

## NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14 September 2016 at 7.00 pm at the St Bartholomew's Church Centre.**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillors: S Todd (Mayor)  
M Boon L Burns  
R Dixon M Peden W Rogers

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** 11 members of the public

### **OPEN SESSION**

- A local resident had three questions to ask the Town Council:
  - i) Referring to the work of a community litter picking team during which it was felt there was a need for more litter bins it was requested that the Town Council use the entire Wind Farm allocation this year to provide the town with adequate litter bins. If there was some technical impediment preventing wind farm money being used for that purpose that the Town Council find it from budget or reserves.
  - ii) Following a number of comments and citing the interests of accountability and transparency the Town Council was requested to reform the Environmental Working Group into a properly constituted Committee with approved and agreed terms of reference to allow the public access to its meetings.
  - iii) With reference to a newspaper report that Newbiggin Development Trust was working in partnership with the Town Council details were requested of when a resolution is going to be put before the Town Council approving the use of Town Council premises as the Registered Office and seeking support for the the partnership arrangements and support claimed to be already in place.

The Chairman advised that as would be seen from the agenda the Environmental Working Group had been working on litter bins for some time with the County Council. At the NALC meeting the previous Saturday issues had been raised concerning the standards of service across East and West Bedlington and Newbiggin by-the-Sea particularly since the secondment of the previous Area Manager and Choppington was still having problems with collection and emptying. The need had been agreed and the type had to be accessible but with a lid and the Town Council would deal with expenditure.

The Environmental Working Group didn't make decisions unless specifically delegated.

Further information relating to the Development Trust would be provided once it had met.

- Leading from the success of volunteers delivering events and securing funding supporting the High Street and regeneration another local resident had a number of questions relating to the Town Plan. Had the objectives needed to fulfil the aims been identified, ensuring they are realistic, achievable and measurable; priorities considered; methods of monitoring progress; evaluation of progress; opportunity for residents and community groups to see the draft plan before being presented for approval by the council?

The Chairman had been delighted to hear of the success of the weekend and stressed the importance of working together. There had been much good work in the background concerning the Rocket House and positive feedback throughout the town. The Town Clerk had been asked to bring forward full comments on the plan to the November Council meeting to consider the priorities of the community and group input

- It was queried when the County Council would return to finish what had been started with the lighting programme.

This was a County Council matter and it was reiterated that complaints needed to be registered through the County Council web site and essential to obtain reference numbers for follow up.

#### **C030/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Cholerton and A Thompson

#### **C031/16 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

#### **C032/16 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

The Chairman reminded Members of the need to declare any new interests in relation to business to be considered at the meeting.

#### **C033/16 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meetings of the Grant Committees held on 20 July and 10 August 2016 were received.

#### **C034/16 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP**

The minutes of the meetings of the Environmental Working Group held on 13 July 2016 were received and noted. Members raised questions concerning the new seat at Beach Terrace which was still outstanding with Neighbourhood Services and the disappointing planting scheme at Horseshoe Steps which it was agreed would require further work for next year.

The minutes of the meeting held on 03 August were discussed and the recommendations considered in turn. Previous works concerning the sand problems had not been successful although improved for the Bank Holiday weekend. It was unanimously agreed to proceed with the trial to lower sand levels from the middle steps to the Quay Wall to try and remedy drainage issues on the promenade. It was also unanimously agreed to proceed with a rolling replacement programme for litter bins as recommended. Members felt that the Bank Holiday arrangements had worked well generally.

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 August were received and the recommendation to replace the bus shelter at the Spital Allotments site was agreed. Members felt that this shelter should be larger and of a similar design to those at the entrance to Sandy Bay.

#### **It was RESOLVED that:**

- A trial scheme for sand removal schemes and any necessary promenade**

- clearance at the day rates provided to be met from the Local Services and Town Improvement budgets be approved and implemented;
- ii) A programme of litter bin replacement be approved commencing with the bins in the vicinity of the shops in the current financial year;
  - iii) Delegated authority be granted to the Environmental Working Group to arrange for a replacement bus shelter at Spital including design and cost.

#### **C035/16 CONCLUSION OF AUDIT**

The Town Clerk was able to report the satisfactory conclusion of the audit for the 2015-16 financial year and that the Certificate circulated with the agenda had been duly signed by BDO the External Auditor. There were no matters to draw to the Council's attention in the report and the statutory process would be completed by providing public notice. The necessary extracts of the Annual Report were now on the web site.

**RESOLVED that: the Town Council approves the Annual Return incorporating the External Auditor Certificate and Report.**

#### **C036/16 NCC CONSULTATION – PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER**

Reference was made to the report of the Town Clerk concerning a number of consultation proposals from the County Council.

The first related to several Dog Control Orders in place throughout the county and the Public Health Protection Unit had advised that it was now necessary to make a formal Public Spaces Protection Order under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in order to preserve the provisions of the previous orders relating to control of dogs..

The offences relating to fouling of land by dogs; the exclusion of dogs from play areas and most of the beach as shown on the plan attached to the report from 01 May to 30 September; dogs on leads were intended to remain the same as at present for the protection of the public.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council agreed with the consultation proposals to preserve the dog control measures.

#### **C037/16 TRAFFIC REGULATION RESTRICTED PARKING BRIDGE STREET**

Following concerns and representations regarding inconsiderate parking on Bridge Street affecting pedestrian safety and resulting in delivery vehicles unable to load and unload; public service vehicles unable to access the Quay Wall; vehicles reversing into Front Street the Highways Safety Officer had proposed a new order be made. That would see Bridge Street becomes a "Restricted Parking Zone" which would restrict vehicles from parking on the street except when loading, or unloading in a designated Loading Bay. The proposed restrictions would be enforced by Northumberland County Council's Civil Enforcement Officers and any vehicle witnessed to be in contravention of the Traffic Regulation Order would be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice.

The Town Council's comments were formally requested regarding the proposed removal of the current moving traffic restriction, and the introduction of a "Restricted Parking Zone, No Loading except in signed bays" Traffic Regulation Order, as shown the circulated plan.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council agreed to the proposals and the creation of a new Restricted Parking Zone in Bridge Street.

**C038/16 HIGHWAY UNAUTHORISED OBSTRUCTIONS ENFORCEMENT**

The Highways Infrastructure Manager was consulting on the balance between supporting business and the local economy against an increased number of complaints about the use of sandwich boards and “A” boards on footpaths as a popular way of attracting shoppers.

While the County Council was committed to supporting and working with local businesses it also had a responsibility to ensure the public could use the streets and footways within the area safely and without obstruction. Concerns about street clutter had been raised and the effect it was having on the ability of visually impaired people to live independent lives.

The County Council needed to make the most appropriate use of limited resources and would prioritise enforcement of unauthorised obstructions on the highway. In order to help local communities and businesses understand how that enforcement would be carried out the guidance had been produced as shown at Appendix 1 indicating minimum footpath width requirements. Members felt that provided fairness for all.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council agreed with the consultation proposals.

**C039/16 TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT**

The Chairman referred to delays with the development following the withdrawal of funding by the County Council for the library element and county services. That had been part of the Town Council’s rationale to bring services together in the town centre and these were now to be located in the leisure centre. He opened a general discussion for Members to consider the current position.

There was some frustration over further delays and the lack of definitive information although a general consensus of the development needing to proceed and the ongoing need for the new toilets in the town centre. There were concerns over the lack of consultation by the County Council and continued lack of information concerning the Active Northumberland plans for the leisure centre/library development.

**RESOLVED that: the clear and definitive information be sought from ARCH and the County Council.**

**C040/16 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Chairman referred to the new model regulations from NALC which the Town Clerk had been requested to look into in relation to the requirements of the Town Council’s financial arrangements.

The Town Clerk explained his research during which more than sixty additional requirements had been identified and that to adopt these would have significant resource implications. It would be necessary for the Members to have a detailed discussion of the implications for changing procedures and it was agreed they would meet informally before a report was prepared.

**RESOLVED that: the consideration of Financial Regulations be deferred for detailed discussion.**

Signed by the Chairman: ..... Date:.....

Newbiggin by-the-Sea Town Council

Council Minutes 14 September 2016