

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, PONTELAND ON 9 OCTOBER 2019

Present: Councillor A Varley (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs C Caisley, R Dodd, T Edwards-Clay, Mrs C Greenwell, A Hall, Mrs S Johnson, A Shanley and Mrs K Woodrow.

68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Ahmed, L Darwin and Mrs K Overbury.

69. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 11 September 2019 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

71. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 55(i) - Grant to Ponteland Memorial Hall

An email of thanks had been received from the Chairman of the Memorial Hall in respect of the grant awarded at the last meeting.

72. PLANNING

(i) Planning Committee

Minutes of meetings held on 3rd, 10th and 17th September 2019 were circulated for information.

(ii) Report on recent planning decisions

There were no reports.

73. GRANTS

(i) Sport Tynedale

A grant application had been received from Sport Tynedale. Members were reminded that the amount of £250 had been awarded to the organisation in December 2018. The grant was to assist towards provision of grants to individuals to encourage them to gain coaching qualifications as well as grants to young people who were pursuing sporting excellence.

RESOLVED – A grant of £250 be approved.

73. GRANTS (Continued)

(ii) Community Action Northumberland (CAN)

It was reported that a letter had been received from CAN requesting donations from all parish and town councils to assist them with their work for all communities in the county. A donation of £150 had been awarded in October 2018.

RESOLVED – A donation of £150 be awarded to CAN.

74. PROJECTS REPORT

The projects report had been circulated for the consideration of Councillors. A separate report relating to the newly installed lights at the public toilets had also been circulated. These had been installed to assist with lighting the car park. The report reminded Members that several complaints regarding the brightness of the lights had been received from neighbouring residents and a decision had been taken to switch them off until a solution was found.

Following a meeting with the installing company, it was recommended that two lower wattage lights be installed which would have a lower irradiation length. The cost would be £297.31 plus VAT.

RESOLVED –

(i) The installation of two lower wattage lights at the toilets at a cost of £297.31 plus VAT be approved.

(ii) The projects report be accepted.

75. ANNUAL AUDIT RETURN 2018-19

A report by the Clerk in relation to the above had been circulated. Members were informed that the External Auditor report and certificate for 2018-19 had been received from PKF Littlejohn on 13th September. The Auditors had not raised any issues with the Town Council.

A copy of the certificate and sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Annual Return (AGAR) had been circulated to Councillors.

The information had been displayed on the Town Council’s website and on notice boards for the requisite 14 days.

RESOLVED – The Council approve and accept the External Auditor report and Certificate for 2018-19 and sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR.

76. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS/FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council was asked to appoint a Working Party to review the above documents in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. A comprehensive review had taken place in 2018-19.

..... DATE

CHAIRMAN

76. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS/FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

(Continued)

RESOLVED – Councillors Varley, Hall, Mrs Overbury and Shanley be appointed to this Working Party to review the above.

77. HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a meeting of the above Working Party held on 14th September 2019 had been circulated.

In relation to item 341, the Chair of Highways wished to express her thanks to the Town Council's contractors for painting the back of the garages at Merton Way car park.

A query was raised in relation to item 351, inconsiderate holiday parking in lay-by at Cheviot View. It appeared that some residents had not been consulted on this matter. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the Highways Working Party meeting to be held on 11 October.

RESOLVED – The Minutes be approved.

78. ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a meeting of the Working Party held on 23 September 2019 had been circulated. The following recommendations had been submitted to the Council meeting for approval.

(i) Adult fitness application

The Council was asked to approve a quote of £1900 plus VAT to progress the planning application for the installation of adult fitness equipment at five sites in Ponteland.

Some members expressed their concern at spending funds on this project without having a firm grant offer. Concerns were also expressed at the suggested locations and the insurance implications.

Members of the Working Party felt that all of these matters had already been discussed. The reasons for the equipment were explained which was primarily to help older residents who did no exercise to improve their health. It was hoped that this could be expanded further in future years.

Concerns regarding locations were reiterated as it would mean users would have to cross busy roads three times to access the equipment. There were also concerns about their ability to access assistance if they were taken ill. After some discussion the recommendation was rejected by a vote of 5 to 3.

Work was required at the Oxbow lake to remove weeds that had not been treated for several years. The Tyne Rivers Trust had submitted a quote of £1200 for two

78. ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY (Continued)

(ii) Oxbow Lake

days work with a team of 3 people plus volunteers. It may be that more than that time was required. A budget of £1900 was available for this year.

RESOLVED – The minutes and the following be approved:

(i) It was agreed not to proceed with the recommendation relating to the planning application for the adult fitness equipment.

(ii) The Council agreed to proceed with the work at the Oxbow lake the cost of which would be met from the appropriate budget heading.

79. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Councillor Dodd reported that the Examination Hearings in respect of the Northumberland Local Plan had commenced on 8th October at Morpeth Town Hall.

Work was ongoing for a design for the Merton Way car park north.

He had attended an event relating to personal safety for Councillors which had been interesting, and he hoped that some of the items raised would be relevant to parish and town Councillors.

Councillor Veronica Jones reported on a forthcoming consultation relating to oral health. She stated that NCC had launched a staff wellbeing initiative for their employees.

Councillor Mrs Jones mentioned that she had attended a recent event with MPs relating to problems they faced with safety issues such as abuse on social media etc.

She had asked for an item to be added to the Local Transport Plan for pavements at the top end of Western Way.

Councillor Mrs Jones also reminded Members of the Ageing Well event which would be held on 17th October at Merton Hall.

80. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor submitted details of his diary engagements for October and November 2019. He informed Members that he had added approximate times for the events for those who were interested in standing for the position of Mayor or Deputy Mayor in May 2020.

81. REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

(i) Ponteland Community Partnership

The Minutes of the PCP meeting held on 21st August 2019 had been circulated.

(ii) Newcastle Airport Consultative Committee – 3 September 2019

The documents in respect of the above meeting had been received and circulated for information. It was agreed to put this item on the November meeting.

82. ACCOUNTS/ BANK RECONCILIATION/ BUDGET REPORT

The Accounts Committee approved payments totalling £44,327.58. A copy of the monthly budget report was also circulated, as well as the Bank reconciliation documents for September 2019. A report outlining budget revisions in the quarter up to 30th September had also been circulated.

RESOLVED – The reports be accepted.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 6.45 P.M.
AT THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE