

Clerks Report – December 2020

BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

There is no update

FINANCIAL REPORT:

To consider voucher numbers 200 – 228 for payment and receipt vouchers 55 – 59

Cllr Weir declares an interest in payment voucher 214.

Cllr Lewis declares an interest in payment vouchers 201, 202, 203

To discuss the first draft of the 2021-2022 budget and precept request

This will be the second time the draft budget has been put to Council for discussion. Members are asked to consider the budget and raise any suggestions or ideas.

To note the outcome of the Accountability and Governance Review 2019-20 from PKF Littlejohn and to discuss actions arising from it

The External Audit has been completed and signed off. One point was raised relating to the date to which the Audit was signed by the RFO was after the date it had been signed by the Chair. In future, the RFO must sign and date the forms before the Chair.

AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Members are asked to note the minutes

To discuss the outcome of the Interim Tree Inspection

The tree inspection was booked for 30 November with a specific instruction to also include the ones in the Memorial Gardens.

Members are asked to agree to the works identified in the report however on viewing the report it became clear that there had not been any survey done of the trees in the Memorial Gardens. Staff have queried this with the tree surgeon who has since said he requires a site visit and a plan of the area before he can carry out the assessment. It appears this omission has been an error on his part perhaps not fully reading the original request.

There was some communication error on the morning of the inspection which resulted in Cllr Weir being unable to meet the tree surgeon.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

ATC are now aware that the Turner Street Car Park planning application has been approved.

AGENDA ITEMS:

To discuss Councils response to additional cycle provision locations within the town

The proposed cycle locations have been circulated. Members are required to submit their comments to ask@amble.gov.uk so that these can be collated and returned.

To receive an update the preliminary meeting with Know Your Town

Cllr Weir and Cllr Bewley have met with Barry Holmes of Know Your Town. Notes of this meeting will be circulated. Members are asked to consider involvement in this and how it could link in with Amble Connect.

To discuss the decision letter regarding Broomhill Street, Runciman Way, Leazes Street and Percy Drive, Amble.

After numerous complaints regarding inconsiderate parking, especially during peak times, NCC have agreed to paint double yellow lines on the above residential streets.

To discuss the query regarding partial interment of ashes and determine the subsequent fee

Staff have been contacted regarding the partial interment of ashes at Amble West. This had been previously been discussed at the Amenities Committee with the recommendation that the fee for this be charged at £200.

To receive an update from the Contractor re Paddlers Park flooding and discuss possible options available.

Jimmy Reith from NCC has been contacted for an update which will be circulated once received.

To note an update on the Seafarers Memorial if available

Planning permission remains outstanding due to the specific drawings and designs requested by NCC. The contractor has been asked to provide these, but it is understood that this is more work that he anticipated and is becoming a greater task. The Clerk is to contact him and ask if he would rather ATC asked another firm to supply the drawings.

To discuss the temporary 80th Anniversary Commemorative board for the Dredger Coquet Mouth

Due to the constrictions of the Covid regulations and the extra workload thus created for Ken Henderson in his professional capacity at NCC, it has not been possible to progress the design, costing or funding for this information board. If members are agreeable, in order to still erect something to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the disaster, Cllr Lewis and her husband are prepared to fund a smaller board, using the same materials as that used in other commissioned signage. This should last until the original information board can be progressed.

To discuss nominations for the cycle donations

As yet, despite advertisement on social media and website there has been no nominations forthcoming.

COMMUNICATIONS

Contact details for Highways Programme

Members to note

To note the information from Northumberland Library Services

Members to note. This has been shared on social media.

To note the email received regarding concerns of swimming at the Little Shore

Cllr Weir received the email circulated regarding concerns of swimming at the little shore with strong currents. Cllr Weir has advised that they contact Warkworth Harbour Commissioners.

NALC News 25/11, 2/12

Members to note. The Clerk will be on Elections briefing on 8/12

INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

To note the dates in Border Links December diary

Members to note

To note the minutes of the meeting with Bill Pringle 19 November

Members to note

To note the outcome of the Turner Street Car Park Planning Application

Members to note

PRIVATE

AGENDA ITEMS

Legal Update

The latest communication from the legal team states that They concede that the time to prove intention to develop is at the hearing. Any evidence that has accrued since the defence and counterclaim was served will still be admissible and relevant, albeit we may have to apply for permission to rely on it at trial or shortly beforehand. We would have to show a good reason for it not being disclosed before now.

Nicholson Morgan also confirm that it is still his intention to vacate and that he does not intend to seek a new lease at trial- yet he wishes to recover his costs from Council.

It is unclear how he can reconcile those two intentions. Hay and Kilner do not agree with his interpretation of Councils entitlement to claim mesne profits (rent) being contingent upon the court ordering a new lease. If he intends to attend trial and concede that he does not want to seek a new lease then he would necessarily have to concede that Council are entitled to possession, and faces liability for costs and mesne profits for having occupied the site without payment to Council.

Hay and Kilner were asked their thoughts on whether they thought it would be worthwhile securing a letter from Rocstone to show intention to develop however on further discussion on this, and having to justify why it was not submitted earlier with the previous evidence, it was agreed to leave this at the moment. If necessary, it can be added as a side letter at a later date.

Nicholson Morgan remain adamant that Council should reconsider the settlement offered on 25 October which asks to bear their costs. Hay and Kilner advise against agreeing to this but asked Council to consider whether they would agree to submit a counteroffer and waive the rental due. After discussion between the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk it was decided that at this stage we would not offer this as the contentious issue is the costs so this would likely not be acceptable.

Hay & Kilner were asked to again send a strong response, mentioning that having stated his intention to the court (in an application to delay the proceedings) to vacate once he received planning permission on his new site, he cannot then argue that he wishes to stay.

The Clerk awaits a response from Hay and Kilner.

To receive an update on grave digging contract

The contractor has confirmed he is able to continue to carry out his contract with ATC

To receive an update on Town Centre Parking if available

The Turner Street Car Park Planning Application has been approved as previously reported

To receive an update on Wellbeing Christmas Gifts idea

As discussed at the last Town Council meeting, work has been continuing with schools and the care home. Both first schools are keen to be involved and are ordering what they need or colouring books and pencils of which the Council will reimburse. JCSC have been harder to reach but we have suggested that perhaps some time in the New Year if they are able to think about a piece of equipment that they would like to contact us- Cllr Parks has managed to talk to JCSC and this is being progressed. Dolphin View Care Home were contacted to ask if the residents would like some old movies bought for them. The care home was thrilled with this as they have recently purchased a smart tv and were going to introduce movie nights. The manager is to contact the Clerk with a list of DVD titles that the residents have chosen. They did also mention that some of the residents liked to colour so asked if we could also include some adult colouring in books and pencils too.