

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2023** AT 7.00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

Present: Councillors D Corney-Walker (Mayor) Presiding
A Hall (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: B Bailey A Gibbs
 J Bradford G Jennings
 P Bullivant M Joyce
 R Buscombe C Parker
 J Cook M Ryan
 L Cooke L Wood
 T Corney-Walker N Yabsley
 C Davieson

Officers in attendance: Phil Rowe Town Clerk
 Sam Scott Deputy Town Clerk
 Sally Henley Town Development Manager
 Linda McGuirk Principal Administrator
 Nigel Canham, Communications Advisor

Also, present 3 x Representatives of Newton Abbot Community Shed

201. **WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed everyone, opened the meeting and invited Councillor L Cooke to share a moment of contemplation. Councillor L Cooke spoke on the importance of honesty and kindness and shared extracts from A. A. Milne's Winnie the Pooh, Jordan Peterson's 12 Rules For Life, Rolf Waldo Emerson's Purpose Of Life and an unknown writer.

202. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor S Walker due to work commitments. Members **agreed** to approve Councillor Walker's reason for absence.

Apologies were noted from District Councillor J Hook and County and District Councillor M Wrigley.

203. **INTERESTS**

None.

204. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 19th July 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19th July 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

205. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

206. **NEWTON ABBOT COMMUNITY SHED**

The Mayor welcomed representatives of Newton Abbot Community Shed to the meeting and invited them to report on their work. A presentation was displayed to support the verbal report. The presentation covered:

- Target demographic.
- Ethos - companionship and supporting people through life events.
- Making small items for the Library to sell and to be sold at community events.
- Projects are directed by the members.
- Funding, members pay an annual £15 donation plus £3 per session attended.
- Becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- Establishing a Repair Café.
- Courtenay Street tree stump project in partnership with the Town Council.
- Securing a permanent base while maintaining a presence in the Library.

The Mayor thanked the representatives for their interesting presentation and invited members to ask questions.

Councillors were impressed with the work of the Community Shed and raised the following:

- How can the Town Council further support the organisation?
- Advertising.
- Tool donations.
- Skill sharing and training.

Councillor C Parker advised he would like to make a donation to the group from his District Councillors Community Fund. Councillor M Ryan offered to support the group with his extensive tool collection.

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

The Mayor invited County and District Councillors to provide a report on their recent activity.

District and County Councillor J Bradford:

- Attended a Full Council Meeting at County Hall where protestors were present due to the recent road layout changes in Exeter.
- Resident parking issues in George Street.
- 20mph speed limit outside Decoy School.

District and County Councillor P Bullivant:

- 20mph speed limit outside Combeshead School.
- Children Services at DCC.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

- Low Traffic Zone road closures in Exeter.
- Garden Community Project.
- Flood Issues.

District Councillor R Buscombe:

- Challenged senior officers at TDC regarding negotiations on the Bandstand lease.

District Councillor A Hall:

- Attended a meeting on the proposed development of the car parks in Newton Abbot.
- Queen Street road closure issues.

District Councillor C Parker:

- Consulted senior officers at TDC regarding negotiations on the Bandstand lease.
- Working to resolve the issue with the Buckland Community Centre rent increase.
- 20mph speed limits around schools in Newton Abbot.
- Attended briefings and training.

District Councillor M Ryan:

- Working to resolve the issue with the Buckland Community Centre rent increase.
- Attended briefings and training.

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

208. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor updated Members on recent engagements which he and his consort, Councillor T Corney-Walker had attended. In particular, the Mayor highlighted his pleasure at attending the recent visit to Besigheim as part of the Twinning Association visit and encouraged Councillors to attend if they have the opportunity.

A list of Mayoral engagements for the period from the 19th July 2023 was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Mayor invited the Deputy Mayor, Councillor A Hall to update members on recent events that he had attended. Councillor Hall had enjoyed attending the Classic Car Show despite the torrential rain.

209. PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 20th July 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce, were received and approved; and
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 8th August 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce, were received and approved, and

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 29th August 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.
- d) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee** held on 6th September 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved.
- e) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee**, held on 19th September 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Joyce were received and approved. Councillor Joyce brought to members attention minute number 23/09(197) informing members of the retirement of the Council's Tree Advisor Mr Eric Collar following 20 years of voluntary service to the Council. Members expressed their sincere gratitude to Mr Collar.

210. **POLICIES**

The Mayor introduced the Council's Standing Orders, previously circulated. Following a review of the policy it was:

RESOLVED that the Council's Standing Orders be hereby approved and adopted.

211. **ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

The Mayor, Councillor D Corney Walker, introduced the AGAR and External Audit Report for the financial year ended 31st March 2023, as circulated prior to the meeting.

Arising from discussion Councillor R Buscombe asked the RFO to clarify the AGAR and Audit Report process and whether the reports had been considered by the Council's Finance & Audit Committee in line with financial regulations.

The RFO confirmed the External Audit Report will be considered by the Finance & Audit Committee in November and advised it is good practice to bring the report to the Council's attention at the first opportunity. The RFO confirmed the Annual Internal Audit Report, Annual Governance Statement and Annual Accounting Statement were approved and signed by the Council in June, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Minute Numbers 23/06(51), 23/06(52) and 23/06(53) respectively. The RFO reminded members that she is available to answer financial questions during working hours.

Councillor P Bullivant asked why section 3, item 2 of the External Auditors Report stated the Council had failed to make proper provision during the year 2022/23 for the exercise of public rights?

The Town Clerk reminded the Council that due to whistleblowing allegations of financial irregularities on behalf of the Town Clerk and RFO the Council was unable to meet its statutory deadlines in regard to the AGAR while investigations were carried out.

Members were satisfied with the response; accordingly, it was:

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

RESOLVED that the External Auditor’s Report for the year 2022/23 be hereby received and noted.

212. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

213. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 15th November 2023.

214. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was hereby:

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.

Cllr A Hall abstained from voting.

215. **NEWTON IN BLOOM**

Members considered a tender application received for the Newton In Bloom contract 2024/28. Arising from discussions, Members supported the recommendations as laid out in the presentation:

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk meet with the tenderer and clarify the tender details.
- b) that authority be delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk & RFO, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Community & Heritage Committee to make a final decision on the tender.

Meeting closed at hours.20:35 hours.

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

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....