

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

The Minutes of the meeting of Thursday 11 March 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

Before the meeting began, item 217.2 was agreed to be moved into Private due to its sensitive nature.

207.PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)

Mrs J Watson and Mrs A Burke were in attendance. Mrs Burke did not wish to speak. Mrs Watson wished to raise the following:

1. *On 18 June 2019 I complained to County Councillor Terry Clarke about the dangerous state of the footpath that cuts across the green space of Philip Drive and the neglected circular flower bed. This resulted in reinstatement of the path by NCC and the removal of the dead foliage in the flower bed. Weeds are now the main feature of the bed and crumbling stone surround. Can the Town Council suggest ways to improve the bed such as replanting to improve the aesthetic of the green space? If not could a junior swing and slide for younger children be erected in place of the bed?*

Response – There is already a play area adjacent to Philip Drive and there have been anti-social behaviour issues here. In terms of planting the circular bed in the grassed / footpath area there has been issues with a persistent weed of Mares Tail which is very difficult to get rid of. At the moment the bed has been filled with treated woodchip to try and stop the Mares Tail growing. There is a cherry tree in the bed at the moment.

2. *I mentioned this once before but could the Town Council enhance the southern approach to Amble by planting flowers on the roundabout near Morrisons? With the increase of urbanization it is necessary to provide a food source for wild birds. Landscaping promotes environmental conservation for native habitat. Landscaping also attracts potential businesses to the area suggesting a community that cares about its town.*

Extract on the positivity of planting flowers, especially post Covid. "Researchers have seen improvement in the moods of patients who are exposed to flowers. Just being around flowering plants helps to lift a sour mood, improve a sad disposition, and alleviate the symptoms of conditions such as depression. Research also indicates that flowers can help to encourage compassion and similar emotions when people are in the presence of floral beauty."

Response – There has at times been difficulty in getting various organisations to take ownership of the entrances of the town. At this particular entrance, the fish sculpture has deteriorated and there are no willing volunteers to help in bringing it back to some sort of standard, so it has fallen on ATC and the goodwill of NCC to resolve this, work will start later this month. The Amble Inn has taken over responsibility for the area outside their establishment. The South Roundabout may be impacted by the proposed development in this area and so it is thought that any works here may be short lived and therefore it could be better to wait until this is done. Previous attempts with planted pots on the central raised section had been vandalised. Cllr Watson suggested that as this development may

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

be some 2/3 years away that it would be nice to see something here. It was felt that Morrisons might place planted pots here.

The area towards the new Persimmon estate has not yet been adopted by NCC and therefore remains a responsibility of Persimmon. ATC have contacted Persimmon in the past about the need to keep this area tidy and inviting.

The South entrance has been planted with daffodils, crocus, tulips and snowdrops by community groups. Poppy seeds were also planted but these failed to grow. Any planting work here needs to be mindful that NCC have a responsibility to cut the verges to ensure sight lines are clear. It was agreed that this would be a nice project for future community groups to get involved in.

It was thought that perennials would fair better here and there was a suggestion to see what is available in the small garden section at Morrisons and whether they could be of any assistance.

Cllr Weir agreed to bring this up with Morrisons.

CW

3. *I wish to bring to the Town Council's attention that the shoulders of the three speed bumps near the entrance to Philip Drive are in need repair as in poor condition.*

Response – The speed bumps were repaired some 3 years ago. Clerk to forward this to the County Councillor for this area and NCC Highways.

TC

207.2 To receive a brief report from Northumbria Police if available

No report available

208. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

208.1 Proposals for future meetings from May 2021

The current powers which allow Councils to hold digital meetings expires on 7 May 2021. It is expected that the government will extend this however there has been no announcement to date. With this in mind, from the end of March staff have been asked to look at other potential venues large enough to accommodate Councils meetings with social distancing. Venues must have up to date risk assessments and additional cleaning schedules. Clerk to update next month.

STAFF

208.2 Election briefing update

The Clerk attended an election briefing on 2 March which gave some guidance on the procedures to follow. Nomination forms are now available from NCC but are unable to be submitted until 29 March 2021 and any prospective candidate may request a copy of the electoral register to assist them.

The deadline for all nominations is 4pm 8 April 2021. All forms must be hand delivered therefore it is recommended to make an appointment. There is the opportunity to book a "checking slot" prior to submission.

A second and more in depth briefing will take place on 14 April 2021.

For more information, visit <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/elections.aspx>

The notice of election will be published on 26 March.

Purdah starts on 26 March and will last until the election result is announced.

209. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL

209.1: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2021, items 189–206.1

The minutes were agreed.

210. CLERK'S REPORT:

210.1 Clerks Report

The Clerks report was accepted.

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

211 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:

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

211.1: Chairman

Cllr Weir presented the two bikes to care workers in the town.

Cllr Weir also attended both Coastal Summits on 19th and 25th February, notes of which have been circulated. Cllr Dargue requested that the final paragraph regarding second homes be followed up and requested an evidence base.

211.2: Vice Chairman

Cllr Lewis' activities are all included within the agenda.

212. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

212.1: To receive a report from County Councillor Clark:

Cllr Clarks report was noted and there were no comments.

212.2: To receive a report from County Councillor Watson:

Cllr Watson was aware of the communications regarding the Motorhome study on The Braid and has dealt with various correspondence from that.

Cllr Watson also intervened in Paddlers Park flooding issues which has resulted in a better outcome for ATC.

The speed sign for Acklington Road has now been ordered.

Councillor Watson gave a comparison for Council tax figures for various towns in Northumberland for information only.

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

213.1 To note the outcomes of the Coastal Forum 19 February 2021 and 25 February 2021

The notes of both meetings were circulated with agenda papers.

213.2 To note CCT update 20 February 2021

It was agreed to move this item to private due to the sensitive content.

Further updates:

NTC are meeting next week

The events committee are focusing on a Christmas Event rather than various events throughout the year. The Puffin Festival will not be going ahead.

NALC are meeting on Friday 19th March – any queries to Cllr Bewley

AYP met and are hoping to employ new staff and recruit more trustees.

214. FINANCIAL REPORT:

214.1 To consider voucher numbers 280– 303 for payment and receipt vouchers 77 – 85

Payments and receipts were approved.

214.2 Bank Reconciliation

Noted.

214.3 YTD figures

Noted

The Clerk gave an update of the digital meeting with CCLA to discuss the uncertain economic future at the present time. In order to safeguard the funds of ATC, in consultation with the Gillian Turner, delegated powers were sought for the Clerk and Chair to reallocate the bulk of funds from the Public Sector Deposit Fund across other bank accounts. This was agreed.

TC/CW

214.4 Grant requests

- Amble Link FC

As this is a new football team for the town and they are registered to play in the league Cllr

TC

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

Lewis proposed that ATC support the purchase of equipment up to an amount of £400. Cllr Dargue seconded the proposal. Clerk to action.

It was confirmed that any issues with other town football teams were being addressed centrally by the FA.

Members were made aware that the Council had been approached to support The Colony Festival but that a grant application form was yet to come in. It is expected that if the restriction are lifted as planned that the festival will take place on 17 July 2021.

215. AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: See Clerk's Report

215.1 To receive an update on the repair to stone work at Amble War Memorial

Although planning permission was not required, staff agreed this with NCC Planning department before seeking quotations from accredited contractors. Staff have compiled with planning officers request for details of the mortar to be used; however we are now being asked what we consider a non-essential and excessive demand of requiring inspection of a sample of the mortar. A letter has been sent to Director of Planning for a response as it is felt that this is unnecessary.

215.2 To note the agreed quote for repairs to the War Memorial Lights

A quotation has now been received for repairs to Amble War Memorial Clock Tower Lights. It has been confirmed that these lights have dusk til dawn sensors and as agreed under delegated powers the contractor has been instructed to carry out the works.

215.3 To receive an update re Paddlers Park flooding and agreement to the water feature works

NCC have accepted responsibility for the land area and agreed to fund the total amount for the test drainage solution proposed for the area.

Since the last meeting, NCC have written in response to the letter send on 15 January requesting a contribution towards the water feature prototype production and installation. They have agreed to contribute £750 towards the cost of this. ATC have asked NCC to confirm how they wish to exchange the contribution.

The contractor responsible for the water feature prototype have yet to be given the go ahead to proceed. Cllr Hinton proposed that the contractors should be instructed to proceed. Cllr Lewis seconded this. All members were in favour, Clerk to action.

TC

215.4 To note the planting agreement with Azure

Cllr Weir has been liaising with Azure regarding ATC having a trade card for the purchase of planting for the town. The discount is a markup from cost price on all products but as this is not a set discount it will be different on each item as the cost price for each item will be different. The discount is on garden and planting products. They do a limited delivery service which at the moment for Amble costs £30 plus VAT for one van load; however NCC may collect the items. It was agreed to purchase from this source.

215.5 To receive an update on West Cemetery Flooding in unused section

Staff and Members have met various contractors to discuss the flooding issue at Amble West. To date there has only been one quotation received for the works. Cllr Lewis proposed that the Council accept this quotation, discussed in the previous meeting, so that it can be progressed. Cllr Weir seconded this proposal. A vote was taken and was agreed unanimously. The motion was passed. The contractor is to be supplied with a plan of the proposed layout of the area. It is hoped that a site visit for members can be held before the next Amenities meeting.

TC

215.6 To receive an update on West Cemetery Seat

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

A quotation of £400 was received for the base and installation of the seat for West Cemetery. This was agreed and the seat should be installed within the next month.

215.6 To receive an update regarding Moles at East and West Cemetery

Work has begun at both cemeteries and the contractor has been asked to rake the hills into the ground so as to not lose soil.

216: PLANNING COMMITTEE

216.1: To note the planning outcomes for February 2021

Noted

Cllr Morrision gave an update regarding enforcement works at 5 North Street.

Cllr Morrison highlighted the recent rejection for works to a retail unit on Queen Street which is to be monitored.

217. AGENDA ITEMS: See Report

217.1 To approve the cemetery fees 2021-2022

Thanks were given to Cllr Lewis for her hard work on developing the formula. Cllr Weir proposed that this formula was adopted. Cllr Hinton seconded this proposal. All in favour, the proposal was agreed. The fees were also agreed.

217.2 To seek retrospective approval for the Newspaper

This item was moved to private.

217.3 To discuss the RBL request to use the Memorial Gardens for centenary event

A request has been received from the RBL regarding their 100 years of the RBL event. Permission has been requested to use the Memorial Gardens. Cllrs Lewis and Watson declared an interest. Members agreed to the use of the Memorial Gardens provided that it is acknowledged that the event is exclusively arranged by RBL and that RBL apply for all appropriate licences etc that are required for their intended event. If RBL intend to use the Town Square they are reminded that they need to contact Amble Development Trust for permission also.

TC

218. COMMUNICATIONS:

218.1 To note all correspondence and responses regarding the NCC feasibility study on The Braid.

Noted. Cllr Watson made members aware of a poll carried out by The Amber to ascertain public opinion. On the website there were 15 for, 0 against and 4 neutral. On facebook there were 6 for, 1 against, 1 neutral. Cllr Watson reminded all that this was a consultation only at this stage.

218.2 CAN Enews 5/2,

Noted

218.3 To note the correspondence and response regarding noise complaint

Noted

218.4 NALC Enews 17/2,

Noted

218.5 To note the comms received regarding signage on Harbour toilets

Noted

The following communications came in after the agenda was posted:

218.6 Than you letter from JCSC

Noted

218.7 Email from Mr Fannon

Noted and response is being drafted after investigations are complete.

TC

219. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

219.1 To note letter sent to NCC Planning re War Memorial Stone Work

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

Noted

219.2 To note the letter sent to NCC re Paddlers Park

Noted

219.3 To note the update regarding the Local Transport Plan

Noted. Further information is requested.

219.4 To note the NCC Footfall Survey report and ATC response

Noted

Members were made aware that NCC have suggested that a sandstone base would be more suited for the Seafarers Memorial, however this is not a requirement. NCC have been asked as to why they feel this would be better when the plinth is to be faced with stone already, however as all the parts of this memorial have been donated and also free contractors time, it is felt it would be unacceptable to put these additional demands on what started out as gestures of goodwill.

220. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

220.1 8 April 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

221: MINUTES –

221.1: Town Council meeting held 11 February 2021 – items 189 – 206.1

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

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

222.1 None

223. AGENDA ITEMS

223.1 Legal Update

Members were given an update.

217.2 To seek retrospective approval for the Newspaper

Moved to private

It was agreed to add a disclaimer to state that the content of Cllrs Corner is the opinion of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Council as a whole.

This item was allowed at the discretion of the Chair

FA Investigations

An update was given

224. INFORMATION ITEMS

224.1 To receive an update on CCT Sculpture Trail 20 Feb 2021 and note the final animations and AR examples

CW

Cllr Weir clarified that the grant funding was £7625 not £76250 as reported.

The height detailed for the sculpture at Hauxley is listed at 28ft. It is expected that this is an error but Cllr Weir will confirm.

Cllr Weir requested a suitable comment to go on the app with reference to the Peace Sculpture. Cllr

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 2021

Lewis will compose a few lines and circulate to members for agreement.
It was queried if a location for the Terns Wings had been decided yet.

224.2 To note the report from the meeting of Amble Development Trust 17 February 2021
Noted