



Blyth Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Assets Committee held in the Council Chamber at Arms Everytne House on Thursday 8 October 2015 at 6.30 pm.

Present:

Councillors:

J R Potts (Chair), O Potts (Vice Chair), A Cartie, J Reid

Also Present

Councillor R Parker

Officers:

Assets Officer Sean Robinson
Committee Clerk Maureen Hawthorne

Members of Public: None.

No	
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Councillors K Ellis, L Rickerby
2	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND GRANT OF DISPENSATIONS Councillor J Reid declared an interest as a Northumberland County Councillor.
3	MINUTES OF THE ASSETS COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 JULY 2015

	The minutes of the Assets Committee held on 30 July 2015 were AGREED by the Committee and signed by the Chair.
4	ASSETS OFFICER'S REPORT (please see attached report from the Assets Officer, S Robinson)
4.1	<p>Litter Bins</p> <p>The Assets Officer's report gives details of new and replacement bins together with the bins which are due to be installed or exchanged. The Assets Officer commented that this work is on schedule and advised that bigger bins are being used in some areas in order to make the service more efficient. Councillor Cartie asked if there was going to be a replacement bin beside Ridley Park – the Assets Officer confirmed a bin would be placed near the entrance to the park. Stock may need to be replenished early in the new year and this will be reviewed at the Committee in December.</p> <p>Councillor R Parker asked if a larger bin could be placed at the entrance to Meggie's Burn. The Assets Officer advised that NCC are currently carrying out improvements on this site and he will raise this at the next Partnership Board.</p>
4.2	<p>Play Areas</p> <p>The Assets Officer stated that in accordance with ROSPA and RPII an annual inspection of the play areas is required for insurance purposes. Tyne Wear Play have quoted £900 to carry out inspection of all 15 of the play areas. The Assets Officer further advised that David Clough is to attend the ROSPA course.</p> <p>The Assets Officer explained that the weekly inspection forms need to be redesigned and he will be drafting a new set of documents and procedure.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to proceed with the quote from Tyne Wear Play.</p> <p>Axwell Drive</p> <p>The cost of repairing the damage was £139. Councillor J R Potts suggested monitoring the types of repairs being carried out. The Assets Office said there have been a number of complaints about anti-social behavior at night time, two bins were set on fire and required replacement. He has asked Reay Security to provide a quote for CCTV on Axwell, Burns Avenue and Cottingwood Green sites. There is a £213 charge to install CCTV</p>

4.3	<p>from NCC.</p> <p>Burns Avenue</p> <p>The Assets Officer said the consultation was very successful and everyone supported the design. Residents were particularly unhappy with the sand surface.</p> <p>Councillor J R Potts said consideration should be given to removing sand from all of the play areas and that S016 money could be used for this purpose. The Assets Officer advised that he has requested a quote to remove sand from Cottingwood Green.</p> <p>With regard to funding the Assets Officer confirmed the information outlined in his report.</p> <p>Councillor J R Potts commented that the Finance Committee meet in November 2015 and the Council should have confirmation of the funding at the next meeting.</p> <p>Cottingwood Green</p> <p>The Assets Officer confirmed that 100% funding has been secured and work will commence in November 2015.</p> <p>Newsham Farm Estate</p> <p>Plans have been drawn up and it is hoped that funding from S106 housing development fund will be used to fund this project.</p> <p>There is £220,000 from S106 – the first part of the funding was released to pay for Cottingwood Green. The next trigger point will be when 175 houses are built. The Assets Officer stated that he is not sure how much money will be released at this point but will be advised of this in 2016, at which point there will be a residential consultation and planning permission will be sought.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to the above actions.</p> <p>Bus Shelters</p> <p>There are currently four bus shelters awaiting repair. The cost of repairing the bus shelter opposite Asda is over £4,000 as it is specialised Perspex. The Committee discussed whether it would be more cost effective to replace the whole shelter. There is approximately £7,000 available from S278 money for Cowpen</p>
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	<p>Road. The Assets Officer will source prices and designs for a replacement bus shelter.</p>
4.4	<p>Cleaning</p> <p>The Assets Officer confirmed that the cleaning is back on schedule for October.</p>
4.5	<p>Advertising</p> <p>The Phoenix Theatre are advertising on two bus shelters, displaying a programme of events which they will change monthly. The Theatre are meeting the costs of the art work etc.</p>
4.5	<p>Bus Shelter at Broadway</p> <p>The Assets Officer advised that he is awaiting a date for installation of the shelter.</p>
4.6	<p>Bus Shelter at Wensleydale</p> <p>The Assets Officer confirmed that the installation will take place early November 2015.</p>
4.7	<p>Seating</p> <p>Councillor O Potts stated that repairs are needed to the seats on Broadway as some of the wooden slats are missing. The Assets Officer will contact Jimmy Reith with a view to repairing or replacing.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to a replacement seat if it cannot be repaired.</p>
4.8	<p>War Memorial</p> <p>The Assets Officer referred to the information contained in his report regarding the improvement of the war memorials. Major Fairbairn is seeking to secure £30,000 for all three memorials. The name plates will be removed and there will be a new memorial section for the name plates. Improvements will also be made to the steps and a handrail added.</p>

	<p>The Assets Officer will circulate the plans to all councilors when they are ready.</p>
4.9	<p>Toilets</p> <p>The Assets Officer commented that the mural on the toilet block at Broadway will be kept as a lasting legacy of the Tour of Britain.</p> <p>The Committee noted that there will be new public toilets integrated into the sports pavilion.</p>
4.10	<p>PAT Testing</p> <p>The Assets Officer reminded Councillors that if they have equipment on loan from the Council that this should also be tested.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to UK Safety Management carrying out the PAT testing for the Council offices.</p>
5.0	<p>BLYTH PARTNERSHIP UPDATE</p>
5.1	<p>Grass Cutting</p> <p>The Assets Officer confirmed that the grass cutting is back to normal arrangement and the team have completed the 18th cut. Extra cuts will take place the end of October/beginning November weather permitting.</p>
5.2	<p>Weed Control</p> <p>The Assets Officer said this is still an issue at the moment despite 4 sprays being carried out. He advised that if there is an underspend from the Partnership Board money then a quad bike may be purchased for Blyth Town Council's sole use which will help improve the standards of weed control. This machine can also be used for gritting in colder weather.</p>
5.3	<p>Litter and Fly Tipping</p> <p>The Assets Officer stated that this is an ongoing issue. Councillor J R Potts said there is an issue with the rubble charge as residents have to pay by credit card. Ashington have employed an Enforcement Officer and NCC are considering doing this for Blyth using underspend from Partnership Board.</p>

5.4	<p>Financial information was made available and will be updated each month by the Assets Officer.</p> <p>Winter Programme</p> <p>The Assets Officer has met with Jimmy Reith this week to discuss the winter programme. This will start as soon as the grass cutting finishes. 80% of the footpaths were cleared last winter and the programme will continue in the same way, commencing with the areas that did not get cleared last year. Trees have also been earmarked for cutting.</p> <p>Councillor Cartie raised an issue where a tree is growing into a resident's garden on Crofton Mill. The Assets Officer advised that NCC would be responsible for cutting the tree and will add it to the list of outstanding jobs. There is also a problem with the public footpath at Isabella and an area next to the golf club on Plessey Road. The Assets Officer said that the plan will be reviewed at the next Partnership Board meeting and he will also revise the list.</p> <p>Councillor Potts commented that dog fouling in the town centre continues to be an issue.</p> <p>Planting</p> <p>There are plans to plant wild flowers (English Bluebells) at Bebside and Rotary Way. The cost for Bebside is £240 and £2,000 for Rotary Way.</p> <p>Councillor Parker said that grass cutting is still of grave concern to him. He pointed out that the grass on his estate has become brown over the past three weeks and feels this is due to the fact that the cuts are being left for more than 9 days. The Assets Officer explained that the agreement with NCC was changed last year whereby cuts are done for quality rather than quantity. Councillor Parker said he was unable to find a copy of the document where these changes were agreed. It was noted that all Councillors receive copies of such reports and minutes of the Committee.</p> <p>The Assets Officer stated that once the grass cutting is finished, he will meet with Jimmy Reith to plan for next year's cuts. They will also review this year's cuts and consider what has worked well.</p>
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6	<p>NAME OF THE COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Assets Officer said that external auditors have commented on the name of the Committee for the past two years. He also advised that his job description has been reviewed and his new title will be changed.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED that the Committee will be renamed Environmental Services Committee. The Asset Officer's job title will become Environmental Services Officer.</p>
7	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Tuesday, 1 December 2015, 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber.</p>

The meeting concluded at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERS OF THE ASSETS COMMITTEE:

Councillors:

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

Officers:

S E Rickitt Town Clerk (Democratic Services)
S Robinson Assets Officer
M Hawthorne Committee Clerk