

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Environment and Regeneration Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 10 November 2009 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors: J Robertson (Chairman)
C Routledge
F Simpson
J Waterhouse

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Finch, Town Clerk
Councillor B Douglas

ER027/09 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor McNeely.

ER028/09 2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2009 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

The Clerk was asked to express concern over the lack of progress on Berwick's Future.

ER029/09 3. STATEMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

Councillor Douglas described a proposal by Berwick Environment Group to erect a wind turbine on the village green at Newfields, which would meet power requirements of St Marys School and would generate surplus energy and finance which would in turn provide a catalyst for raising funds for a play park, up-grading of the football pitch and improvements to the community centre and changing facilities.

Councillor Douglas said the necessary permissions were in place, and grants were being sought from a number of bodies; the Environment Group was looking

to the Town Council for a grant of £5000.

Members welcomed the proposals and advised that a BEES application form should be completed for consideration by Council.

ER030/09

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest other than one of personal interest by Councillor Simpson in proposal by Berwick Environment Group, which was not a business item, not having been included in the agenda.

ER031/09

5. BORDER BRIDGE ILLUMINATIONS

The Chairman welcomed Tim Kirton and Bernard Shaw.

Tim Kirton outlined the events so far which had been held to mark the 150th anniversary of Robert Stephenson's death. He described the plans to illuminate the Border Bridge. It was hoped that Northumberland County Council would undertake the procurement and installation; future management was expected to be by a local partnership, of which it was hoped the Town Council would be a member. Plans were in hand to raise the capital costs. Annual revenue costs were expected to be in the order of £3-5,000, and it was hoped the Town Council would assist in meeting this target.

Members expressed their thanks for the up-date, and for the hard work to date; it was suggested that the request for financial assistance should be put to the Council in the next financial year.

ER032/09

6. LOCAL HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT ISSUES

Members raised the following issues:

- i. The poor state of the footway on North Road
- ii. Road surface breaking up in Sunnyside Crescent
- iii. The pedestrian crossing in Golden Square (markings)
- iv. The height of the kerb in Brucegate
- v. The dangerous state of Spiders Alley
- vi. The condition and poor drainage on the cobbled surface of Belltower Place
- vii. The railings on Northumberland Road, at the bottom of Shielfield Terrace

(dangerous sharp points).

ER033/09

7. BERWICK MARKETS

Councillor Routledge reported that he had attended a Market Town Welcome meeting arranged with Terry Garnick of the County Council. It had been proposed that a group of representatives from the Town Council, County Council, Chamber of Trade, Freemen and Market Town Welcome should be convened to consider the future of the Charter Market.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Town Council agrees means should be found to secure the future and improvement of the Charter Market; and (ii) the Council should be represented on the group to discuss the Charter Market's future.

A second representative, able to attend in the absence of Councillor Routledge, would be sought at the next Council meeting.

ER034/09

8. APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT ASSISTANCE

Members considered the application from The Berwick-upon-Tweed Preservation Trust for assistance towards the £3,400 cost of renewal and refurbishment of panels on the Berwick Lowry Trail, and the update of the related leaflet.

It was agreed that the Lowry associations were an important part of the town's attractions.

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Finance and Resources Committee that the Council make a grant of £1500 during the current financial year; and to consider assisting with the balance in the next financial year if this had not been raised elsewhere.

ER035/09

9. STORAGE OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Members discussed the future storage of Christmas lights, which at present were kept in the County Council depot, but for which new arrangements would need to be made as the County Council would not be involved in Festive Lighting after the forthcoming Christmas season.

The offer of temporary storage above the Post Office in West Street was

welcomed, but it was agreed longer term arrangements needed to be considered.

ER036/09

10. MITCHELL MEMORIAL HALL

The Clerk reported that the Estates Surveyor from the County Council had visited the Mitchell Memorial Hall. It was understood that the County Council was currently evolving a policy on asset transfers and disposals, but that in the meantime the Town Council would require to put forward a business plan for the Hall's proposed use if it were taken over.

A fuller report would be available on the Hall and its condition and a further report would be made to the Council at its next meeting.

ER037/09

11.PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR 2010-11

The Chairman proposed that the budget for 2010-11 should include a sum of £20000 earmarked for the proposed community greenhouse.

The Clerk advised that it would be unwise to earmark funds for specific purposes until the results of the research into residents' preferences, being carried out by the Berwick Community Trust, and funded by the Town Council with a grant of £6000, were known.

Members agreed that the amount allocated under the BEES scheme should be increased to £20000, without specifying projects until the results of the research were known.

ER038/09

12.OUTSIDE BODIES

There had been no requests from outside bodies for Town Council representation.

ER039/09

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12 January 2009 at 6 pm in the Ante Room, the Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed.