

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS & CEMETERY  
COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2012

PRESENT: COUN. J ALVEY (CHAIR)

Mesdames: S McDonnell, J Black &  
L Wood

Messrs: J Hardy, W M Jeffrey, T Jones,  
R Huitson, C Austin, C J Metcalfe,  
C Robbins, H Bennett MBE, D Langan &  
C Watkins

**MEMBERS WERE REMINDED OF THE NEED TO  
DISCLOSE ANY INTEREST, PREJUDICIAL OR  
PERSONAL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF  
CONDUCT.**

52. MINUTES SILENCE – FORMER TOWN COUNCILLOR AND  
MAYOR – TOM LONGSTAFF

The Leader informed Members that a former Town Councillor and Mayor, Tom Longstaff, had sadly passed away. A minutes silence took place as a mark of respect. The funeral was to take place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February at 2.15pm, St. Cuthbert's Church, Peterlee.

**RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk send a letter of  
condolence to Tom's wife, Olive and their family.**

53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:- Mrs M Milsom (poorly), D Milsom (poorly), R Jones (poorly), Mrs J I Measor (ill health) and E W Hall (poorly).

**RECOMMENDED that the apologies submitted, be accepted.**

54. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

Matters Arising

i) Minute No. 28 – Request from tenants of Numbers 1-4 Olaman Walk for a Gate

Members gave consideration to the above request and it was **RECOMMENDED that:-**

i) **Ward Members, Councillors S McDonnell and J Alvey, carry out a consultation in person with the residents of the Lowhills Road area,**

ii) **The Parks Supervisor prepare a costing for the provision of a sign, a padlock and the possible erection of a gate currently held in the Council's storage.**

ii) Minute No. 44 – Request for Grit Bins – Plan as Requested  
A copy of an up to date plan of all the Town Council's grit bins had been circulated to Members.

The Parks Supervisor suggested the bins remain in situ until the end of the winter season, and locations be re-considered at the October meeting, in readiness for the next winter season. Members stressed that bins be divided equally amongst the Wards.

**RECOMMENDED that this item be placed on the agenda for the October meeting and residents be kept informed through the Council's 'About Town' newsletter.**

55. SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL – LARGER LOCAL COUNCILS INFORMAL RECEPTION – 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2012

An invitation to the above reception had been received from Spennymoor Town Council, a copy of which had been circulated to Members. The invitation was extended to the Mayor and Mayoress, Deputy Mayor, Town Clerk and partners, Leader and no more than six Members.

Members expressed their concerns at the number of Members stipulated in invitation, and it was agreed that this matter be raised at the Larger Local Councils meeting.

Councillors:- C Austin, C J Metcalfe, S McDonnell and J Alvey confirmed their attendance.

**RECOMMENDED that the invitation be accepted.**

***COUNCILLOR MRS L WOOD DECLARED AN INTEREST ON THE FOLLOWING ITEM AND TOOK NO PART IN THE DISCUSSION THAT ENSUED.***

56. REQUEST FROM EAST DURHAM HOMES FOR FENCING

A request had been received from East Durham Homes, a copy of which had been circulated to Members, for their consideration.

Members were against the suggestion of erecting fencing throughout the Town, they felt this would not improve the environment.

**RECOMMENDED that the Parks Supervisor request East Durham Homes to submit alternative suggestions.**

57. USE OF SPORTS PITCHES

A meeting had been arranged for Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February at 1.00pm to discuss the above item with Members and then followed by 2.00pm with the Sports Users. As this was a newly established Working Group clarification was sought if Members wished to be included and involved with these meetings.

**RECOMMENDED that Members be notified of these meetings and attend, if they so wished.**

58. OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY PRESENTATION

The Town Clerk advised that she would be arranging to meet with Nigel Dodds of Durham County Council, together with the Sports Development Officer and the Parks Supervisor.

Members agreed that the Town Council be involved with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

**RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk advise Members of the outcome of the meeting.**

59. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE WAS ASKED TO PASS THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1961 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

60. THE REPORT OF THE PARKS SUPERVISOR

***COUNCILLOR C AUSTIN DECLARED AN INTEREST ON THE FOLLOWING ITEM AND TOOK NO PART IN THE DISCUSSION THAT ENSUED.***

a) Zurich Municipal Annual Health and Safety Checks

The Parks Supervisor advised Members that early indications from Zurich Municipal (Risk Management) stating that the “rubber crumb” safety surface which was the required surfacing for the age range of fixed play equipment, which was prevalent in all the play areas had now become of paramount importance.

**RECOMMENDED that the Parks Supervisor prepare costings for each option, together with on-site sessions being set up to obtain input from Ward Members in conjunction with the Supervisor's technical input, this be implemented as a matter of urgency.**

b) Play Equipment (General)

Additional to the previous report on play surfacing Members were asked to consider the general age of all of the play equipment, with the exception of Eden Lane which had been refurbished in 2009.

**RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk and the Parks Supervisor update the Asset Management Strategy, as a matter of urgency.**

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED that the provision of play equipment generally be considered when the annual budgets were being agreed.**

c) John Deere “Gator” 4wd Utility Vehicle

The Parks Supervisor referred Members to the 2010 vehicle replacement programme (assets), notably a year by year approach to replace Park’s vehicles and equipment over a period of several years.

The Parks Supervisor advised that it had now become necessary to replace the Kubota RTV 900, due to the vehicle being non-operational for a number of weeks throughout last year, increasing the pressure on transportation within the Department.

The replacement utility vehicle would be a John Deere 4x4 agricultural (diesel) road legal vehicle which would be tax exempt and would not require an MOT. Also with this type of vehicle being of plastic composite construction the estimated life span was eight years (subject to average wear and tear).

The Parks Supervisor had obtained two quotations, details of which were given to Members for consideration.

**RECOMMENDED that a John Deere Gator vehicle be purchased from Greenlay Machinery Ltd, at a cost of £7,000 plus VAT, and the Kubota 900 ATV be disposed of on a part exchange basis, this be ordered immediately.**

d) Princes Trust Community Project

Members considered an offer made by the Princes Trust (Peterlee) to provide a decorating project at Hill Rigg House sports changing rooms. The project would consist of the preparation and painting of

sports changing rooms and corridors in the facility as well as the purchase and gifting of “several” wipe boards for providing tactical information to football teams.

The project was aimed at promoting team working and also planning, as well as the research of projects which would benefit the communities where the Princes Trust was based. The Princes Trust would provide most of the materials such as paint, personal protective equipment and Princes Trust staff had risk assessed the project, which would be under constant supervision from the Princes Trust staff.

**RECOMMENDED that:-**

- i) the offer from the Princes Trust be accepted, with the proviso the Parks Supervisor monitor the project,**
- ii) the Facilities Manager of Hill Rigg House submit monthly Reports to be considered at the Shotton Hall Sub-Committee.**

e) Jubilee Woodland Project

Members were advised that an arrival of 420 no. trees including one commemorative oak tree, which would be provided gratis by the Woodland Commission. This is to link in to the Queens Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. The trees would be planted at various Council sites such as; Woodhouse Park and Eden Lane Cemetery. The project would be supervised by the Parks Development Officer. The trees were all native species and approximately one foot tall and came complete with plastic rabbit guards and support canes.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.**

f) Helford Rd Sports Fields

The Parks Supervisor referred Members to the damage to football pitch number one at Helford Rd which had been reported by the Helford Road Facilities Manager on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012.

Although the damage was minimal leading up to the pitches, the Parks Supervisor suggested that the Town Council should not allow this team to use the sports facilities for the 2012 season, particularly as several letters have been sent out over the years warning of misuse of Council facilities.

**RECOMMENDED that further investigations be made and a full report brought back to Members.**

61. REVIEW OF ESTABLISHMENT

The Town Clerk advised Members the staffing establishment/structure was out-dated and would benefit from a review. She suggested that NEREO be engaged to provide specialist support at the usual rate.

**RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk be given authority to commence a review of the Establishment in conjunction with a NEREO Consultant, as a matter of urgency.**