

# ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance & General Services Committee Meeting held at 6:00pm on Tuesday 30 July 2019, at Ashington Town Hall, Station Road, Ashington.

## PRESENT:

**COUNCILLORS:** Lynne Grimshaw (Chair) Eleanor Armstrong  
Marjorie Chambers Matthew Cuthbert  
Stephen Fenwick Brian Gallacher  
Lawrence Henderson Liam Lavery  
Ken Parry Pauline Thompson  
Tom Wilson

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

## FGS 19/962 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors, Victor Bridges, Nicola Chambers, Avril Chisholm, Jim Lang, Kris Lavery, Mark Purvis and Bob Walkinshaw.

## FGS 19/963 2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS.

There were no disclosures of interest.

## FGS 19/964 3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING.

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 July 2019, were agreed and signed as a true record.

## FGS 19/965 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

### FGS 19/946 9. PEOPLES PARK PLAY AREA.

The Chair reported that feedback regarding the new play area had been very positive and along with the relatively fine summer weather, the park was being well used.

The Town Clerk thanked the Northumberland County council (NCC) members for their funding contributions and reminded all members that he was still waiting for cost quotations for the new lighting provision, including the installation of new street lighting columns and CCTV for the consideration of the Town Council.

## **FGS 19/966 5. APPLICATION FOR FUNDING SUPPORT.**

### **Hirst Youth Project**

The Chair invited Rachel Martin, Senior Youth Worker to give a presentation on behalf of the Hirst Youth Project.

Ms Martin informed members that Hirst Active Youth was a youth led community organisation established in 2015, working with young people aged 9 to 25 years living in Ashington. Members were informed that there were approximately 60 children and young people currently attending on a weekly basis.

Hirst Active Youth's guiding aims were to provide young people in Ashington with a voice on provision of services and activities from Hirst Welfare Centre and to develop new services and activities in response to the needs of young people in Ashington.

The 3 staff currently deliver activities including;

- Focus Group – currently supporting volunteer development, youth work and volunteering skills,
- General Drop-In – every Friday evening for 13-19 year olds, with a variety of activities to take part in,
- Junior Prevention Programme – a junior drop in for 9-12 years in which they can engage in free time activities such as cooking, arts and crafts and socialising,
- Junior Gym – provision of weekly subsidised gym sessions (£) for 12-19 years,
- Health Drop-In – a session focused on increasing knowledge around health, promoting healthy choices and creating discussion and debate around health based issues and themes,
- Holiday activities – including archery, paddle board, cooking and cycling.

Members were informed that Hirst Active Youth currently operate on a budget of approximately £45,000 per year, which includes all part time staff, project and running costs. The group are currently funded through a range of small grants and trusts, including, Police and Crime Commissioner, Community Foundation, Community Chest, Sir James Knott & Hadrian's Trust. The group plan to continue to apply to new funding streams and are looking to approach Northumberland Children's Trust and Virgin Money.

Ms Martin specifically requested that the Town Council consider targeted funding towards the Youth Worker in the sum of the sum of £6,308 which would continue to fund a 12- hour Youth Service over 3 days per week.

The Chair thanked Ms Martin for her excellent presentation, and Ms Martin left the meeting.

Members discussed the presentation and Cllr Fenwick proposed a motion to support the funding application in principle and offer 50% of the annual funding over a two-year period.

**Resolved:**

**That the Finance & General Services Committee:**

- (i) Recognise the importance of interactive youth engagement work in Ashington and support the role of the Hirst Active Youth in developing new activities and services in response to the needs of young people,**
- (ii) Agree to part-fund the employment of a dedicated Youth Worker for a two-year period 2019-2021 (October 2019-September 2021),**
- (iii) Agree to a 50% contribution to the cost of the Youth Worker post in each financial year, equivalent to a £3,150 annual contribution in both financial years 2019/20 and 2020/21,**
- (iv) Actively encourage Hirst Active Youth to seek a 2-year matched-funding contribution for the Youth Worker post from the current funder and/or any other recognised funding source; and that**
- (v) The Town Council be informed of the outcome of all such funding applications.**

**South East Northumberland Rail User's Group (SENRUG)**

The Chair invited Mr Dennis Fancett, Chair of SENRUG to give a presentation.

Mr Fancett began by thanking the Town Council for their previous support as members of SENRUG and for their previous donation of £600 in 2014 towards the development of the initial SENRUG website that had helped move the organisation forward immeasurably.

Members were informed that SENRUG was a voluntary pro-rail campaign group that promoted rail travel and lobbied for better rail service within, to, from and through South East Northumberland, representing the interests of both existing and potential rail travellers in the area.

Campaigns include, Newcastle-Cramlington-Morpeth, Ashington Blyth & Tyne Line Passenger Services, Improvements in station facilities and bus and rail integration for passengers.

Mr Fancett informed the meeting that SENRUG were requesting a contribution of £1,500 towards the development of a new website (with on-going maintenance), new publicity material (with associated membership form) and newsletter printing. The total cost of the overall project was £3,715.

Members thanked Mr Fancett for the informative presentation and also stressed the need for SENRUG to be properly consider applications to a wide number of local councils for funding support towards the project.

**Resolved:**

**That SENRUG be awarded the sum of £500 towards costs of new website, new publicity material and newsletter printing.**

**FGS 19/967 6. CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP.**

Cllr Liam Lavery reminded members of the very recent Town Council resolution regarding climate change and the need to now consider how work and initiatives could be practically taken forward.

Cllr.Lavery requested elected member volunteers for the Group and reported that he had also been given names of residents who may be interested in attending and joining the Working Group.

The Town Clerk reminded members that the first meeting of the Group would likely take place in September given both the meeting recess in August and the need to both try to identify willing and able Town Council members and top also look at a possible programme of work.

The Town Clerk informed members that the Centenary of 'The Peace' Tree Planting Scheme agreed by the Town Council, was also likely to be incorporated into the first project for the group.

**Resolved:**

**That the elected member representation on the Climate Change Working Group be agreed as:**

- Cllr Liam Lavery
- Cllr Pauline Thompson
- Cllr Tom Wilson
- Cllr Jim Lang
- Cllr Eleanor Armstrong

#### **FGS 19/968 7. SCEDULE OF PAYMENTS.**

The Town Clerk submitted a full schedule of payments and income for the financial period 28 June 2019 to 25 July 2019.

**Resolved:**

**That the Schedule of Payments for the financial period 28 June – 25 July 2019 be formally agreed and approved.**

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

#### **FGS 19/969 8. BUDGET REPORT 2019/20.**

The Town Clerk submitted the first quarterly full budget report for the period 1 April – 25 July 2019.

Cllr Grimshaw highlighted the People's Park Play Area scheme and thanked NCC members for the financial support.

**Resolved:**

**That the Full Budget Report for the financial period 1 April to 25 July 2019 be formally agreed and approved.**

#### **FGS 19/970 9. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING.**

Tuesday 24 September 2019, at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, 65 Station Road, Ashington, NE63 8RX.

**The Meeting ended at 7:50pm.**