

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – FEBRUARY 2021

The Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 11 February 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, J Watson, K Morrison, J Dargue, D Bewley, T Hinton, V Smith - Town Clerk.

APOLOGIES

I Parks- accepted

189.PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)

Mrs J Watson and Mr J Fannon were in attendance but did not wish to speak.

189.1 To receive a brief report from Northumbria Police if available

Northumbria Police were thanked for their report. There were no comments.

190.BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

190.1 To note the letter to NCC and NCC response regarding the increasing of Cllrs and abolishment of ward system

The response was noted and the Council will try again in the future. It was agreed to keep working as a team rather than by ward.

190.2 To note the update on Local Election Arrangements

The Local Elections will be going ahead as planned on 6 May 2021. Cllr Morrison queried the progress with the vacancy on the Council. As always it is preferred to have a full compliment of Cllrs however it had been previously agreed that due to the Council's policy on attending meetings before applying, that it would be best to wait until this can happen again. However, now that we have more certainty on the election going ahead, all places on the Council will be up for renewal.

190.3 To note the information on Postal Vote Charges.

It has been confirmed that all Town and Parish Councils are responsible for paying for their own postal votes and this is the preferred method of voting at this moment in time. Although this Council has budgeted for these costs there was concern expressed for smaller councils with much smaller precepts. Cllr Bewley agreed to discuss this with NALC tomorrow.

DB

191. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL

191.1: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2020, items 170-188.1

The minutes were accepted.

192. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerks Report was accepted.

193 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:

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

193.1: Chairman

Cllr Weir and Clerk are presenting the reconditioned bikes on Saturday. Cllr Weir is attending Coastal Summit meetings on 19th and 25th February. Members comments have been submitted to Cllr Weir to raise. Cllr Weir and Lewis attended a site visit with a drainage contractor to discuss possible solutions to the ground issues at West Cemetery.

The new flag pole has been erected and Cllr Weir will be teaching staff how it works when possible.

Chairs Signature.....

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193.2: Vice Chairman

All the activities of the Vice Chair have been included within the agenda.

194. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

194.1: To receive a report from County Councillor Clark:

Cllr Clarks report was received and circulated. Members were reassured by the Harbour Masters comments regarding sewage water and the testing of the waters that is carried out.

There was some confusion on whether a speed sign survey should be part of the LTP.

194.2: To receive a report from County Councillor Watson:

Cllr Watson clarified reports regarding the investigative works on the Braid for overnight camper van stays. The £5000 allocated is for hard standing investigations only at this stage to assess whether it is viable to have the necessary infrastructure that would be required. No other details have been discussed. A full report will be circulated in due course. A letter from a Hauxley resident was noted alongside Cllr Watsons response to this.

A query had been received regarding the speed sign at the bottom of The Wynd. This has not worked for quite some time and again it was felt that the regular presence of the police speeding van was a better deterrent. If this still presents as issue next year it may be that it can be looked at as part of Members Small Schemes however it is actually in the parish of Warkworth so maintenance discussions would be needed.

Cllr Watson also reported that Warkworth Parish Council recently confirmed to not allow commercial activity on the Stanners. This will have a direct impact on water activity further down the river.

The speed sign for Acklington Road has been ordered.

Cllr Watson took part in a meeting to discuss the various issues with Church Street Bus Shelter. At the time of the meeting the crossing beacon has been repaired. Further discussion took place about the bus stop and the associated problems with a great deal of input from Northumbria Police. Various solutions are being looked at in more depth including raising the crossing / a spotlight/ additional signage / CCTV etc. A further meeting is expected to be arranged for 2/3 weeks. ATC had already asked for additional speed signage in the main town route but is yet to receive a reply. Cllr Watson agreed to follow up on the issue with Paddlers Park as Cabinet Member.

Cllr Watson requested some clarity on where information came from regarding a move and/or closure of some libraries. Cllr Watson was made aware of the paragraph in the NCC Medium Term Financial Plan where it discusses the finances of Active Northumberland and the savings it must make. As Libraries come under their remit, ATC simply made proactive enquiries so as to ensure that it was kept in the loop of any discussions for Amble before decisions were made.

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

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

Cllr Morrison's report from Amble Youth Project was noted.

196. FINANCIAL REPORT:

196.1 To consider voucher numbers 255– 279 for payment and receipt vouchers 70 - 76 for information (Finance)

Cllr Weir declared an interest in Voucher numbers 264 and 265.

Cllr Lewis declared an interest in Voucher 276

The payments and receipts were approved.

196.2 Bank Reconciliation

Noted

196.3 YTD figures

Noted

Chairs Signature.....

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196.4 Grant requests

- **Citizens Advice**

As agreed at the AGM, Citizens Advice are to be supported with a grant of £50.

TC

196.5 To note the submission of the precept request to NCC

The precept request has been sent.

196.6 To approve the Financial Risk Assessment and appendix for 2021

It was agreed to have the rebuilding valued at a cost of one store room now that there is no longer a need for separate rooms. It was also agreed to change the comments from the Risk Assessment Officer to update necessary only if changed. The Covid19 paragraph is also to be included here rather than in the Statement of Internal Control. The Financial Risk Assessment was approved subject to the above amendments.

TC

196.7 To approve the Statement of Internal Control 2021.

The Statement of Internal Control was approved subject to the removal of the Covid19 paragraph.

TC

197. AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: See Clerk's Report

197.1 To note the minutes of the Amenities Committee 28 January 2021

The minutes were approved.

197.2 To receive an update on the meeting with Contractor re flooding at unused section of West Cemetery

Notes of the above meeting were circulated with the agenda papers. In some places the flooding is very bad and dangerous for digging. A quote has been received however it was felt prudent to seek a second quotation. Members will also be asked to think about whether they feel it is worthwhile to budget for the whole of this area to be worked on over time. In order that we may inter in this section when necessary, it was proposed that we begin interring upwards towards the Natural Burial Area for around 4 interments and then begin to go towards the fence line for around 6 interments per line. This should create a small block of spaces which are less affected by the flooding at this time and gives some time to have the drainage remedied. An amount of up to £12k was delegated to Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk to authorise outside of meeting. All members were encouraged to attend a site visit to gain further first hand information. A site visit as part of the next Amenities meeting will take place at the West Cemetery.

197.3 To receive an update on the offer of free Oak Trees for Amble West Cemetery

The trees will be dropped off as soon as possible and will already come with biodegradable tree guards.

Members were also updated about a leaning tree in West Cemetery. A local experienced tree surgeon was asked to make safe as soon as possible.

198: PLANNING COMMITTEE

198.1: To note the planning outcomes for January 2021

Noted

198.2 To note the outcome of the investigations by Building Control re 102 Queen Street.

The outcome was noted. It was deemed that no action was necessary.

199. AGENDA ITEMS:

199.1 To approve the comments for the 2021-2023 Private Housing Sector Consultation

Members approved the comments and were thanked for their contributions.

199.2 To agree representation at the Amble Coastal Summit electronic meeting on 25 February 2021

Cllr Weir is available to attend both these sessions and thanked members for their comments.

199.3 To discuss quotations for repairs to East Cemetery Wall

Chairs Signature.....

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There was concern about discussing commercially sensitive items in the public domain until work had been appointed and therefore this item was moved to private.

199.4 To discuss quotation for the Memorial Gardens Maintenance Contract

The quote for the above was approved and work is expected to begin in March.

199.5 To discuss the contribution request to trial drainage works at Paddlers Park

Discussion took place about the works required here and the necessity to resolve the issues in time for Summer. It was proposed that the Council offer to contribute 50% of the costs up to a maximum of £1000. This was seconded by Cllr Morrison and agreed.

TC

199.6 To agree comments to the Harbour Post Office Consultation

Members had no objection in principle although there was some concern about retaining existing jobs and whether the new location had adequate space. Members were however pleased that Amble was retaining the service.

199.7 To discuss ideas for “Bettys Tree” commemorative plaque; to note contents of the letter from family members and the removal of the deteriorating tree in the raised bed

The Stewart Family would like the original plaque back if possible as it has sentimental value. Further discussions are needed on the new plaque and its location. The current tree is dying and the family are thrilled with the idea of the newly planted Nordmann Fir as a replacement. ATC will try to remove the plaque and suggest that in early March the old tree is removed. The Clerk to ask the contractor to remove the tree when he begins work in the Memorial Gardens.

TC

200. COMMUNICATIONS: See Clerk’s Report

RECOMMENDATION - *That the Council note the communications.*

200.1 Escape Family Support – Young Persons Project

Noted

200.2 Latest News from Westminster and Northumberland

Noted

200.3 NHS Stakeholder Update 1 February 2021

Noted

200.4 To note the request for additional dog bin at Gloster Park

The resident was made aware that all bins are now dual purpose.

201. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

201.1 To note the notes from the Chairs attendance at the ADT meeting 21 January 2021.

Noted

201.2 To note the request for a grit bin on the Persimmon Estate and Councils response.

Query and response noted. It was confirmed that as Alnwick Way and that estate has not been adopted by NCC that it remains the responsibility of Persimmon to provide any necessary grit bins for those residents.

201.3 To note the letter of support sent to Amble Youth Project in relation to their Drug Prevention Programme.

Noted

201.4 To note the new contact details for the NCC monitoring officer.

Noted

201.5 To note the letter to Anne Marie Trevelyan re the support for the Sewage Bill.

Noted

201.6 To note the letter to NCC Officers and Members re Paddlers Park

Noted

202. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

202.1 11 March 2021, 6.00pm venue tbc

Chairs Signature.....

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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

203: MINUTES –

203.1: Town Council meeting held 14 January 2021 – items 184-188.1

The minutes were approved

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

204.1 Cllr Weir updated members on discussions with ADT and AONB.

205. AGENDA ITEMS

205.1 Legal Update

Members were updated.

205.2 Council Membership

This item was added prior to confirmation of local elections going ahead.

East Cemetery Wall Repair – moved to private from Agenda item 199.3

Members agreed to proceed with the quotation of £350.

TC

206. INFORMATION ITEMS

206.1 To receive an update on CCT Sculpture Trail

Cllr Weir gave an update on the discussions around branding and some further discussions are ongoing around the name of the trail.

Chairs Signature.....