

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th NOVEMBER 2024 AT 6:30 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT**

Present: Councillors A Hall (Mayor) Presiding
C Parker (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: B Bailey A Ineson
J Bradford G Jennings
P Bullivant M Joyce
R Buscombe P Parker
L Cooke M Ryan
D Corney-Walker L Wood
C Davieson N Yabsley
A Gibbs

Officers in attendance: Phil Rowe Town Clerk
Sam Scott Deputy Town Clerk
Linda McGuirk Principal Administrator
Nigel Canham Communications Manager

By invitation: Freeman Mr Michael Hocking

Also present: 3 x representatives of Green Newton
Inspector J Johnson
Emily Farrell, Manager of Newton Abbot CIC
District Councillor J Hook
7 x Members of the public

291. **WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Mayor advised that the order of business to be transacted would be altered, with agenda item 9 'Co-Option' following agenda item 6, to allow the newly co-opted Councillor to participate in the remainder of the meeting.

292. **APOLOGIES**

A valid reason for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Tom Corney-Walker.

The Mayor advised that Councillor T Corney Walker is unable to attend meetings due to an on-going health condition and asked members to consider approving an extended leave of absence for a period of six months. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that a six month leave of absence be hereby approved in relation to Councillor Tom Corney-Walker, due to ill health.

Members sent their best wishes to Councillor T Corney-Walker.

Cllr J Bradford abstained from voting.

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293. **INTERESTS**

None declared.

294. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meetings held on:

- a) Wednesday 18th September 2024 were received and signed as a correct record.
- b) Wednesday 9th October 2024 (Special Meeting) were received and signed as a correct record.

295. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

296. **PRESENTATION**

The Mayor welcomed the representatives of Green Newton to the meeting and invited them to give a presentation to members.

The presentation covered:

- Green Newton - a place to go for green ideas and actions.
- Developing a strong and growing green economy with local food production, leisure and green tourism interconnected with a sustainable community.
- Collaboration – people and groups promoting and creating a green economy in Newton Abbot. Creating connections.
- Engagement – to create opportunities for people and groups to participate in the Green Newton project.
- Developing an app.
- Facilitate and encourage a regular programme of local initiatives and events.
- Promoting a greener Newton.
- Green Economy.
- Health & Wellbeing.
- Sustainable living.
- How the Town Council can support the project by having a presence on the app, sharing information and encouraging wider participation.

The Mayor thanked the representative for their informative presentation and invited members to ask questions. Councillors expressed their support for the initiative. Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby supports the Green Newton project.

297. **CO-OPTION**

- a) The Mayor outlined the procedure to be followed in co-opting an applicant to the vacancy in the Brunel Ward, which had arisen from a casual vacancy due to non-

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attendance by Jamie Cook. Upon advising that the Co-Option Policy stated voting should take place by a show of hands, in accordance with Standing Order 5(a), two members rose to request a vote by ballot. Members were accordingly invited to vote by ballot for one position from seven applications.

RESOLVED that the co-option procedure to fill the casual vacancy in the Brunel Ward be hereby carried out by ballot.

b) Arising from the vote, the Town Clerk declared that Paul Parker had been successfully co-opted on to the Council:

RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby formerly co-opts Paul Parker.

The Town Clerk invited the co-opted Councillor, who was present at the meeting, to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was duly counter signed by the Town Clerk. Councillor P Parker formerly joined the meeting.

Cllr Bradford left the chamber at 18:50.

298. **REPORTS OF COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

The Mayor invited County and District Councillors to provide a report on their recent activity in Newton Abbot.

District and County Councillor P Bullivant reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Attended the Remembrance Service, advising the service was extremely well organised.
- Advised the Government has withdrawn all funding affecting the A382 works.
- Road works including and disruption caused by the utility infrastructure works.
- Program to repair potholes.
- Parking restrictions around Library.
- Attended opening of mini Market Hall.
- Looking and the impact the recent budget will have on social care provision.
- Committees and focus groups looking at provision of new homes.
- Installation of two additional grit bins.

Councillor M Joyce asked if Devon County Council is directly supporting the primary care network due to the implications of the recent budget and asked about the highway issues on Queen Street and the lack of correct signage to allow enforcement.

Councillor C Parker asked for clarification about National Insurance being paid by Government to Councils.

District Councillor R Buscombe reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Attended the Remembrance Service and was proud of the number of uniformed cadets present.

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- Anti-Social Behaviour at Hele Park, establishing a Neighbourhood Watch group.
- Presentation to Overview and Scrutiny on Housing, which he intends to share with members.
- Working hard to improve relationships between the District Council and the Town and Parish Councils.
- Central Government likely to establish a Unitary Authority in Devon. Suggests the Town Council establishes a working group to prepare for major changes and contribute to discussions.

District Councillor J Hook referred to her report, circulated prior to the meeting and tabled at the meeting, on matters she had been directly involved in.

District Councillor M Ryan reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Attended Cllr Buscombe's presentation on Housing.
- Planning application for 90 houses in Haccombe with Combe.

District Councillor C Parker reported on issues in which he has had direct involvement:

- Planning application for 90 houses in Haccombe with Combe which has been called in to the Local Planning Authority.
- Attended a site meeting at Wolborough Barton.
- Budgetary implications of the National Insurance changes.
- Trees – issues with Tree Preservation Orders.
- Attended an interactive session on climate actions.

The Mayor thanked the District and County Councillors for their reports as they provided a valuable insight into the issues within Newton Abbot.

299. **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on engagements which he had attended since the 18th September 2024 and highlighted his pleasure in attending the Remembrance Services and the Poppy Train.

The Mayor was delighted to report that the Council had been presented with a silver trophy by the Lord of the Manorial Borough of Newton Abbot in recognition of the Council's success at the Barham Cup.

300. **BROADCASTING COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- a) Members discussed broadcasting Council meetings and noted the Government is considering making changes to legislation which would require Council's to broadcast meetings. The Town Clerk reported that he had obtained two independent quotes for the installation of necessary equipment, both quotes were in the region of £10,000.

Members were concerned about the high cost to the taxpayer and asked the Clerk to investigate cheaper alternatives, it was agreed that residents should also be consulted on live streaming Council meetings at the Annual Town meeting.

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Members agreed the purchase of equipment was premature and that the Council should await the outcome of the Governments review. Members asked the Clerk to investigate what other larger Council's are doing.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Council will delay installation of equipment to enable live streaming of Council meetings until there is increased public demand or a change in legislation. The Clerk will research alternative solutions and investigate what other larger Councils do.

- b) Members discussed responding to the Government consultation to allow remote and hybrid attendance at Council meetings including the possible introduction of proxy voting. Members expressed great concern at allowing proxy voting, the Clerk encouraged all members to respond individually to the consultation in addition to the Clerk submitting formal Council response.

RESOLVED that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk agree a formal response to the Government consultation on Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings.

301. **POLICIES**

- a) The Mayor introduced the Paternity Leave and Pay Policy, as circulated prior to the meeting and asked members to consider a recommendation from the Staffing Committee to adopt the new policy. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that Paternity Leave and Pay Policy be hereby, approved and adopted.

- b) The Mayor introduced the following policies, as circulated prior to the meeting and asked members to consider a recommendation from the Policy & Resources Committee to adopt the new policies:

- Drone Flying Policy
- Bee Keeping Policy
- Keeping Hens on an Allotment Policy

Following a review of the policy documents among Members, it was:

RESOLVED that the policies in relation to the:

- 1. Drone Flying Policy
- 2. Bee Keeping Policy
- 3. Keeping Hens on an Allotment Policy

be hereby, approved and adopted.

302. **UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)**

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In accordance with minute 24/10(279), members considered a recommendation from the Finance & Audit Committee, that the Council supports an application by Newton Abbot Chamber of Commerce to the UK PF for the creation of a Visit Newton Abbot website, subject to written confirmation from the District Council to indemnify the Town Council from any financial loss.

Councillor C Parker confirmed the District Council already holds the funding and felt there was no need for concern. Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Council hereby supports an application by Newton Abbot Chamber of Commerce to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for the creation of a Visit Newton Abbot website

Councillor M Joyce abstained from voting.

303. **ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE – OLD FORDE HOUSE**

In accordance with minute 24/10(284), members considered a recommendation from the Finance & Audit Committee, that the Council consider instructing a Surveyor to undertake a full condition survey and provide a market valuation of Old Forde House and that the Council submits an expression of interest in the asset under the Asset of Community Value Regulations.

The Town Clerk reported that following the Finance & Audit Committee meeting he has been carrying out due diligence and a building condition report was required prior to obtaining a property valuation. The Clerk confirmed he will keep Councillors informed of progress.

It was agreed to note the report of the Clerk.

304. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 17th September 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce, were received and approved.
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Staffing Committee** held on 2nd October 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor R Buscombe were received and approved.
- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 8th October 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.
- d) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Community & Heritage Committee**, held on 16th October 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor L Cooke were received and approved.
- e) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee**, held on 23rd October 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor D Corney-Walker were received and approved.

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- f) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee**, held on 29th October 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.
- g) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance & Audit Committee**, held on 30th October 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor C Parker were received and approved.

Councillor C Parker sought permission from the Mayor to refer to minute numbers 280 and 281 of the above minutes, advising there is £6,083 remaining in the grant budget with no further grant application being considered this year. Councillor C Parker reported that Newton Abbot CIC is currently experiencing financial difficulties and proposed the remainder of the grant budget is given to the Newton Abbot CIC.

Councillors M Joyce and L Cooke declared an interest as they are Trustees of Newton Abbot CIC.

Councillor M Ryan declared an interest as he is a Trustee of Newton Abbot CIC and a member of the Buckland Community Centre committee.

Members discussed the proposal and recognised the necessity to financially support the CIC. Some concerns were raised about giving further financial support. Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Council hereby agrees to pay £6,083 of the remaining Grant budget to Newton Abbot CIC.

Councillors L Cooke, M Joyce and M Ryan having declared an interest took part in discussions but abstained from voting.

Councillors P Parker, P Bullivant and N Yabsley abstained from voting.

305. LATE CORRESPONDENCE

None.

306. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 at 7:00pm.

Meeting closed at 19:50 hours.

Chairperson (Mayor).....Date.....

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