

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Environment and Regeneration Committee Meeting held on Monday, 18 January 2016 at 6.00 pm at The Town Hall, Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed

PRESENT:

Councillors:	I Dixon (Chair)	K Graham
	H Bettison	G Hill
	D Blackburn	G Roughead
	A Gibson	C Seymour
	E Goodyer	G Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

W Pattison, Town Clerk

8 members of the public

OPEN SESSION

Ms Janet Clare Dean brought photos taken in Berwick after 9pm of litter bins left open which allows seagulls to scavenge and of youths climbing over railings around the Guildhall. Ms Clare Dean also requested the floral competition for businesses in the Town should be extended to all residents. Mr Darling advised the closure of Jus Rol and wondered what the Town Council were doing to assist. Cllr Goodyer advised that Cllr Hodgson was a member of the Task Force dealing with this concern and Cllr Hill advised of a meeting held earlier in the day and which Councillors had discussed support, employability issues and transport issues. Mr Andrew Marshall advised of the relevant minutes disbanding the Tourism forum in November 2014 and also mentioned the Tourism Advisory Group which is also no longer a Council tourism group. Mr Marshall expressed concern that minutes from past years posted on the Berwick Council website were showing as recently updated and the Clerk advised that the Assistant to the Clerk will look into why they are displaying this message as a matter of urgency. Cllr Blackburn expressed his concern at offices being built on the Kwik Save site and that they were not in the best interests of the Town and that NCC were not interested in the opinion of the people of Berwick.

ER064/15

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been accepted from: Councillors J Lang, A Forbes and G McLean.

ER065/15

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2015 were proposed by Cllr Hill and seconded by Cllr Graham and agreed by all and signed as a correct record.

ER066/15

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Item 10 Cllr Goodyer, Item 12 Cllr Gibson.

ER067/15

4. REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

There were no requests for dispensation.

ER068/15

5. SEAGULLS IN BERWICK

Mr Stuart Laidlaw, Eagle Enterprises, advised Councillors of his company's method in dispersing seagulls, which would be done by releasing Birds of Prey to frighten the seagulls away and make them move on to another area and this would be completely humane. The recommendation was to attend the area 3 times per week initially and to release the birds of prey to gain an effective result, this would cost in the region of £300 per day but would be more cost effective if several days over a longer period of time were booked. Questions on whether this would harm smaller, indigenous birds was advised as a no and a question on where the birds dispersed to after they were scared away was also asked and this was advised as uncertain. Attacks on people especially when holding food had been mentioned to Mr Laidlaw while he was in Berwick and this issue and mess from nesting was also mentioned. Seagulls also carry harmful bacteria. Cllr Goodyer and Hill advised they were not in favour of this being done and as a coastal town this was an inevitable consequence. Cllr Bettison advised that the seagulls were a concern and wondered if a survey had been done on the current quantity of birds in Berwick. Cllr Graham also wondered if the town as a whole would be encompassed and Mr Laidlaw agreed the town could be done in sections. Cllr Dixon thanked Mr Laidlaw for attending the meeting and said Councillors had much to think about and this would be put onto another agenda for further discussion.

RESOLVED: To discuss again at a future meeting.

ER069/15

6. DOG BAG DISPENSERS

Councillor Roughead thought more dog bag dispensers were needed at the entrance to housing estates, the clerk advised that the Quayside was currently littered by dog fouling and Councillors thought NCC should be contacted and the dog warden needed to be advised of the current situation.

Cllr Graham suggested ordering 100,000 dog dispenser bags from China which would be more cost effective.

RESOLVED: To contact the Dog warden.

ER070/15

7. TEENAGE MARKET FOR BERWICK

Councillors were generally in favour of this event which the Clerk advised as the 10 Portas Pop Up stalls being used to showcase and enable students from Berwick Youth Project, Berwick Academy and Longridge Towers to sell and promote music, arts and crafts, skateboarding skills etc, for either charity or for school funds. The cost to the Council would be just over £300 for NCC to erect and dismantle the stalls and to clear up afterwards. If the market was held on a Wednesday or a Saturday, the Town Council would have to pay pitch fees to NCC of approximately another £300, £600 in total. However, if the market was held on another day there would be no charge. Cllr Goodyer thought holding the market on a Sunday was a good idea. Cllr Roughead like the idea of graffiti landscapes as displayed in Alnwick and the Clerk advised her assistance to help organise the market and to liaise and meet with the 3 organisations and decide on a suitable date. **Suspend Standing Orders** – Mr Andrew Marshall didn't think it was a good idea for the Town Council to pay fees to NCC and said NCC owed the Council a lot of Portas monies especially for this particular kind of situation and said the Council would also need to employ a Solicitor for legal advice. **Re-instate Standing Orders.** Cllr Hill advised the market could not be agreed or go ahead without proper costings, a report and a Risk Assessment being done.

RESOLVED: To discuss again once costs, a report, legal advice and a risk assessment had been obtained/established.

ER071/15

8. BERWICK IN BLOOM

- a) Mr Bernard Shaw spoke to Councillors about the organisation of a joint competition to be run by Berwick in Bloom and the Town Council for

businesses in the town and there would be 4 categories, accommodation providers, Cafes/Restaurants, Shops, Licensed Premises. Cllr Bettison was in favour and thought it was a good idea. **Cllr Bettison left the meeting.**

Councillors advised they were unsure why this had been brought for discussion to the Environment committee and queried the costs. The Clerk advised the cost would be to buy a Cup for the overall winner and 4 framed certificates for the winner of each category. Councillors were in general agreement but could not approve this as it was thought it was not the right committee to be discussing a competition.

RESOLVED: To bring to another meeting approval of costs to buy a Cup and 4 framed certificates.

b) Council approval was requested to place 3 tier planters in the town centre and replace some of the containers already in the town centre. Some of the containers would be placed in Tweedmouth and Spittal. The money to fund this project comes from £5k of Portas monies which comes under the banner of 'Make Berwick Beautiful' which was one of the choices given by the public and voted for by Councillors. Cllr Hill advised this must be minuted as Councillors noting.

RESOLVED: Councillors noted.

ER072/15

9. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE AND TOURISM FORUM / ADVISORY GROUP

a) Cllr Blackburn demanded immediate action to stop the TIC moving to the library and the TIC figures supplied to BTC seemed to imply that the TIC was not losing money. Cllr Goodyer advised there were 3 choices, 1. the Town Council takes the TIC over, 2. Combine the office with BTC and TIC in a Town Centre location 3. Allow the TIC to move to the library. The main priority was agreed that the TIC stayed where it was. Agreement to put these proposals to NCC was proposed by Cllr Goodyer and seconded by Cllr Hill and approved by all.

RESOLVED: To put the proposals to NCC.

b) To create a new Tourism Group to be run by the Council was not supported by Cllr Hill but thought this was something which could be

discussed at Policy and Strategy. Cllr Blackburn thought there should be a Council led group but thought it should wait until there was a better understanding of what the future held for the TIC.

RESOLVED: To not form a Council led Tourism group.

ER073/15

10. EU BIDS

Councillor Goodyer advised his interest as a partner to the bid and requested suspension of standing orders to advise Councillors about the bids. Suspend Standing Orders – An informal decision to join two European projects, both projects are related to the emerging technology known as C-ITS. There are a growing number of apps that are available on smart phones and Berwick has been chosen as to hold a pilot that promotes tourism using C-ITS. The other project is ERTICO and the Town Council has agreed to issuing an expression of interest on the basis that it does not commit to joining the project - Re-instate Standing Orders.

RESOLVED: Agreed unanimously by all Councillors (Cllr Seymour had left the room).

ER074/15

11. QUAYSIDE

Cllr Goodyer spoke about the potential of the Quayside which could be developed to deliver economic growth in the town. The land is in mixed ownership. There is a well advanced proposal to develop a marina on the site for touring vessels and NCC Highways have expressed a desire to look at the pedestrianisation of the Old Bridge. A proposal to meet with all parties to explore the possibility of exploring a sympathetic redevelopment of the Quayside was agreed.

RESOLVED: To discuss the potential for a sympathetic re-development of the Quayside with all interested parties.

ER075/15

12. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

West End Residents Association - Withdrawn by the Clerk as representatives were unable to attend.

ER076/15

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Monday 29 February 2016 at 6.00pm.