

MINUTES OF THE **MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 20th JULY 2022** AT 6.30 P.M. AT NEWTON'S PLACE, 43 WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

Present: Councillors C Bunday (Mayor) Presiding
L Sheffield (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: P Bullivant D Howe
D Corney-Walker R Jenks
C Davieson A Jones
A Hall C Parker
R Hayes M Ryan
M Hocking

Officers in attendance: Phil Rowe Town Clerk
Sally Henley Town Development Manager
Linda McGuirk Principal Administrator

In attendance: Nigel Canham Communications Advisor
Ethan Heppell Press, Mid Devon Advertiser

By Invitation: Two Representatives of Heath Rail Group
Fergus Pate, Principal Delivery Officer, Teignbridge District Council
Mark Wells, Bovey Tracey Town Clerk
Sheila Brooke, Mayor of Bovey Tracey Town Council

134. **WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited Reverend Ben Maynard to open the meeting with prayers.

135. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mike Pilkington (illness), Mike Joyce (illness), Karen Crout (illness), Chris Jenks (work commitments), Ryan Hall (work commitments) and Samantha Scott, Deputy Town Clerk.

The reasons for absence were noted.

136. **INTERESTS**

None declared.

137. **MINUTES**

- a) The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8th June 2022 were received and signed as a correct record.
- b) The minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on the 15th June 2022 were received and signed as a correct record.
- c) The minutes of the adjourned Special Council Meeting held on the 13th July 2022 were received and signed as a correct record.

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....

138. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

139. **HEATH RAIL LINK**

Representatives of Heath Rail Link addressed Members with an update on the plans to facilitate re-opening of the existing railway line and to return it to operational use for commuters and heritage passengers. The group's aim is to raise funding to secure the line and run a regular commuter service between Heathfield, Teigngrace and the mainline hub of Newton Abbot, where the disused platforms 9 and 10 will be restored.

A business plan has been created and discussions are taking place between Great Western Railway (GWR), Network Rail and Devon County Council (DCC). DCC have produced a feasibility study. The group are currently investigating funding opportunities to enable the project to progress and are considering ways to increase membership.

The Mayor thanked the representatives for their interesting update and invited Members to ask questions. Members expressed great interest and support for the project.

140. **BRADLEY LANE BUS LINK CONSULTATION**

Mr Fergus Pate, representing Teignbridge District Council (TDC) gave a presentation to Members on the proposed Bradley Lane Bus Link, which is currently out for public consultation.

Councillors expressed concern regarding the potential loss of existing bus services; removal of mature trees; the installation of parking restrictions, which will cause parking issues and the proposed figure of eight route. Members asked whether the scheme was commercially viable?

The TDC representative responded, confirming that the 77a and 88a services will continue to operate. Parking numbers have been considered, but more work is required. The scheme might need to be subsidised in the short term, but it should be commercially viable.

The Mayor thanked Mr Pate for attending the meeting.

141. **GREEN FUTURES – VICARY'S FIELD ECO HUB**

Members received a report, circulated prior to the meeting, regarding a proposal to build an Eco Hub in the north-eastern corner of the Vicary's Field, by the entrance to the Community Garden. The Eco Hub would serve as a place to meet, hold training sessions and run community events in order to engage local people in the practical work of making the area as environmentally sustainable as possible. The Eco Hub would have five key functions:

1. Community tools library
2. Teaching/ workshop/ social space
3. Kitchen and food preparation area
4. Toilet facilities
5. Workspace for plant propagation and small maintenance jobs

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It was noted, the developer for the Bradley Lane development has indicated they are prepared in principle, to provide access to utilities such as water, electricity, telephone, recycled building materials and sewerage during the groundworks phase of the Bradley Lane development.

To progress with the project, Green Futures have requested support in principle for the initiative from the Town Council as the landowners. Support will enable the group to seek funding opportunities and investigate planning requirements.

Following discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Council supports the Vicary's Eco Hub proposal in principle, subject to further information and consideration of a detailed business plan.

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

A. District Councillor Jackie Hook spoke about the following issues in which she had direct involvement:

- Future High Street Fund
- Bradley Lane Bus Link
- Carbon Action Plan
- Oceans Recovery declaration
- Local Plan housing sites
- Heath Rail Link
- Cost of living crisis

B. District Councillor Janet Bradford spoke about the following issues in which she had direct involvement:

- Public transport issues
- Visited two Schools in her capacity as a Member of the Children's Scrutiny Committee
- Allocated part of the Locality budget to establish a singing group at Buckland Community Centre
- Attended a vintage tea party organised by Wellbeing in Action and was free for over 65's

Cllr Bradford advised she is due to attend:

- TDC Full Council meeting, where a motion for a Cultural Quarter in Newton Abbot had been rejected
- Motion by the Leader of TDC to consider fresh options for the Alexandra Theatre have been submitted
- Highways and Traffic Orders Committee agenda including Queen Street consultation - outcomes and next steps.

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

143. **MOYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a) The Mayor updated Members on her recent engagements, as previously circulated, and highlighted several events of significance, which included Royal British Legion

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Declaration Day; Royal British Legion Falkland's Liberation Day and the Rotary Club Civic Reception held at Newton's Place.

- b) The Mayor reported the next band concert takes place on Sunday 14th August. A commemorative plaque will be unveiled in honour of Henry Cole, Freeman of the Town, and past Mayor. The Mayor welcomed everyone to attend the concert and show their support.

144. **PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES**

- a) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Community and Heritage Committee** held on 15th June 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor Lesley Sheffield, were received and approved; and
- b) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee** held on 22nd June 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor David Corney-Walker, were received and approved, subject to a minor amendment which had been updated in the published minutes; and

Cllr D Howe abstained from voting

- c) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Planning Committee** held on 28th June 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor Ann Jones were received and approved; and

Cllr R Jenks abstained from voting

- d) The Minutes of the Meeting of the **Finance and Audit Committee** held on 29th June 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Councillor Colin Parker, were received and approved following a vote on their accuracy as raised by Councillors P Bullivant and R Jenks.

Cllr P Bullivant advised he had notified of his apologies.

Cllr R Jenks believed Minute number 114c was inaccurate.

145. **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING**

Members considered a proposal for the installation, operation and maintenance of Ultra Rapid electric vehicle charging at Newton's Place. The Town Clerk advised that the scheme being discussed during the meeting was an example of what opportunities exist. If the Council decides to proceed with the installation of electric vehicle charging at Newton's Place, further investigations are required to consider the most suitable options.

Arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk investigates and reports back on suitable options for the installation, operation and maintenance of Ultra Rapid electric vehicle charging at Newton's Place.

146. **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

The Town Clerk advised Members that the insurance renewal for the year 2022/23 had been received at the end of June, two days prior to the expiration of the current policy.

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The renewal included a 33% increase in the premium on the previous year due to the volatile state of the insurance market. Members were advised the cost of insurance will be over the budgeted amount for the year and that it was an unavoidable situation.

The Town Clerk confirmed that due to the current insurance policy expiring on the 1st July 2022, an emergency decision had been made to proceed with the insurance quote provided by the broker as the Council cannot lawfully operate without a valid insurance policy in place.

It was noted that as part of the policy the insurers are looking at the flood risk element of the policy for the Vicary Mill Leat, Town Quay and Newton's Place.

Arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the decision taken under emergency action to approve the insurance quote for the year 2022/23, as previously advised at the Finance & Audit Committee meeting held on the 29th June 2022, Minute number 22/06/115c be hereby ratified.

147. **UKRANIAN INDEPENCE DAY**

The Mayor reported that a request has been received for the Council to support Ukrainian Independence Day, scheduled to take place on the 24th August 2022. The group has requested for the Ukrainian Flag to be flown from St Leonard's Clock Tower to mark the occasion.

Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Council will support Ukrainian Independence Day on the 24th August 2022 and permit the Ukrainian Flag to be flown from St Leonards Clock Tower on this date.

148. **LATE CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

149. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 21st September 2022

Meeting closed at 20.11

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

Chairperson (Mayor) initials.....