

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14 December 2011 at 7 pm at the Sports and Community Centre Newbiggin by-the-Sea.

PRESENT:

Councillors: R McCready (Mayor)
L Anderson M Boon M Cholerton
W Rogers

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: 10 members of the public and 1 member of the press.

OPEN SESSION

The following questions were raised by members of the public:

- A local resident referred to the very poor condition of the road surface at Holmwood Avenue which he contended was the worst road in Newbiggin and was suffering further from works by the electricity company. The Chairperson advised that the matter would be referred through the County Councillor.
- A letter had been delivered by a resident regarding a request for a bus shelter at Woodlea and the matter would be considered later on the agenda. He requested that the public opening times be displayed at the Town Council Offices.
- Another member of the community referred to arrangements made to the display of bus timetables when they were moved to accommodate changes for the Triathlon but not put back resulting in the code number on the top being obscured. There had been some damage to Perspex at the Spital bus stop and the timetables removed. The Transport Officer at the county council would be advised.
- Northumbria Police were represented by Nathan Brown and Neil Parkin and the meeting was advised that there was no real change on the police front in the town with crime static. The issues with the vacated schools which had now been taken back by Northumberland County Council were progressing. Horse related problems were decreasing with the winter months and the CCTV now fully operational again in Front Street. The new footpaths to the academy had been installed and already there was a problem with off-road motor cycles and they were looking for a deterrent being installed. The Police Forum meeting would take place at the Sports and Community Centre on 22 December.

C066/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Kirkup; M Peden and A Thompson.

C067/11 BUS SHELTERS

The Town Council had agreed to accept future responsibility for new and replacement bus shelters and had investigated the design and associated costs for metal framed glazed bus shelters which ranged from £5,000 to 7,500 each. This excluded the associated ground works within the highway to be carried out by the highway authority and quotations for three replacement sites and one new site ranged from £2,120 to £4,200.

Where a new bus shelter was to be erected then there must be a local consultation exercise carried out before the county council would consider the approval of the application.

Members considered that a minimum budget per bus shelter of £7,200 up to £11,700 depending on design location and installer would be required together with a partnership approach with the local county councillors if all four were to be carried out in the next few months.

The county council would be carrying out some minor repair works before transfer in April and most shelters would benefit from painting to improve their appearance perhaps in a standard corporate colour scheme. A new shelter had been requested at Woodlea and the roof had blown off the shelter near the Sports Centre while the two shelters at the Colliery were known to require replacement. Some comments were offered by the Police representatives regarding the shelters not being enclosed to discourage congregation.

It was known that County Councillor Thompson who was unable to be present through illness intended to make a contribution from his county area allocation and County Councillor Lang who was present offered to contribute £5,000 from his allocation.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Town Council allocate £10,000 from the current balances towards a new bus shelter at Woodlea and replacement of the two shelters on Woodhorn Road at the Colliery;**
- ii) a painting scheme be carried out in spring 2012;**
- iii) the Town Clerk be authorized to undertake consultation as necessary; apply for consent; accept the lowest quotations for supply and installation of the approved design and arrange the associated ground works.**

C068/11 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillors R McCready declared an interest as a Director of Newbiggin Arts Forum and handed over to Councillor M Peden to Chair the following item.

Councillor M Peden in the Chair.

C069/11

EVENT BUDGET BIDS

Bids had been requested in relation to the Events Budget for the current financial year and three had been submitted and circulated on behalf of the following local organisations Bad Apples; Newbiggin Arts Forum; Newbiggin Maritime Centre which had been invited to attend the meeting to give a brief presentation of the proposals.

Caroline Ball referred to the Not for Profit Organisation Bad Apples that had organised previous events in the town and wanted to work with local clubs and promote what was available in Newbiggin towards employment and education through free of charge workshops.

Newbiggin Arts Forum was represented by Laura Mathieson who explained how events had been built up over the past five or six years involving the local community using the gallery to showcase local talent and forming off-shoot groups. It was proposed to provide artists and materials for a Chinese New Year event involving the creation of lanterns; dragons for dancing and food tasting.

The Newbiggin Maritime Centre representative was unable at the last minute to attend but the scheme proposed involved a Flights of Fancy event for local people providing materials equipment and instruction for kite flying at the Church Point.

Councillor McCready withdrew from the meeting during consideration by the members.

All three events would provide good participation for local people and through co-operation and the use of larger premises a large number of participants could be anticipated at relatively modest cost. Members were inclined to approve all three events and requested co-operation so there would be no clash between events.

RESOLVED that the three applications be approved for events to be arranged for local people before the end of March at a total cost of £1,050.

Councillor McCready returned to chair the remainder of the meeting.

C070/11

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 09 November 2011 were agreed and signed as a correct record. References were made to the bulb planting event attended by local children; the meeting arranged for 18 January for consideration of the Olympic Torch related arrangements; the public toilet project awaiting a decision on the planning application.

In relation to the Druridge Bay Coal and Coast Project it was agreed that the Town Council accept the invitation to join the partnership.

CO71/11 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meetings of the Grant Committees held on 25 October and 28 November 2011 had been circulated and were received for information reference being made to the grants that had been approved.

CO72/11 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 22 November 2011 had been circulated and were presented for approval where necessary.

The Chairperson outlined the discussion that had taken place and the recommendations to Council regarding Local Service Transfer and budget expenditure.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the minutes of the Finance Committee be approved and adopted;**
- (ii) The budget allocation for grants be increased by £2,500 from balances.**

CO73/11 COAL TUB MONUMENT

The Coal Tub to commemorate the former Newbiggin Colliery was currently remotely located and rarely seen by most residents and visitors. It had suffered from vandalism and graffiti and the Newbiggin Colliery Residents Association wished to see the Coal Tub moved from its present site to a more auspicious place as it was part of the history of the Newbiggin Coal Mining Community.

It had been suggested that the coal tub was worthy of a better site and all the necessary approvals had been obtained from the county council for it to be moved close to the former Colliery Manager's House on Woodhorn Road to show respect for miner's past and present and the families of those miners. The land in that location was open to the public and in fact part of the former rail line used by the tubs to transport coal from the pit head to the screens so was a very appropriate site and highly visible to the community and visitors.

It was likely that the Coal Tub would have to be removed from the existing site for refurbishment then installed on a plinth at the Woodhorn Road location with the overall cost exceeding £2,000.

RESOLVED that this matter be deferred to the next meeting.

CO74/11 NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION – ASHINGTON PROJECT – PROPOSED LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITY

Northumberland County Council had commenced formal consultation on its web site regarding what it called the Ashington Project to create a new leisure and community facility in Ashington. This would be a replacement for the existing Leisure Centre in Ashington where many facilities were provided on a Wansbeck-wide basis and therefore of interest to the Town

Council.

The plan was to build a new, high quality, inspirational centre for those who live, work or study in Ashington and surrounding areas at an estimated cost of £20 million. The facility was also hoped to attract new investment and increased visits to the town and increase activity for existing businesses - placing it at the heart of Ashington's future prosperity.

Certain core services and activities were proposed Sports facilities, including a pool, gym and studio spaces; Library services; Café, social and meeting spaces; Access to information, advice and county council services; a registrar's office. Some additional services and/or activities might be provided including Learning and skills development opportunities; a range of healthcare information/services e.g. doctor's surgery, pharmacy etc.; Arts performances and participation activities; a wider range of sporting activities.

Two possible sites for the new centre were being considered because they were the closest to most households, as well as being best placed to contribute to town centre revitalization. These were the former Asda site in the centre of town and the former hospital site on West View following a careful appraisal of all of the potential sites in Ashington to arrive at this shortlist. This had taken into account factors such as how easy was it to get to the site for all forms of transport, and how many households were within easy walking distance; would the location allow the facility to draw users from other areas who would also spend on other services or in shops in the town, and could the site attract additional investment from other sources; was the site big enough to accommodate the facilities and services planned

Members considered the timetable for consultation on location and additional activities and services with feedback and more concrete proposals for further consultation in February and March through a touring exhibition. The final decision would be taken following a report on detailed proposals and costs by the County Council's Executive Committee with a view to commencing design and build in the summer for completion in 2014.

RESOLVED that a response on the consultation be considered at the next meeting.

Signed by the Chairperson:

Date: