

Minutes of the **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY, 3rd September 2024** at **6.00 pm** at **Ferryhill Town Hall**.

PRESENT: **Councillor:** A Ferguson (Chair)

Councillors: J Donald, D Farry, B Lamb, J Makepeace, C Woods, C Atkinson,
Vacancy

Officials: L Owens, Town Clerk
E Clark, Works Manager

CS.01.24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Bihari.

Councillor K Tinkler was not present at the meeting however no apologies for absence were given.

CS.02.24-25 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Nominations were invited for the election of a Chairman for 2024/25.

Moved by Councillor B Lamb that Councillor A Ferguson be elected as Chairman, **Seconded by** Councillor D Farry.

RESOLVED That Councillor A Ferguson be elected
Chairman of the Committee for the 2024/25
municipal year.

CS.03.24-25 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Nominations were invited for the election of Vice Chairman for 2024/25.

Moved by Councillor B Lamb that Councillor C Atkinson be elected as Vice Chairman, **Seconded by** Councillor D Farry

RESOLVED That Councillor C Atkinson be elected Vice
Chairman of the Committee for the 2024/25
municipal year.

CS.04.24-25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

CS.05.24-25

MEMBERS DISPENSATION

There were no members' dispensations in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

CS.06.24-25

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were four members of the public present in relation to item 7 on the agenda, Allotments Reserves.

CS.07.24-25

ALLOTMENTS RESERVES

Members considered a report which was previously circulated. The Town Clerk and Works Manager were in attendance to answer any questions.

A member of the public present at the meeting discussed East End allotments and the quotations in relation to the path works that were in the Town Clerk's report. The Works Manager confirmed that the grids that are being proposed to repair the path at East End Allotments will be put in properly and the company who provided the quotation has advised that this option of repair is likely to last for up to 20 years. The member of public who spoke in relation to the path at East End Allotments was of the opinion that the grids are a good option but only if they are put in properly.

Another member of the public present at the meeting who wished to speak advised that potholes are an issue on the path before East End Allotments, however to their knowledge they thought that this area of path was unadopted. An issue raised by the member of the public speaking at this point, was about drainage problems at the bottom of East End Allotments which the Works Manager is aware of. As no other Members of the public wished to raise any other concerns, Councillors were invited to speak by the Chair.

Councillor Farry raised queries in relation to item 5.3 of the report which is in relation to Grounds staff completing maintenance work on both the paths at East End and Paxton Street noting that work is becoming more regular and more time consuming. Councillor Farry advised that it would be beneficial if a programme of works was in place to detail issues such as these to help us better manage our estate. The Works Manager advised that she does keep a comprehensive list of all ongoing works and will continue to report this as necessary.

Councillor Farry also advised that it would be good to seek clarification over item 5.7 and look at any lease the Town Council has in relation to the farmers' field and the land the Town Council use on the A167 where the A167 football pitch is. The Town Clerk

clarified that the Town Council bought the land on the A167 where the A167 football pitch is and therefore this is the Town Councils responsibility.

During the discussions it was noted that the issue the Town Council has with the spread of the Japanese Knotweed is that it has never been dealt with as effectively as it should have been. The report details that a survey was completed in 2020, and a quote given on how to eradicate the Japanese Knotweed, however for reasons unknown the work didn't progress and therefore because of this the growth has become unmanageable for the Town Council staff, and any work that the Town Council staff were to do would have very little impact in managing the Japanese Knotweed.

Further discussions took place about the issues with the path before East End Allotments and Councillor B Lamb confirmed who this land belongs to. Councillor B Lamb raised concerns about the quotation for the path works and advised that we need further detail in the quotation to be able to make a firm decision, such as how the paths will be laid, will there be edging on the tarmac path that has been quoted for at Paxton Street. Councillor B Lamb also stated his desire to meet with the contractor on site along with the Works Manager to discuss the paths further.

Councillor Farry advised that in his opinion we need further details on the quotations for the paths such as the price per running metre for the tarmac and grids to enable Members to be able to make a decision on how they wish to move forward. Councillor D Farry also feels that we should be seeking further quotations in relation to the Japanese Knotweed, approaching the likes of Durham County Council. It was noted from the Town Clerk and the Works Manager that three quotations had been sought for both the path works and the Japanese Knotweed, however despite the Works Managers best efforts only one company came forward for both works.

RESOLVED

1. That the Works Manager seeks further information from DGS who provided the quotation for the path works for the Allotments to ask for clarification on how the paths will be laid and the price per running metre for both the tarmac and grids. Once known the information is to be brought back to a meeting of full Council due to the fact that Community Services only meet every three months.

2. That the possibility of sourcing further quotations to manage the spread of Japanese Knotweed be explored further.

CS.08.24-25

WORKS MANAGERS QUARTERLY REPORT

Members considered a report which was previously circulated. The Works Manager was in attendance to answer Members questions.

Councillor D Farry advised that in the Works Managers report it would be beneficial if this could provide some detail into the problems that the Grounds Staff experience when carrying out their day-to-day duties, such as time spent repairing paths, the damage to bus stops, etc. By doing so Councillor D Farry explained that this will give a more clear example of the work spent dealing with issues on our estate and any potential areas that the Town Council may need to budget for going forward.

The Works Manager and Town Clerk sought clarity on the level of detail required and agreed that it was manageable to include some level of detail in the report to enable the Town Council to be better prepared and able to plan more for works needed rather than be presented with works that are imminent and require a substantial amount of money to rectify.

RESOLVED

1. That the report from the Works Manager be received.
2. That the Works Manager provides details in her ongoing quarterly report that covers issues that may likely have an impact on budgets going forward.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6:40 pm.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR.....

DATE.....