

NOTES OF THE **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025** AT 7.00 P.M.

**PRESENT:** Councillor: R Buscombe (Chairperson) Presiding  
M Joyce (Vice Chairperson)

Councillors: L Cooke  
C Davieson  
A Hall  
A Ineson  
C Parker  
M Ryan  
L Wood

Councillor P Parker was also in attendance

By invitation: Mike Saxton, Business Development and Operations Director at Newton Abbot Rugby Football Club  
Dimitra Stewart-Palapanou, Nikki Mortimore and Andrew Baker, Newton Abbot Police Cadet Leaders  
Caitlin Mortimore and Haydn Ward, Newton Abbot Police Cadets

Officers In attendance: Pierre Doutreligne, Projects & Strategy Officer  
Rob Woodger, Facilities Maintenance Team Leader  
Nigel Canham, Communications Advisor

Also, in attendance Freewoman Carol Bunday  
Freeman Mike Hocking  
County Councillor J Fry

**32. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All members of the Community Engagement Group were in attendance.

Apologies were received from Linda McGuirk, Principal Administrator.

Apologies were also noted from County Councillor M Cockerham and from Newton Abbot CIC Business & Community Development Manager Emily Farrell.

**33. INTERESTS**

None declared.

**34. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Community Engagement Group meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025 were received and signed as a correct record.

### 35. **PRESENTATION – NEWTON ABBOT RUGBY CLUB**

The Chairperson, Councillor Richard Buscombe, welcomed a representative from the Newton Abbot Rugby Club (NARFC), who gave a detailed presentation covering:-

- history of the club;
- importance of the club in the South West;
- the “One Club” ethos;
- fundraising and charity events;
- breakdown of membership figures;
- the vital role of volunteers;
- how memberships run at a financial deficit;
- corporate partners.

#### **Discussion points raised by Councillors included:**

- how Newton Abbot Town Council can give exposure to NARFC’s charity drives and community initiatives;
- growing interest in women’s rugby;
- the current terms of the lease and the future of the club in light of Sibelco’s quarrying plans;
- the possibility of NARFC moving back to Newton Abbot in the future (as opposed to Kingsteignton); and
- new protocols for concussion and head injuries.

The Chairperson thanked the representative and encouraged continued collaboration.

### 36. **PRESENTATION – NEWTON ABBOT POLICE CADETS**

The Chairperson, Councillor Richard Buscombe, welcomed representatives from Newton Abbot Police Cadets, whose presentation covered:-

- their current base in Kingsteignton and how they would welcome relocating to Newton Abbot;
- the various projects in which the cadets are involved, such as test purchasing (alcohol, tobacco, vapes...);
- help at care homes and raising money for blood bikes;
- how cadets would welcome being considered for being part in council-led events and initiatives;
- the need to challenge the false narratives that cadets are all future police officers and that cadet leaders are all serving in the police;
- the current shortage of cadet leaders (as opposed to cadets).

**Councillors discussed how:-**

- Newton Abbot Town Council could help advertise the recruitment of cadet leaders;
- they would welcome being invited along to a cadets training session at Middlemoor;
- they would ensure that the council's events programme would be shared with the Cadets Unit Managers;
- they would make the most of their connections within Devon & Cornwall Council to discuss collaborations between the Town Council and the Polic Cadets.

The Communications Advisor offered to cover the councillors' visit to a cadets training session and write about it for the council's various media outlets. The Chair thanked the representatives and offered support for further outreach and continued collaboration.

**37. HOT TOPICS**

Members agreed on the following future discussion topics, which had been suggested at the July 9 meeting:

- Newton Abbot Fire Service
- Transport – Stagecoach (and other local transport representatives).

**38. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

Meeting closed at 20:24

CHAIRPERSON..... Date.....