

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – JANUARY 2021

The Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 14 January 2021 at 6.00pm via Zoom conferencing.

Members and the public were reminded they would be muted unless speaking.
Requests to speak would be signaled by a raised/waved hand.
Members were therefore asked to signal agreement by a 'thumbs up' gesture.

PRESENT:

Cllrs Craig Weir, (Chair), Cllrs H Lewis, I Parks, J Watson, K Morrison, J Dargue, D Bewley, T Hinton, V Smith - Town Clerk.

APOLOGIES

None

170.PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)

Ian Smith from Northumberland Gazette was in attendance.

170.1 To receive a brief report from Northumbria Police if available

The report was circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the ASB at Church Street Bus Shelter had reduced but it is thought that this was to do with the recent lockdown and increased police presence.

It was also noted there had not been many COVID-19 breaches.

171.BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

To receive an update on the Governance Review

The Council has been informed that the request to increase the number of Cllrs had been declined. Members were asked to apply again once more house had been built. Cllr Watson recommended that members apply again more formally and quote the figures we have to support our request. Members felt the current system was disproportionate in area. In the meantime, Members agreed to continue to work together on the town as a whole in spite of the ward system.

It was queried what criteria in terms of demographic sizes needed to be met before the request would be looked upon more favorably but it would seem that there is no clear guidance for this. It was also agreed to request clarification on the removal of wards from the parish. Clerk to action.

Clerk

172. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL

172.1: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2020, items 151 – 169.2

The minutes were approved.

Cllr Watson gave an update on the Church Street Bus Shelter. There has been delays due to COVID-19 and staffing issues with the NCC lighting team.

Cllr Watson gave an update on the removal of the dumpy bags at the end of the Little Shore.

173. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerks Report was accepted.

174 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:

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

174.1: Chairman

Cllr Weir has been involved in the presentation of wellbeing gifts to Dolphin View and Amble Links and Amble First Schools. JCSC are still to determine which books they would like.

Cllr Weir had been made aware of an attack on a council worker in Alnwick and had contacted the team to express his and our sentiments.

174.2: Vice Chairman

Chairs Signature.....

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Cllr Lewis has updates on activity listed throughout the agenda.

175. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

175.1: To receive a report from County Councillor Clark:

Cllr Clarks report was circulated in advance. The Rights of Way, pavement and verge issues on Percy Drive was noted.

175.2: To receive a report from County Councillor Watson:

Cllr Watson gave an update on the Turner Street Car Park. It was felt that NCC received a lot of criticism due to fake news being reported and emphasised that NCC have a duty to its taxpayers to ensure that value for money is secured. The car park works will begin as soon as is possible.

Cllr Watson is continuing to work on issues with Gloster Hill development over problems there.

Cllr Watson gave a COVID-19 update. Northumberland had turned a corner with around 194 cases per 100,000 compared to 367 cases per 100,000 a couple of weeks ago. Nevertheless, Cllr Watson stressed that the restrictions must still be adhered to if we were going to bring the virus under control. 10% of Northumberland has now been vaccinated. This is expected to rise to 20% by the end of next week.

Cllr Watson also reported that the majority of Northumberland schools have decided to give vouchers to parents rather than send food packages home, so the images in the press recently relating to this does not affect Northumberland.

Cllr Watson confirmed that there had been speculation that the JCSC renovation had once again been put on the back burner, however, he confirmed that there had still been £16m allocated for this once it has been decided what the plans were.

Cllr Watson had previously asked members to support his purchase of an interactive speed sign on Acklington Road. Members had asked for going costs prior to approval. The sign would be guaranteed for the first 5 years and then would be the responsibility of ATC. Members agreed to support this and make budget preparations for the future.

Cllr Watson made members aware of preliminary discussions regarding the A1068 pathway to link both JCSC sites. This would need permission of the landowners and would also have to be a multiagency piece of work, but all felt this was a worthwhile investigation and would also benefit the many children who walk to both school sites along the main road. ATC had had initial discussions with the school who were very keen to see this happening. It is hoped that this could be the result of some S106 agreement. NCC are to find out costs and investigate further. It was also queried whether there would be any plans to have adequate lighting here. Cllr Watson to keep members updated.

Cllr Watson was unable to provide an update on the ANPR cameras but confirmed the funding had been allocated.

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

176.1 To receive the report of Councillors who represent ATC on outside bodies

Cllr Weir attended once again to fix the Christmas Tree that had been moved by severe winds. Many thanks to all of those who attended to assist on Christmas Eve.

Cllr Weir, Lewis, Hinton and Parks also attended the SLA meeting with NCC.

Cllr Weir made members aware of the census taking place in March.

Cllr Parks and Morrison made members aware of the request for a letter of support from Amble Youth Project in regard to their Drug Prevention Programme so that they may access additional funding. Members agreed, Clerk to draft a response.

Clerk

177. FINANCIAL REPORT:

177.1 To consider voucher numbers 229– 254 for payment and receipt vouchers 60 - 69 for information

The payments and receipts were approved.

Chairs Signature.....

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177.2 Bank Reconciliation

Noted

177.3 YTD figures

Noted

177.4 Grant requests

- **Hospice Care North Northumberland**

The request was noted. Members felt they were unable to support with the full amount but agreed to support with a donation of £50.00

Clerk

- **Bailiffgate Museum**

The request was noted. Members agreed to donate £50.00

Clerk

177.5 To note response re: May election costs

Members were made aware that it was likely that parishes would be required to pay the postal votes costs for the upcoming Election. Further clarification of the full details has been asked for. There is speculation that government may delay the elections. If the elections do not take place, members may be asked if they would be prepared to stay in position until such a time as an election can take place. With this in mind, ahead of the next meeting, members were asked to consider what they would intend to do should this be the case. The issue will then be discussed in full at the next meeting.

Clerk

177.6 To discuss and agree the final draft of the 2021-2022 budget and precept request

Members unanimously agreed the 2021 – 22 precept request of £211.340.

Clerk

178. AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

178.1 To seek approval for tree works to Amble East Cemetery

A quote of £280.00 was agreed.

The following items were updated at the chair's discretion:

An update was given regarding the plantings at the East Allotment. NCC have made a great job using these to fill potholes. If possible, they have been asked if they would do the couple at the main entrance too.

179: PLANNING COMMITTEE

179.1: To note the planning outcomes for December 2020

Noted

179.2 To note Councils response to felling of tree application on which members were not formally consulted.

NCC have apologised for the error.

179.3 To receive an update in respect of the letter sent to NCC re planning application 20/03189/FUL | Proposed two storey rear extension | 102 Queen Street Amble NE65 0DQ

A letter has been sent and we await a response.

179.4 To note Council's letter regarding lack of notification of applications

Noted

179.5 To note response of enquiry to planning department regarding repairs to War Memorial

NCC agreed that as this work would not affect the integrity of the memorial that consent was not required, however they did request to know the materials that the contractor intends using. Contractors are currently being sourced and being asked to supply this information in their quotation.

179.6 To note response re: problems from Persimmon development, Percy Drive

A letter was sent to NCC regarding the issues arising from the new development. In terms of the tree removal, this needs to be dealt with direct with Persimmons. Since the original letter was sent the grass verges have had new turf laid and grass seeded. All workers now park elsewhere. Cllr Clark

Chairs Signature.....

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is also addressing the issue with the Rights of Way.

180. AGENDA ITEMS:

180.1 To discuss the request to join a Rural / Market Town Group Nationwide

They request was discussed however it was not felt that this was within the remit of ATC. It was also felt that the strategic plan overlaps with much of the detail of the group and was a duplication of work.

180.2 To discuss received quotations for works to High Street Garden

Three quotes had been received. Quote one £800, quote two £932, quote three £725.

All contractors had been used before and gave satisfactory work. Members decided to appoint contractor 3 provided that a site visit took place before work begins.

180.3 To approve the Newspaper

Approved. Many thanks to Cllr Lewis.

180.4 To seek retrospective approval for Councils response Anne Marie Trevelyan re the Sewage Bill due to be discussed on 15 January 2021.

Retrospective approval to write to the local MP was requested and approved.

180.5 To discuss request for speed sign on A1068, nr Alnwick Way

A resident has requested that a speed sign be placed on the A1068 nr Morrison's where the speed van regularly sits. Members considered the request however felt that for as long as the speed van attended, that this was a better deterrent than the signage. Discussion also took place regarding the speeding on Percy Drive. It was queried if another sign was to be put in place, it would be better placed on Percy Drive. Clerk to send the request to Terry Clark for investigation.

180.6 To receive an update on the cycle donation and hand over

The winners were picked at random. A handover is being arranged.

180.7 To receive an update on the insurance claim re East Cemetery Wall after RTA

The damaged wall at the East Cemetery has been reported to the insurers. A claim has been logged and we await further information. In advance of this, quotes are being obtained for the repairs to the wall.

180.8 To receive an update if available regarding the offer of free trees

Friends of the Earth have been contacted. We await to hear if the location at the west cemetery is suitable as per their criteria. If so, NCC would be asked to plant. Clerk to also get ATCs name on the list for the NCC tree donation when it next comes around.

180.9 To receive an update on the Coquet Mouth Signage

The Coquet Mouth signage was erected in time for the 80th Anniversary. Many thanks to Cllr Weir and Maggie, Cllr Lewis and Michael and all others who have helped. There is some debate about the location of the wreckage stated on the sign, however, this is what is stated in the Admiralty Wreckage Report from the time. Clerk to send details to Ian Smith.

180.10 To receive an update on the Seafarers Memorial

The seafarer's memorial is finally out for consultation on the NCC planning portal. Ian Smith was given an update on the reasoning behind the memorial and to contact ATC if he required any further info to inform his future article.

180.11 To receive an update on the repairs to Church Street Zebra Crossing Beacon

The beacon was still broken. Clerk to pass to Cllr Clark for an update.

180.12 Update on Town Car Park

Members were pleased there had finally been some good news on this. Well done all involved.

181. COMMUNICATIONS: See Clerk's Report

181.1 To note CAN News 11/12, 22/12

Noted

181.2 To note anonymous complaint to Cllrs re: building works

Noted

Chairs Signature.....

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181.3 Community Conversation Hosts

Noted

181.4 To note the resident's enquiry and Council response re Neighbourhood Plans

Noted

181.5 To note the update from iNorthumberland

Noted

181.6 COVID-19 Community Champion Update

Noted

The following items had been received after the agenda was circulated:

181.7 There had been a large fire at the Industrial Estate. A letter was sent to Public Protection and Advance Northumberland with a request that all sites were checked that they were following all fire, health and safety rules. The Fire Service had been asked to look at those sites not under Advance responsibility.

181.8 NCC have requested that a green wheelie bin be replaced with a normal litter bin at Wellhaugh Point Picnic Area. This area belongs to NCC so it would not be something that ATC would consider. However, it was felt that it could be possible to use Coastal Mitigation monies for these type of litter bins as this fund is specifically for ensuring the dunes are protected and that people have clear routes to avoid disturbing wildlife etc. Litter bins along these routes would ensure they were kept pleasant and clean. It was agreed to forward this thought to NALC for their consideration in discussion with NCC.

Clerk

181.9 Planters

It had previously been agreed that the Wynd bed would be for commemorating the start of the national fire service 80 years ago. Cllr Dargue proposed that the RBL 100-year anniversary to be marked at the Dilston Terrace beds. Cllr Weir seconded. If possible and not too late for NCC, Clerk to ask for one bed to have RBL and another 100 in red.

Cllr Lewis and Watson declared an interest as they are both on the RBL committee.

182. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

182.1 To note the notes of the meeting with contractors re High Street Gardens works

Noted

182.2 Notes of Partnership Meeting on 16 December 2020

Noted

182.3 To note the letter sent to NCC Rights of Way Officer regarding condition of Public Rights of Way off Percy Drive

Noted

182.4 To note letter sent to Public Protection regarding fire risk concerns at some units on Coquet Enterprise Park and subsequent responses.

Noted

183. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

183.1 11 February 2021, 6.00pm venue tbc

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

184: MINUTES –

Chairs Signature.....

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184.1: Town Council meeting held 11 December 2020 – items 166 – 169.2
The minutes were approved.

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

185.1 None

Clerk

186. AGENDA ITEMS

186.1 Legal Update

There was nothing further to report.

186.2 To discuss possible options relating to Paddlers Park Water Feature

Approval was sought to send a report to NCC which outlines problems and a possible solution. Approval granted, Clerk to send.

187. COMMUNICATIONS

187.1 To note the comms from JCSC re Paid Leave for NCC Employees

Noted.

Clerk

188. INFORMATION ITEMS

188.1 Staffing and office update

Members were made aware of the current staffing arrangements under the Covid restrictions. Cllr Lewis proposed that the ex-gratia payment for home working be reinstated, this was seconded by Cllr Weir.

Chairs Signature.....