Decision Report

Meeting: Community Development Committee

Date of Meeting: 24 November 2026

Subject: Seaside Telescope

Recommendation

The Committee RESOLVE to agree to:

- Accept the seaside telescope as a Town Council asset, subject to the necessary permissions being obtained.
- Delegate to Officers responsibility for the final location and installation arrangement in consultation with Northumberland County Council, should the telescope be accepted as an asset and purchased.
- Support Groundworks NE with the installation of their telescope on Commissioners Quay, and accept ownership if their project is supported by Councillors MLIS funding.

Ward

South Blyth

Risk Management

There is currently no budget provision for this project as the cost will be met by both NCC and Blyth Town Council Councillor allowances, and other external funding. There will however be a minimal maintenance budget required to be met by Blyth Town Council as well as regular inspections by Officers. An estimated amount for this will be available in time for the meeting.

Crime Prevention

None

Public Sector Equality Duty

Accessibility has been considered when selecting the proposed telescope model.

Objective

Promoting the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community.

Report

Councillor D Nicholson has put forward a suggestion received from a resident to install a free-to-use seaside telescope along Blyth beach promenade for public use. The proposed telescope would provide residents and visitors with an opportunity to view the coastline and surrounding areas, contributing to the enjoyment and attractiveness of the promenade.

The suggestion has been discussed with Officers at Northumberland County Council who have advised responsibility for the telescope would rest with Blyth Town Council, including the cost and arrangements for installation, ongoing maintenance and insurance. Wether licence for installation is required is being checked.

The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the telescope to be accepted as a Blyth Town Council asset, should one be purchased through separate funding arrangements.

Councillor B W Elliott has offered to purchase the telescope using County MLIS Funds, with the support of Cllr T E Elliott's Councillor Small Schemes Funding.

For information, two manufacturers have been approached for quotations for dual-headed, wheelchair-accessible telescopes. The final installation cost would be confirmed prior to any works commencing. The purchase of the telescope will cost between £4,370 and £8,700 with quotes and specifications highlighted in Appendix 1. The choice of telescope will be made by the Councillors concerned.

Both companies have advised that ongoing maintenance requirements for the telescopes are expected to be minimal. Periodic general safety and condition checks would, however, be required to ensure the equipment remains in good working order and safe for public use.

Officers were made aware of a project led by Groundworks North East who are working with the port and the Environmental Agency and wish to install a wheelchair-accessible telescope on Commissioners Quay in addition to running some education based workshops on nature-based solutions in the estuary. Cllr Rolls is considering supporting this project via MLIS. Officers have explored the feasibility of extending the education portion of project up to the seaside with Groundworks, however this was not possible.

Elisa Mullen
Democratic Service Officer 17 November 2026

Appendix 1

Model	Supplier	Cost	Optics	Construction	Additional Information
T2 	Tourist Telescopes	£5,295	12×50 fixed	Galvanised steel, powder coated	UK Based company. £150 - £200 for transportation and delivery Paletised and ready for installation upon delivery Standard colour choices: black, ultra marine blue, moss green
Triton 	Tourist Telescopes	£8,500	12×50 fixed waterproof	Galvanised steel, powder coated	UK Based company. £150 - £200 for transportation and delivery Paletised and ready for installation upon delivery Standard colour choices: black, ultra marine blue, moss green

Model	Supplier	Cost	Optics	Construction	Additional Information
DFN4 	HDC Scopes	£4,470	20×80 or 30×80 Binoculars	Premium aluminium alloy	Shipped from Taipei. 4 Weeks delivery upon payment. Cost for shipping TBD based on location, import duty and size of product ordered. Custom colour at an additional cost of £350 (choose from 20 colours)
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