

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **COMMUNITY & HERITAGE COMMITTEE** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025** AT **7:00 P.M.** AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT.

**PRESENT** Councillor: A Ineson - (Vice Chairperson) Presiding

Councillors: B Bailey                      A Hall  
J Bradford                              M Joyce  
R Buscombe                            C Parker (Mayor)  
C Davieson                              P Parker  
A Gibbs                                  L Wood

Officers in attendance: Sam Scott - Deputy Town Clerk & RFO  
Linda McGuirk - Principal Administrator  
Thomas Collard - Green Spaces Officer  
Pierre Doutreligne – Projects & Strategy Officer  
Dr Charlotte Dixon – Museum Curator

By Invitation: Andrew Rothery, Green Futures Newton Abbot  
Freeman Mike Hocking

Present Devon County Councillor J Fry  
Devon County Councillor M Cockerham  
1 x Member of the public

51. **ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMUNITY & HERITAGE COMMITTEE 2025/26**

Nominations were received for the election of the Chairperson of the Community & Heritage Committee for the year 2025/2026.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Louise Cooke be elected Chairperson of the Community & Heritage Committee for the year 2025/2026.

52. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Valid reasons for absence were received on behalf of Councillor L Cooke and M Ryan, Phil Rowe, Town Clerk and Nigel Canham, Communications Officer.

53. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMUNITY & HERITAGE COMMITTEE 2025/26**

Nominations were received for the appointment of the Vice Chairperson of the Community & Heritage Committee for the year 2025/2026.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Amanda Ineson be appointed Vice Chairperson of the Community & Heritage Committee for the year 2025/2026.

54. **INTERESTS**

None.

55. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Community and Heritage Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 were received and signed as a correct record.

56. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

57. **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee gave due consideration to the Terms of Reference for the Community and Heritage Committee, circulated prior to the meeting.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference for the Community and Heritage Committee be hereby, approved and adopted.

58. **MUSEUM**

a) The Vice Chairperson, Councillor Amanda Ineson invited the Museum Curator, Dr Charlotte Dixon to report on the What's In Store Project and to provide a general Museum update:

- What's In Store Project report highlights
  - The project will make a fundamental change to the level of care, community access and space provided for stored museum collections by building a single-storey extension to the museum, housing an environmentally innovative and accessible collections store.
  - During the year-long development phase the team has consulted and engaged with over 2,500 people, exceeding original targets.
  - Throughout the year the museum worked with a team of professional advisors, including – Architect, Structural engineer, Mechanical and electrical engineers and Museum storage fit out companies.
  - As a result of the consultation process areas of change include:
    - A larger store, with an extra 18m<sup>2</sup>
    - An entrance at the front of the building with a wider door for easy access

- An added vestibule at the entrance to ensure consistent environmental conditions
- A ramp at the entrance for visitors with mobility aids
- The community room being housed within the current stores to ensure stable conditions in the new store
- Dedicated workspace for behind-the-scenes museum volunteers
- Planned exploration of artwork to be added to the chrome cladding during the delivery phase

The changes to the project have resulted in an increase of £70,000, which will need to be raised. This additional funding will be sought through the submission of grant and funding applications. In addition, donations received by the museum are being earmarked for the project, and the museum's underspend from last year's budget has also been allocated to the *What's in Store?* project. The Town Council has previously agreed to underwrite the project and meet any shortfall in funding that remains.

Curator is due to give a presentation on the What's In Store project at the forthcoming National Museum Conference.

- Museum updates
  - Between April 2024 and March 2025, Newton Abbot Museum welcomed and engaged with 16,735 visitors. This includes 3,237 formal and informal educational visits (schools and home ed for example). By comparison, between April 2023 and March 2024 we welcomed 15,157 visitors.
  - £623.56 was received in donations to the museum between 23<sup>rd</sup> January and 30<sup>th</sup> April.
  - The Museum currently has 63 active volunteers. A summer volunteer social and award ceremony was held recently. Each volunteer was given a gift and a card and those who have volunteered for a year or more were presented with a certificate and long service badges.
  - Two Summer exhibitions are planned, Railway 200 and Rediscovering Stover Country Park.
  - October 2025 marks 5 years since Newton Abbot Museum opened. To celebrate this milestone there will be a photographic exhibition in the museum showcasing images taken during the build and restoration of St Leonard's Church to create Newton's Place.
  - The Tower has reopened for the season thanks to a team of volunteers. It has proved popular with visitors so far and is open every Wednesday between 10am – 1pm and select Saturdays. A new video has been produced and includes narration with subtitles to make the history of the tower more accessible.

Councillors extended their congratulations to the museum staff and volunteers, noting that their efforts had exceeded all expectations.

b) The Museum Curator advised that the Council is required review and adopt the following Museum Policies:

- Business Plan
- Collections Care and Conservation Plan

**RESOLVED** that the policies in relation to the:

- i) Business Plan
- ii) Collections Care and Conservation Plan

be hereby, approved and adopted.

#### 59. **PRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF GREEN FUTURES NEWTON ABBOT**

The Vice Chairperson, Councillor Amanda Ineson welcomed the representative of Green Futures Newton Abbot to the meeting and invited them to make a presentation to the Committee. The representative displayed a visual presentation on the large screen giving an overview of the Newton Abbot Pesticide Reduction Strategy and highlighted the following:

- Community strategy to reduce pesticide use in Newton Abbot
- NATC achievements to date
- Results of the Bradley Pesticide Collection
- Projected UK sales of home and garden pesticides
- Identified potential partners
- March 2026 planning to hold a Newton Abbot pesticide collection
- Identify how many pesticides there are stored at residential addresses 'Check your sheds'
- Community Strategy
- Invite Cllrs to attend a community workshop
- Pesticide Free Devon Conference
- Launched the Pesticide Free Devon Network

The representative invited Councillors to attend a Community Engagement Workshop, date to be confirmed.

Councillors expressed that the representative had done a fantastic job and commended his work. They noted that the conference was excellent and suggested that NATC should work collaboratively to support the project moving forward.

#### 60. **ST LEONARD'S CLOCK TOWER SWIFT NESTBOX**

The Vice Chairperson introduced the report, as circulated prior to the meeting, outlining a proposal for a swift nestbox at St Leonard's Clock Tower. It was noted the proposal is

subject to planning permission. Members raised concerns about the cost and suitability of the suggested location. Arising from the discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the proposal to install four swift boxes behind the louvred openings on the east and west elevations of St Leonard's Clock Tower be supported, subject to the necessary planning approval being obtained.

*Cllr A Hall abstained from voting.*

#### 61. **TREE SURVEY**

The Green Spaces Officer introduced the Tree Condition Assessment Quotes report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members were reminded of the Council's duty to undertake periodic tree surveys in order to ensure public safety, maintain legal compliance, and promote the long-term health of the trees.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Council proceeds with the recommendation to accept Quote 4 for the Tree Condition Assessment.

#### 62. **PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY**

Councillor J Bradford reported that access to the permissive footpath located near the Church at the end of Coach Road had been closed by the landowner, with the gate padlocked and barbed wire placed on top of the gate. A map of the location was circulated for Members' reference.

Councillor Bradford presented further evidence, including maps and photographs depicting public use of the footpath, some of which date back to 1890. She advised that, should sufficient evidence be provided to demonstrate that the path has been used openly and without interruption by the public for at least 20 years, there would be a strong case to apply for the route to be designated as a public right of way. In support of this, Councillor Bradford has also collated a number of evidence forms completed by residents confirming long-term use of the path.

Arising from the discussion, it was:

**RESOLVED** that Newton Abbot Town Council writes to Devon County Council and the landowner to seek the reopening of the permissive path from College Road to Courtenay Road.

Members expressed their thanks to Councillor Bradford for her research and the extensive evidence collection undertaken in support of this matter.

#### 63. **MARKETS**

The Projects & Strategy Officer provided an update on the proposed partnership between the Town Council, Teignbridge District Council (TDC) and The Cwtch Hub CIC

for the management of the street markets in Newton Abbot. The update included the following key points:

- Timeline: Initial discussions took place with representatives from NATC, The Cwtch Hub CIC and Teignbridge District Council on 22nd April 2025.
- TDC officers expressed interest in the proposal and invited The Cwtch Hub CIC to submit a business plan for further consideration.
- Teignbridge District Council remain keen to progress the partnership discussions, with a further meeting scheduled to take place on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025 to review and discuss the proposed terms and conditions, as well as legal considerations.
- Two options for the management and operation of the street markets are currently under consideration.

Members expressed their thanks to The Projects & Strategy Officer and The Cwtch Hub CIC for their drive and ambition to see the partnership succeed.

#### 64. **TRANSPORTATION**

Councillor Joyce advised that he has submitted an application to install the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) in the Buckland Ward and requested the Police Vision Zero initiative attends the area to assess the situation. Councillor Joyce expressed concerns regarding a petition calling for a reduction in the speed limit to 20mph, noting that a previous survey conducted in 2019 had been unsuccessful.

A lengthy discussion took place, covering matters including traffic calming measures, lack of enforcement, speeding vehicles, the merits and limitations of 20mph speed limits, and concerns that existing data does not support the implementation of a 20mph limit at this time. It was noted that any such request would need to be submitted to Devon County Council's Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that residents be advised to approach Devon County Council Highways directly, as the Town Council holds no authority over highway matters.

*Cllr C. Parker abstained from voting.*

#### 65. **SUB- COMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/FORUMS**

- a) The Minutes of the meeting of the What's In Store (WIS) Project Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025, as presented by the Councillor A Ineson, were received and approved.
- b) The Minutes of the meeting of the Events Sub Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025, as presented by Councillor A Ineson, were received and approved.
- c) The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Group held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor R Buscombe were received and approved.

**66. ACCOUNTS/INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The Committee received and noted an overview of income and expenditure statements for the Community & Heritage Committee, Newton In Bloom and the Museum for the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

Accordingly, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the Town Council hereby:

Approves the Income and Expenditure Statements for the periods, 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 for the:

- Community and Heritage Committee.
- Newton In Bloom.
- Museum.

**67. LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**68. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025

The Meeting closed at: 20:20

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