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Minutes of an electronic meeting of East Bedlington Parish Council held via ZOOM on Tuesday 6 April 2021

PRESENT:

Councillor Steve Aynsley
Councillor John Batey
Councillor Helen Bradford (part)
Councillor Paul Hedley (part)
Councillor Keith Scantlebury
Councillor Allan Stewart
Councillor Mike Trimming
Councillor Alex Wallace

In attendance: Ron Thornton – Clerk, Jenny Tindale – Deputy Clerk,
Neighbourhood Inspector Phil Patterson
County Councillor Bill Crosby
6 members of the public

		ACTION
	<p>PUBLIC SESSION The Chairman opened the meeting and invited comments and observations from members of the public. Mark Wilkinson, a resident of the Parish complained about the levels of ASB in Gallagher Park and enquired as to what actions the Parish would be taking. The Chairman thanked him for his comments and advised that a response would be given at the next Parish meeting.</p>	
CO193/20	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ASBSENCE Apologies were noted from Councillors Allan Douglas (illness), Councillor Lynda Mason (work commitments) RESOLVED: (i) That the Parish Councillors' apologies be accepted.</p>	
CO194/20	<p>CHANGE OF ORDER OF MEETING The Chairman requested the moving of agenda item 13 (iii) to be discussed after agenda item 16 to allow the exclusion of Press and Public. RESOLVED: That the agenda be so changed.</p>	
CO195/20	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 March 2021 were presented to the meeting. RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 March 2021 be agreed as a true record.</p>	

CO196/20	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES There were no matters arising.	
CO197/20	DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION There were no requests.	
Councillor Hedley joined the meeting at this point		
CO198/20	POLICE REPORT <p>The Neighbourhood Inspector reported that overall crime is down by 9%. There had been a slight increase in burglaries, mainly impacted by burglaries to unsecured garden sheds. As previously predicted there had been an increase in youth ASB. The Easter break, and improved weather had resulted in larger groups of young people visiting parks. It was noted that young people visiting parks were not necessarily engaging in ASB, there needed to be a tolerance level from other park users in this matter. Creating additional play parks is contributing to the problems as with limited staff it is impossible to police them all at the same time. The Police have responded to motor bike nuisance and seized additional vehicles. There continued to be evidence that parents are supplying young people with alcohol and concerns around underage and proxy sales. These matters are all something that residents should report. In Inspector Patterson's opinion, residents needed to work together with the Police, elected members and Youth organisations to seek a workable solution. He reported that he had already identified opportunities working with Bad Apples NE to create diversionary activities. The Inspector updated on £2.3 million drugs seizure and advised that those reporting drug crime may not receive an immediate response as it takes time to build up intelligence and the level of drug activity needs to be significant to secure a warrant. He urged residents to report any incidents to 101 as and when they were happening to build up the intelligence levels.</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk advised that discussions had already taken place with Bad Apples NE to use East Bedlington Community Centre for diversionary activities as part of the Parish Council's commitment to youth work as the offer had been declined by NCC Youth Workers. Acorn Counselling would also be supported under this fund and will starting counselling sessions for young people in the Centre from end of April.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Police report be noted.</p>	
CO199/20	NCC COUNCILLOR REPORTS There were no written reports from NCC Councillors.	
CO200/20	CORRESPONDENCE A member sought clarity on log 429 – allotment heaters. The Deputy Clerk appraised members of the enquiry and advice given.	
RESOLVED: (i) That the correspondence be noted.		

The Clerk circulated a written report updating members on most recent events.

In adding to the report, he confirmed that:

- 1) A site visit had taken place at Cambois Allotments. A course of action involving flood relief measures had been put forward by the Clerk. He would be consulting a Civil Engineer before progressing works. Plot 527 has now been prepared for letting and is expected to be taken up later in the week.
- 2) The new bins previously approved by members have now been installed with the exception of the bin approved for the Gables Surgery. Once agreement with NCC Neighbourhood Services on a preferred location has been agreed arrangements will be made with the contractor to install. Due to high levels of litter at the new play area in Kings and Queens Road, a request has been made to re-install the bin currently held in storage. The Clerk proposed that he would make arrangements to undertake this work at the same time if approved at Services working group.
- 3) Inspection arrangements for the Parish Council Defibrillators have been formalised. The inspection duty has been included in the role description of the Outdoor Services Officer. Additional batteries and spare paddles have been ordered to enable speedy replacement should the equipment be used.
- 4) The Parish Council have redeemed £80 of meat vouchers. The scheme is administered by The Matthew Project. It was noted that the low take up is in part due to NCC Communities Together supporting families in need in the Parish. It is expected that the uptake will increase when the local authority resources run out.
- 5) A letter had been received from Steven Adey (Bernicia Group) confirming that there are no objections to the siting of the play area in Burnside. Feedback was still awaited from the property services team in relation to the layout of any services and from the solicitors in relation to the occupation licence.
- 6) Newsletter – the Clerk reported that there had been conflicting reports on the delivery of the newsletter, and it is thought the non-delivery is not as widespread as first reported. He also reported that guidance had been sought from the monitoring officers as to whether the remainder of the publication can be issued during Purdah. It was agreed that the only failsafe way of ensuring delivery had taken place was to undertake the work in house. It was agreed that this is not best use of the staff time and some members felt that it was not their role to delivery publications.
- 7) Notice of Elections have been posted on all notice boards in the Parish. Notice as to whether any seats will be contested is expected week commencing 12 April.

Clerk

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(i) That the Clerk's Report be noted.</p>	
CO202/20	<p>PLANNING</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>(i) That no objections be offered in relation to 21/00474/FUL</p> <p>(ii) That members support application 21/00223/FUL Gables Health Centre</p> <p>(iii) That members support application 21/00818/FUIES – Britishvolt PLC, Welcoming the investment in the Parish, in terms of job creation, provision of training facilities and environmental improvement to the derelict former industrial site. The potential to extend rail links, including passenger services was also welcomed.</p> <p>(iv) That members support application 21/0116/CCD – Bedlington Railway Station. Whilst members welcomed the proposed re-introduction of rail services in the Parish. Members supported residents in their objection to the use of green space opposite Ravensworth Street and to the rear of West View as proposed car parking on the grounds of loss of amenity space; loss of wildlife habitat and increased road safety concerns. Member offered support for alternative car parking arrangements in the area of commercial land currently used as a container park.</p>	Clerk to respond
CO203/20	<p>FINANCE REPORT</p> <p>The Clerk presented a suite of reports including a schedule of Receipts & Payments; Bank Reconciliation; Budget and Balance Sheet</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the,</p> <p>(i) Schedule of receipts and payments be approved.</p> <p>(ii) Cleared balances at 1 April 2021 of £191,617.10 be noted.</p> <p>(iii) Budget report be noted.</p> <p>(iv) Balance sheet be noted.</p>	
CO204/20	<p>REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(i) That the report of the Responsible Finance Officer and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.</p>	
CO205/20	<p>REVIEW OF SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(i) Members noted the review of the system of Internal Control.</p>	

	<p>(ii) Members noted the report of the Responsible Finance Officer and adopted the report as that of the Council.</p> <p>(iii) Members concluded that the Council has an adequate and effective system of internal Audit in place.</p>	
CO206/20	<p>STANDING ORDERS</p> <p>RESOLVED Councillor Stewart requested Standing Orders be moved to conclude the business of the meeting.</p> <p>That Sanding Orders be moved.</p>	Members
CO207/20	<p>WORKING GROUPS</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(i) That the draft minutes of the Services Working Group held 16 March 2021 be received.</p> <p>(ii) That the draft minutes of the Finance & General Purpose Working Group held on 24 March 2021 be received</p>	
CO208/20	<p>MATTERS FOR DECISION</p> <p>Members discussed at length the proposal put forward by the Chairman to install 2 large bins in the Furness Bank Car Park to alleviate the amount of litter accumulating in the gateway to the Parish. It was agreed by members present that the current facilities were inadequate for the number of visitors to the park. Councillor Stewart objected to the proposal and suggested that increased services from the NEAT team were required as an alternative. Councillor Wallace reminded members that East Bedlington Parish Council does not currently pay for enhanced services and members were aware of the significant cuts to the Neighbourhood Team. He suggested that an initial installation of one new larger capacity bin as a way forward. Members were unable to reach a decision and the matter was referred to the Services Working Group</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>(i) The installation of two large bins at Furness Bridge Car Park be referred to the Services Working Group.</p>	Clerk
	Councillor Bradford left the meeting at this point.	
CO209/20	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
CO210/20	<p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting due to the personal nature of the business to be discussed.</p>	

CO211/20	<p>STAFFING COMMITTEE</p> <p>Members received the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 1st April 2021. The Chairman recognised the work undertaken by Councillor Trimming in setting up the appraisals and Chairing the Staffing Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) That the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 1 April 2021 be agreed as a true record. (ii) That the changes to job descriptions outlined in the report be agreed. (iii) That the Clerk prepare an action plan for the implementation of performance targets/milestones and to address other staffing issues in the Chair's report. (iv) That progress towards the achievement of targets be presented by the Clerk to the Staffing Committee for monitoring on a quarterly basis. (v) That the Clerks request to reduce his working week to 3 days be supported and that a detailed report be submitted in September 2021 outlining the resource and financial implications. (vi) That the Deputy Clerks request to commence CILCA training at a cost of circa £1,000 be agreed. (vii) That the Outdoor Services Officer's aspirations to increase his hours be noted and taken into consideration in any revised establishment /staffing structure proposals. 	
C0212/20	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Tuesday 4 May 2021 at 6pm via ZOOM Virtual Conferencing.</p>	

Signed:

Date: