

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 5th JUNE 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 Gibbs
P Bullivant A Ineson
R Buscombe G Jennings
D Corney-Walker M Joyce
L Cooke M Ryan
C Davieson L Wood

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

Also, present Father Matthew Cashmore
Ten members of the public
Representative of the press – Mid Devon Advertiser

29. **WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Father Matthew Cashmore to open the meeting with prayers.

Members were informed that as per Standing Order 14, Conduct During Debate, the Mayor granted Councillor M Joyce a dispensation to remain seated when speaking.

The Mayor invited Councillor David Corney-Walker to make a presentation to the Council.

30. **APOLOGIES**

Valid reasons for absence were received on behalf of Councillor J Bradford, T Corney-Walker and N Yabsley. Members **agreed** to approve the reasons for absence.

Councillor J Cook did not attend. Members noted the lack of attendance by Councillor J Cook without apology. Arising from a discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk should communicate with Councillor J Cook as a reminder of his obligation to respond to the summons issued in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

Cllrs D Corney-Walker, C Davieson and C Parker abstained from voting.

Apologies were noted on behalf of the District Councillors J Hook and R Hayes.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

31. **INTERESTS**

None declared.

32. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meetings held on:

- a) Wednesday 13th March 2024 were received and signed as a correct record.
- b) Wednesday 15th May 2024 (Annual Council Meeting) were received and signed as a correct record.

33. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- a) A member of the public spoke on behalf of the Queen Street Traders Association about the perceived insulting proposal received from the Newton Abbot & Kingsteignton Garden Community Board that: the Town Council delivers business support events on the completion of the Queen Street pedestrianisation scheme, on behalf of the District Council.
- b) Councillor R Buscombe read a question on behalf of a resident regarding the Town Council's participation in Fair Trade Fortnight. Members discussed the proposal, arising from the discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that in principle the Council supports participating in Fair Trade Fortnight subject to a press release being issued to ask if residents would like to be involved.

Cllr L Cooke abstained from voting.

34. **QUEEN STREET**

A letter received from Devon County Council, tabled at the meeting, provided an update on the construction of the Queen Street enhancement scheme. The Mayor invited the Town Development Manger to report on the works which have now commenced.

The Town Development Manager reported in detail on the works which had caused considerable disruption. Initial problems have been exasperated by the site manager being absent from site during the start of the project, when it was critical for someone to be present to resolve issues and liaise with members of the public.

The Mayor thanked the Town Development Manager for her report and a discussion took place about the delivery phase of the project. It was agreed to note the report received from Devon County Council.

35. **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.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

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

- Bus improvement scheme.

District Councillor R Buscombe reported that he has been privileged to be elected as Executive Lead for the Social Housing Building Program.

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

- Attended several training sessions.
- Attended the Planning Committee meeting.
- Walked through his ward with members of the District Council’s Senior Leadership Team looking at local issues including parking at Town Quay.
- Buckland Centre.
- Funding issues.

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

- Attended several training sessions and meetings.
- Resident problems.
- Attends the Buckland Hub monthly meetings.

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

36. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) The Mayor invited Councillor D Corney-Walker to report on engagements which he had attended prior to the Annual Council Meeting.

Councillor D Corney-Walker expressed his pleasure at attending the first of the Sunday Markets.

b) The Mayor updated Members on recent engagements which he had attended. In particular, he had enjoyed officiating:

- Annual Town Meeting.
- Classic Motor Show.

c) Other appropriate items including Mayoral activities in the course of preparation.

The Mayor reminded members of the events taking place tomorrow to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day.

37. QUEEN STREET – BUSINESS SUPPORT OPPORTUNITY

Members considered a proposal received from the Newton Abbot & Kingsteignton Garden Community Board that the Town Council delivers business support events on the completion of the Queen Street pedestrianisation scheme on behalf of the District Council

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

The Mayor advised that following discussions with officers at the District Council it was his understanding that the funding can be spent on the whole town and not just Queen Street.

The Town Development Manager confirmed the funding is available from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and is not being offered to Newton Abbot as compensation for loss of business on Queen Street. The funding would provide an opportunity to help the town back on its feet following a period of disruption across the whole town which included the current extensive Wales and West utility works. It was noted that the proposed works scheduled for East Street and Wolborough Street will cause significant disruption across the town. It was suggested the UK Shared Prosperity Fund could be used to create promotional material to market the town.

Councillor Bullivant advised that the Newton Abbot & Kingsteignton Garden Community board would like to see the funding used to hold a series of events to coincide with Christmas and suggested a week-long event. The Town Development Manager advised that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund application has strict criteria which must be met, and the brief is narrow. Evidence of how the funding is spent will be required. In her professional opinion, marketing material to benefit the whole town would be preferable.

In principle, Councillors were in support of using the funding for the benefit of the whole town and requested further clarification on spending. Councillor Bullivant agreed to withdraw the proposal and confirmed the Newton Abbot & Kingsteignton Garden Community Board will provide additional clarification on the funding ahead of the Full Council meeting on the 19th June 2024.

38. NEWTON’S PLACE

The Town Clerk reported on an action taken, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairperson of the Finance & Audit Committee, to authorise works to create a protective screen to the front fenestration of Newton’s Place.

RESOLVED that the Town Council ratifies the decision made by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and the Chairperson of the Finance & Audit Committee to authorise works at a cost of £3,500 to create a protective screen to the front fenestration of Newton’s Place.

39. WHAT’S IN STORE PROJECT

a) The Town Clerk was pleased to announce that confirmation has been received from the Heritage Fund that the project can commence.

b) The Town Clerk invited members to form a Project Board to oversee the ‘What’s in Store’ project. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby forms a Project Board. Membership will include Councillors M Ryan, C Parker and P Bullivant. Councillor G Jennings will attend as the Museum volunteer representative.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

40. **SIGNAL GANTRY**

The Town Clerk reported that work to refurbish the Signal Gantry located on Torquay Road has begun. Volunteers from the South Devon Railway are carrying out the work which will include painting, replacement of the three arms, new glass and railings. The cost of the work is being met through donations; any shortfall will be met through the Community Infrastructure Fund.

The Town Clerk was asked to investigate displaying a project information banner on the scaffold. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk will investigate installation of banner at the Signal Gantry to provide members of the public with information on the project.

41. **POLICIES**

- (a) Code of Conduct
- (b) Statement of Internal Control
- (c) Anti-Fraud and Corruption
- (d) Business Continuity and Council Risk Management Plan
- (e) Flag Flying Protocol

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

RESOLVED that the Policies in relation to the:

- Code of Conduct
- Statement of Internal Control
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption
- Business Continuity and Council Risk Management Plan
- Flag Flying Protocol

be hereby, approved and adopted.

42. **MOTION TO COUNCIL**

In accordance with Standing Order number 8, to consider a motion submitted to the Clerk by Councillor M Joyce that:

"This Council, having seen the success of the Annual Town Meetings, held recently and in the past, require the Town Clerk, with the assistance of other staff members, to examine the holding of a second Town Meeting in the Autumn 2024. This additional Town meeting is to be used as a trial, to enable the Town Clerk, to report back on its effectiveness, thus enabling Councillors to consider it becoming a regular event in the Councils diary."

"The Town Clerk, along with other staff members, will consider suitable months and days and discuss this with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, before presenting to Councillors for consideration."

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Council will hold a second community engagement event in the town centre during the Autumn.

43. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 12th March 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce, were received and approved.
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Community & Heritage Committee** held on 27th March 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor L Cooke were received and approved.
- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 2nd April 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.
- d) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee**, held on 23rd April 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.
- e) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee**, held on 14th May 2024, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.

44. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

45. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 19th June 2024 at 6:15pm - prior to the Policy & Resources Committee meeting.

46. **EXCLUSION OF THE 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.

47. **ASSETS**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on an asset acquisition opportunity for the Council to consider, relating to the land and buildings known as the public conveniences Newfoundland Way, as outlined in the documents circulated prior to the meeting. In the meantime, a Tenancy at Will, is required.

Arising from the discussion it was:

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

RESOLVED that the Town Council will hereby continue with the Tenancy at Will for Newfoundland Way Public Conveniences while due diligence into the freehold transfer opportunity is carried out.

Meeting closed at 19:55 hours.

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

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....