

NOTES OF THE **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GROUP HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Councillors A Jones Chairman (Presiding)  
C Bunday Vice Chairman

Councillors D Corney-Walker M Joyce (Mayor)  
C Davieson C Parker  
M Hocking L Sheffield

By Invitation: Emily Farrell – Manager CIC  
Kate Green – Community Engagement Consultant

Officers In attendance:  
Linda McGuirk – Principal Administrator

**CE10. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A Hall, R Jenks and Sally Henley – Town Development Manager.

**CE11. INTERESTS**

None.

**CE12. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Community Engagement Group meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were received and signed as a correct record.

**CE13. COMMUNITY PLAN – REVIEW**

(a) The group received an update from Emily Farrell and Kate Green on the review of the Council’s Community Plan.

The Chairman welcomed Kate and Emily and invited them to update members on the community plan consultation. Members had been previously circulated a copy of the Preliminary Consultation Report and were reminded the report was a mid-way point update in the consultation process. A short video was played which showcased some of the great community engagement which has taken place so far.

There have been two main components to the public consultation:

- Engagement at various clubs, groups and public events in the town.
- Online engagement through Facebook, email and via an online survey.

Key statistics from the engagement:

- 58 questionnaires completed at the Annual Town Meeting, plus numerous conversations and an opportunity to contribute via the Washing Line.
- More than 220 people of all ages have been spoken to at events and groups in the town.
- 425 people have completed an online survey, and others have sent comments via email and Facebook.

- Meetings with key stakeholders have taken place – including individual Town Councillors and the Town Development Manager. These discussions are on-going and will continue until the end of March 2022.

It was noted feedback received from the community has been mixed with the majority of responders living or working in the town.

Discussion took place regarding the decline of markets in the town and also the future of the Alexandra Theatre.

Emily informed members the CIC had convened a meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the arts and culture provision in the town. All councillors were invited to attend the meeting.

Members raised concerns about the coach drop off area, agreeing the area created a poor first impressions of the town for visitors.

#### **(b) Next steps.**

The next step in the review process is to draft the new Community Plan for Newton Abbot. Alongside this, discussions with stakeholders will continue to further refine the consultation material collected. As a first step, key themes have been proposed that the revised Community Plan should focus on. It was stressed that these are open to amendment and that not all the issues are within the control of the Town Council.

- Town Centre
- Leisure
- Young people
- Older people
- Environment and Climate change
- Neighbourhood Projects

Stakeholders and service providers will be invited to attend the focus groups to look at each area by end of March. Members fully supported the proposals and agreed it was important to draw on expertise and that the Town Council should be driving force behind the project.

It was agreed that to encourage participation within the focus groups a small amount of funding was required. Members requested an item should be included on the next Finance & Audit Committee agenda. Kate was asked to submit a proposal in writing for the Committee to consider.

#### **CE14. INVOLVEMENT OF WIDER COMMUNITY**

The Chairman advised a request had been received from a Teignbridge District Councillor to join the Community Engagement Group. It was **resolved** to decline the request and advise them they are welcome to attend the meeting.

Members expressed their sincere thanks to both Kate and Emily for their hard work.

**CE15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Community and Engagement Group would be 18<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7.00 pm at Newton's Place.

Meeting closed at 20:15pm

CHAIRMAN..... Date.....