

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE** HELD AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT ON **WEDNESDAY 30th OCTOBER 2024** AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C Parker (Chairperson) Presiding
D Corney- Walker (Vice-Chairperson)

Councillors B Bailey A Hall
P Bullivant M Joyce
L Cooke M Ryan
C Davieson L Wood
A Gibbs

Councillor N Yabsley attended the meeting.

Officers in Attendance: Phil Rowe - Town Clerk
Sam Scott – RFO and Deputy Town Clerk
Linda McGuirk - Principal Administrator

By Invitation: Two Representatives of Newton Abbot Swimming & Water Polo Club.
Mark Amphlett, Chairperson of Newton Abbot Chamber of Commerce.
Lisa Cox, Representative of Newton Abbot Chamber of Commerce and Phoenix Sounds.
Emily Farrell, Manager of Newton Abbot CIC

Also present: District Councillor Paul Parker

274. APOLOGIES

All members of the Committee were present. Apologies were received from Nigel Canham, Communications Advisor.

The Chairperson advised he had received a request to change the order of the agenda. Agenda item 7 would be moved to agenda number 5.

275. INTERESTS

Councillor M Joyce declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 – Newton Abbot CIC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) application, as he is a trustee of Newton Abbot CIC. Councillor Joyce confirmed he would not participate in the discussion or take part in the vote.

Councillor A Hall declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 - Newton Abbot CIC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) application, as he is the Council's representative on Newton Abbot CIC. Councillor Hall confirmed he would participate in the discussion and vote. And agenda item 8, Grant applications as he is a trustee of Newton Abbot Community Transport. Councillor Hall confirmed he would not participate in the discussion or take part in the vote.

Chairperson initials.....

Councillor P Bullivant declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8, Grant applications, as he is a trustee of Newton Abbot Community Transport. Councillor Bullivant confirmed that he would not participate in the discussion or vote.

Councillor M Ryan declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7 – Newton Abbot CIC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) application, as he is a trustee of Newton Abbot CIC. Councillor Ryan confirmed he would not participate in the discussion or take part in the vote.

276. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee held on 26th June 2024 were received and signed as a correct record.

277. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

278. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) APPLICATION**

The Chairperson, Councillor C Parker, introduced the CIL application received on behalf of Newton Abbot CIC, as circulated prior to the meeting. The application seeks funding to bring forward the Houghton Barton Health & Wellbeing Centre, to address the demands that the ongoing development of this neighbourhood is placing on local NHS funded services.

The Town Clerk reported that he had received confirmation from the District Council's CIL Officer that the NACIC application satisfied the relevant regulations in that it relates to funding to ensure the satisfactory provision and operation of infrastructure, e.g. a Health & Wellbeing Centre.

Councillor Bullivant expressed concern that the application was premature and reported that local NHS services were unlikely to offer a service at the facility.

Members discussed the application in detail, acknowledging the area is developing fast with residents having limited access to services and the importance of being prepared to support residents.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that Newton Abbot Town Council hereby grants Newton Abbot Community Interest Company £25,000 from the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Having declared an interest Councillors A Hall, M Joyce and M Ryan did not take part in the discussion or vote.

Councillor L Cooke left the Chamber at 19:17

Chairperson initials.....

279. PRESENTATION - NEWTON ABBOT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Further to minute 24/06(69) the Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Newton Abbot Chamber of Commerce to the meeting and invited them to present their proposal to members.

The representatives introduced a proposal to create a Visit Newton Abbot website, to boost local growth, funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). A PowerPoint presentation was displayed on the large screen to support the verbal presentation.

The presentation covered:

- What is Visit Newton Abbot?
- Website design and content
- Economic benefits
- Involvement of the Town Council
- Benefits of the Council involvement
- Promotion of Visit Newton Abbot
- Content management and updates
- Technical support and hosting
- Analytics and feedback
- UKSPF outcomes
- Additional ideas
- Next steps

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and invited members to ask questions.

Councillors asked questions regarding:

- Who will update the website.
- How will people without access to the internet access information.
- Improving areas to encourage visitors.
- Concerns about use of the Town Council bank account.
- Ongoing costs
- UKSPF

Members asked the Town Clerk and RFO to advise on the financial implications of holding the UKSPF grant on behalf of another organisation.

The Town Clerk, as Proper Officer, and the RFO advised members they do have concerns due to the uncertainty of the criteria and the conditions for spending the funding, which have continued to change. The Town Clerk reminded members that when the Council considered a proposal to utilise the UKSPF in June 2024, it was advised that the funding could not be used for marketing purposes. The Town Clerk advised the Council would be expected to initially fund the project without guarantee of the government approving the application to the UKSPF.

Chairperson initials.....

Councillor P Bullivant stated he had been assured the District Council would re-pay the Town Council if the UKSPF application was declined.

Members supported the creation of the Visit Newton Abbot website but remained concerned about the potential financial implications to the Council.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that it be **RECOMMENDED** to the Council at its meeting to be held on the 13th November 2024 to support an application to the UKSPF 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.

280. **PRESENTATION – NEWTON ABBOT COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY (NACIC)**

The Manager of Newton Abbot CIC, Emily Farrell, gave a presentation on the work of the Buckland and Courtenay Community Centres. The presentation covered:

- Structure of the CIC and community centre resources
- Key focus – management of two community centres
- Buckland Centre rent is paid to the District Council
- Buckland Hub project
- Base Youth Club
- Youth Council
- Supporting the community
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Invitation to Councillors to become a Trustee of the CIO

The Chairperson thanked Emily for her informative presentation and invited members to ask questions. Councillors asked how the CIC was coping financially and discussed the impact of the recent government budget would have on the community centres. Councillor C Parker declared he would like to be a Trustee.

281. **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Prior to consideration of the grant applications the RFO circulated a document outlining the balance of grant budget. The Committee was requested to consider the following grant applications:

- a) Newton Abbot Swimming & Water Polo Club
The Chairperson welcomed the representatives of Newton Abbot Swimming & Water Polo Club to the meeting and invited them to give a short presentation to members. Members considered the grant application received from Newton Abbot Swimming & Water Polo Club.
- b) Newton Abbot Community Transport
Members considered the grant application received from Newton Abbot Community Transport.

Chairperson initials.....

c) Newton Abbot District Society of Arts

Members considered the grant application received from Newton Abbot District Society of Arts and agreed to defer consideration of the application until a completed application is received, including a copy of the accounts.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED

- a) that the Town Council hereby grants £990 to Newton Abbot Swimming & Water Polo Club.
- b) that the Town Council hereby grants £5,000 to Newton Abbot Community Transport.

282. DEVON & TORBAY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Chairperson, Councillor C Parker, introduced the draft Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan, as circulated prior to the meeting. The draft plan is the strategic document that sets out the priorities for transport across the county between 2025 and 2040. Members welcomed all transport improvements for Newton Abbot but raised serious concerns about the timeline for completion given that previous transport improvements have not been implemented. In addition, members raised the following:

- Support inclusion of the Heath Rail Link within the Plan.
- Welcomed improvements to cycle paths linking Newton Abbot with Torbay, providing consideration is given to the ongoing maintenance.
- The Buckland Railway bridge is vital and must include public pedestrian access and not just be for the use of rail passengers.
- Requested a timeline and plan for the works, especially in relation to the Teign Estuary Trail.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that that Newton Abbot Town Council supports all proposed transport improvements, as outlined in the draft Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan, for Newton Abbot. A timeline for completion must be provided, especially in relation to the Teign Estuary Cycle Trail. In addition, the Council requests the proposed Buckland Railway Bridge is accessible to members of the public as well as rail passengers.

283. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**a) INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENTS**

The Committee received the Income and Expenditure Statements for June, July, August and September 2024 (previously circulated). The Chairperson invited questions from Members.

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

30TH JUNE 2024

Opening Balance	£ 823,168.51
Misc. Income	£ 14,075.03
HLF 1 st tranche of What's in Store D'ment Phase grant	£ 39,476.00
Total Income	£ 876,719.54
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 124,098.26
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 124,098.26
BALANCE as of 30TH JUNE 2024 Business Call & Current Account:	£ 752,621.28

Balances as of 30th June 2024

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 752,521.28
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 752,821.28

Total: **£752,821.28**

Balance of CCLA fund at 30th June 2024

£472,198.00

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

31st JULY 2024

Opening Balance	£ 752,621.28
Misc. Income	£ 21,213.49
VAT return 1 st QTR 24/25	£ 17,637.00
Total Income	£ 791,471.77
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 199,813.46
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 591,658.31

BALANCE as of 31ST JULY 2024 **£ 591,658.31**
Business Call & Current Account:

Balances as of 31st July 2024

Current Account	£ 101.00
Business Call Account	£ 591,557.31
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 591,858.31

Total: **£591,858.31**

Balance of CCLA fund at 31st July 2024

£472,198.00

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

31ST AUGUST 2024

Opening Balance	£ 591,658.31
Misc. Income	£ 4228.62
Total Income	£ 595,886.93
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 141,074.75
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 141,074.75
BALANCE as of 31ST AUGUST 2024 Business Call & Current Account:	£454,812.18

Balances as of 31ST August 2024

Current Account	£ 101.00
Business Call Account	£ 454,711.18
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 455,012.18

Total: £455,012.18

Balance of CCLA fund at 31ST August 2024

£472,198.00

Chairperson initials.....

NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT

30th SEPTEMBER 2024

Opening Balance	£ 454,812.18
Misc. Income	£ 27,972.90
2 nd tranche of Precept	£ 797,279.00
Total Income	£1,280,064.08
LESS:	
Expenditure	£ 137,862.40
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 137,862.40
BALANCE as of 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024 Business Call & Current Account:	£1,142,204.68

Balances as of 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Current Account	£ 100.00
Business Call Account	£ 1,142,104.68
Petty Cash Account	£ 200.00
Total Cash in hand at bank	£ 1,142,404.68

Total: £1,142,404.68

Balance of CCLA fund at 30th September 2024

£472,198.00

Chairperson initials.....

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the statement of income and expenditure for the periods June, July, August and September 2024, as submitted to the Committee, be hereby approved and signed by the Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee.

b) FINANCIAL BUDGET COMPARISON

The Chairperson referred to the Financial Budget Comparison summary and report which detailed Income and Expenditure for the Finance and Audit Committee for the period 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024 (previously circulated). The Chairperson noted that there had been no questions in advance but invited questions from Councillors. Following a brief discussion among Members, accordingly, it was

RESOLVED that the Financial Budget Comparison Summary for the Finance and Audit Committee for the period 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024, be hereby approved and signed by the Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee.

284. ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE – OLD FORDE HOUSE

The Chairperson referred to communication received from the District Council, as circulated prior to the meeting, referring to the disposal of Old Forde House, Newton Abbot. It was noted that the premises had been designated as an Asset of Community Value.

Members were keen to protect the important heritage building for the town but were aware that some elements of the structure was in poor condition and the financial implications of bringing the building into use, along with the limited opportunities for future uses bearing in mind its Grade 1 Listed status.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that **it be RECOMMENDED** to Council at its meeting to be held on the 13th November 2024, to 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.

285. CONSULTATION FUTURE OF PUBLIC TOILET PROVISION

The Chairperson referred to communication received from the District Council, as circulated prior to the meeting, informing the Council of a forthcoming consultation on the future provision of public toilets in Newton Abbot. Members were invited to comment on the proposal.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

Chairperson initials.....

RESOLVED that Newton Abbot Town Council hereby strongly objects to the closure of any public toilet provision in Newton Abbot and requests that the District Council retains and maintains the current facilities.

286. **EXTEND THE MEETING**

At 8:55pm, the Chairperson informed members that In accordance with Standing Order 26, Duration of a Meeting, a vote was required to extend the meeting for 30 minutes. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting be extended until 9:30pm or until conclusion of the business to be transacted, which ever was shortest.

287. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

288. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be Wednesday 15th January 2025.

289. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was:

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

290. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the dispute with the District Council regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy and referred to the correspondence shared with members prior to the meeting. Members were informed the District Council has not formerly responded to the letter sent on behalf of the Town Council by its legal representative.

The Chairperson, Councillor C Parker added to the verbal report and expressed his concern.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he will report back to the Council once a response has been received.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the verbal report from the Town Clerk and Chairperson of the Finance and Audit Committee, Councillor C Parker be noted.

Chairperson initials.....

Meeting closed at 21:22 hrs.

Chairperson.....Date.....

Chairperson initials.....