

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEPTEMBER 2021

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 30th September 2021 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr I Parks (Chair) Cllr T Hinton (Vice Chair) Cllr H Lewis, Cllr J Dargue, Cllr D Bewley, S Moore - Administration Assistant

70: APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE:

Cllr K Morrison - accepted

71: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None

72: PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

No Members of the public were present.

73: ALLOTMENTS:

73.1 To receive a report from AAHS.

Members noted the report

73.2 To receive a report from attendance at a committee meeting 15th Sept and discuss attendance at AAHS AGM to be held on the 4th of October

Members noted the report. Cllr Weir and Cllr Lewis will attend at AAHS AGM.

73.3 Loose post update

Members were informed that the repair will be carried out soon. Staff to order postcrete

75: ASSETS REPORTS:

75.1 To seek retrospective approval of works from previous asset report.

Members retrospectively approved the repair works highlighted in the previous asset report.

75.2 Update on asset work requested at SLA meeting

Members noted the update.

Cllr Parks and Cllr Hinton were still to carry out a walk of the History Trail and report back re: signage.

75.3 To note and discuss issues and agree any actions required from the August/September report.

The great majority of the seats required some work but first all supports required a through clean- covered by the SLA. Bolt work was most urgent and would be requested under the SLA.

Two seats needing new slats were of the oldest type and it was decided to completely renew all slats with polyboard as per a previous quote for boards and this work. The contractor would be asked if it was possible to use rivets rather than bolts. The third would have a new wood slat installed- to be asked if this could be done in SLA.

The seats identified as possibly having rust would be checked by Cllrs Weir and Lewis to ascertain whether sanding down was sufficient, or replacement was necessary - report back to staff.

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The seats gifted by HMP required work - HMP would be asked if they could undertake this; if not, due to the intricacies involved in restoration, they would need to be disposed of.

After all were checked, then the SLA off season maintenance work of sanding/painting/staining could be started- discuss at next SLA meeting in October.

76: TOWN:

76.1 To receive an update on the Memorial Gardens Abies Concolor tree and discuss the High Street Garden tree.

Members were informed there has still been no response from Paramount Plants after several attempts to contact them.

It was noted that the tree in High Street appeared to be also dying; it was agreed to get the contractor to remove it and start to replenish the ground ready for a new one to be planted. It was suggested a soil sample be taken from each area to ascertain suitability for conifer planting; Earth Balance would be asked if they analysed soil samples and a decision on this was delegated to the Clerk and Chair and Vice Chair. There are very few suppliers of trees over 30-40cm, however staff had found another source which members decided to use due to the poor response from Paramount Plants. Staff to contact the firm regarding availability, preparation, and delivery.

The following was added at Chair's discretion:

To discuss possible ideas for a non-religious memorial to be added into the Memorial Gardens area.

The concept of a memorial area for the community to place memorial plaques was being adopted by some areas. Whilst there was a facility within the West Cemetery, it was acknowledged that some may still feel this had religious aspects and so be reluctant to use it. There was also the facility to place a one on the town seats. If a memorial was placed within the garden area, then a suitable location would need to be determined and also a decision as to the form it would take as well as about the responsibility and finance required. Members were reminded that there was currently a White Rose Planter within the town square where community could plant roses and place a plaque in the soil if they wished. Perhaps as the bed was a flat surface, plaques could be placed around there. Members were asked to consider the idea which would be discussed again.

77: CEMETERIES:

West Cemetery

77.1 To discuss memorial wall remedial work

Although not urgent, for greater stability this might require more than mere pointing, so staff would seek recommendations and quotes from contractors

77.2 To receive a report on section M inspection work

Members were informed that a contractor has been and dug an inspection trench. Ground is dry with sand at lower levels and no signs of pipework.

77.3 To receive an update on new signage

Members were informed that the new signs for the Cemetery have arrived. Members agreed to a quote of £100 for install the posts and signs. Staff are to inform the contractor the quote was accepted and arrange for someone to meet with them at the Cemetery to show where to install the posts.

77.4 To discuss date for turning off fountain

The contractor had called at the cemetery but would need to clarify that the maintenance clearance etc. had been carried out.

The Chair and Staff were reminded that water to the cemetery is turned off after the end of October and on again for the beginning of April, Staff to check notices are in the noticeboards.

77.5 To discuss price for 2 replacement memorial plaque at turning circle at the West Cemetery

Members discussed the price that had been quoted for 2 replacement stainless steel plaques, it was agreed that these were far too expensive and to go with another material. Staff are to order 2 plaques in copper coloured aluminium composite material. The contractor fixing the other signs would be asked to place this one too. It was thought that 1 of the other signs could have a shorter pole so there was a small piece for use here.

77.6 To seek retrospective approval of works from West Cemetery visit

Members retrospectively approved the repair works of clearing the gutters, maintenance to the office roof and the cutting back of overhanging branches.

77.7 To seek retrospective approval for the removal of 5 wasp's nests

Members retrospectively approved the removal of the 5 wasp's nests.

The following was added at Chair's discretion:

To discuss reserving plots in section N

A query had been raised in regard to this; however, the enquirer wished to reserve a plot immediately behind a children's plot. This was not possible as provision for another row of children's plots had been made. Members discussed the idea of reservation but determined to keep this the same as section M and not to allow reservations in section N.

East Cemetery

77.8 To discuss items from site visit

Site visit was cancelled due to inclement weather

78: PLAY AREAS:

Paddler's Park

78.1 To receive an update on Paddler's Park

The contractor was planning to visit to look at the water feature again next week. Ideas of firmer fixing would be investigated and discussed over the next month's so it could be in place ready to use next season.

78.2 To discuss items from site visit

Site visit was cancelled due to inclement weather

78.3 To receive update if available on request for commemorative seat

Members were informed that a meeting is to be held Monday 4th October. Chair, Vice Chair staff delegated to attend.

79: TOWN FURNITURE e.g., bus shelters, bins, noticeboards, seats:

79.1 Update on Covid Commemorative seat and to discuss price for Commemorative seat plaque

Members were informed there was no update on the delivery of the new seat. Members discussed the price that had been quoted for the Commemorative stainless-steel plaque, it was agreed that this was far too expensive and to go with another material. Staff are to order the plaque in copper coloured aluminium composite material, with bold lettering. A price would be obtained for the installation of a base in preparation for delivery. NCC have agreed to take delivery and install the seat when it arrived.

79.2 Update on new signage ordered

Members were informed the new coal truck signs have arrived and that NCC have agreed to remove the old signs and install the new ones free of charge.

79.3 Update on plants & planting schemes

Cllr Weir delegated to obtain the necessary plants up to a maximum of £200. NCC would plant as part of the SLA.

79.4 To discuss a theme to be recommended to Full Council for The Wynd and Dilston Terrace beds for next year

Members discussed themes for the beds, this will be further discussed at Full Council on the 14th of October.

The following was added at Chair's discretion:

Sponsorship from Amble Inn for the Fish Sculpture and Coal Truck

Cllr Weir had approached Amble Inn new management. They were reminded they had taken responsibility for the coal truck and its planting. They were willing to discuss sponsorship of the Fish Sculpture once a price was given. Members discussed costs of plants and maintenance and agreed to request £100 per annum. Council would provide a small plaque to indicate Amble Inn's sponsorship.

80: COMMUNICATIONS:

None

81: AGENDA ITEMS:

81.1 To receive an update on the stone repair work of Amble War Memorial.

The contractor would be asked to respond within the next seven days with a date to carry out the work before Remembrance weekend. Failing that he would be informed that Council would not go ahead with him but take another contractor as it was essential this was done a.s.a.p.

81.2 To receive an update regarding Tree Preservation Order request.

Members were informed that the TPO had been received by NCC, however they must prioritise TPO requests on the basis of threat. Currently none of these trees are under threat so they will not be a priority. Staff are to write to NCC to ask if we can resend the TPO yearly to keep it on their radar.

81.3 To receive an update on seat ends from Sodexo and seat refurbishment.

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Despite enquiries it was unlikely these would be found. Cllr Parks had previously indicated he would pay for these to be refurbished and he was therefore asked to clarify what he would like to do now. If he was so minded, he could not carry on with the idea, he could pay for another of the older type to be refurbished or he could purchase a new seat with location to be discussed further. He would consider and tell staff of his decision.

81.4 To discuss new litter bin response.

A response had been received from Advance which indicated that they would discuss the idea more fully if Council confirmed there would be no responsibility on them to install, empty or replace this bin. Discussions had taken place with NCC who felt that locating a one close to the estate entrance would be problematic for emptying. As ATC already are responsible for those on the estate and this could not go in the desired location, it was felt Advance's response was not satisfactory. Advance would be informed of the request from the member of the public and a decision left with them as the area was in their responsibility.

81.5 To receive an update on highway tourist signage audit

This was ongoing with members urged to report any signage which they felt was no longer correct or requests for any new ones.

81.6 To discuss the beacon

As this had been installed by Alnwick District Council whose responsibilities had passed to NCC, NCC would be asked to whom enquiries to use should be addressed so that the recommended safety procedures could be observed. It was felt prudent to also enquire when it was last inspected. Warkworth Parish Council would be copied into correspondence as the beacon was actually within their parish.

82: INFORMATION ITEMS:

None

83: DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

The next Meeting date will be held at 6.00pm on Thursday 25th November 2021, in the Town Council Office, Top Floor, Fourways 2, Amble NE65 0DT.