

COUNCIL 09 JANUARY 2011

1 Northumberland County Council Consultation – Colliery Woodland

- 1.1 Members deferred consideration of the consultation proposals so that a presentation of the scheme could be made to this meeting and Barry Wilson NCC's Woodland Management Officer will be in attendance.
- 1.2 The Countryside Access and Recreation Manager is currently consulting the public and Town Council regarding a proposal to create 12 Hectares (29 Acres) of native woodland on land adjacent to Collingwood Road Storey Crescent and Latimer Way. The site is north and west of the Academy site as shown on the plan on display.
- 1.3 The new woodland will be part funded by the Forestry Commission and will be certified under the woodland carbon code a register of woodlands created and managed to store carbon whilst delivering a range of environmental and social benefits. Mixed native trees mainly Oak-Ash protected by grow tubes inside fenced compartments with public access points and paths eventually providing a habitat for a variety of wildlife with many providing seeds and berries for the various migratory birds visiting the area.
- 1.4 Members wished to address concerns over misleading information on carbon capture; the planting of trees instead of crops; lack of maintenance and management of existing planted areas; problems with wind-blown rubbish and questioned the need for a car park at the scheme while acknowledging local community benefit.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council receive the presentation and make comments in response to the consultation proposals.

2 Dedication Garden

- 2.1 The Town Council agreed the principle of providing a Dedication or Memorial Garden in the town in response to a request from a member of the public to be able to plant trees in memory of a deceased friend.
- 2.2 The scheme has been progressed with the county council's approval and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds had no objection when consulted regarding bird feeding concerns expressed at a previous meeting. A range of standard species has been agreed and an application form developed as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 A small budget was agreed to help start this project and consent is sought to purchase and plant four trees to be place with the first dedication wild cherry tree at the entrance to Long Park adjacent to the medical centre.
- 2.4 Arrangements are in hand to hold an initial dedication and planting ceremony in March and to provide an information board.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council approve the purchase of four trees with guards and stakes and an information board at the Dedication Garden.

3 Public Toilets

- 3.1 Priority number one in the Town Plan was identified as the provision of adequate public toilets in the town to complement visitor attractions and provision has been made in the budget agreed for 2011 – 2012.
- 3.2 Options for consideration need to be developed as soon as possible and suitable sites and cost estimates need to be identified and it is felt that this is best developed through a small working group that would report back to the Council.

RECOMMENDED that Members be appointed to a Working Group.

4 Allotment conditions

- 4.1 An approach has been made to the Newbiggin Allotment Association to permit the keeping of a pig on an allotment managed by it and consent is required from the Town Council to vary the terms of the original lease as the practice has phased out over the years.
- 4.2 It is suggested that so long as individual allotment sites to be used for this purpose are located in positions that will not give rise to complaints of nuisance owing to noise or offensive smells from nearby residents and the Association enforce reasonable hygiene and animal welfare standards then approval can be given on an individual basis by the Town Clerk.
- 4.3 The external fencing along the northern boundary of the site at Woodhorn separating the allotments from the Alcan ponds is in need of replacement. The original documents from when the site was leased by Alcan to the former Wansbeck District Council have not been traced so while an approach will be made to the company it is likely that responsibility will lie with the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the terms of the lease are varied to allow the keeping of pigs on specific allotment sites approved by the Town Clerk;**
(ii) approval is given to contribute to the cost of replacing the boundary fence at the Woodhorn site.

5 Events Planning

- 5.1 As part of the budget process several possible events and schemes were identified that would require development and support and funding was included in the budget.
- 5.2 Early work is required with some partners to deliver these schemes and an events calendar and programme needs to be established at an early date to complement other activities taking place in the town where possible.
- 5.3 Sports and leisure activities; literary events engaging school children and a book festival; the Queens Jubilee; Community Organisations event; a schools celebration and the production of an events calendar leaflet all need early impetus and approval. Members are invited to confirm arrangements for events planning.

6 Town Council Notice Board

- 6.1 The notice board located at the Quay Wall/Piazza was removed as part of the intended regeneration scheme by the county council and will not be replaced.
- 6.2 It is important for the town that information regarding events and agenda for Town Council meetings and various statutory notices can be displayed in a convenient location. To achieve that the Town Council will have to agree to fund a new notice board of good weather-proof quality and hopefully a place can be found for it in the new regeneration layout.
- 6.3 There is no specific provision in next year's budget but it is suggested that the cost of acquisition and installation not exceeding £2,000 can be met from balances.

RECOMMENDED that approval be given to acquire and install a new notice board.

7 Date and venues for future meetings and Town Assembly

- 7.1 Following brief discussion at the last meeting a draft Diary of Meetings is attached at Appendix 2 following the same theme of meeting on the second Wednesday of each month at venues around the town.
- 7.2 The county council Area Committee is again likely to clash with Town Council meetings on some occasions as it is to alternate between the second and third Wednesday.
- 7.3 John Dobson Campus is available in June but not thereafter. The new Academy site may be available but there is to be a price review so costs are not known at present. Otherwise costs for using the other venues are currently £15; £25; £30 per hour.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council agree the Diary of Meetings for 2011 – 2012.

DRAFT DIARY OF MEETINGS – 2011/2012

DATE	MEETING	VENUE	TIME
2011			
13 APRIL	TOWN COUNCIL	Sports Centre	7.00 pm
11 MAY	TOWN COUNCIL	St Bartholomew's Church Hall	7.00 pm
08 JUNE	TOWN COUNCIL	John Dobson Campus	7.00 pm
13 JULY	TOWN COUNCIL	Sailing Club	7.00 pm
10 AUGUST	TOWN COUNCIL	Sports Centre	7.00 pm
7 SEPTEMBER	TOWN COUNCIL	St Bartholomew's Church Hall	7.00 pm
Tba	Finance Committee	Town Council Cottage	
Tba	Grants Committee	Town Council Cottage	
12 OCTOBER	TOWN COUNCIL	New Academy site*	7.00 pm
9 NOVEMBER	TOWN COUNCIL	Sailing Club	7.00 pm
tba DECEMBER	Finance Committee	Town Council Cottage	
07 DECEMBER	TOWN COUNCIL	Sports Centre	7.00 pm
2012			
11 JANUARY	TOWN COUNCIL	St Bartholomew's Church Hall	7.00 pm
08 FEBRUARY	TOWN COUNCIL	New Academy site*	7.00 pm
tba MARCH	Finance Committee	Town Council Cottage	
14 MARCH	TOWN COUNCIL	Sailing Club	7.00 pm
Tba	Grants Committee	Town Council Cottage	