

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 2019** AT 6.30 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 9 DEVON SQUARE, NEWTON ABBOT

Present: Councillors R D Jenks (Mayor) Presiding
M Joyce (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: P Bullivant Mrs A Jones
Mrs K Crout C N Parker
C Davieson M Pilkington
B Hayes M E Ryan
R Hayes Mrs L Sheffield
D Howe

Honorary Freeman of Newton Abbot Henry L J Cole

Invited guests: The Reverend Gareth Regan
Commander Steven Waller, Royal Navy
Lt Commander Michael Greaves, Royal Navy
Warrant Officer 1 Mark Berry, Royal Navy
Leading Hand Spencer Farrow, Royal Navy
Richard Underhill, Chairman, Royal British Legion
David Cair, Vice Chairman, Royal British Legion
Myles Clough, Currie and Brown
Lorna Turner, The Fruit Tree
Nigel Canham, PR Media Consultant

Member of the Public: Dr Peter Beale

Representative of the Press: Ross Bryant, Mid Devon Advertiser

In attendance: Philip Rowe Town Clerk
Sally Henley Town Development Manager
Alexandra Robinson Committee Administrator

The Mayor invited his Chaplain, The Reverend Gareth Regan, to deliver prayers.

210. **WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed everyone, including invited guests to the Full Council Meeting.

211. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of County & District Councillor Gordon Hook, County & District Councillor Mrs Jackie Hook, District Councillor Ms Janet Bradford, Councillors Mrs Carol Bunday, David Corney-Walker, Ryan Hall, Mike Hocking and Chris Jenks and Mrs Sam Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

212. **INTERESTS**

None Declared.

213. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24th July and the minutes of the Special Meeting on 11th September 2019 were received and signed as correct records.

214. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Mayor welcomed Dr Peter Beale to the meeting and invited him to speak on grass verges in the town. Dr Beale thanked the Mayor for the opportunity to speak and gave a statement outlining the following key points:

- Professional ecologist who worked at Seale Hayne for over 27 years;
- Considering the best use of grass verges in the town;
- Since 1930s there had been a 97% reduction in wild flower meadows;
- The improvements in farming and use of farmland has caused significant reduction in land available for swathes of meadow on which insects depend;
- Teignbridge District and Devon County Councils are identifying verges to be managed with wild flowers rather than cutting them and Dr Beale requested that the Town Council consider the same exercise;
- A colleague had identified Bee Orchids growing in Buckland and was able to persuade the Town Council not to cut the verge and encourage the spread of the orchids;
- The importance of insects, early pollination of plants and the effect on ecology;
- Manage balance between those verges that need cutting and those that could be retained for wildflowers; and
- Dr Beale offered his assistance to advise and identify suitable sites.

The Mayor thanked Dr Beale for his informative update and proposals for the management of grass verges and advised him that the matter would be deferred for consideration by the Council at a future appropriate committee meeting; following which Dr Beale left the meeting.

215. **PRESENTATION – HMS TRIUMPH – FREEDOM OF THE TOWN**

The Mayor reported that he was delighted to welcome Commander Steven Waller and members of his ships company to the meeting and that it was a prestigious honour to the town that they had accepted the invitation to grant the Ship's Company Freedom of the Town. The Mayor added that he looked forward to building upon the strong relationship and developing the affiliation.

Councillor Richard Jenks presented HMS Triumph's Commanding Officer, Commander Waller with a framed declaration that the Ship's Company had been bestowed with Freedom of the Town.

In response Commander Waller, stated that it was an honour for HMS Triumph. He reported that the Royal Navy had reduced its fleet from 28 to 9 submarines in active service and there had not been a Freedom of the Town granted in the last ten years. Commander Waller pledged that HMS Triumph would take the affiliation seriously, he noted their responsibility in defending the seas as 85% of trade into the UK was transferred by sea. He finished by noting that the framed declaration would be installed on the Two Deck so that it would be visible to the entire ships company.

Members of the Council applauded the Officers of HMS Triumph and congratulated them on accepting the Council's invitation for Freedom of the Town of Newton Abbot.

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

A. District Councillor Colin Parker reported on the following issues in which he had direct involvement:

- Initial queries and complaints in connection with the hours of operation at Aldi Supermarket;
- Following accidents at Penn Inn slip lane to raise design with Devon County Council;
- Grass cutting and road side verge management;
- Identification of suitable tree planting sites; and
- Buckland Primary School site - ground breaking event for the construction of Glendinning School would be on Tuesday 1st October at 2pm.

B. District Councillor Rob Hayes reported on the following issues in which he had direct involvement:

- Fairtrade to be reinstated in the town and steering group to be set up;
- Where Climate Emergency conflicts with Fairtrade, Climate Emergency will take precedence;
- Male suicide figures show the region to have highest rates in the UK;
- Following the closure of Liaise Bistro, Market Square, Andy's Man Club and Women's Well Being Club were seeking a new venue for their meetings; and
- Work with the Samaritans in the town to provide support.

C. District Councillor Phillip Bullivant reported on the following issues in which he had direct involvement:

- Teignbridge District Council covenant to support the armed forces, post service; and
- Thanked HMS Triumph for the work that they do.

There being no further questions from Councillors, the Mayor thanked the District Councillors for their reports.

217. **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Council received the list of engagements (previously circulated) which the Mayor had carried out since 24th July 2019.

The Mayor reported that he had participated in a wide variety of events during the past few weeks and made particular note of the Twinning Visit to Besigheim where he was made very welcome and he was now looking ahead to the Civic Service to be held at St Paul's Church on 6th October 2019. Councillor Richard Jenks encouraged all Councillors to attend.

The Mayor invited the Deputy Mayor to report on the engagements that he had undertaken. The Deputy Mayor reported that he had thoroughly enjoyed all the events he had attended; in particular he noted the Teignbridge Quality Awards, the success of the Summer Nights events in the town and the effort involved in the Town Criers Competition. Councillor Joyce recorded his sincere thanks to the Councillors and staff who were involved in the thoroughly enjoyable event.

Councillor Mike Pilkington recorded his appreciation and thanks to the Ships Company of HMS Triumph.

218. **MAYOR/CLERK ACTIONS DURING SUMMER RECESS**

The Mayor invited the Town Clerk to update Members on the actions taken on behalf of the Council during the summer recess.

The Clerk reported that in consultation with the Mayor he had arranged for the appointment of a new contractor to carry out the grass cutting contract for the year 2020 and the cost of which would be met within the existing budgets.

The Clerk further reported that also in consultation with the Mayor that he had commissioned an architect to draw-up plans for submission to the Planning Authority and the preparation of a tender for the works to the land adjacent to Newton's Place once vacated by the construction team.

Members commended the Clerk on his prompt action and accordingly it was;

RESOLVED that the Council approve the actions taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor, Councillor Richard Jenks on actions taken during the summer recess.

219. **CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

The Mayor reminded Members of their consideration of Climate Emergency at the meeting of the Strategic Planning Forum on 17th July 2019 reference Minute 19/07(SPF18). The Mayor proposed that the declaration be adopted as set out with a minor amendment. Accordingly, it was;

RESOLVED that the Council adopt the Motion to declare a Climate Emergency, as set out:

“That Newton Abbot Town Council in declaring a ‘climate emergency’ and having taken into due consideration, the varied information on climate, both nationally and locally, hereby declares that, wherever and whenever possible Newton Abbot Town Council, will liaise with and consult closely, with all other interested parties, who have declared a climate emergency and in doing so, indicate that it will strive through means of dialogue, cooperation and participation in all manner of forums to achieve, the aims, as set out to be carbon neutral by Teignbridge District Council in their ‘climate emergency declaration’ by 2030.”

220. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- A. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 13th August 2019 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;
- B. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 3rd September 2019 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe were received and approved;
- C. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee** held on 11th September 2019 as presented by the Mayor, Councillor R Jenks, were received and approved; and
- D. The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 24th September 2019 as presented by the Chairman, Councillor D Howe, were received and approved;

221. **NEWTON'S PLACE PROJECT – UPDATE**

The Mayor invited the Town Clerk to provide a verbal update on the Newton's Place Project. The Town Clerk advised Councillors that at the last meeting of the Project Board, members had requested that the Council be regularly updated on progress of the refurbishment within Newton's Place. Accordingly, a presentation slideshow of photographs from the start of the construction programme through to the end of August 2019 was displayed on the TV screen for Councillors to see the extensive changes within the former church.

222. **TOWN HALL**

The Mayor invited the Town Clerk to update Members of the sale of the Town Hall. The Clerk informed members that the contracts were due to be exchanged with the purchaser on 6th August, and this is yet to take place. Councillors noted that Completion was planned for 2nd December 2019.

223. **DEVON AIR AMBULANCE – NIGHT TIME LANDING SITES**

Further to Minute 19/03(410) the Mayor invited the Town Clerk to update Members on the Night Time Landing Sites for the Devon Air Ambulance.

The Clerk informed Members that given their great support for the initiative, significant progress had been made on the four sites proposed for the town:

- a) Recreation Trust, funded fundraising led by the Mayoress but awaiting Planning Approval by Teignbridge District Council;
- b) Baker's Park, funded by the Rotary Club awaiting planning decision by Teignbridge District Council;
- c) Sandringham Park, although funded by the Carnival Committee and funds raised by the Mayoress is waiting for site operator support from Teignbridge District Council; and
- d) Decoy Country Park, the arrangements for the site are to be established.

224. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

225. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council was to be held on Wednesday 20th November 2019.

226. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

227. **NEWTON'S PLACE PROJECT**

The Mayor invited the Newton's Place Project Manager and Project Co-ordinators to give an update to Council on the progress of the construction programme and an overview of the project.

Mr Clough gave a detailed report to Council on the progress of the construction programme. He informed members of the procedures in place to manage the delay in the programme.

Lorna Turner, Project Co-ordinator then gave a report on the overview of the project programme to date. Ms Turner outlined the extensive work undertaken by the Museum Designers and the programme of conservation works to be carried out.

Members queried aspects of the programme and following a lengthy discussion, accordingly, it was;

RESOLVED the Council noted a) the delay in the construction programme and that the situation was being closely monitored and managed by the Project Manager, Quality Surveyor and had the support of the professional services team, b) that the other aspects of the project such as the Museum Design and fit-out and conservation works remained on track and contractors were working closely with the Project Co-ordinator to deliver on time and c) the Project Manager would investigate the delay with the contractor further and report back to the Project Board in due course.

Chairman (Mayor)