



## BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Assets Committee** held in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at 6.30pm.

**Present:**

Councillors:

R Parker (Chair/Mayor), B W Elliott, J R Potts, O Potts, J Reid and L Rickerby.

**Also present:**

Sue Noddings – Town Clerk (Corporate Services)

Stephen Rickitt – Town Clerk (Democratic Services)

Sean Robinson – Assets Officer

Liam Forsyth – Committee Clerk

Prior to the commencement of the Meeting, the Mayor, Councillor R Parker informed Councillors that the Council's Christmas Cards were now available upon request.

**031/13/01: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor K Ellis (Vice-Chair), Councillor D Rutter and Councillor A Turnbull.

**032/13/02: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND GRANT OF ANY DISPENSATIONS**

None.

### **033/13/03: MINUTES OF THE HELD ON THE 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2013**

The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) commented that he was still investigating the ownership of the Sensory Garden. It was noted that Northumberland County Council held no record of it being formally leased to it or the Borough Council.

Councillor J Reid commented that he had been in contact with the Port of Blyth, who had indicated that they were happy for it to remain as a garden.

The Minutes of the Assets Committee were **AGREED** by the Committee signed by the Chair.

### **034/13/04: ASSETS OFFICER'S UPDATE REPORT**

*(Please find the report attached as an Appendix)*

The Assets Officer provided an outline for his report to the Committee, updating where appropriate.

Initial discussion was held regarding the litter bins in the Town and the need for galvanised steel bins due to reported vandalism.

The Assets Officer further commented that he was still seeking suggestions and reports from Councillors and members of the public, in order to keep up-to-date with the maintenance schedule for waste bins.

Councillor R Parker enquired as to the removal of the bin on Waterloo Road opposite the Prince of Wales pub. The Assets Officer responded he will investigate. **Action: SR**

Councillor J R Potts enquired as to whether the Town Council is unable to provide bins on lampposts or near bus stop. The Assets Officer commented that this was related to concerns put forward by Northumberland County Council and represented a recommendation from Neighbourhood Services.

The Assets Officer informed the Committee that he had held a meeting with Proludic regarding the play area at Cottingwood Green. It was noted that the development is sought to take place this year and a quote is to be achieved using monies left within the budget.

Councillor B W Elliott expressed concerns regarding the inspection reports carried out by Northumberland County Council for the playgrounds.

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Concerns were particular noted regarding the Cowpen playground and the need to make sure that the reports are being conducted.

The Town Clerk (Corporate Services) provided an outline of the process, also commenting that the independent insurance reports passed the audit process.

Councillor O Potts commented that the Cowpen playground was not of a suitable standard and she was keen that the Town Council to enhance the playgrounds within Blyth.

The Committee then held discussion regarding potential provision of adult gyms and related budgetary considerations. It was **AGREED** that is to be monitored.

The Town Clerk (Corporate Service) commented on the need to focus on using the allocated budgets. The Mayor, Cllr R Parker commented that he was also keen to make sure that the budgets allocated were used.

The Assets Officer provided an update regarding the bus shelter on Ogle Drive. It was noted that no incident had been logged with the Police. The Assets Officer commented that he was to continue to investigate this incident to see if compensation could be obtained.

Councillor J R Potts expressed concern that the situation has taken nearly six months to get to this stage and also cited related concerns in relation to Northumberland County Council's maintenance of the bus shelters within Blyth.

The Mayor provided an outline for the Committee regarding the issues experienced, including difficulties in sourcing the brickwork in order to complete this task.

The Committee also discussed wider concerns regarding service delivery regarding the maintenance of the bus shelters.

Councillor J R Potts enquired as to whether there was an update regarding the placement of bus shelters formally at the bus station, to the new locations. The Assets Officer informed the Committee that he was awaiting response regarding the maintenance proposals but he too was disappointed with the lack of response from the County Council regarding this matter.

The Assets Officer also discussed seating with the Town. It was noted with approval that all seating within the Town is to be repainted in Blyth's

## Subject to ratification

corporate colour (Sapphire Blue). The maintenance, repairs and scope for enhancement was also discussed by the Committee. It was noted that the Assets Officer is seeking further input from Town Councillors regarding this item.

The Assets Officer also commented that he was seeking the adoption of the pre-circulated seat as standard within the Town.



This was **AGREED** by the Committee.

Discussion was then held regarding the War Memorials. The Assets Officer provided an outline of his plan for the enhancement of the memorials within the Town. It was noted that grants have been sought for various memorials across the Town in order to enhance areas such as lettering and general presentation.

The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) commented that the War Memorials Trust is to provide an update which will be circulated in due course by the Assets Officer.

Councillor J Reid enquired as to whether there was an update regarding the War Memorial previously sited at Bebside Club. The Assets Officer commented that the stone memorial had been moved to the Bebside Inn.

The ownership and practicalities of the ownership of private memorials was then discussed by the Committee. Councillor R Parker suggested that the memorials in private ownership are to be added to the Council's War Memorials list as and when encountered.

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The Mayor, Cllr R Parker also commented that the brass plates on the War Memorial at Ridley Park are in need of repair in order to best display this asset.

Discussion was then held regarding the toilets within the Town, in particular the closed public toilet on Cowpen Road. It was **AGREED** that this is to continue to be investigated via contact with Northumberland County Council.

An update was also provided regarding the plaques to be placed on the planters within the marketplace, funded as part of her ward allocation by Councillor Bruce.

### **035/13/05: THE BUDGET FOR 2014/2015**

The Town Clerk (Corporate Services) commented that it has been suggested that the budget setting process encompasses the potential to develop the Town Council's partnership working with Northumberland County Council.

A brief outline was therefore provided by the Town Clerk (Corporate Services) outlining the aforementioned proposals. It was noted that this, in her belief would represent not only the provision of additional services but also allow for an enhanced engagement process.

An update was also provided outlining such areas as staffing, equipment and other associated logistical costs.

The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) informed the Committee that he had sought commitment from Northumberland County Council and noted that initial responses had been positive.

The Town Clerk (Corporate Services) commented that she was to meet with Barry Rowland from Northumberland County Council this Friday in order to discuss wider issues.

The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) also noted that he had already met the legal team at County Council for initial discussions regarding formulating a partnership agreement.

Councillor J R Potts expressed his concerns that, should Blyth Town Council pursue this route, this would represent taking on services that were not currently our responsibility. Councillor R Parker commented however this would allow Blyth Town Council a far greater input not only

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into the County Council's maintenance systems but allow our Council to drive the service.

The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) provided an outline and placed this potential development within the context of the wider unitary authority cuts.

The Mayor, Councillor R Parker commented that it was his belief that the uptake of such a partnership working scheme, would improve Blyth's ability to attract inward investment.

Councillor L Rickerby expressed her support, commenting that this would allow for leveraging and input in order to ameliorate and enhance the current situation and system.

Councillor J R Potts enquired as to which other neighbouring authorities are taking up this arrangement. The Assets Officer commented that at present, only Choppington Parish Council was engaged in such a scheme.

Councillor R Parker also noted due to potential future budget alterations and restrictions as dictated by DCLG, that this may therefore represent the Council's last opportunity to make such advancements. The Town Clerk (Democratic Services) also expressed similar concern.

Councillor B W Elliott commented that the key to this proposal lies within the strength of the contract.

Councillor O Potts commented that this represented the sole proposal, expressing concerns that previous arrangements with Northumberland County Council have not delivered as expected. Councillor O Potts also enquired as to whether Blyth Town Council could commit to five years for this arrangement.

Councillor L Rickerby initiated discussion regarding safeguards within the contract and their importance.

Councillor J R Potts wished to note that this proposal does not include maintenance and new projects.

Discussion was then held regarding staffing and equipment practicalities.

Councillor R Parker then reiterated his belief that input would remain the key benefit, in particular with areas such as budgetary control.

The Town Clerk (Corporate Services) informed the Committee that, should this proposal be accepted by the Full Council, it would be

## **Subject to ratification**

presented to the public in the New Year via the proposed Neighbourhood Forums.

Councillor R Parker commented that this proposal would go to the Full Council Meeting via the Finance Committee, also noting the need for full figures highlighting budgetary implications.

The Town Clerks both commented that they were to chase up further information from Northumberland County Council in order to inform Councillors prior to the forthcoming budget setting Committees and Council.

### **036/13/06: UPDATE ON CONTRACT WITH NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL.**

It was commented that this subject was covered within the previous Agenda item.

### **037/13/07: UPDATE ON STREET LIGHTING**

The Town Clerk Democratic Services commented that he was still awaiting a response with Northumberland County Council regarding this Agenda item.

Councillor R Parker suggested that we ask the County Council if it would be possible for the Town Council to purchase enhanced lamp standards in the current financial year, even if they were not be installed in the following year. This was **AGREED** by the Committee.

### **038/13/08: TRANSFER OF SERVICES**

Discussion was held under this item regarding the transfer of the freehold of the play areas by the County Council. It was commented that Northumberland County Council had backtracked and had now noted that they were happy to keep the status quo. This was welcomed by the Committee as avoiding unnecessary conveyancing costs.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to keep the status quo arrangements.

### **039/13/09: AN ADULT APPRENTICE**

The Town Clerk (Corporate Services) commented that she had held a meeting with Northumberland County Council's Apprenticeship Services.

It was noted that the Northumberland County Council will provide assistance with the full recruitment process.

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It was also commented that funding may be available to assist in providing apprentice.

The Town Clerk (Corporate Services) commented that she was seeking direction from Councillors, in order to best meet their requests.

Councillor O Potts commented that any future apprenticeships must take into account placing pressure of the current staff at the Council.

**040/13/10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND ITEMS FOR URGENT ATTENTION**

There was no other business or items for urgent attention.

**041/13/09: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the Assets Committee is to be held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8.05pm.**

**MEMBERS OF THE ASSETS COMMITTEE:**

Councillor R Parker (Chair/Mayor)  
Councillor K Ellis (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor B W Elliott  
Councillor J R Potts  
Councillor O Potts  
Councillor J Reid  
Councillor L Rickerby  
Councillor D Rutter  
Councillor A Turnbull

**Copy to all remaining Town Councillors for information**

**Signed by the Chair:**

**Date:**



**BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Assets Committee**  
**10 December 2013**

Report of the Assets Officer

**Litter Bins**

We have purchased 90 litter bins (30 x 90ltrs Ground Mounted Bins, 30 x 50ltrs Plastic Post Mounted Bins, 30 x 42ltrs Galvanised Steel Post Mounted Bins) and have commenced the replacement of the damaged/missing bins.

The following list below is that of damaged/missing bins that have now been replaced:

Bins installed as replacements/new

1. Outside Ladbrokes on Bowes Street
2. Broadway roundabout outside Cadet building
3. Broadway field next to seat
4. Junction of Bondicar Terrace and Coomassie Road
5. Behind substation at Tern Close
6. Opposite old school building on Princess Louise Road
7. Next to 4 Craster Close
8. Grassed area on Union street
9. Outside Natwest bank
10. Outside caretakers office at Community College
11. Hepple Court lamp no 3678BY
12. Field next to Nye Bevan house
13. 89 Weardale Ave lamp no 3252BY
14. Rotary way lamp no 4677BY
15. Cut next to 9 Hallsgreen
16. Cut from Asda to Tynedale lamp no 4108B
17. Cut from Asda to Tynedale lamp no 4112B
18. Footpath next to Draeger, Kitty Brewster road

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- 19.31 Bolam ave lamp no 4641B
- 20.22 Marlow house lamp no 2585BY
- 21.End of Tynedale drive lamp no 4165B
- 22.Whitdale ave lamp no 3547BY
- 23.Bus stop sandringham drive
- 24.1 Goschen street
- 25.End of Alfred street lamp no 341 BY
- 26.Seating area entrance to Kitty Brewster Ind. Est.
- 27.Miners Memorial garden north farm
- 28.Holly house
- 29.Gallaghers field
- 30.Entrance to |haven court
- 31.Isabella heap/west court
- 32.Cut from Priory Grange to Malvins close
- 33.End of cut next to Golden Eagle
- 34.Old School House on Princess Louise road
- 35.Joes Percy Cut / Newsham Road
- 36.Bader court / Wensleydale terrace cut
- 37.Kingsway footpath behind Croft park
- 38.South Newsham footpath /Woodlands Park
- 39.Gladstone street 2 x bins for K Nisbett
- 40.Keelmans Terrace on grass verge
- 41.Salisbury street outside shop
- 42.Junction of cycle way Mulberry close
- 43.Outside play area next to south beach pub
- 44.New Delaval Welfare 2 x bins for D Campbell

## **Subject to ratification**

It was agreed by the Chair/Vice Chair that we would purchase additional bins and build up our stock from this year's budget in order to progress with the rolling programme of replacing/upgrading the existing bins and also adding additional bins as requested. Presently we are putting 5 new bins in to the Cowpen Quay area where the new houses are presently been built. Additional bins will be required for the new developments which are planned for the town in the coming months. NCC has enough storage space to accommodate the additional bins.

Additional bins are going to be placed in between the new Morrisons store and Wilkinsons at the request of Councillor D Campbell, one bins is to be placed on the footpath at Blyth Golf Club/Three Horse Shoes at the request of Councillor Gordon Thompson. The cost of the information stickers for all the bins is 60p per sticker.

## **Play Areas**

The weekly inspections are been carried out in accordance with the maintenance contract between Blyth Town Council & Northumberland County Council. There have been minor repairs carried out on the equipment at various play areas. The long term plan is to implement a rolling programme of new equipment. This is due to the life expectancy of the play equipment. I am due to meet a Play Area specialist (10 Dec 13) to survey all sites and to see what improvements can be made and approximate costs. The contract for the play areas with Northumberland County Council stands at £8000 + £1200 for monthly reports (not included in the budget). The budget for ongoing maintenance is set at £17000 which to date we have used £1,736. I intend to use the difference to improve the play area at Cottingwood Green (Newsham). If there is any money left over I will use it on another play area.

## **Bus Shelters**

The bus shelters are due to be cleaned in Feb/Mar in accordance to the maintenance contract. The following bus shelters require minor maintenance:

Broadway  
Park Farm Villas  
Black Diamond  
Briardale Road  
Plessey Road/25<sup>TH</sup> Avenue

Repairs to be carried out w/c 09 Dec 13.

The 2 bus shelters stored at Cowley Road (originally from the Bus Station) earmarked for Ogle Drive and West Court are now in the process of been repaired.

Brick bus shelter at West Court (damaged Jul 13); investigation is ongoing to reclaim damages from driver for repairs to the bus shelter. I have contacted Northumbria Police to obtain log reference number and also emailed NCC who cleaned up area for further information. Once we find out details we will pursue costs from the driver. Requested quote for repair work and have not had reply so pursuing other builders to get quotes for the work to be carried out.

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Chair/Vice Chair of Assets Committee has instructed me to liaise with Northumberland County Council to implement a major maintenance plan for this financial year with a budget of £50,000. This will include new bus shelters/repainting of existing shelters in the corporate colours of the town and extra cleaning. Details are to follow once plan is formalised.

## **Seating**

One clean has been completed with one further clean scheduled for Feb/Mar 14. There is £5000 in the budget for ongoing maintenance which will be put towards the repainting of the seats (corporate colours). This will be implemented in conjunction with the bus shelter maintenance. For replacing any damaged seats I have obtained a quote from Wybone Ltd (Company that supply the Post Mounted Bins) and the cost of an anti-corrosion galvanised steel seat. The cost of the seat is £440 + VAT + £17 (fixing bolts) + £108 carriage/delivery charge. Any orders over £500, carriage/delivery charges are waived.

Two seats are to be replaced at Broadway Circle (along with 4 Ground Mounted Litter Bins). The cost of replacing these items is to be met by Northumberland County Council as part of the Cycle Route Improvement Scheme. This work is to be carried out from Feb 14.

Councillor Gordon Thompson is using his Councillor's Scheme to purchase a replacement seat at Plessey Road adjacent to the bus shelter.

## **War Memorials**

Investigations are still ongoing with regards to the transfer of land surrounding the Town's War Memorials.

Commemorative Wall: A subcommittee (Cllr R Parker, Cllr K Ellis, Cllr J Potts and Cllr J Reid) has been set up to discuss the feasibility of building a Commemorative Wall at Ridley Park adjacent to the War memorial. Also I have had interest from Major Fairbairn who would also like to be involved. A date needs to be set to move this project forward.

Cowpen War Memorial: I have received email from War Memorial Trust with a offer to fund the replacement of the rifle and also the improvement of the lettering. I have to complete another application form to submit to the trust and they have provided details for conservators of professional organisations to carry out these works.

Newham & New Delaval War Memorial: A member of the public stated during public question time at the Full Council Meeting stating the memorial was in need of repair. I have already inspected the memorial as part of the Remembrance Weekend preparations and have already contacted the War Memorial Trust with regards to getting a further grant towards the repairs/upkeep. I am awaiting a reply which can take up to 8-10 weeks due to the workload of the War Memorial Trust.

## **Subject to ratification**

Currently we have £5000 in the budget for this financial year which should contribute towards the improvements at Cowpen and Newsham & New Delaval War memorials.

## **Toilets**

The toilet block on Cowpen Road is waiting to be demolished. We have been informed by Northumberland County Council that there is no wall behind the toilet block and if demolishing is to take place, a replacement wall will need to be built in place of the toilet block. The wall belongs to St Cuthbert's Church and permission will be needed to carry out this work.

The budget for this financial year was set at £7000 for the contract cleaning and £4000 for ongoing maintenance. The service contract between Blyth Town Council and Northumberland County Council for this year is £9225 leaving £1748 for ongoing maintenance. I will conduct a survey of the toilet block to ascertain what improvements could be made for the remaining money before the end of the financial year.

## **AOB:**

Commemorative Plaques:

We have received the quote for the commemorative plaques for the market place and place a Purchase Order for them. The cost of the plaques is £270 + VAT and the cost will be taken from Cllr C Bruce's Councillors' Scheme. We are now awaiting the delivery date for the plaques.

**Sean Robinson**  
**Assets Officer**

**10 Dec 13**