comment on Delivery: Current single access point from Acklington Road restricts size of development....Yield reflects single access point from Acklington Road.'

In view of the above recent NCC's officer's statements and recommendations, if this application is approved, Members urge either a condition to ensure the safer access route or a large reduction in the number of dwellings.

This was seconded by Cllr Horn and agreed.

Clerk

The Clerk noted that re: signal cottage application that there are a number of fictitious objections on the public access system, this information was forward to NCC who validated the authenticity of the comments and removed those that were fictitious. They continue to investigate the matter.

192.2: To note for information planning decisions, planning matters pending and planning matters pending consideration during the month of January 2017 –

Members commented that the planning reports had not been circulated. The Clerk would do so.

Clerk

193: AGENDA ITEMS:

193.1: Consideration of representative for Coastal Communities Team – Cllr Lewis proposed Cllr Weir be our representative, this was seconded by Cllr Dargue and agreed.

Weir

193.2: Arriva X20 Service changes – Cllr Lewis – This item had been dealt with in the public participation section.

193.3: Communication of Labour Party Candidate – Cllr Lewis brought to the attention of the Council a leaflet posted through local doors which she assumed was for a candidate standing for NCC Amble division however nowhere was NCC mentioned and it stated Amble had 'benefited from a Labour Council' and Amble has 'done well in recent years from a Labour Council'. Cllr Lewis asked for it to be recorded for the benefit of any members of the public who may have been mis-lead that Amble Town Council is not Labour Council.

Cllr Dargue stated that she hoped a line could now be drawn under this. She was very proud of the Town Council being a non political council and having achieved so much working together as a team and in partnership with other organisations and others of varying political persuasions.

For reasons of transparency she noted that she was elected onto the council as a Labour candidate and as such her support would go to Mr Clarke

193.4: Consideration of request for Tree Preservation Orders; Cllr Lewis proposed a

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request be made to NCC to suggest tree preservation orders put on:

Tree at the top of the Wynd, the junction with High Street to the cemetery.

Tree at the top of Links Avenue in the grass area opposite the shop.

Trees behind the wall at the Welfare Park, Acklington Road.

Trees in South Avenue near Acklington Road junction.

Trees along the A1068 from Marks Bridge towards and in South Avenue. Also the tree on the opposite side at Lindisfarne Road.

Trees within Amble Parish boundary along the A1068 from Gloster Hill, Amble towards Rotary Way (Warkworth).

Trees in Dilston Terrace.

Trees in the Memorial Gardens adjacent to George Street back lane.

Trees in the Town Square.

Trees down Percy Drive.

Trees planted in Acklington Road from JCSC towards Hope Farm.

This was seconded by Cllr Watson and agreed.

Clerk

193.5: Consideration of earmarked loyalty fund budget – It was agreed in October 2007; the Council did not contribute to a pension scheme and was sad to find when a Clerk died in service, the Council as a body could not even buy his widow some flowers as there was no provision within the public purse – it was noted Cllrs paid for flowers via personal contributions.

The Loyalty Scheme was therefore created; this was a scheme for in service employees only which gave a lump sum upon retirement after many years of service or on death in service. The employee did not contribute but the Council paid 3.75% of their gross salary into this pot.

This ceased upon the changes to the law whereby all employers must pay into a pension scheme (auto enrolment). Whilst there is a need to retain some monies to fund the likes of the loyalty leaving gift, the bulk of this money was for in service employees.

It is now suggested that lump sum calculations be worked for the existing three employees and this amount then paid as a voluntary lump sum contribution to their pension fund.

If agreed the Clerk will calculate each employee's total contributions paid and provided some monies are retained, will report amounts back to next Council meeting for approval before making the contributions to the individual pension funds. This would be returned to the March meeting.

Clerk

It was noted that the amount of £16879 built up from 2007 to 2015 currently within Council accounts is not Council money or public money but destined for in service employees' benefit.

193.6: Consideration of PC Refresh – As it had been 6 years since the last desktop refresh, the Clerk had obtained a quotation for replacing the PC's (not including monitors) with online back up. Whether licences were included would need to be established. As there was currently £1563 earmarked for this purpose, it was proposed that a refresh including licences and online backup be delegated to the Chair with the Clerk up to the amount of £1563. This was seconded by Cllr Horn and agreed.

Clerk/
Dargue

193.7: Newspaper – Cllr Lewis informed that the litter pick did not appear in the news page due to the date change

194. COMMUNICATIONS:

194.1: NCC - A Design Vision for Northumberland – A letter from Mark Ketley informed that NCC are seeking to ensure that the framework of policies, procedures and initiatives that guide the built environment place a firm emphasis on the delivery of high quality, successful new developments across the County. Establishing the scope and content of additional design policies and guidance is now a key priority and work is due to commence shortly on the preparation of an overarching "design vision" document for the

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County that will inform the future design policy framework. Item 194.2 referred to a questionnaire based on this.

194.2: Northumberland County Council Stakeholder Survey – The completion of the survey was delegated to the Chair with the Clerk.

Clerk/
Dargue

194.3: Natural England/AONB - England Coast Path - Public drop in consultations are being delivered from 15th to 17th February 2017 to hear people's views about developing the England Coast Path from Amble to the Scottish Border, including Holy Island.

Northumberland AONB carried out similar sessions last year when commencing the South Bents to Amble stretch. The local drop in session was being held on Friday 17th February from 9.30 to 12.00 at the Methodist Hall, Chapel Lane, Alnmouth.

194.4: NALC Portal Invitation – This was noted for information only; the Council already has quite a comprehensive website.

194.5: Warkworth PC – Letter regarding NHB – The Clerk shared a letter from Warkworth PC to Gavin Barwell MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning regarding the lack of consultation by NCC on the use of the New Homes Bonus payment when their was an expectation from DCLG to consult with communities.

The Clerk would circulate to Members and return to the March agenda.

March

194.6: Amble WI - Woodlands Trust – The WI had been granted approx. 250 trees of varying species (blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel, silver birch, ash and common oak). The Group would like to plant blackthorn trees on the eastern boundary of East Cemetery to create a hedge and some on an area of the Braid. They had been informed that land owner's consent would be required.

Members agreed that it would not be possible to plant trees on the eastern boundary of the east cemetery as there were burials along the wall line and it is illegal to disturb remains. The outside of the East Cemetery was not ATC land.

Cllr Lewis suggested a few small hawthorns could be planted on the boundary of the central pathway in the East cemetery that runs behind the spire although they would need to be kept quite compact and would become ATC responsibility for maintenance. If other areas were needed the Council could consider planting some along the boundary of the West Cemetery that abuts the farmers land.

Cllr Horn suggested that they could be guided towards Hauxley Nature Reserve if unable to find locations for planting.

Clerk

194.7: NCC - Pre Application Advice Protocol – A letter from Mark Ketley; *the proposed changes to the Pre Application Advice protocol were considered by Full Council on 10 January 2017.*

The recommended changes were approved by the Full Council with the following amendment as set out below:

- *An assessment will be made by the Principal Planning Officer when allocating minor pre-application enquiries and where appropriate Town and Parish Councils will be consulted.*

I understand that a number of local councils are concerned that they will not be consulted on enquiries which are marked as confidential. Unfortunately the Planning Department is unable to consult on confidential enquiries. This is because confidential enquiries are commercially sensitive. However, I can reassure you that developers will be encouraged to engage with Town and Parish councils as soon as they are able to and prior to submitting a planning application. This was noted.

194.8: North Northumberland Policing Sectors – The Clerk informed that as a result of government cuts Northumbria Police has had to review staffing levels across the North Northumberland Area.

A review of Neighbourhood Supervision was conducted by the Senior Management Team and the Supervision has been reduced from 5 to 4 Sergeants.

Sgt Ian Forster would now cover Amble and Rural Morpeth (Hadston / Broomhill / Red Row / Widdrington / Druridge / Cresswell / Acklington HMP) the change would take effect

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from 20th February.

The Clerk had extended an invitation to Sgt Forster to a future Town Council meeting and also a separate meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair to discuss progress on CCTV.

The Clerk had also thanked Sgt Wilmore-Grieves thanking her for the excellent work she has done whilst responsible for Amble.

195. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

The Council noted the following information items.

195.1: Unauthorised obstructions Guidance 2016

195.2: NALC Enews 10 January 2017

195.3: NALC Enews 17 January 2017

195.4: NALC Enews 24 January 2017

195.5: CAN News: Village halls support, housing plans and more

195.6: NHS Stake Holder Update - Public consultation Rothbury Community Hospital

196. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

196:1 The next Meeting will be on Thursday 9th March 2017 at. 6.00pm. in the Town Council Office, Fourways 2, 6 Dilston Terrace.

It was resolved under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public will be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda due to their sensitive nature and no recordings of proceedings shall take place.

All remaining press and public left the meeting.

PUBLIC VERSION OF PRIVATE

197: MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 12 January 2017 were agreed as a true record.

198: PRIVATE REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

198.1: ARCH meeting - The ARCH notes were to be circulated to Members and returned to the March meeting for consideration. Clerk

198.2: Town Liaison meeting held with Ruth Bendell – The notes of the meeting were outstanding and would be done and circulated prior to the March meeting. Clerk

198.3: ADT– Cllr Weir was not present to provide an update.

198.4: Notes of meeting Coastal Communities Team – Cllr Weir's notes of the inaugural meeting had been circulated and a subsequent meeting had been held to put forward items from the Council of potential projects. We would await the notes of the meeting where the projects were considered.

199: AGENDA ITEMS

199.1: CCTV update – The Clerk was waiting on a report of the survey of locations.

199.2: Update regarding potential disposal of land – Further information was awaited.

199.3: Meeting with solicitor re: tenancy agreements/ land issues –a meeting was due to take place on 15th February with Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair.

199.4: Meeting with Greg Gavin & Ray Wealleans – The notes of this meeting were still to be done.

199.5: Staff Appraisals/Personal Performance Reviews – The Clerk's appraisal had been completed by the Chair. The Environmental Operative's Appraisal would be carried out next week and the Administration Assistant's in the next 2 weeks. Summaries would be brought to the March meeting.

The meeting closed at 21.03

Chairs Signature.....

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Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Chairs Signature.....