

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Environment and Regeneration Committee Meeting held on Monday, 14 September 2015 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	I Dixon (Chair)	G McLean
	H Bettison (left at 6.30)	G Roughead
	D Blackburn	C Seymour
	A Forbes	G Smith
	A Gibson	

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Town Clerk

5 members of the public

OPEN SESSION

Mr John Haswell expressed concern at poor Councillor attendance at a recent meeting with the Lighthouse Film Company regarding the filming of the Berwick Video for the Visit Berwick Website. Mr Haswell also advised BTC needed to employ a tourism officer as a matter of urgency and that the Chamber of Trade would be inserting an advert into a nationwide Coach Company holiday brochure. Cllr Dixon advised a lot of Councillors worked through the day and an evening meeting would be better to discuss tourism and it was agreed to arrange this shortly and also invite Mr Derek Sharman and Mr Jim Herbert.

ER033/15 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors J Lang and G Hill (holiday).

ER034/15 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2015 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

ER035/15

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Cllr Gibson, items 11 and 13 personal, Cllr Blackburn items 8 and 10, Cllr McLean items 6 and 10, Cllr Bettison. Item 12.

ER036/15

4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

ER037/15

5. PORTAS MANAGEMENT GROUP

Cllr Bettison advised that the choices had been narrowed down to 3 by Councillors and they were, Make Beautiful Berwick Happen, Cobbles at the Quayside which are uneven and difficult to walk on, Shop Fronts to be painted and empty shop windows decorated/painted.

Costs will be properly established and will be discussed again.

RESOLVED: To ascertain costs

ER038/15

6. PLAY PARKS

A meeting will be held on 23rd September at 12 noon with the Council's Solicitor Andrew Daverson to discuss the current progress of the freehold transfer. Cllr Gibson advised his concern at the delay in progressing Flagstaff Park, Cllr Seymour advised that the Council's Solicitor had advised that the Council should wait until the transfer was complete before placing new equipment. This will be discussed again at the Council Meeting of September 28th when all Councillors will have met with Mr Daverson by that date.

b) Vandalism Concerns were discussed and in particular wooden fencing being repeatedly destroyed at the Highcliffe Play area and also at Newfields. Cllr Seymour thought metal fencing was the answer and also had concerns that NCC had stopped doing repairs due to recent vandalism. CCTV cameras were mentioned and Cllr Bettison advised this issue was to be discussed at the October Council meeting. Cllr Roughead mentioned Blyth Council had introduced their own camera at play parks which had a removable memory stick to check on vandalism and these were mounted on lamp posts at a cost of £250 payable to NCC. Suspend Standing orders – Mr Darling advised a supplier would install the necessary cameras – Resume Standing Orders Cllr Gibson thought all Berwick play parks should eventually all have cameras.

Councillor Bettison left the meeting

c) Four Housing have advised they are not willing to freehold transfer land at Westfield, Springdale and Grove Gardens South, but will lease the land to BTC.

Councillors discussed in detail and it was eventually decided to request that the Clerk invited representatives to come to BTC from Four Housing to discuss the matter further and invite County Councillors and Ward Councillors to attend.

RESOLVED: To invite Four Housing to attend a meeting in the BTC office

ER039/15

7. SEATS AND BENCHES

Cllr Gibson with the assistance of Cllr Mclean will compile 3 lists of all 300 seats in Berwick, one list will have all seats requiring varnish/paint, 2nd list will have all seats needing repair and a third list would have all seats beyond repair and needing uplifting/removing. Cllr Seymour advised this was repetition and had already been done but the Clerk advised this was an easier way to keep control of all seats needing attention. No further seats will be purchased. Suspend standing orders – Mr Darling advised a rolling charge for seats should be undertaken with seats in preferred locations costing more to buy - Standing Orders resumed. A decision on a member of the public requesting a plaque on a seat in memory of a loved one, will be, plaques to be charged at a £100 and £150 for the purchase of a seat of their choice, total £250, and the person commemorating/purchasing the seat must also take on the care and maintenance of the seat infinitum. This was proposed by Cllr Forbes and seconded by Cllr Gibson and agreed by all.

RESOLVED: £250 charge for a seat purchased in memory of a loved one and the buyer must also take on full maintenance of the seat. No further seats to be purchased for the time being

ER040/15

8. DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME

Mr Sion Gates, Manager of the Youth Hostel in Berwick has proposed BTC consider providing a minor work schedule for 10 students from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme to work in the Town. The Students will be supervised overall by Mr Gates and a request for volunteer Councillors to assist and direct the work was requested. Cllr Blackburn advised BTC would

need to provide paint, varnish etc and Cllrs Gibson and McLean thought painting town centre seats and planters and also litter picking was a good variation of work for the students who are expected to be aged between 16 -19 years. Cllr Forbes advised of her assistance and also suggested if it was raining, the students could paint the inside the scout hall at a lower level only. Standing orders suspended – Mr Darling thought a Risk assessment could be provided by a local painter and to just concentrate the work in one area only. Standing Orders re-instated. Cllr Dixon thought it was a good PR exercise. Cllr McLean thought it was a good idea but there were logistics to consider and Cllr Seymour also expressed concern on viability. The work would be done over a 3 day period 21, 22 and 23rd of October. Due to Mr Gates having to advertise the work/invitation this week, it was a matter of urgency to make the decision. Councillor Gibson then proposed and Cllr Forbes seconded and was carried unanimously to invite the students to Berwick with Cllr Seymour abstaining.

RESOLVED: To agree a minor work schedule and to provide paint and other materials for Duke of Edinburgh Award students

ER041/15

9. NOTICEBOARDS

Councillors agreed there were a lot of notice boards to post information re the Town. Councillor Forbes suggested all Ward Councillors posted information in their own wards. The BTC website contains relevant information as required/needed. Councillors were in general agreement that a central notice board for important information was satisfactory and other notice boards would hold yearly/ peripheral information.

RESOLVED: To keep the central notice board updated

ER042/15

10. REPAIRS REQUIRED FOR PIER ROAD SHELTER

Cllr Mclean advised the Shelter was actually the Ness Gate shelter and was located just under the arch and needed re-roofing and re-furbishing. Cllr Seymour thought the shelter had listed status. Cllr Blackburn thought the ownership could be ascertained from the Assets Committee at NCC and in the meantime the Council should pay for the necessary repairs until the owner (s) were found. This was proposed by Cllr Blackburn and seconded by Cllr

Seymour, but a vote taken was 6 against with one abstention. A vote to ascertain ownership before undertaking repairs was proposed by Cllr Dixon and seconded by Cllr Roughead and this was carried by all Councillors with Cllr Seymour abstaining and Cllr Blackburn against.

RESOLVED: To ascertain ownership before undertaking repairs

ER043/15

11. BUS SHELTERS AND LITTER BINS

The bus shelters were all cleaned and reported as satisfactory with just a few reservations in regard to Spittal. Cllr Gibson proposed that all litter bins located at the bus shelters should also be cleaned and quoted an extra £1 per bin as well as the £8 to clean all the shelters.

This was agreed and a proposal to clean all bins and bus shelters every 2 months for £9 each was agreed.

Cllr Roughead mentioned a problem with the time on the electronic notice board at Golden Square which was 40 minutes slow and requested this be repaired. Cllr Smith requested a litter bin to be placed outside of the Spar Shop in Tweedmouth.

RESOLVED: To clean all bus shelters and litter bins located next to the shelters at £9 per shelter every 2 months and repairs to be made to the electronic notice board at Golden Square. A litter bin to be placed outside the Spar Shop in Tweedmouth.

ER044/15

12. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS FOR SPITTAL

Mr Mike Greener, Spittal Improvement Trust has requested assistance from the Town Council to supply new Christmas Lights for Spittal. No costs were supplied to Council. Councillors agreed if the cost was within the Clerk's delegated authority, consideration could be given.

RESOLVED: Consideration will be given to provide funding for Christmas Lights depending on costs.

ER045/15

13. QUEEN VICTORIA FOUNTAIN CASTLEGATE

Councillor Gibson expressed concern that the Queen Victoria Fountain at Castlegate had not been in working order for some considerable time.

Councillors were in agreement that it should be repaired and this was proposed by Cllr Gibson and seconded by Cllr Blackburn and agreed by all.

RESOLVED: To ascertain cost and gain estimates for repairs.

ER046/15

14. PRIOR PARK

- a) Cllr Graham has requested a litter bin to be provided at the corner of Springdale and Prior Road. This was discussed at length and after Cllr Blackburn advised it was a resident request it was agreed to provide a litter bin in that location.
- b) Grit bins we also requested at each end of the estate - after a lively discussion it was agreed that this request needed to be re-appraised due to there already being several grit bins located in Prior Park already, with 2 in the requested vicinity.

RESOLVED: To provide a litter bin at the corner of Springdale and Prior Road but to re-appraise the grit bin provision

ER047/15

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 16 November 2015 at 6.00pm.