

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Environmental Working Group held on Wednesday 13 January 2016 at 10:00 am at The Bungalow Newbiggin by-the-Sea.

PRESENT: Councillors:
M Cholerton M Peden W Rogers S Todd
Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk
County Neighbourhood Services Team

EWG23/15 ENHANCED SERVICES 2015 and 2016

The Neighbourhood Services Managers discussed with Members the core provision in the town while reviewing the current year programme and local schemes that had been achieved throughout the summer months. The current enhancement represented the employment of two additional employees in the town for six months and Neighbourhood Services had circulated for consideration suggested new programme options including weekend cover although this resulted in less hours being available or additional costs.

Pressure continued on county services following cuts on cuts with the prospect of more to follow in subsequent years and Members were concerned to ensure consistency in treatment of core Neighbourhood Services. The public toilet review had resulted in winter closures and a move towards the 'Your Welcome' scheme throughout the county. The only statutory requirements related to bin/litter collection which would continue at twice weekly with town centre bins being emptied each day Monday to Friday. Grass cutting would remain a fortnightly service unless enhanced by Parish Councils and housing companies. Within the highway areas liability and risk had to be assessed with the requirement being what was reasonably practicable having regard to available finance.

Particular problems had been experienced owing to wind-blown sand affecting several areas of the promenade making pedestrian access difficult and resulting in blocked drains and flooding. Work had been undertaken on a number of occasions often involving heavy equipment and high costs but it was clear there was no budget provision for the necessary beach profiling to minimise the effects throughout the season. Members also emphasised there were huge service implications of not dealing with the sand problem.

It would be necessary to prioritise services for enhancement and probably alternate the seat painting programme concentrating on those throughout the town in alternate years. Neighbourhood Services now had no budget for weekend working and toilets were to remain closed at weekends to avoid the high cost of vandalism. While promenade bin capacity had been significantly increased by the Town Council they were not being emptied over weekends leading to some localised problems at Bank Holidays. Consideration would be given to a trial with large capacity bins at strategic locations. Weekend arrangements would have to be funded by Town and Parish Councils.

It was AGREED: that the enhanced service requirements for the for the 2016 season be referred to the Town Council.

EWG24/15 PROBLEM AREAS AND WORKS

A number of problem areas were highlighted and the group considered the issues and solutions:

Road flooding problems at Dixon's Corner and the garage dip on North Seaton Road and drainage problems at the White House Corner and Church Point Car Park would again be referred to the Highways Manager;

Increasing dog-fouling issues to be reported and referred to Animal Welfare for increased enforcement;

Re-visit and enforcement regarding use of litter bins adjacent to commercial premises in Front Street;

Drainage and problems of flooding with the blockage of manhole at the Skate Park to be referred to specialist company Aimrange at Town Council expense;

Fly tipping, blockage and flooding at burn adjacent to the allotments and Scout Hut to be resolved jointly by the Town Council and Neighbourhood Services. The Town Clerk would request County Councillor Simpson to make a contribution from the local scheme fund;

The issues of potentially dangerous derelict buildings and dumping at the former Church Farm site would be referred to Environmental Health. Complaints of this type to be registered through Customer Services;

Neighbourhood Services to contact the Graffiti Removal Squad regarding the Skate Park area and check arrangements for the removal of the Christmas tree from the town centre.

It was AGREED: that Neighbourhood Services would pursue these matters as discussed.