

C106/13 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

No new interests were declared at this point.

C107/13 PUBLIC REALM SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

The report referred to the proposals to provide public realm service enhancements through a partnership with the County Council funded by the Town Council. Members had attended the County Council South East Area Committee meeting earlier in the evening to hear of the service enhancement partnership working proposals but had to leave before that item was considered owing to the overrun of question time and Arriva bus presentation.

The Town Clerk advised that a meeting had been arranged with senior county officers for the following Wednesday and suggested that all Members might want to attend to discuss the issues for the town in detail and the relative financial information. Any decision could be deferred to the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED that:

- i) arrangements be made for all Members to attend the scheduled meeting with County officers to discuss service enhancement possibilities;**
- ii) the Finance Committee be delegated powers to make a decision on public realm service enhancements for 2014-15.**

C108/13 NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

i) Parking Orders

Consultation was underway regarding the changes in parking charges and orders throughout the county and most charges were being removed apart from some visitor car parks at Corbridge; Craster; Holy Island; Newton by the Sea; Sea Houses.

It was confirmed there were no charging effects for Newbiggin by-the-Sea but the legal process would involve revoking existing orders and creating a new one with 'no-return' time limits although it appeared that they would not be less than existing time limits. It was proposed that time limits would be enforced through the introduction of disk parking zones and 'no return' would assist enforcement which was likely to increase where vehicles were not parked correctly. Reference was made to the on-street loading bays being changed to parking bays.

ii) Post 16 Transport

The County Council consultation proposed significant changes to some discretionary home to school transport policies including Post-16 transport as part of efficiency savings and included scrutiny of three forms of voluntary subsidy to students. The full consultation document which was on the county web site had been circulated to Members for information. Changes were proposed to policies affecting free transport for sixth form and college students; students over 8 in First and Primary Schools living between 2 and 3 miles from school; provision on denominational grounds.

The options for consideration were withdrawal of subsidies; re-introduction of a standard charge; limiting the transport costs that NCC would pay for. The number of students currently receiving these elements of free travel had increased to over 3,500 at an average cost of £936 per student, more than double those other rural areas that still contributed, ranging up to £4,000 per year for rural travelers to Tyneside Colleges.

Members considered the implications for furthering education and the limitation of course options available without having to travel out of the county. All High School students from Newbiggin had to travel out of the town and there were grave concerns for an area of such high deprivation. It was thought that the proposals would affect sixth form provision across the county and that at least means testing should be introduced for contributions to the cost of post 16 travel.

iii) Northumberland Parish Charter

A revised and simplified version of the Charter had been circulated for Members consideration and comment. The County Council had raised a number of questions as part of the consultation covering shared principles; effective communication; engagement for making decisions; financial arrangements guided by fairness efficiency and transparency; local services and assets.

Some minor queries were raised regarding election arrangements but Members had no submissions to make regarding the Charter.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The consultation proposals be noted;**
- ii) The County Council be advised that contribution to post 16 student transport costs should be retained and means tested.**

C109/13 DIARY OF MEETINGS 2014-15

A draft Diary of meeting dates and venues had been circulated for agreement.

RESOLVED that: the Diary of Meetings for 2014-15 be agreed.

C110/13 RISK ASSESSMENT

A draft risk assessment for the forthcoming year had been circulated by the Town Clerk and Members agreed with the relatively low risks identified in the document.

RESOLVED that: the Risk Assessment for 2014-15 be agreed.

C111/13 TOWN PLAN AND PROCESS ANNUAL TOWN ASSEMBLY

The review of the five year Town Plan would need to start in the summer and the town Clerk recommended combining this with the Town Assembly meeting in May. The process would be preceded by Town Councillors meeting with Directors of the Portas Town Team to look at common issues and with other local organizations.

RESOLVED that: the Annual Town Assembly be held in May and commence the public involvement in the review of the Town Plan as outlined above.

C112/13 BVAL SCHOOL HOLIDAY AND LEISURE PROGRAMME

Recent events under the leisure programme operated by BVAL had shown improved attendances and participation which had been witnessed by some Members when attending the opening of the Skate Park. Similar school and holiday engagement programmes were proposed for 2014-15 for which provision had been made in the budget.

RESOLVED that: BVAL operate the school holiday and leisure programme for 2014-15

C113/13 YOUTH – CONSTITUTION

A series of meetings involving representatives of the youth services and the Town Council had been held over the past year to develop provision in the town. The County Youth Service was now operating from within the Sports and Community Centre and it had now proposed by that a formal group be constituted with objects to develop engagement and intervention with young people. Activities were to operate also from the Salvation Army Hall the Sports Centre and St Bartholomew's Church Centre. It was reported that some youth groups were proceeding so that grants could be attracted.

RESOLVED that: the Chairman clarifies the situation with the Youth Services Officer.

C114/13 EVENTS LEAFLETS

The Town Clerk confirmed that the events information had been collated and passed to the designer who had passed the work to the printers and it was hoped that the leaflets would be available for the Alnwick event the following week. Sufficient copies were being obtained to distribute to local households rather than include limited information in a newsletter.

RESOLVED that: additional copies of the Events Leaflet be obtained and distributed to local households.

C115/13 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman agreed to consideration of the following urgent items in view of the need for timely decisions to be communicated to the Council's insurers and the County Council.

C116/13 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act relating to financial and business affairs.

C117/13 ANNUAL INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Clerk advised that the insurance arrangements for the Town Council were due for renewal and reduced rates had again been offered by Zurich Municipal Insurance for one year; three year and five year cover arrangements. Members thought that the renewal should be for three years.

RESOLVED that: the annual premium of £701.82 be accepted and the insurances renewed with Zurich Municipal for a further three years.

C118/13 PREMISES AND TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS

The County Council was seeking confirmation from the Town Council of its commitment and intentions regarding recent proposals for the acquisition of premises and a wider town centre project.

RESOLVED that the Town Council:

- i) Proceed with the acquisition of The Bungalow from the County Council at a cost of £25,000 plus legal costs and arrange for the transfer of the premises;**
- ii) Confirm its commitment to the town centre project with the County Council.**

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