

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Finance & General Services Committee Meeting held at 6:00pm on Tuesday 26 February 2019, at Ashington Town Hall, Station Road, Ashington.

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS: Lynne Grimshaw (Chair) Eleanor Armstrong
Marjorie Chambers Nicola Chambers
Avril Chisholm Matthew Cuthbert
Stephen Fenwick Lawrence Henderson
Ken Parry Pauline Thompson
Tom Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mike Slaughter – Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Stephen Humphrey – Funding & Project Officer
Sharon Parmley – Senior Administration Officer (minutes)

FGS 19/905 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Victor Bridges, Brian Gallacher, Jim Lang, Kris Lavery, Liam Lavery, Mark Purvis and Bob Walkinshaw.

FGS 19/906 2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS.

There were no disclosures of interest.

FGS 19/907 3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING.

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 30 October 2018, were agreed and signed as a true record.

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 February 2019, were agreed and signed as a true record.

FGS 19/908 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

There were no matters arising from the minutes held on Tuesday 30 October 2018.

There were no matter arising from the minutes held on Tuesday 12 February 2019.

FGS 19/909 5. APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Applications for financial support were received from the following;

- **Ashington Town Football Club**

The Club has 21 teams supported by 76 volunteers, providing football activities for boys, girls and adults, based at the Josephine Butler Academy in North Seaton.

The Club requested £794 to support the costs of; equipment (cones, bibs, goal posts and footballs), placing 2 volunteers on an FA coaching programme and 5 volunteers through DBS.

- **The Holy Sepulchre Church**

To address the needs of the growing number of asylum seekers families in Ashington the Church has developed a Learning English Together (LET) project.

The Church requested £288, to support the language lessons for the families. Funding would allow the purchase of learning aids and exercise books.

- **Friends of Ashington Community Woods (FOACW)**

FOACW carried out a wide range of tasks in the woodland, including regular litter picks, creating and maintaining footpaths and general woodland management work.

The group requested £500 as a contribution towards personal protective equipment (PPE), first aid kits and litter pickers for volunteers.

Resolved:

That: Town Council members agreed to;

- (i) Ashington Town Football Club be awarded a grant of £794,**
- (ii) The Holy Sepulchre Church be awarded a grant of £288,**
- (iii) Friends of Ashington Community Woods be awarded a grant of £500**

FGS 19/910 6. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS.

The Town Clerk submitted a full schedule of payments and income receipts, for the financial period 27 October 2018 – 20 February 2019.

Resolved:

That the Schedule of Payments for the financial period 27 October 2018 – 20 February 2019 be formally agreed and approved.

The full schedule of payments is attached to the minutes as schedule 1

FGS 19/911 7. BUDGET REPORT 2018-19.

The Town Clerk submitted a Full Budget Report for the period 1 April 2018 – 20 February 2019.

Resolved:

That the Full Budget Report for the financial period 1 April 2018 to 20 February 2019 be formally agreed and approved.

FGS 19/912 8. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT.

The Clerk presented an update report on the current work programme of the Town Council as follows;

Allotments Capital Programme.

The major capital works to renew the water pipeline and supply to the High Market and Wansbeck Road allotments sites was completed in November 2018, at a cost of £39,400. The installation of new meters will see the Allotment Associations be directly responsible for the settlement of all water accounts. The estimated annual saving on the water charges, previously met by the Town Council, is estimated to be in the region of £4,300 per annum.

Hirst Park – Revival Project.

The capital works to the park commenced in February further to the award of the contract to Brambledown Landscape Services Ltd.

Northumberland County Council successfully secured £2.29million through The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund, supported by contributions from the Town Council and Ashington Leisure Partnership, bringing the total project value to £2.7m. Work will include; planting of trees, shrubs and flowers throughout the park, a new children's play area, performance area, a new formal garden, the creation of a horticultural training building and growing area (to be operated in partnership with Northumberland College), a new community allotment (to be operated by the Full Circle Food Project), repairs to gates & fences, improvements to paths, tennis courts and the outdoor games areas.

The official commencement of the work took place on the 19 February, attended by the Civic Head of Ashington (Cllr. M Chambers).

Peoples Park Play Area Project

Further to successfully securing the overall funding package and the subsequent award of the contract to Kompan Scotland Ltd for the sum of £209,542 work on the Town Council project will commence in early April. The project is expected to be completed by the end of May with an official opening planned for Friday 7 June.

Town Centre CCTV

The Town clerk reported that work to relocate the CCTV system from the Town Hall to Ashington Police Station was completed in February. The financial responsibility for the full term of the lease remains with the Town Council, with Reay Security Ltd responsible for ensuring the system reliability and for all maintenance work.

Neighbourhood Services

The Town Clerk provided a summary of neighbourhood services work as follows;

New Bus Interchange

With the completion of the new road linking the A197 Parkway Roundabout to Woodhorn Road at Wetherspoons the Town Council is now directly responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the 8 new large bus shelters. This high-profile regeneration area represents a new challenge to the Town Council asset management role that will need to be carefully monitored.

Allotments

The Town Council's Neighbourhood Services Officer (NSO) is taking a proactive role on the maintenance and upkeep of the Town Council's 8 allotment sites. Work that was previously outsourced is now being done "in-house" including fencing & plumbing repairs.

The NSO has attended a Rodenticide Training Course in order to support and undertake rodent and pest control work. Additionally the NSO and the Funding & Project Officer also recently attended a course on Asbestos Awareness in relation to allotment sites.

Litter Bins

The Town Council have recently undertook a full exercise to establish, to the best of our knowledge, the location and type of all bins in the town. The full spreadsheet has been forwarded to NCC and indicates a total supply of 504 bins.

Over the last four years some 340 bins have been installed by the Town Council with a mix of both new supply and replacement bins. 2018/19 has finally seen a reduction in requests for new bins.

Storage & Secure Unit

The Town Clerk is in the process of investigating options for a suitable small unit to safely store the neighbourhood services vehicle and materials.

This will address the changing work requirements of the Town Council and support future developments.

Forthcoming Events

The Town Clerk provided a summary of forthcoming events;

- Remscheid Town Twinning Visit - 5-7 March - visit from Remscheid Mayor Burkhard Mast-Weisz and City Director Sven Wiertz.
- Great British Spring Clean – 3-7 April – litter picking events across Ashington.
- Remscheid Music & Arts College - 26 April – visit from College to Woodhorn Museum with a musical performance at Newbiggin Maritime Centre.
- Worker’s Memorial Service - 27 April - at North Seaton Cemetery.
- Peoples Park Play Area – 7 June - Opening Event for new play area.
- Northumberland Miners’ Picnic – 8 June – at Woodhorn Museum.
- Ashington Fayre Day – 30 June – at rear of Wansbeck Square.
- Ashington Garden Competition – 8-9 July – judging of gardens.

FGS 19/913 9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS.

There were no other items of urgent business.

FGS 19/914 10. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

Tuesday 26 March 2019, at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, 65 Station Road, Ashington NE63 8RX.

The Meeting ended at 7:40pm.