

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Newent Town Council held on Monday 9 November 2015 at the Market House, Newent at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr E Wood (Mayor), Cllr Mrs J Davies, Cllr E Heathfield, Cllr Miss M Shere, Cllr C Thomas, Cllr R Beard, Cllr J Celino, Cllr Mrs P Celino, Cllr Mrs M Duncan, Cllr Mrs C Howley, Cllr Mrs S Marcovecchio, Cllr Mrs K Draper, Cllr D Blick

Apologies: -

13.00 Approval of Minutes of Council meeting – 12 October 2015

Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting of 12 October 2015 was proposed by Cllr Wood and agreed by 12 votes in favour, 1 abstention.

13.1 Matters Arising

P.80 11.1 9.6.2 The Clerk reported that whilst the person interested in becoming the Town Crier for Newent had showed initial enthusiasm, he had since contacted her to advise, that after careful consideration he felt he was unable to commit the time to such a position.

13.2 Approval of Minutes of Council meeting – 26 October 2015

Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting of 12 October 2015 was proposed by Cllr Wood and agreed by 11 votes in favour, 2 abstentions.

13.3 Matters Arising

P.94 Planning applications – DF426 P0089/15/Discon Whitegates, Culver St, Newent Discharge of condition (10) Layout and specification of play area and play equipment relating to planning permission P1579/09/FUL

Cllr Mrs Duncan advised that since the Council had commented on this application a letter had been received from a resident of Whitegates expressing concern regarding the positioning of the play area which was in very close proximity to his property. Cllr Mrs Duncan advised that this had not been appreciated when firstly looking at the application and that in the circumstances the Council should perhaps request a site visit for further investigation. This was seconded and unanimously agreed.

13.4 Approval of Minutes of Extraordinary Council meeting – 2nd November 2015

Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting of 12 October 2015 was proposed by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed after the following amendments:-

Present - amend Cllr Mrs C Howell to Howley, Cllr Mrs Marchovecchio to Marcovecchio, Cllr Mr C Taylor to Thomas and Cllr Mrs M Serle to Miss M Shere

4th para – amend was to were

Penultimate para – amend delete second alarm

13.5 Matters Arising

Cllr Blick made a comment regarding the way in which one member had voted based upon up to date costings not being available for the renovation of the Lodge and stated that equally up to date costings were not available for the new build either.

13.6 Finance/Sundry Payments

Cllr Wood, J & P Celino declared interests in this matter and left the room whilst it was under discussion.

It was unanimously agreed to give a donation of £50.00 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Wreath (in addition to the manufacturing costs)

Finance/Sundry Payments were unanimously agreed and considered lawful to a figure of £16,602.55

13.7 Correspondence

13.7.1 Newent Rugby Club – request further dates for bar on Recreation Ground for fundraising purposes – 5 and 19 December 2015

In the absence of any problems when similar fundraising events had taken place during October, Cllr Celino proposed the further dates be permitted. This was seconded by Cllr Beard and unanimously agreed.

13.7.2 Coleford Town Council – invitation to Charities Showcase – 18 November 2015

Invitation to attend Charities Showcase on 18 November 2015 where local charities will be in attendance to highlight their work. No-one able to attend.

13.7.3 Gloucestershire County Council – draft Local Transport Plan (2015-2031) Consultation

Members were advised that Gloucestershire's draft Local Transport Plan (2015-2031) Consultation will run between 20 Nov 2015 and 5 February 2016. The draft Local Transport Plan includes updated transport policies and priorities and sets out the County Council's long term approach to managing transport demand across the county up to 2031. Public consultation is dependent on the decision taken by Gloucestershire County Council's Cabinet on 11 November 2015 and they will write again to confirm this.

Members noted this information.

13.5.4 Mr P Newman - Independent Internal Auditor – Offer of services to conduct internal audit 2015/16

Mr Newman, Independent Internal Auditor offered his services to undertake the 2015/16 audit at the same price charged last year at £160.00. Cllr Wood proposed this be accepted which was unanimously agreed.

13.5.5 Newent in Bloom – drainage on Library car park

Advise that the Newent Library garden suffers badly from flooding in heavy rain. The cause is run-off from the car park behind it. Water runs in through the side gate and under the back fence, making the emergency exit very muddy and slippery for days afterwards. The fence posts have also become unstable. One group has done what it can to facilitate drainage within the garden, eg soakaways, gravel, but the source of the problem, and its remedy lies with the car park. A meeting has taken place with the Librarian and the Council's Estates Supervisor to discuss a solution and the consensus was that a low cost mitigation would be to dig a gully just outside of it, and parallel with the fence line of the car park. This could possibly be tacked on to a larger job next time the Council needs to hire a digger, as the work would only take a few hours to undertake. Request that this work is added to the Council's budget so that the necessary work can be expedited before the winter weather takes its toll.

Members considered this matter. It was suggested that the problem lay in the fact that the level of the garden had increased in the last 12/18 months and this is why the area was not draining and was not in fact the cause of the car park. It was agreed that the Estates Supervisor be asked to meet with a County Council Officer to discuss this more fully before agreeing to any course of action.

13.5.6 Public Rights of Way – Scraggs Bank Newent – request to give consideration to improving the area

The Public Rights of Way Officer advised that the Council will recall that the footbridge at The Scraggs was recently vandalised and that it has now been repaired. The person who reported it left a message on their website stating that "Scraggs Bank and adjacent green space areas would benefit from action to clear Peacocks Brook, its banks and from general regular maintenance. Such noticeable attention with occasional publicity would help deter vandalism and related behaviour in and around the site. Note that Scraggs Bank especially when daffodils are in full bloom, is the subject of several photographs on the internet, thus of potential worldwide interest."

The Public Rights of Way Officer further stated that whilst the local police have been involved in the vandalism to the bridge and have been asked to keep an eye on the area, they wonder if the Town Council would have any interest in co-ordinating a more joined up approach to improving this local area, close to the town? Perhaps it may be able to support a better approach that would help keep the area attractive for walkers using the footpaths whilst minimising problems such as dog fouling for the landowner.

The Clerk advised that whilst the bridge had indeed been repaired, the original material from the bridge was still in the brook and had not been retrieved, as photographs taken that day had identified. This was being taken up with the Public Rights of Way Dept.

Members commented on the area as a potential site for a dry lagoon to prevent flooding as identified by Jason Westmoreland of the FoDDC and that the area in question did not come under the jurisdiction of the Town Council. Cllr Celino proposed that the Town Council comment that it did however support the area as an important and an attractive site, and confirm that the footpath is well used. The Town Council however, does not have a

responsibility for the land itself, but it would support the Public Rights of Way in any approach they make to the landowner.

This was unanimously agreed.

13.6 Business

13.6.1 Planning applications – see attached

13.6.2 Future of Listening Post

Members considered the future of the Listening Post given that for several consecutive months insufficient Members had been available to man it on the last Thursday of every month. Cllr Celino who had instigated the Listening Post spoke strongly in favour of retaining it stating it gave the public the opportunity of speaking to Councillors outside of the Council meeting and that it had worked well when it had been held in the Tea Rooms. He felt the move to the Chill Out Zone was not so inviting and now it had been moved to the Market House prior to the Council meetings. Cllr Mrs Howley pointed out that the meetings prior to the Council meetings were in addition to, not instead of the Listening Post.

Cllr Blick proposed that the Listening Post be discontinued. This was not seconded however and therefore failed.

Members discussed days on which they would be available to man the Listening Post. Tuesdays were considered favourable and Cllr Celino offered on a temporary basis given the Tea Rooms were for sale, to hold future Listening Post meetings at the Tea Rooms from 5.30 pm on the last Tuesday of the month. This was unanimously agreed and that the Clerk would submit a list of dates for foreseeable months for Members to sign up to.

13.6.3 Representative Reports

Representative reports were given by

Cllr Wood	-	Hartpury College presentations
Mrs J Davies	-	Onion Fayre Committee
Cllr E Heathfield	-	Newent Initiative Trust – Balloon Race
Cllr J Celino	-	Wye Valley Tourism – meeting at Coleford
Cllr Miss Shere	-	Cliffords Mesne Village Hall Committee
Cllr Mrs Howley	-	Glos Wildlife Trust – meeting at the Lake
Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio	-	Glos Building Survey (older properties in Newent)

13.6.4 Any Other Business

Cllr Mrs Draper advised that the Christmas Lights budget may exceed its limit by a maximum of £500 and requested approval to the expenditure if so required.

Members were reminded that expenditure could not be considered under Any Other Business. Cllr Blick proposed that the expenditure be approved in principle and that it be raised as an agenda item at the next meeting. This was agreed.

This concluded the business of the meeting and it was declared closed at 8.45 pm.