

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE **COMMUNITY & HERITAGE COMMITTEE** HELD ON **WEDNESDAY 19th OCTOBER 2022** AT **7:00 P.M.** AT NEWTON'S PLACE, 43 WOLBOROUGH STREET, NEWTON ABBOT

PRESENT Councillor: A Jones (Vice Chairperson) Presiding

Councillors:	D Corney-Walker	D Howe
	C Davieson	M Joyce
	A Hall	C Parker
	R Hayes	M Ryan

Invited Guests: Emily Farrell – Manager of Newton Abbot CIC

Officers in attendance: Sam Scott – Deputy Town Clerk
Dr Charlotte Dixon – Museum Curator
Linda McGuirk – Principal Administrator

218. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Bunday (Mayor), M Hocking, L Sheffield (Chairperson), K Crout, C Jenks, R Jenks, M Pilkington and Phil Rowe - Town Clerk, Sally Henley – Town Development Manager.

Councillors P Bullivant and R Hall did not attend.

219. INTERESTS

None

220. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community and Heritage Committee held on 15th June 2022 were received and signed as a correct record.

221. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

222. MUSEUM

Dr Charlotte Dixon presented a report to Members, circulated prior to the meeting, and highlighted the following aspects of the report:

- Visitor numbers

Since January this year the Museum has welcomed over 10,000 visitors into the Museum and St. Leonard's Tower. In contrast, the previous museum saw an average of 2,000 – 2,500 visitors a year (open from Easter to October).

- Accreditation

Following submission of the Museum's policies and plans to Arts Council England in March, Newton Abbot Museum is now a fully accredited Museum. Accreditation is the benchmark for well-run Museums and Galleries.

- Exhibitions and changing displays

The Fired for Royalty exhibition was delayed due to the passing of the Monarch. It is planned to open the exhibition around the time of the Coronation of King Charles III.

Your Space, Object of the month continues to be a success.

- Family workshops and Toddler Tuesdays

Both are well attended. A booking system has been introduced for Toddler Tuesday due to the popularity.

- Events

A summer bear trail around the town was held in conjunction with the Town Council, Library and Austins department stores. It was a great success with 166 submitted entries.

- School and educational visits.

The museum continues to receive requests for educational visits and workshops. So far this year 572 children and 138 adults have attended school visits and Home Education workshops.

- Group Visits and talks

So far this year, the museum has welcomed over 800 visitors for group visits. This includes providing tours of the museum and a closer look at objects in the collection that aren't on display. In addition, the Curator has given talks to groups both in the community, including the Priory in Abbotskerswell, and in the Museum.

- Community Engagement Projects

The Community Engagement Officer has been busy working with a range of school, educational and group visits and running activities such as Museum: Make and Create. In addition, the following projects are in progress: Devon Recovery Learning Community course; Twilight sketching; Teignbridge CVS; Library Fun Palace; Homestart; Arts Award and working with local Syrian families. In addition the Community Engagement Officer is working with Eat That Frog CIC, School projects, history projects and funding applications for the museum stores and Arts England.

- Volunteers and work experience students

The Museum currently has 47 active volunteers who are working in a range of roles from front of house, behind the scenes and research. There are currently two 15-year-old students volunteering at the Museum on a Saturday for their Duke of Edinburgh Award. A new work placement joined the team with his work coach on a Friday for 8 weeks.

- Heritage Assets

In May the museum re-launched the Heritage Assets register, to celebrate aspects of the town that are not designated as listed buildings or conservation areas. This was started and then put on hold when the Newton's Place project started. The re-launch resulted in 23 new suggestions (some of which are listed buildings and therefore not eligible for this register) by the public to be considered at a panel meeting. The panel will consist of representatives of the Town Council, Museum and Civic Society. The next steps are to set up the first panel meeting, to confirm the itinerary that was produced previously and to contact the owners of properties / features that are accepted for the register.

- **Museum Stores**

The planning application for the store extension project has been approved. The team are now working on putting together an application for funding to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The Chairperson thanked Dr Dixon for her comprehensive and interesting report and provided an opportunity for Members to ask questions on the report.

Members asked Dr Dixon several questions and expressed their delight with the ongoing success and diversity of the museum.

223. **COMMUNITY PLAN**

A representative of Newton Abbot CIC, Emily Farrell, informed Members the draft Community Plan has been available for public comment since its publication in early summer. Several comments have been received, most of which have resulted in small edits to the text, and some changes to the list of projects. Some images have also been changed. Devon County Council and Teignbridge District Council have started to engage with the consultation.

A further project has been added, called Help! This focuses on the signposting that the Town Council is providing to the public in respect of the cost-of-living crises.

Members discussed the draft plan and were supportive of the plan in principle. They requested to see the revised version prior to the Full Council meeting, when Members will be asked to consider adopting the Community Plan.

RESOLVED that the Community & Heritage Committee hereby recommends the Full Council adopts the Community Plan at its meeting on 16th November 2022, subject to sight of the amended document prior to the meeting.

224. **STAGECOACH**

Councillor Mike Ryan advised members of the ongoing and deteriorating issues with the Stagecoach bus services in the area. Several members of the public have contacted him about the inconsistency of the bus service. It was noted that Stagecoach was subject to a Government investigation due to their poor service.

Other Members advised they have also received complaints about the bus service.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk sends a letter to Stagecoach to advise them the Town Council is totally dissatisfied with the current service provision in the town and surrounding area and that all Councillors are receiving complaints from their constituents. The letter should be copied to MP's Ann Marie Morris, Kevin Foster and Mel Stride and the team investigating Stagecoach.

225. **NEWTON IN BLOOM**

The Chairperson reported the contract for floral displays expires on the 30th November 2022. The RFO informed Members there has been ongoing issues with the current contractor maintaining and watering the displays. Investigations to find alternative providers have been difficult as most providers do not offer a complete package of planting, installation, watering, maintenance and removal. Due to these issues the RFO suggested the following options:

- Tender for a new contractor.
- Town Council to take on the responsibility for watering and maintenance of the floral displays. It was noted there is a cost implication associated with employment of a fourth FMO plus the cost of water and purchase of a bowser. Members were reminded that appointment of two FMO's had been previously agreed (Minute number 22/S.18(b)). One of these positions had not been filled.
- Remove floral displays

Members considered the options, arising from the discussions, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Council hereby invites tenders for the provision of the towns floral displays and investigates the implications of employing a fourth full time Facilities Maintenance Officer, necessary equipment and cost of water.

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

- a) Community Engagement Group – 13th July 2022

Arising from the consideration of the report of the meeting it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Community Engagement Group meeting held on 13th July 2022 be hereby noted.

- b) Events Sub-Committee – 12th October 2022

Arising from the consideration of the report of the meeting it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Events Sub-Committee meeting held on 12th October 2022 be hereby noted.

227. ACCOUNTS/INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

- a) The Committee received and noted the Income and Expenditure statement for the Community and Heritage Committee, for the period 1st April – 30th September 2022.

The RFO informed the meeting that several questions had been raised prior to the meeting and these had been answered satisfactorily.

Discussion took place regarding the cost centre for the Town Quay which is at variance with the current budget. The RFO explained this is due to retrospective invoicing by the District Council and that the savings reflected by the town Council taking on the responsibility for cleaning the Town Quay would be reflected in the 2023/24 cost centre.

In addition, the RFO reported that the District Council had renewed its contracts for the cleaning of public toilets in the District but had not included Newfoundland Way. Also, the District had not informed the Town Council of the change. Due to the urgency and requirement to ensure the toilets continue to be cleaned the current contractor has been appointed to continue with the service. Due to the reduction in economy of scale, there has been a slight increase in the cost of the contract.

Devon County Council has advised the funding received to maintain the grass verges will not be increased in line with inflation. These matters will need to be considered when considering the 2023/24 budget.

The RFO further advised that due to the current floral display contract expiring, Members should consider increasing the budget provision for In Bloom.

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 – 30th September 2022. Accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Income and Expenditure Statements for the period 1st April – 30th September 2022 for the:

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

- b) The Committee considered the budget requirements for the Community & Heritage Committee for the year 2023/24.

Members considered the implications of the budget and the current cost of living crises; accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that the Community & Heritage Committee recommends the Strategic Planning Forum considers the following budget requests:

- 1) Events Sub-Committee retains a budget of £22,000 (plus inflation) and carries forward any unspent budget from its current budget.
- 2) Museum retains a budget of £32,800 (plus inflation) and carries forward any unspent budget from its current budget.
- 3) Newton In Bloom budget is deferred for consideration by the Strategic Planning Forum to allow time to investigate the cost implications because of the likely change in contractor.

4) LATE CORRESPONDENCE

None.

5) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community and Heritage Committee would be held on Wednesday 8th February 2023.

Meeting closed at 20:28

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