

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS &  
CEMETERY COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2015

PRESENT: COUN R KYLE (CHAIR)

Mesdames: L Wood, J I Measor, K Hawley,  
V Watson, S Simpson & K Liddell

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

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

THE CHAIRMAN INTRODUCED NEWLY ELECTED  
MEMBER, COUNCILLOR KAREN HAWLEY TO THE TOWN  
COUNCIL AND WISHED HER ALL THE BEST IN HER NEW  
ROLE.

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been submitted from Councillors C  
Baty, M A Cartwright & C Robbins (ill).

**RECOMMENDED the Council approve the reasons  
submitted for absence received from these Members on the  
grounds given above, and their apologies for absence be  
recorded. FURTHER RECOMMENDED a get well card be  
sent to Councillor C Robbins on behalf of the Town Council.**

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

86. MINUTES OF THE EDEN LANE COMMUNITY BUILDING STEERING GROUP OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2014, a copy of which had been circulated to Members for their attention. The management and condition of this community building was discussed at length. It was reported that there was interest in using the building however it was stressed that a commitment, both in terms of finance and involvement needed to be made to allow current use to continue and to attract future users. It was asked whether the building was fit for purpose; it was confirmed it was suitable and met the needs of the current users. It was accepted that the buildings' potential needed to be considered, along with what the costs would be to get the building to standard.

**RECOMMENDED Councillor M A Cartwright, as Edenhill Ward Member, be included on the Steering Group for their future meetings. FURTHER RECOMMENDED results of the reports already commissioned in respect of Fire Risk Assessment, DDA and Mechanical & Electrical be considered at the next meeting.**

87. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS & PUBLIC 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.
88. PROGRESS REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was considered under the following headings;-

i) Procurement of Vehicles (Non Agricultural)

The Horticultural Supervisor had been asked by Members to produce an asset register and to evaluate current procurement of agricultural vehicles such as tractors, grass cutters and also vehicles such as vans and pick-up trucks. The aim was to complete an asset survey of current vehicles and to factor in their disposal and subsequent replacement, if required. Additionally the asset register would be a working document for the Officers/Members to set aside anticipated budgets so as to enable procurement in any given year of anticipated needs of the Parks Department, a copy of the current Asset Register had been circulated to Members.

Of crucial importance to all of the above was the inclusion of a service level agreement with Durham County Council horticultural maintenance department, which enabled gratis assistance with vehicle procurement and also enabled entry into the North Eastern Purchasing Portal (NEPPO) which effectively gave current best prices on a number of vehicles and also enabled a minimum of 25% discount. Operating under the umbrella of the Durham County Council scheme the Town Council would not have to pay the £5,000 annual fee for entry into the scheme.

**RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor make further investigations into procurement on a re charge basis, considering what the Town Council’s needs were and then negotiate charges with Durham County Council, and report back to Members.**

ii) 2014-2015 Budget (Vehicle Purchases)

The Supervisor referred to the information circulated relating to the 2014 asset replacement strategy, he advised that there was a need to replace the two x 4 wheel drive pickup trucks (currently Ford Rangers) as included and provided for in the 2014/2015 budget.

Several comparisons had been made with other four wheel drive, diesel powered vehicles. All with double cab (4 seats) and included a tow bar, beacon and load liner. It was suggested that perhaps the life of these vehicles could be prolonged and it was asked if members could arrange to inspect the vehicles that required replacing, on a date to be arranged, prior to the Council Meeting.

**RECOMMENDED that this item be re considered at the Council Meeting.**

iii) Eden Lane Facilities- Outstanding Works Requirements

As discussed earlier in the meeting the Supervisor drew Member’s attention to the mechanical and electrical condition reports compiled by Dayes Kenyon Associates in December 2012, whereby various works had been highlighted as being required for health and safety, fire risk and mechanical and electrical survey purposes. Of particular concern was the requirement to change the full heating system, which was now totally obsolete. Quotations to replace fully were in excess of £10,000.

The Manager of East Durham College, had facilitated a potential project with the Town Council and Eden Lane Steering Group members which would address the full heating requirements of the building by utilising trainees and technical staff plus a local contractor to install a full Baxi commercial grade heating system to the Eden Lane facilities building (former social club) at extremely preferential rates.

The Horticultural Supervisor gave a breakdown of the criteria of this proposal, a copy of which all Members had been circulated.

Members raised their concerns with and asked the Supervisor for his opinion if this building was “fit for purpose”. The Supervisor stated that in his opinion he thought it was fit for purpose, for the current users at the moment. However, this building did require finance to be invested for it to be brought up to a high standard and to attract continuous regular clients.

**RECOMMENDED that Members arrange to view the Eden Lane Community Building. FURTHER RECOMMENDED that approval be given to the partnership project with East Durham College being taken forward, as detailed in the report. Plenary powers be granted to allow this work to be carried out as soon as possible.**

*COUNCILLORS W M JEFFREY, J ALVEY, AS OFFICIALS AND PLOT HOLDERS & C J METCALFE AS A PLOT HOLDER, DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM.*

iv) Thorn tree Gill Leisure Gardens (outstanding issues)

The Horticultural Supervisor referred to his report of November 2014, whereby he had reported that no further works had been carried out on the disused rain shelter which was either in need of demolition or refurbishment.

The Horticultural Supervisor referred to the Big Lottery Fund grant which had been awarded for both sites of the Peterlee Leisure Gardens Association, (PLGA), in July 2014. A Councillor clarified that the lottery grant had been paid to the Leisure Gardens Association not the Town Council, which he had given all relevant documentation to the Deputy Town Clerk to retain for transparency. An internal audit was also to be carried out as previously agreed.

**RECOMMENDED that Members take the opportunity to view the rain shelter at Thorntree Gill, prior to any action being taken with this structure. FURTHER RECOMMENDED this be considered at the next meeting.**

89. LOWHILLS ROAD CAR PARKING ISSUES

A Councillor advised that cars had been parking on the football pitches and touch line over the weekend. He had witnessed this action and the driver/registration plate and Football Team could be identified. This had not been the first time this had happened.

**RECOMMENDED that a formal first written warning be issued to the Team following the recent actions of one of their players, as per the Hire Agreement, rules and their Club's Constitution. A copy be supplied to the Secretary of the League.**

90. TOWN CLERK'S GRIEVANCE

The Deputy Town Clerk reported the contents of an e mail received from Highgate Chambers on behalf of Councillor Thompson. A suitable reply was to be made on behalf of the Town Council.

**RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted and the action taken in this regard, be endorsed.**