

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2017** AT 7.00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 9 DEVON SQUARE, NEWTON ABBOT

**PRESENT** Councillors Ms L Roberts (Mayor) Presiding  
Mrs J A Jones (Dep Mayor)  
Councillors  
Mrs C Bunday R Jenks  
Mrs J Cleave M Joyce  
C Coyle-Moore C N Parker  
R Hayes K L Purchase  
M Hocking M Ryan  
D Howe T Ward

Representative of the Press: Sam Hall – Mid Devon Advertiser

By Invitation: County and District Councillor Gordon Hook  
District Councillor Mrs Jackie Brodie  
District Councillor Philip Bullivant  
Honorary Freeman Mr Henry Cole  
Mrs Michelle Luscombe, Principle Planner, Teignbridge District Council  
Miss Sam Taylor, Highways Engineer, Devon County Council

In attendance: Philip Rowe – Town Clerk  
Sally Henley – Town Development Manager  
Alexandra Robinson – Committee Administrator

The Mayor invited her Chaplain, The Reverend Patrick Parkes, to deliver prayers.

414. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors D Corney-Walker, Mrs S Kingdom, M Pilkington and Mrs L Sheffield and Mrs Sam Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

415. **INTERESTS**

None declared.

416. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017 were received and signed as a correct record.

417. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

418. **PRESENTATION FROM TEIGNBRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL – NA1 HOUGHTON BARTON FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Mayor introduced Michelle Luscombe, Principle Planner from Teignbridge District Council and Sam Taylor Highways Engineer from Devon

County Council and invited them to update members on Teignbridge District Council's proposed development framework for NA1 Houghton-Barton.

Mrs Luscombe circulated site maps which provided the context in which the proposed framework had been designed. She reminded Members of the key elements of the topography which gave the main constraints and limitations to the development aspirations.

Mrs Luscombe then gave the background to the development proposals and highlighted the following:

- ❖ The plan formed part of the Local Development Plan for Teignbridge;
- ❖ The proposals included development from the southwest of the A383 up to the A382 in the northwest bordering with the Seale-Hayne site to the northwest;
- ❖ It accounted for the allocation of housing, employment, recreational and other mixed use areas within the development;
- ❖ The proposals included 1,800 homes of which 650 have already been constructed at Hele Park;
- ❖ The site included a varied topography of steep hills, listed buildings, historical orchards, a high-pressure gas main and a pylon corridor to the southern part of the site.
- ❖ The area included established 'flight routes' and feeding sites for Greater Horseshoe Bats and those had been taken into account as part of the design;
- ❖ Overall it had been a challenging site to plan but the District Council had a responsibility to maximise the potential within the parameters and constraints.

Mrs Luscombe and Miss Taylor summarised the proposed layout and infrastructure to the development. They reported that there would be constraints on developers to construct roads and footpaths in keeping with each allocation of houses (currently set at 200 dwellings). Additionally, they advised that once these thresholds were reached land would be released to Devon County Council for the construction of a primary school to insure that the infrastructure was developed in keeping with the momentum of housing provision.

The Officers were pleased to report that their first round application to the Local Enterprise Partnership had been successful and they hoped that this would result in an allocation of a £3m grant.

Mrs Luscombe and Ms Taylor invited questions from Members and these covered the following points of discussion:

- The plan included a neighbourhood hub comprising a primary school, high street with food and non-food retailing, a neighbourhood square and community building which could incorporate health facilities;
- Whilst a local neighbourhood would be encouraged, the size of retail units should not discourage business or focus away from the heart of Newton Abbot;
- Members emphasised the need for a local GP surgery, pharmacy and services such as hairdressers to be available locally on site;
- Employment land would include mixed use, professional services such as banks and solicitors and any shortfall in employment land that

could not be accommodated on the site would be met by financial contribution towards off-site provision;

- 23 full sized allotments and 11 play areas would be included in the design;
- The District Council would continue to consult and involve local amenity support groups such as the CIC to ensure that local needs were met and delivered;
- A dedicated access route would be incorporated to improve access to Seale-Hayne;
- Given the larger plot sizes needed for gypsy and traveller sites those had not been identified specifically in the plan and would be allocated elsewhere;
- The road layout took account of the sensitive landscape and current land ownership, it made the best use of the available land;
- If successful upon application an experimental traffic order would be implemented in September 2017 for a period of up to 18 months to ascertain the best flow of traffic safely through the Highweek area.
- Members sought assurance that the infrastructure and services were delivered in a timely manner alongside the development of dwellings given that recent examples of development in the region had left new occupants without key facilities such as broadband and footpaths.

In summary, Mrs Luscombe advised the Council that the consultation period extended until the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and she invited all Members to the consultation event on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March at Highweek Village Hall to be held from 2pm – 8pm. She suggested that given the variety of pertinent issues raised within the discussion that she would welcome a consultation response from the Town Council.

The Mayor thanked both Mrs Luscombe and Miss Taylor for their informative and thorough update on the NA1 Development Framework Plan, whereupon they left the meeting.

Following further discussion among Members it was

**RESOLVED** that all Members be invited to make a consultation response to the NA1 Houghton-Barton Framework Development Plan prior to the consultation deadline of 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and that the Planning Committee be invited to respond on behalf of the Town Council.

#### 419. **REPORTS OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

A. District Councillor Jackie Brodie reported on the following issues in relation to Bushell Ward in which she had a direct involvement:

- Redevelopment of the Queens' Hotel;
- Aldi supermarket Planning Application and deterioration of the existing site;
- Parking issues particularly adjacent to schools;
- On-street parking restrictions.

B. District Councillor Bullivant reported on the following issues in which he had a direct involvement:

- Budget provision and car parking charges;
- Houghton Barton development;
- The work of Newton Abbot Street Pastors and support for their organisation;
- Footpaths, particularly on new developments;
- Whitehill development;
- Allotments at Hele Park, transfer of ownership;
- Broadband infrastructure, installation into recent developments.

C. County and District Councillor Hook reported on the following issues in which he had a direct involvement:

- ❖ Successful Local Enterprise Partnership funding bid for Houghton Barton;
- ❖ Planning application for proposed construction of footbridge from railway station to Brunel Industrial Estate;
- ❖ Introduction of charges at recycling centre for disposal of household 'DIY' items;
- ❖ Increased incidents of 'Flytipping';
- ❖ Review of quality of highways repairs following poor or inadequate repairs;
- ❖ New bus shelter for Queensway route;
- ❖ Budget cuts to affect future Investing in Devon funding.

D. District and Town Councillor Parker reported on the following issues in which he had a direct involvement:

- ✓ The successful development of Sandringham Park, Multi-wheeled Outdoor Sports Facility known locally as Buckland Skatepark, opening Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Councillor Parker recorded his thanks on behalf of the Council, to Mrs Sam Scott, Deputy Town Clerk for her considerable involvement in the project.

#### 420. **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received the list of engagements (previously circulated) which the Mayor had carried out since 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

The Mayor acknowledged that she had thoroughly enjoyed all the events attended however she drew particular attention to the following: -

- ✓ The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of Dyrans Talking Newspaper at which there was a delightful cake. She noted that Brian Smith, Chairman, would be making a presentation to Members at the next meeting of the Community and Heritage Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017.
- ✓ The Lord Mayor of Exeter Civic Service and forthcoming Banquet.
- ✓ Fun Pig Racing charity event, whereupon £1000 was raised for cancer research.

The Mayor commented that she would have a number of forthcoming engagements up until the end of her term of office as Mayor.

#### 421. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- A. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Community & Heritage Committee** held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2017 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs C Bunday, were received and approved;
- C. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance & Audit Committee** held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor Colin Parker, were received and approved;
- D. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- E. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee** held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor Mike Hocking, were received and approved subject to an update on Minute 411 being noted and it being approved that the consultation response as tabled at the meeting be sent to the Heart of the South West on behalf of the Town Council.

#### 422. **TOWN DEVELOPMENT - ANNUAL REPORT**

The Mayor invited Mrs Sally Henley the Town Development Manager to update Members on the local economy of Newton Abbot. Mrs Henley reported the following key issues relating to the town:

- ❖ Shop Vacancy Rates were less than half the national average currently at 4.4% for Newton Abbot compared to 9.4% nationally;
- ❖ Independent Businesses were higher than the national rating currently at 53.3% for Newton Abbot compared to 41.4% nationally demonstrating a vibrant economy;
- ❖ The town accommodated a wide variety of retailers which was commendable during such difficult economic conditions for retailers;
- ❖ The changes to business rates as a result of the recent Budget;
- ❖ The continued investment of the Town Council in supporting Shop Improvement Grants ensured continued enhancements to the street scene;
- ❖ Continued investment in Product Placement in the town ensured additional income and strengthened the local economy;
- ❖ Two Motor Shows scheduled for June and September;
- ❖ 'Summer Nights' street food events for three Saturday evenings during the summer;
- ❖ Increasing requests from musicians and street artisans to perform;
- ❖ Easter Event will involve the Police in partnership wearing 'Easter Bunny Ears' and the supply of free chocolate eggs from Asda and Tesco accompanied by two life-sized 'walking eggs';
- ❖ The launch of the winter promotional video in advance of the 2017 Christmas events;

- ❖ Participation on Torbay Development Agency a forum to encourage regeneration of towns in the region;
- ❖ The improvements to the pedestrian surfacing in Courtenay Street and parts of Queen Street had been welcomed and complimented by residents and businesses alike;
- ❖ Students from South Devon College had been commissioned to build planters for the olive trees to be located in the area between Lloyds Bank and Coffee#1.

Mrs Henley offered her thanks to the Town Council for their support and involvement in these projects.

The Mayor thanked Mrs Henley for her very informative update on the local economy and invited questions from Members. Councillors supported the comments made by Mrs Henley on the current economic difficulties for retailers and offered their sincere thanks for her efforts and the outstanding results that she has achieved for the town.

#### 423. **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

The Mayor invited the Town Clerk to report to Members on the proposed arrangements for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017. He noted that since the purchase of the former St. Leonard's Church that it offered Members the opportunity to review arrangements from previous years. Following discussion among officers it was noted that it was important to remain accessible to as many members of the community as possible and therefore the Council could maintain their presence at a stand in Courtenay Street but could encourage visitors to make use of the opportunity of an additional 'Open Day' at Newton's Place. Both sites would be staffed to facilitate visitors moving from one site to the other.

Accordingly, it was;

**RESOLVED** that the Annual Town Meeting 2017 would be held in Courtenay Street and the former St Leonard's Church known as Newton's Place, would also be open for the duration of the Annual Town Meeting as an additional opportunity for visitors to view the premises.

#### 424. **NEWTON'S PLACE – PROJECT UPDATE**

The Mayor invited the Chairman of Newton's Place Project Board, Councillor Mike Ryan to update Members on the project. He acknowledged that the application bid had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Council would hear of their decision on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017. He reported that in the meantime safety netting had been fixed across the nave to prevent risk of injury from further debris falling from the ceiling. That following a recent asbestos survey an area near the organ room had been cordoned off to prevent access, pending its safe removal.

Councillor Ryan reported that the Twinning Association among others would be afforded a private accompanied viewing during March 2017 and that the next meeting of the Project Board would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Ryan for his update and invited the Town Clerk to report on the additional requirements of the HLF funding process. The Clerk reported that in order to procure professional services alongside the construction elements of the project that it would be necessary to review and amend the Council's Financial Regulations. That he had received advice from the District Council's procurement officers and had also been granted access to the Procurement Portal without additional cost.

Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk be authorised to review the Financial Regulations of the Council to ensure they would meet the necessary requirements of the procurement process for all services in relation to the Newton's Place project and would return the amended Regulations to the Council for their approval and adoption.

425. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

426. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council was to be held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 and would be the Annual Meeting of the Council.

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Chairman