

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS &
CEMETERY COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 9th JUNE 2014

PRESENT: COUN. R KYLE (CHAIR)

Mesdames: L Wood, M Milsom, J I Measor,
K Liddell & S Simpson

Messrs: D Milsom, W M Jeffrey, C J Metcalfe,
A Watson, D Sillito, R Curtis, C Watkins,
C Robbins, J Alvey, A Watson & S Miles

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors;- G Cowie (holiday), C Baty (hospital appointment), V Watson (holiday) and L Cook (work).

RECOMMENDED that the apologies submitted be accepted.

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

3. PROGRESS REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR

The Horticultural Supervisor's progress report had been circulated to all Members, consideration was given to the following headings:-

i) General Overview

Work had commenced on the summer planting of beds/roundabouts within Peterlee, plants had been

inspected and were of a very good quality. It was anticipated that the 36,000 plants would take an estimated two weeks to prepare beds and plant. The Horticulture Supervisor had contacted Durham County Council with regard to various issues on both main roundabouts within Peterlee and a meeting had been held with Street Scene personnel and representatives from the Highways Dept on Friday 9th May on site.

A report was awaited from Durham County Council in relation to this matter. Members agreed to the Supervisor's proposal that the service level agreement be reviewed and amended with Durham County Council, which would alleviate the problems recently reported by the Supervisor regarding sponsorship, signage, safety matters etc. could be addressed in a mutually agreed timeframe by both Councils. Similarly any exit strategies be discussed by both Councils so that departments concerned (Parks, Highways, Street Scene) would be able to effectively plan and liaise with any future joint issues that could arise.

There was considerable discussion on the signage that had been installed on the roundabouts without any prior consultation or planning permission etc. The Horticultural Supervisor explained he required risk assessments and method statements from Durham County Council as a matter of urgency to assist with the safe planting of the roundabouts. Following consideration it was **RECOMMENDED that:-**

- (i) The signs be removed immediately to allow the planting of the roundabouts to be carried out safely;**
- (ii) This would then allow Officers the opportunity to liaise and consult fully and agree the re positioning of the signs with full risk assessments and method statements being in place;**
- (iii) the Horticultural Supervisor's proposal be supported and he liaise with Durham County Council to review the current service level agreement.**

ii) Sports Fields/Fine Turf

Work had been completed on the annual maintenance of the ten football pitches within Peterlee, based at Lowhills, Eden Lane and Helford Road.

A total of 80 no. tons of high grade top soil had been placed within the worn areas of the fields, re-seeded and pre fertiliser applied. The Supervisor reported there were instances of unauthorised use of the pitches however this was monitored and sanctions applied accordingly to teams. Unfortunately there were Teams who seemed to think pitches could be utilised all year round. He further added that information signs would be erected warning the public against unauthorised use.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

iii) Mayoral Planting Scheme

The Supervisor advised that measures had been taken to ensure that the viral condition pseudomonas appeared to have had some positive results.

The maintenance measures taken were:-

- Produced an Arboriculture Report for affected areas (Shotton Hall-complete)
- Implement findings (implement pruning regime, identify sick plants)
- Produced longer term plan (check tree density, reduced self seeded species, ash etc)
- Training of “in house” staff (on going staff numbers identified – implemented 2014)

The above measures would ensure that the annual Mayoral planting scheme could be re-established, however, on a cautionary note the Supervisor advised that by placing more trees at a single site on an annual basis, could create the same problems at a later date.

The Supervisor proposed that the Shotton Hall grounds be utilised to plant a maximum of six specimen standard type trees for the 2014-2015 season, after which one standard tree per year or alternatively an avenue of Mayoral trees within Woodhouse Park could be introduced;-

Balliol Close entrance – space for 10 no. trees

Centre of Woodhouse Park – space for 10 no. trees

Balliol/Burnhope Way path – space for 20 no. trees

RECOMMENDED that:-

- (i) the Horticultural Supervisor’s proposals contained in the report, be supported and implemented;**
- (ii) the Annual Tree Planting by the Mayor be re-instated immediately;**
- (iii) the trees planted by the various Mayors be recorded on office plans rather than using a plaque or sign.**

4. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 31ST MARCH 2014

A copy of the above Statement of Accounts had been previously circulated to Members, were received and agreed.

RECOMMENDED that the Statement of Accounts, be agreed and accepted.

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

6. THE REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR – VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

The Horticultural Supervisor’s Report, a copy of which had been circulated to Members was considered.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (a) the factored asset, procurement and disposal mechanism, (as detailed in the report), for the Parks Department over the next four years, be approved;**
- (b) as proposed by the Horticulture Supervisor, credit terms with John Deere Ltd (Financial), at the rates and**

cost as detailed in the report, after discount and trade in, be obtained to purchase the following items of machinery; John Deere 5 series tractor plus attachments, trimax snake tractor mowing system and a John Deere x 950R ride on mower. In addition the redundant equipment would be disposed of as trade-ins.

7. REQUEST TO PURCHASE LAND – GARAGE AT ESSINGTON WAY – PROGRESS FOLLOWING THE SITE MEETING HELD ON 29TH APRIL 2014

A copy of a request to purchase the above land had been considered and had been followed up by a site meeting, a copy of the note of the site meeting had been previously circulated to each member. Both Members present at the site meeting and Officers gave a verbal update on the site meeting they had attended and there was a full discussion on the proposal and how it may affect any of the Town Council's future operations.

RECOMMENDED that the District Valuer be engaged to provide a valuation on this piece of Town Council land and on receipt of their report a further report be presented to Members.