

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & General Services Committee Meeting held at 6:00pm on Tuesday 2 July 2019, at Ashington Town Hall, Station Road, Ashington.

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS: Lynne Grimshaw (Chair) Eleanor Armstrong
Victor Bridges Marjorie Chambers
Nicola Chambers Avril Chisholm
Matthew Cuthbert Stephen Fenwick
Brian Gallacher Lawrence Henderson
Jim Lang Liam Lavery
Mark Purvis Pauline Thompson
Bob Walkinshaw Tom Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mike Slaughter – Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Stephen Humphrey – Projects and Funding Officer
Sharon Parmley – Senior Administration Officer (minutes)

FGS 19/950 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors, Kris Lavery and Ken Parry.

FGS 19/951 2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS.

There were no disclosures of interest.

FGS 19/952 3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING.

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 28 May 2019, were agreed and signed as a true record.

FGS 19/953 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

FGS 19/946 9. PEOPLES PARK PLAY AREA.

The Chair reported that the opening event had been excellent, well attended and organised and that the press coverage and social media had recognised and welcomed the new facility as a real addition to the park. The Chair thanked all of the staff and members who were directly involved in the work and planning.

Members were delighted with the final design and build and were clearly of the opinion that the new play facility had “raised the bar” for the standard of children’s play facilities throughout the town.

FGS 19/954 5. APPLICATION FOR FUNDING SUPPORT – HEART OF THE HIRST TENANT AND RESIDENT GROUP.

A small grant scheme application was received from Heart of the Hirst Tenant and Resident Group. The sum of £447.92 had been requested for the purpose of purchasing four pop-up gazebos and four heavy duty outdoor tables to support future community events.

Resolved:

That a small grant amount the amount of £447.92 be awarded to the Heart of the Hirst Tenant and Resident Group.

FGS 19/955 6. ANNUAL FUNDING SUPPORT TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2019/20.

The Chair referred members to the comprehensive discussion report setting out the need for the Council to review and consider priorities, policy and procedure for the future annual funding of outside bodies.

Resolved:

That the annual funding support to outside bodies report be deferred until the next Full Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday 9 July 2019, to allow members to fully discuss and agree future actions.

FGS 19/956 7. ACQUISITION OF NEW PLAY EQUIPMENT – Paddock Wood PLAY AREA (Cllr.J.Lang)

Members agreed that this item be deferred until the next Full Council meeting, scheduled for on Tuesday 9 July 2019, to allow Cllr.Lang to brief members on the planned improvement.

FGS 19/957 8. CLIMATE CHANGE (Cllr.L.Lavery).

Cllr.L.Lavery presented a comprehensive motion to members. Cllr.Lavery stated that members would be aware of the global concerns at present and reported that the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that we have 12 years to make the necessary changes to limit a rise in global temperatures to 1.5C.

Members were reminded that globally, failure to act would see a marked increase in sea levels and flooding, extreme and abrupt changes to weather patterns, crop failures, extinction's of plant, insect and animal species and global economic disruption and crisis. Members recognised that such a scenario would detrimentally impact

on the well-being of people worldwide, including at a very local level residents in Ashington.

Cllr.Lavery stated that the fight against climate change, as well as being an enormous challenge, brought an opportunity to look to build and focus on a future Ashington with well paid jobs and investment. Members agreed that there was a chance to look to build a bright future for local people by embracing a new clean energy and encouraging investment that would bring quality jobs and employment opportunities to benefit the whole community.

Members recognised that there was only so much that Ashington could do but nevertheless it was important to play a part, make a statement and make a start to look to work positively towards a carbon neutral future and to seek to improve the lives of the people who lived in the town.

Resolved:

That in looking to work practically with our major partners and organisations towards the future, Ashington Town Council resolves to;

- (i) Recognise the global climate emergency and publicise this to the people of Ashington in order to raise awareness and build support in taking action,**
- (ii) Work with local Colleges and Universities to measure and understand the town's carbon footprint and subsequently prepare a series of achievable actions the town council together with others can take to address this emergency,**
- (iii) Embrace the Green Industrial Revolution and work with local, regional and national bodies to ensure Ashington can benefit from the jobs created,**
- (iv) Call on Northumberland County Council and central government to look to provide the powers, resources and directives to make Ashington carbon neutral,**
- (v) Commit to reviewing all spending in the next financial year to ensure the councils carbon footprint is properly taken into account,**
- (vi) Positively work towards carbon neutrality by balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal or where possible by looking to eliminate carbon emissions altogether,**
- (vii) Initiate a yearly competition of Ashington Schools to develop ideas to make the town carbon neutral, and**

(viii) Look at the establishment of a forum including businesses, local organisations and residents to examine and develop ideas to make the town carbon neutral.

FGS 19/958 9. CENTENERY OF “THE PEACE” – COMMEMORATIVE TREE PLANTING SCHEME.

The Town Clerk presented to members a letter received from a resident in Ashington requesting the development of a “*Commemorative Tree Planting Scheme*” to mark the centenary of The Peace (2019).

Members were informed “The Peace” took place in 1919, after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June in that year and that many war memorials, including those of Bothal, Longhirst and St. George’s Presbyterian Church (now Trinity Church) make reference to “The Great War 1914 – 1919”.

Members discussed the scheme and agreed to go forward with the Commemorative Tree Planting Scheme. They also agreed that tree planting scheme would contribute greatly to the new Climate Change motion proposed earlier.

Resolved:

That;

- (i) the proposed Commemorative Tree Planting Scheme be approved; and that**
- (ii)**
- (iii) The scheme be taken up and incorporated into the work regarding climate change.**

FGS 19/959 10. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS.

The Town Clerk submitted a full schedule of payments and income

Resolved:

That the Schedule of Payments for the financial period 25 May – 27 June 2019 be formally agreed and approved.

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

FGS 19/960 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

There were no items of urgent business.

FGS 19/961 12. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

Tuesday 30 July 2019, at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, 65 Station Road, Ashington, NE63 8RX.

The Meeting ended at 6:45pm.