

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16th OCTOBER, 2018

Present: The Mayor, Councillor Mrs B E Allen (Presiding) and Councillors R Arthur, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace, S P Colborn, S Cudlip, D Cummings, Mrs V Cummings, Mrs S Forster, Ms R M Gratton, Mrs L Kennedy, K Shaw, T Shepherd, B Taylor, R Whitehead, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillors G N Hepworth, D McKenna, Mrs S Pratt.

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

2. OPEN SESSION

In accordance with established policy the Council provided the opportunity at the beginning of the meeting for a 15 minute session.

A representative from Fishbone Allotments requested some clarification of the current status of Greenscape as he was under the impression it was a Community Project and not a Community Allotment. A representative from Greenscape stated that nothing had changed. Fishbone Allotments stated that if this was an allotment then they should come under Fishbone Allotments Association. Greenscape noted that it is a project and it isn't owned by anyone and is a community project. A Facebook post from Greenscape was handed to Members by Fishbone Association. The post was inviting members of the public to visit the community allotment. A Member noted that the wording could be construed as semantics and the Acting Town Clerk stated that this could be discussed further at next week's Allotment Sub-Committee meeting.

Fishbone Association stated that there was a rumour that Greenscape want to form an Association. Greenscape stated that they had made enquiries with the National Allotment Association to see if a single site could become an association and they had written to the Town Council asking for permission to become an Association. The Acting Town Clerk and the Chair of the Allotment Sub-Committee stated that this would all be discussed at the next Allotment Sub-Committee meeting.

A member of the public raised an issue with regards to the street lighting at Wedgewood Road and stated that he had contacted Durham County Council

numerous times by telephone regarding this matter. He noted that there is an elderly lady of 92 years who lives there and she could easily fall due to the dark. A Member stated that she had also been contacted by the member of the public as well as by the elderly lady and her daughter and the issue was now resolved. The reason the repair had taken so long was due to the number on the lamppost being given incorrectly to which Durham County Council had apologised.

The member of the public also raised the issue of parking at Westlea as some families owned 2 and 3 cars and they were parking on paths and corners which was also dangerous. A Member stated that this issue was also being looked into in Westlea as well as Eastlea and Seaton. The Member asked for patience whilst this was being looked into.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Further discussions with the Allotment Associations takes place at the next Allotment Sub-Committee meeting.
- (ii) Greenscape forming an Association to be discussed at the next Allotment Sub-Committee meeting.

3. TO CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEAHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 18th SEPTEMBER, 2018

RESOLVED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved, and they be signed as a correct record by the Mayor.

4. REPORTS OF SERVICE COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the reports of the following Committees, copies of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved:

- a) Report of the Arts and Information Committee held on 25th September, 2018.
- b) Report of the Parks and Events Committee held on 25th September, 2018 subject to page 9677 item 3.3 regarding the Remembrance Sunday Parade. A Member stated that the question of who is responsible for operating and running the Remembrance Service has been talked about within the Chamber on numerous occasions and it was always known that it was the responsibility of the Royal British Legion who had taken on that responsibility for the Order of Service and all that is related to the parade. The RBL have come to the Council over the years for some relatively small items involving the loud speaker, amplifiers and any other small items that were necessary. The Council have had very minimal involvement and the RBL cherished their responsibility and they would hold various meetings with groups to discuss the order of parade etc. The Member stated that it was surprise to him that it now appears that it is going to be the Councils responsibility for operating this. The Member requested that some clarification is sought from the RBL as to how this has happened. It is in the RBL's own Terms of Reference but

that doesn't mean that it is always the responsibility of the Town Council. The other concern the Member had was the reported £2k spend on the Remembrance Day and noted that the Town Council had never spent that kind of money in the history of the Council on the parade. The Acting Town Clerk stated that it was discussed at the last meeting that due to it being the 100 year Anniversary it was agreed to spend extra money to make it a memorable occasion and also in light of the RBL having just re-establishing themselves following a difficult period of time it was agreed to assist this year but for future years to look at other ways for the RBL to raise funds to pay for the parade. Members discussed that the Town Council would be paying for the band and also for the road closures as the Police are unable to man the closures this year and that was also a reason why the RBL have moved the parade to start from North Terrace this year.

A Member also questioned why in the minutes it states that Dave McKenna should be asked on how to spend the £2k. The Acting Town Clerk noted that it was suggested that Dave McKenna could meet and work in partnership with the RBL.

- c) Report of Planning and Environmental Committee held on 2nd October, 2018, subject to a letter of thanks should be sent to the two representatives from Durham County Council who gave a presentation on the private sector landlords and empty properties. They should also be asked if they can provide a regular update and also ask them for copies of the presentations with telephone numbers for their team.

A Member also stated that on page 9685 the minute regarding the local government reorganisation should be amended as the reorganisation took place prior to 2010.

- d) Report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 2nd October, 2018, subject to page 9690 it was noted that 1 Member had not received a copy of the Seaham Community Party Leaflet when these had been distributed to all Members. Also it was requested that the Leaflets be placed on the next Finance and General Purposes Committee agenda. Also subject to page 9690 item 8, a Member wished to make an amendment to the recommendation and requested that Officers produce an appropriate report outlining possible charges along with full usage requested by the Squadron, risk assessments and how the usage would fit in with other teams currently using the playing fields and bring this report to the next available Parks and Events Committee meeting. The amendment to the recommendation was agreed and seconded.

- e) Report of the Twinning Committee held on 2nd October, 2018.

- f) Report of the Establishment Sub-Committee held on 2nd October, 2018.

5. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the report which relates to the proposed sale of the bungalow it was recommended that the formal resolution be passed to exclude the press and public pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings Act, 1961).

6. SALE OF THE BUNGALOW

Members discussed the proposal from the tenants requesting that rent from 1st January, 2018 is returned and no further rent be paid until the sale of the bungalow is finalised due to the condition of the building and works which need to be carried out before the winter months. It was noted that the delay in the sale was due to awaiting permissions from CISWO and then the Charity Commission.

The Town Council's Solicitor had agreed that this was a fair compromise and advised the Town Council to accept the Tenants request as the Tenants are willing to pay for the repair works to be carried out.

A Member stated that he did not think the start of this process was in 2005 and that an application to purchase the bungalow came to the Council sometime after this date and requested clarification of this.

A Member also stated that this arrangement cannot be left open ended and that once all permissions for the sale of the property come through then the transaction should be concluded as soon as possible. It was also noted that the Tenants should be given a proper explanation that the bungalow was a Trustee property and the Council are not responsible for the amount of time that it takes to get consents for the sale of the property it is beyond the Council's control. It was noted that the Tenants own Solicitors should have made them aware of this and that the Town Council are not to blame for this lengthy process.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The rent paid from the Tenants from the 1st January, 2018 be reimbursed.
- (ii) No further rent to be collected.
- (iii) Once all permissions have been received to sell the property the transaction should be concluded as soon as possible.
- (iv) The Tenants have agreed to pay for the repairs which need to be carried out.
- (v) A letter to be sent to the Tenants from the Acting Town Clerk explaining the delays in the sale are due to awaiting permissions from CISWO and the Charity Commission and that the Town Council have no control over these timescales.
- (vi) The Acting Town Clerk seeks clarification of when the initial purchase application was received from the Tenants.