

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6th JUNE 2018** AT 7.00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 9 DEVON SQUARE, NEWTON ABBOT

PRESENT Councillors K L Purchase (Mayor) Presiding
R D Jenks (Dep Mayor)

Councillors

Mrs C Bunday	M Joyce
Mrs J Cleave	Mrs S Kingdom
D Corney-Walker	C N Parker
C Coyle-Moore	M J Pilkington
R Hayes	M E Ryan
M Hocking	Mrs L Sheffield
D Howe	T Ward
Mrs J A Jones	

Freeman: Mr Henry Cole

By Invitation: The Reverend Patrick Parkes

In attendance: Philip Rowe – Town Clerk
Samantha Scott – Deputy Town Clerk
Sally Henley – Town Development Manager
Alexandra Robinson – Committee Administrator

The Mayor invited his Chaplain, The Reverend Patrick Parkes, to deliver prayers.

63. **WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the Full Council Meeting and made particular welcome to Ms Jackie Simpson of Westcountry Savings and Loans and Mr Jeremy Newcombe of LSN Architects.

64. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of County & District Councillors Mrs Jackie Hook and Gordon Hook; and Councillor Ms Liz Roberts.

65. **INTERESTS**

Councillor Mrs J Cleave gave notice of her intention to declare a pecuniary interest in Minute (68) below.

66. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 7th March; the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting on 2nd May and the Special Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2018 were received and signed as correct records.

67. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Honorary Freeman, Henry Cole reminded Members of the excellent reputation that the Town Council had worked for and that it was important to uphold the good working ethos among Members despite the various political backgrounds. He emphasised that as a Member of the Town Council that Councillors should be proud of the high standards of services delivered, the excellent events managed and the manner in which they are conducted. He finished in noting that this should remain as the ethos for the Council.

68. **PRESENTATION – WESTCOUNTRY SAVINGS AND LOANS**

The Mayor invited Ms Jackie Simpson of Westcountry Savings and Loans to update Members on the financial services offered to local people through Westcountry Savings and Loans.

Ms Simpson thanked the Council for inviting her to update Members and with the aid of presentation slides, raised the following key points:

- As a Member co-operative they had been trading since 2004
- A membership of 2,400 adult members and 37 organisations
- Currently hold £2.31m in savings and have £1.85m out on loan
- The Average loan is £1,500 but 50% are under £500
- Covers a large geographical area across Devon, Somerset, North Somerset, up to Bristol and now Cornwall
- Fully registered with both the Prudential Regulations Authority and the Financial Regulation Authority
- Hold seven payroll partnership schemes (including Devon County Council)
- The team comprises six staff (4.2 FTE) with voluntary Board of Directors
- Currently working on new project with eight Housing Providers (including Teign Housing) the aim is to encourage tenants to save on an affordable basis.

Ms Simpson explained that whilst Westcountry Savings and Loans were not a charity they followed charitable aims, the main ones being:

- Create a safety net for lower income groups
- Assist and guide with money management
- Offer affordable loans, £100-£15,000 3.9%
- Aim to alleviate poverty
- Encouragement of thrift

As the company expands so they have developed technologies to increase accessibility to services via email and online whilst maintaining some face-to-face provision as they recognised that this continued to be the preferred method for some customers. The company aimed to attract a younger membership and create good practices in an economic climate of rising personal debt.

The Mayor thanked Ms Simpson for her presentation and invited questions from Members who raised the following points:

- Assessment of credit ratings and ability to service loans
- Endorsed the safe and ethical savings and loans

- Emphasised that some clients would always prefer face-to-face contact rather than applying online
- Encouraged the expansion of partnerships schemes particularly the payroll partnerships
- The emphasis on savings and loans and any applications for current accounts were directed to other high street providers

The Mayor thanked Ms Simpson on behalf of the Town Council for taking questions, whereupon she was invited to leave the meeting.

Councillor Mrs J Cleave having previously declared an interest took part in the discussion thereon.

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

No reports were received.

70. **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received the list of engagements (previously circulated) which the Mayor and previous Mayor had carried out since 7th March 2018.

The Mayor invited Councillor Mrs Ann Jones to report on the engagements prior to her hand over in May 2018.

Councillor Mrs Jones reported that, although it had been the last six weeks of her Mayoral Year that she had been extremely busy. She highlighted the presentation of the prestigious award of Legion D'honneur as being very special and also the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate former Councillor Mrs Di Nichols in Golden Lion Square. She added that subsequently a tree had been planted to commemorate what would have been Mrs Nichols 100th birthday.

The Mayor reported that he too, had attended a variety of engagements which he found to be very interesting and he had enjoyed meeting Councillors from other towns and parishes. He finished by adding that he was proud to have represented Newton Abbot Town Council and he was looking forward to the forthcoming engagements.

71. **NEWTON'S PLACE PROJECT UPDATE**

A. Update on Project Design prior to Tender

The Mayor invited Mr Jeremy Newcombe to update Members on the project design prior to Invitations to Tender for the Construction Contract being despatched.

Mr Newcombe updated Members with the aid of presentation slides to demonstrate the design drawings and features contained within the building. He explained in some detail the aspects of flooring, meeting rooms, heating and ventilation and also demonstrated enhanced design elements which included a model railway track and miniature train which it was hoped would be able to travel through the building with an attached camera to provide a visual

display of 'behind the scenes' areas as displayed on a television monitor screen in the refreshment area. Whilst some specific areas of the Museum Design were not in the architectural brief and were managed by Leach Design; Mr Newcombe was able to explain the collaboration between Designers, Engineers and the Architects in forming the finished designs.

Mr Newcombe demonstrated the continued efforts of the Project to evolve and incorporate up-to-date design specifications. The design now included extended disabled toilet facilities. The larger sized room would incorporate an adult sized couch, specialist hoist, privacy screen and enhanced toilet and washing facilities to accommodate a user and their carer thereby making Newton's Place more accessible to the wider community.

Mr Newcombe summarised his presentation by reporting that the Design team were two weeks from completion of the Design Drawings and that once finalised would be referred back to the Project Manager and Quantity Surveyor in order to prepare the necessary Schedules of Works in preparation of the Tender process. He advised that the Project Manager, Quantity Surveyor and Town Clerk would be shortly advertising the Construction Contract for Tender and inviting Expressions of Interest. There would be a careful evaluation and short list prepared for consideration by the Council prior to formal Invitations to Tender; upon receipt of applications there would be a further evaluation process in which the final short list would be prepared for selection of Contractor, in line with the Council's Procurement Strategy.

Mr Newcombe was pleased to report that the Newton's Place Project remained on track and to budget and therefore it was anticipated that upon successful completion of the Tender Process and appointment of Contractor that work on site would commence in the early autumn of 2018 with a scheduled completion of late summer 2019.

The Mayor thanked Mr Newcombe for his detailed presentation and explanation to Members on the Design Drawings for the Newton's Place Project and invited questions from Members, who raised the following key points:

- ❖ Access to the building and entry points
- ❖ Welcomed the enhanced disabled toilet facilities and the incorporated mother/baby facilities
- ❖ The provision of accessible taps, light switches, door openings and emergency pull cord to be included
- ❖ Standard of technology within the Museum exhibits within available budget and capacity of the Museum Design

Councillor Mike Ryan, Chairman of Newton's Place Project Board summarised the meeting held earlier in the day with the Heritage Lottery Fund Board Member, Mrs Evelyn Stacey and HLF Grants Officer Mrs Helen Wheatley where upon the Project team had been able to present the resilience of the project, the community support and enthusiasm and the commitment of the Town Council to deliver Newton's Place to the community of Newton Abbot on time. He reported that the HLF Board would make their decision on the Round Two Application for Grant Funding on 19th June and the decision would be announced thereafter.

Councillor Mike Hocking, Vice Chairman of Newton's Place Project Board endorsed the comments made by Councillor Ryan and added that the Project Board were proud of the officers, Museum volunteers and project consultants in their professional delivery of the project to the HLF; their tremendous efforts and ability to convey the enthusiasm and commitment of all those involved. He personally thanked all those involved.

The Town Clerk reminded Members of the Project timetable and the importance of raising any queries or clarification on the Design Drawings within the Meeting. The Council raised no further queries or suggestions for the Design Drawings therefore the Mayor thanked Mr Newcombe on behalf of the Council for his extensive involvement in the project and comprehensive update at the meeting, whereupon he was invited to leave the meeting.

B. Update on Funding Strategy

The Mayor invited the Town Clerk to update Members on the projected funding of the Delivery Phase of the Newton's Place project.

Further to Minute 18/02(357) the Clerk reported that following the meeting with the representatives from the HLF Board earlier in the day that he had prepared a summary financial statement which was circulated at the Meeting. The statement highlighted the total project costs and how these costs would be met.

The Clerk explained that whilst the Council awaited news on the Round Two application from the HLF towards the end of June, that £71,260 had been successfully achieved from additional funding applications. Mr Rowe advised that due to the current economic climate and increasing competitive nature of funding applications that the project had been unsuccessful in bids from other key funders. The funding team would still pursue a rolling programme of funding applications and had made several bids, but due to the differing timescales news of these would not be available until the autumn at the earliest.

The Clerk reminded the Council that at the Special Meeting of the Council held 21st February 2018 that it was resolved under Minute 18/02(357) that the Council '*would be prepared to underwrite any shortfall in the match funding when the decision was reached by the Heritage Lottery Fund in June 2018*'.

The financial summary provided by the Clerk, showed a shortfall of £795,205 to which he advised the Council could meet through an application for loan with the Public Works Loans Board. Members were satisfied that the loan could be serviced in the current year from within the existing budget for 2018/19 and that future years would be covered by the additional CIL income and would not therefore necessitate an increase of the Council's Precept. Members considered the current low fixed interest rate applied to the loan and the consequences of a potential rise in construction costs due to inflation, if the Council were to delay the programme until the Autumn.

The Council offered its full support in continuing the current timetable for the project and the commitment to meeting the shortfall in funding for the Newton's Place Project through a loan with the Public Works Loans Board. Following discussion, accordingly it was unanimously;

RESOLVED that a) the Clerk be delegated authority to seek approval from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a Public Works Loans Board loan of £800,000 up to 40 years for the refurbishment of the 19th Century listed former Church of St Leonards into a Museum and Community Space for the benefit of the community, b) In the event that it being necessary to increase the precept for the purposes of servicing the loan; it would be intended to increase the precept by 1.8% which is the equivalent of an additional **£2.03** council tax per Band D property per year, and c) that the project group continue a rolling programme of funding applications whereupon if they were successful in the autumn of 2018, prior to the setting of the annual budget, that this would negate the need of increasing the precept.

72. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- A. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 13th March 2018 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Community & Heritage** Committee held on 28th March 2018 as presented by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mrs L Sheffield, were received and approved;
- C. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 3rd April 2018 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- D. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 24th April 2018 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- E. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 15th May 2018 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- F. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 5th June 2018 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved subject to it being noted that Councillors would receive additional information from the Committee Administrator on Amended Planning Application 17/01542/MAJ prior to the next meeting on 26th June 2018.

73. **GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)**

The Mayor invited the Deputy Town Clerk to update Members further on the progress with regards to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations. The Deputy Clerk reported that a revised Privacy Policy had been circulated by email in advance of the meeting and was tabled at meeting to which she invited Members to take time to read and raise any questions directly with her. Mrs Scott advised that the matter would be further reported at the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.

74. **POLICY DOCUMENTS**

The Deputy Mayor introduced the Policy documents, previously circulated drawing Members' attention to the key principles contained within them and made reference to the Council's Business Continuity Plan as contained within the Risk Management Policy. The Town Clerk confirmed that no questions had been received prior to the meeting

Following the review of the documents it was;

RESOLVED that the:

- a) Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy,
- b) Risk Management Policy, subject to amendment and
- c) Statement of Internal Control, be hereby, approved and adopted.

75. LATE CORRESPONDENCE

The Mayor invited Councillor Mrs Ann Jones to update Members on the new initiative OUR Newton Abbot. Councillor Jones raised the following key points:

- ❖ Following a presentation by Nigel Canham (PR Consultant) and discussion at the last Meeting of the Community Engagement Group it was agreed for Members to promote the Council among residents;
- ❖ An informal working party of five Councillors had been set up;
- ❖ The name was agreed as OUR Newton Abbot – O-Ownership, U-Understanding and R- Respect;
- ❖ Reviewed public events and that NATC have taken on and public perception of what the Town Council delivers;
- ❖ Further updates would be made to Council and to the Community Engagement Group;
- ❖ A suggested launch event had been arranged for Saturday 30th June 2018 to coincide with the Summer Nights Events;
- ❖ Requested Councillor support on the evening of 30th June.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Mrs Jones for her informative summary of OUR Newton Abbot noted that the group would liaise with Mrs Sally Henley, Town Development Manager to coincide with the arrangements for the Summer Nights event but he encouraged Members to participate in the launch event.

76. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council was to be held on Wednesday 25th July 2018.

Chairman (Mayor)