

Item 10 – Walsden Neighbourhood Watch Community Group (WNWCG) - update

Alternative use for land – Walsden Neighbourhood Watch Community Group Enquiry

At the meeting of the Emergency Committee 3rd June 2020 a request to support turning the old Library space into a community garden to promote people's wellbeing was put forward by WNWG

Members requested more information before being able to consider whether or how to take this forward.

The WNWG have responded as follows

“Walsden Neighbourhood Watch Community Group (WNWCG) are petitioning the Calderdale Council to save the land in question for a community garden.

We have plans to turn the corner into a 'pocket garden' with seating, flower beds and vegetation (to attract the local wildlife) for the use of all members of the community.

It will give our residents space where they can meet and rest, take time out and give them a sense of wellbeing. We feel that the garden will be most beneficial to the whole community and be a welcoming sight for visitors to the region.

As part of the National Neighbourhood Watch Network, we are eligible to apply for funding from several groups associated with the network and there are also the local funding groups available so therefore there should be no necessity to rely upon the Todmorden Town Council other than for advice if needed.

Please refer to <http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/support/support-schemes/fundraising-guidance>.

A constitution has been attached and a bank account will be set up within the next few weeks. We already have support from Age Concern and Healthy Minds Calderdale and a letter is pending from Tod in Bloom.

As requested, below is a list of our Executive Office bearers..

Chairperson Deb Jones

Vice-Chairperson Katy Reaston

Secretary Lesley Hart

Treasurer Brian Hewson

We look forward to being able to discuss this matter further and put forward more detailed plans within the near future”

Way forward for Todmorden Town Council

There are possibly three approaches to take on this:-

- Not support

- Support but with no further involvement other than to add Town Council support should the Group require us to do so, and a matter contractually, entirely between the group and CMBC
 - If the group cannot be sustained and or maintain area to a required standard, then likely use of land back to CMBC
 - Group entirely financially self sufficient
 - Possibly limited grant aid by Town Council

- Support but with further involvement of Town Council
 - May be needed by CMBC to be formal landowner – community asset transfer?
 - Likely by way of lease – suggest 5 year but renewable.
 - Town Council covenant likely seen as stronger
 - May be fall back in event of Group not continuing.
 - Possibly return of site to CMBC at option of Town Council
 - Legal liability –Public Liability - slips and trips etc
 - Would require management agreement
 - Will likely have financial implications
 - Need to understand what is proposed in detail
 - What obligations on the site
 - Utilities in ground
 - Maintenance obligations
 - Pocket garden – content, replenishment, pathways, surfacing
 - Security and safety
 - Rates liability?

Recommendation

That if Members wish to support in a more active role that the Town Clerk hold an informal meeting with WNWCG representatives to gain a more detailed understanding of what is proposed and can then consider likely financial implications should the Group fold.

Appendices

- 1 Constitution
- 2 Letter of support Healthy Minds
- 3 Letter of support Age Concern
- 4 Letter of support Todmorden In Bloom

