

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & HERITAGE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th OCTOBER 2023 AT 7:00 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

PRESENT Councillor: L Cooke (Chairperson) – Presiding
M Ryan (Vice Chairperson)

Councillors: B Bailey A Gibbs
J Bradford A Hall (Deputy Mayor)
P Bullivant G Jennings
D Corney-Walker (Mayor) M Joyce
C Davieson C Parker

Officers in attendance: Sam Scott – Deputy Town Clerk & RFO
Sally Henley - Town Development Manager
Linda McGuirk – Principal Administrator

By Invitation: A representative of Newton Abbot Green Futures

231. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Valid reasons for absence were received on behalf of Councillors R Buscombe, T Corney-Walker, J Cook, S Walker. Apologies for absence were received from Communications Advisor, Nigel Canham and Town Clerk, Phil Rowe.

232. INTERESTS

Councillor A Gibbs declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10 Allotments, as he is an allotment holder.

233. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community and Heritage Committee held on 14th June 2023 were received and signed as a correct record.

234. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

235. PRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF GREEN FUTURES

The Chairperson welcomed a representative of Newton Abbot Green Futures to the meeting and invited him to make a presentation to the Committee. A PowerPoint presentation was displayed to support the written report circulated prior to the meeting. The presentation gave an overview of the work of the organisation:

- Background to current situation locally and nationally
- Species loss and pollinator decline
- Causes of decline due to habitat loss, monoculture cropping and pesticides.

- The work of Rachel Carson 'Silent Spring'
- The dramatic increase in global pesticide consumption 1990 to 2021
- Bradley Bug Recovery Project
- Bradley Barton Pesticide Amnesty

The group's current objectives include:

- Expanding the pesticide amnesty across Newton Abbot, with the support of the Town Council.
- Producing a guide to pesticide free gardening in partnership with Newton Abbot District Community Allotment Association.
- Engaging with local farmers
- Developing a stronger partnership with the Town Council

The representative requested the Town Council to consider developing a policy to support the reduction in the use of pesticides across the wider community and thanked the Council and its Officers for supporting Green Futures in their work.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for the informative presentation and invited Members to ask any questions.

Members supported the work of Green Futures.

236. **PESTICIDE FREE COUNCIL**

Members were informed the Council has not used pesticides across its assets and services since 2020. The Committee was invited to make a formal resolution confirming its commitment to being a pesticide free Council.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Community & Heritage Committee recommends to the Full Council that Newton Abbot Town Council prohibits the use of pesticides across its assets and services.

237. **TRAILTALE**

The Town Development Manager reported that she and the Town Clerk had recently attended a presentation by TrailTail to consider an opportunity for the Council to develop an interactive bespoke town trail app. Research undertaken after the presentation had raised two potential issues with this particular app including it not being compatible with the latest android technology and poor app optimisation. The cost to develop the app with 5 bespoke trails would be approximately £6,000. The Town Development Manager suggested further research is carried out into alternative options.

RESOLVED that in principle, the Council supports the development of a bespoke interactive town trail app, pending a report to include the outcome of research to consider suitable options.

238. **RECOMMENDATION FROM SUB-COMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/FORUMS**

Members considered the following recommendation arising from the Community Engagement Group meeting on the 12th July 2023 (minute number 23/07(CE07)):

That the Community & Heritage Committee purchases and installs benches in areas to be identified by the Town Development Manger as part of the Linger Longer project identified in the Newton Abbot Community Plan.

The Town Development Manager shared a presentation identifying thirteen locations around the town which could be suitable for seating and meet the requirements of the Linger Longer project, as identified in the Community Plan.

Members discussed the proposed locations and raised concerns about anti-social behaviour, the lack of seating in the Market Square, possibility of placing seating adjacent to the library to restrict parking, off street locations and the requirement to obtain permission from relevant authorities. It was suggested the Police are asked their opinion.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that in principle, the Council supports the proposal to increase seating, in accordance with the Linger Longer project, pending a report to include identification of off-street sites, cost implications and obtaining the relevant permissions and approval from Devon County Council Highways.

Cllrs D Corney-Walker and A Hall abstained from voting.

239. **SUB COMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/FORUMS**

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Events Sub Committee held on 5th July 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Ryan, were received and approved; and

Cllr G Jennings abstained from voting.

- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Group held on 12th July 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor A Hall, were received and approved; and

Cllr G Jennings abstained from voting.

- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Events Sub Committee held on 27th September 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor M Ryan, were received and approved; and

- d) The Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Group held on 4th October 2023, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor A Hall, were received and approved.

240. ALLOTMENTS

The Deputy Town Clerk gave an update on the long-term improvements to the access tracks at Decoy allotment site. Investigation had taken place into the use of a permeable track; this option was not considered financially viable, and advice sought from Highways confirmed it was unnecessary where water run-off is not onto a hard surface.

Works are scheduled to take place at Decoy allotment site. Quotes are being obtained for the remaining sites.

The Chairperson, Councillor L Cooke reported she had recently visited the new Hele Park allotment site. She advised members the site is not fit for purpose and required major work. She urged members to visit the site and start considering how the Council moves forward.

241. TEIGNBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (TALC)

Councillor M Joyce reported he had attended a meeting at Teignbridge District Council to consider whether there was sufficient support for the reinstatement of TALC (Teignbridge Association of Local Councils) or the formation of a new Association. TALC had previously provided a platform between the District Council and all the Teignbridge town and parish councils. Following a discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that Newton Abbot Town Council:

- a) Hereby supports the creation of a new association with Teignbridge District Council and all town and parish Councils within Teignbridge.
- b) Invites the Managing Director of Teignbridge District Council, Mr Phil Shears to a meeting of the Town Council.

242. GRASS CUTTING

The Deputy Town Clerk reported a member of the public had contacted the Council regarding the frequency of grass cutting in the Buckland ward. Members were asked to consider a reduction to the current grass schedule in areas that are not affected by the visibility splays. Arising from the discussion it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Council continues with the current cutting programme.

Cllr J Bradford abstained from voting.

243. **FLORAL DISPLAYS**

The Chairperson, Councillor L Cooke gave a background report on the Newton In Bloom infrastructure costings as circulated prior to the meeting and advised additional beehive planters are required near Carpet Right and Lloyds Bank. In addition, much of the current floral infrastructure requires replacement. The RFO confirmed the expenditure could be taken from Community Infrastructure Levy Fund (CIL).

Members raised concerns about the cost contained in the report and asked the effect the expenditure would have on CIL balance. Arising from discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the Community & Heritage Committee RECOMMENDS to the Full Council that the Council hereby allocates funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy Fund to purchase infrastructure for the Newton In Bloom project, subject to obtaining the relevant permissions and approval from Devon County Council Highways.

Cllrs J Bradford, C Parker and M Ryan abstained from voting.

The Chairperson expressed her thanks to the Town Development Manager and the Assistant Events Co-ordinator for their work on the project.

244. **ACCOUNTS/INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The Committee received and noted an overview of income and expenditure for the Community & Heritage Committee, Newton In Bloom and the Museum for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st August 2023. The RFO advised that a Councillor had asked questions in advance of the meeting and was satisfied with the answers. The RFO was happy to answer any further questions. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Income and Expenditure Statements for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st August 2023 for the:

- 1) Community and Heritage Committee
- 2) Newton In Bloom
- 3) Museum, be hereby approved.

245. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

246. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Community and Heritage Committee would be held on Wednesday 7th February 2024.

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

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

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 voted against.
Cllr J Bradford abstained from voting.

248. **BUDGET 2024/25**

Members were invited to discuss and consider any proposed growth items for the forthcoming budget 2024/25, to be referred to the Strategic Planning Forum. Arising from discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Strategic Planning Forum consider inflation increases where necessary in relation to the Newton In Bloom, Community & Heritage and Museum budgets for the period 2024/25.

The Meeting closed 8:40pm

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