

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Newent Town Council Meeting held on 27th January 2020 at the Market House, Newent at 7.30 pm

Present: Councillors Mrs J Davies (Mayor), Mrs C Howley, E Heathfield, Mrs M Duncan, Mrs G Moseley, Ms C Birkan, Mrs S Marcovecchio, Mrs K Draper, R Beard, A Ralph, Mrs R Wadley, Mrs J Gooch

Also present – The Clerk and 5 members of the public, 1 member of the press and District Councillor Vesma

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Mrs Gooch as the newly elected Town Councillor.

Public Participation Session: A member of the public spoke with regards to the Hedgehog Awareness Day and asked for permission for the event to be held at the Lake.

A member of the public raised concerns regarding planning application P0041/20/APP. The site does not promote wildlife and there is no wildlife corridor. The site is mostly concrete for parking and road systems and nothing is in place for electric vehicles or provision for cycling or walking into the town.

17.1 Apologies – Cllr Mrs Odhiambo

17.2 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Heathfield declared an interest in the correspondence from Newent Onion Fayre.

(1 member of the public left the meeting at this juncture)

17.3 Cheltenham Motor Club – To provide information on road closures for the Three Shires Stages Car Rally on Sunday 6th September 2020

A representative from the Cheltenham Motor Club was welcomed to the meeting and gave some background information regarding the event. Lessons had been learnt from last year's event and details of road closures will be issued in advance. The Club would like to extend the road closures this year.

(A member of the press joined the meeting at this juncture)

The event is good for the local economy, as many participants and marshals don't live locally and require accommodation etc.

There will be a community support fund of over £2,500, which councils in the road closure areas can apply for.

Councillors were given the opportunity to ask questions. A point raised was that the event takes place during harvesting time and a month later would

be better. A query was raised regarding damage to roads and if pot holes will be filled. Any damaged caused to the roads would be repaired.

Any further questions can be sent via the Clerk.

(1 member of the public and a member of the press left the meeting at this juncture)

17.4 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th January 2020

Resolved: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th January 2020 were approved. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Howley, 11 in favour, 1 abstention.

17.5 Clerk's Update and Matters Arising

Public Meeting – After offering 2 dates to both Mark Harper MP and Martin Surl, the Police Crime Commissioner, for a public meeting, Mark Harper MP responded confirming he was not available on the dates. Three further dates were then suggested; Mark Harper MP has yet to respond and the following response was received from Martin Surl;

“Thank you for contacting the office and the invite to come along to your public meeting. It's unfortunate that none of your proposed dates are suitable for Mark and the dates you have subsequently proposed are unlikely to work for me or the Chief Constable. However, I think there is a better solution.

On Thursday 6 February, both myself and the Chief Constable are holding a public 'Meet the Police' event at Coleford Police Station, between 2:30 and 4:30 pm, where there will be a comprehensive briefing giving an overview of the Constabulary and policing in the Forest of Dean district, which will be open to any member of the public or council. Both the Chief Constable and I will be happy to take questions. The local neighbourhood inspector and members of his team, senior detectives and others will also be in attendance.

In my view, it is a tremendous opportunity not to be missed for those who support or have concerns about policing in the county.

I will be pleased if you can publicise the event as the more people who attend the more successful it will be. In the meantime, I encourage you to arrange a meeting with the local inspector, which my Deputy and I will do our best to attend.

If you have any specific questions you wish to ask me, please don't hesitate to ask”.

The Clerk has written back to Martin Surl stating that the Town Council is very unhappy with the proposal and reiterated the request for a public meeting in Newent. To date a response has not been received.

Inspector Cook has confirmed that he will attend a public meeting.

Head Teachers attending Council meetings – Both Headteachers have responded to confirm they would be happy to attend meetings and Mr Johnson is scheduled to attend the meetings on 24th February and 11th May. Mr Lerner has agreed to attend the meeting on 12th October.

All correspondence has been sent

General Updates

The Lodge – The Council has been notified that The Lodge and associated boundary wall and railings have now been registered as Grade II listed. An application has been made to have the business rates cancelled.

Cllr Mrs Gooch referred to item 16.8.3 and stated that the private email sent to the Council, in her capacity as a District Councillor, was to offer assistance to the Council and was not a criticism. If Councillors were unsure of anything in the email, they should have responded by email and not used a public meeting to berate Cllr Mrs Gooch. Cllr Mrs Gooch requested that the item be struck from public record and requested a public apology from Cllrs Beard and Mrs Howley. Cllr Beard was not prepared to apologise as he had not berated Cllr Mrs Gooch in anyway and Cllr Mrs Howley had no comment.

Cllr Ms Birkan referred to comments made in the public participation at the last meeting and confirmed that there are two PCSOs for Newent.

(A member of the press re-joined the meeting at this juncture)

17.6 Finance

17.6.1 To approve accounts to be paid

| Payments made since last meeting | | £ |
|----------------------------------|------|---------|
| Wages | BACS | 7790.51 |
| | | . |
| Barclaycard Transactions | | |
| Fasthost Internet | | 6.00 |
| Fasthost Internet | | 13.19 |
| Door Furniture Direct | | 18.61 |
| FODDC | | 21.00 |

Direct Debit/Standing Order/BACS payments December:

| | Payment method | £ |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Lex Autolease | DD | 559.97 |
| Lloyds Bank | DD | 5.00 |
| Lex Autolease | DD | 603.44 |
| Allstar | DD | 90.66 |
| Allstar | DD | 111.07 |
| Newent Association for the Disabled | BACS | 35.00 |
| GCC | BACS | 2858.96 |
| HMRC | BACS | 2035.90 |
| British Gas | DD | 201.06 |

| Payments to be considered | Chq No. | £ |
|--|---------|------------------|
| | | Already approved |
| Chris Hyett (replacement cheque) | 15324 | 407.66 |
| Ermin Plant | 15325 | 360.00 |
| Geosphere | 15326 | 7500.00 |
| Gloucestershire County Council | 15327 | 148.80 |
| Newent Autocentre | 15328 | 171.53 |
| ASH & Co | 15329 | 72.00 |
| Don Young | 15330 | 156.70 |
| Newent Memorial Hall | 15331 | 144.00 |
| Grundon | 15332 | |
| Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Tourism Assn | 15333 | |
| MKM | 15334 | 19.69 |
| Glebe Chapel | 15335 | 508.00 |
| Petty cash reimbursement | 15336 | 196.00 |

Resolved: The above expenditure is approved, to a value of £24,754.75. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, All in favour.

17.6.2 To review budget update

The Clerk explained the reasons for budget overspends.

The report was noted.

17.7 To consider response required to correspondence/consultations received

17.7.1 Newent Onion Fayre – Request that fees are waived for Bands in the Park and Live at the Lake events and also the Onion Fayre

(Cllr Heathfield left the meeting whilst this item was considered)

Resolved: The fees for the Onion Fayre are waived and the fees waived for the other events providing they are registered charities.

Record of Voting: Proposed Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Moseley, 9 in favour, 2 abstentions.

17.7.2 Newent Onion Fayre – To request that one of the Lewall Street Car Park free parking days is allocated to the day of the Onion Fayre and the request for staff help for setting up on 11th September 2020

(Cllr Heathfield remained outside the meeting whilst this item was considered)

Resolved: The request for the allocation of a free parking day is approved. It is also approved that staff will be available on 11th September to help set up the Onion Fayre, providing no emergency Council works are required. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Duncan, All in favour.

17.7.3 A request to hold a Hedgehog Awareness Day at the Lake on 16th May 2020

Resolved: The request is approved and the fees are waived as it is a registered charity. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Howley, All in favour.

17.7.4 A request for a memorial tree to be planted at the Lake

The Council's Arboriculturist has been asked to recommend some areas for planting memorial trees and species to be planted. A policy is being produced for council consideration in February.

Resolved: The request is approved in principle, but will need to adhere to the policy. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Davies, All in favour.

17.8 To receive District Councillor reports

(1 member of the public left the meeting at this juncture)

The following two reports from District Councillor Mrs Gooch had been circulated;

December report

Dear Members

I have;

Liaised with County Councillors and brought relevant matters to their attention regarding the flooding on the B4215 at Malswick

Liaised with Highways regarding flooding on the B4216 – I am pleased to report Highways are intending to carry out some flood alleviation work in their next financial year

Followed up concerns regarding parking on the Co-op car park – A land charge agreement in dated 1999 has been added to the FODDC planning file (at my request) under reference;

P1656/18/FUL | Extension to existing retail premises including alterations to internal layout and car park. | Co-op Market Square Newent Gloucestershire GL18 1PS

I have asked FODDC to provide me with the legal position – awaiting a response

Followed up residents issues regarding PROW's

Promoted Newent and Businesses on social media networks to attract visitors and increase footfall

Liaised with Licensing Officers – regarding a recent licensing application

Attended a Full Council meeting at FODDC

Webcast link;

<https://aisapps.sonicfoundry.com/AuditelScheduler/Player/Index/?id=a1edf8f7-3cb4-4102-9375-44b18ad2c50b&presID=d5ddeac59e1c4ebcbfa6b6554cf257f31d>

Printed Minutes;

<http://meetings.fdean.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=120&MIId=2864&Ver=4>

Followed up various concerns regarding planning issues, in particular the Culver Street appeal hearing – FODDC Officer response awaited

Raised the ATM charging with the Cabinet Member for Town Centres

Received a response from the Cabinet Member for Business regarding the use of Lewell Street car park for Motor home overnight stays as well as challenging the response received.

'None of our Publica partners offer any overnight parking in their car parks, as this would constitute camping. There are 6 larger size campervan bays for daytime use only (and only for parking, not camping) at Stow on the Wold.

If this was to be pursued, the Parking Order would need amending. However, officers would caution against providing any overnight parking (camping) as this may lead to nuisance for nearby properties (outdoor cooking, noise etc.) and possible health & safety risks (for example children playing in the car park). Moreover, providing overnight parking for mobile homes would be taking business away from local tourism businesses (camp sites etc.)'

Attended and observed NTC meeting of 9th December

I was not a consultee to Historic England's invitation to comment on the potential listing of Cemetery Lodge. I do think the listing will unleash the

business rate burden NTC has been paying; <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief/exempted-buildings-and-empty-buildings-relief> making a potential cost saving of around £1500 per annum, info from NTC expenditure over £500 and budget <https://www.newenttowncouncil.org.uk/download/Expenditure-of-500-April-June-19.pdf>

Cemetery Chapel and the Lodge once listed have the potential to attract Heritage Lottery funding. I would urge members to consider working with District Councillors and Foddc Regeneration Officers to work on a scheme. As a suggestion I would ask Members to look at <https://arnosvale.org.uk/discover/>. I believe a similar attraction would be possible by working with Partners. Any such scheme would be a great asset to the economic viability of the Town Businesses, as well as safeguarding and preserving historical assets for future generations to enjoy.

Provided the following link to the clerk for free training which Members may wish to consider https://ww5.gloucestershire.gov.uk/staffnet/rel-uk/story_html5.html

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Joyful New Year.

Outstanding matters

I would appreciate my request for NTC to invite me to the meetings they hold with Highways and Police Liaison.

And

For NTC to form a regeneration working group in collaboration with Ward Members and Foddc Officers to advance projects for the Social and economic benefit of Newent.

January report

Dear Residents and Members of NT and Taynton Parish Council

I have dealt with and followed up on Residents' behalf

concerns with recycle facilities

Planning issues

The Land Charge agreement reference Co-op car park – FODDC legal dept. are writing to the Co-op

PROW's

Highways and flooding issues

Written to the Police

I have;

Liaised with FODDC regarding Meek Road recreation land

Written to NTC regarding their role as a Statutory consultee on planning matters

Suggested to NTC that District and County Councillors are copied into the request for the Police to hold a public meeting – this I felt was an important public issue which we should all be working together to resolve.

Kept the public informed through social media regarding Severn Trent Roadworks

Attended the Public Participation of the NTC meeting as an observer and to support Residents' put their concerns regarding lack of Police

Stood as a candidate for the Newent Central Ward By election so that if elected I can fulfil my role as a District Councillor to more effectively support Residents & Businesses. The best outcomes are reached by working together.

I am pleased to have influenced NTC to pledge to GLOW Glos. Wellbeing. <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/gloucestershire-health-and-wellbeing-board/glow-gloucestershire-wellbeing/>

Newent Town Council pledges to support mental health and wellbeing by supporting local organisations that promote and educate mental wellbeing.

As a result of their pledge I am delighted NTC has been offered 2 free spaces on GCC Mental Health First Aid Course.

I am very pleased to have also influenced both our schools and feel extremely proud of their pledges.

The Federation of Newent Schools Glebe & Picklenash

We are Mental Health Champions and we will continue to promote this in our school. We also pledge to continue to be an inclusive school in which children are able to feel safe and respected. We will continue to teach children about personal, emotional and social aspects of life age-appropriately and train all staff on Mental Health and what it means for our school.

Newent Community School

Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre is committed to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of all our students and staff by raising awareness through our PSHE programme, our outstanding pastoral team and as a Trail Blazer school. The focus and value of positive mental

health and wellbeing of the whole school is embedded within Newent's strategies. Newent Community School was the first secondary school to achieve the GHLL Mental Health Champion Award; we will continue to promote positive lifestyles.

I am pleased the application to list Cemetery Lodge by a local Newent resident was successful.

The listing will save annually around £1500 of public money and will enable NTC to bid for Heritage funding. I am certain my two colleagues would, in the interest of attracting investment help to set up a regeneration group with FODDC Officer Support. Lydney, Coleford and Cinderford are moving forward with projects by team working.

Outstanding matters

I would appreciate my request for NTC to invite me to the meetings they hold with Highways and Police Liaison.

And

For NTC to form a regeneration working group in collaboration with Ward Members and Foddc Officers to advance projects for the Social and economic benefit of Newent.

District Councillor Vesma read out the following report;

Waste and recycling

Last time I was asked to investigate options for increased cardboard recycling. The Joint WasteTeam's contract manager replied: *"I am currently working on a project with the street wardens to try to reduce flytipping at the recycling sites (dumping next to the recycling bins) and also to address the business waste that is ending up in the recycling banks which is what is resulting in the banks overflowing. The recycling banks are for household waste only so businesses should not be using them – they should have their own arrangements for dealing with their waste. I will look at swapping out some of the other material banks which do not fill up for a couple more cardboard/ paper banks as well so as not to increase the number of banks at the site"*

[Post-meeting note: there appears to be one container fewer than a year before, so am following this up]

Planning

Cllr Moseley spoke on behalf of local residents at a recent Planning Committee on the application to build 36 dwellings south of Southend Lane. Although residents are largely pleased that the longstanding eyesore of the derelict nursery site will disappear, they have major concerns over the condition of the lane, drainage issues—both surface and foul water—and

the 100% rental type of housing. Mixed use would have been preferred but the developer is a registered provider (RP). Three minutes is not long enough to cover all the issues or even to mention some of the facts. Cllr Moseley was disappointed that no member of Newent Town Council nor of the public attended to speak. If all the slots were taken, up to 12 or even 15 minutes could be devoted to outlining local concerns to the officers and other members of the committee. Cllr Gooch had hoped to attend but was unable to get to the meeting, while I myself had a prior commitment. The only resident who attended had not commented officially, so they had no opportunity to request a speaking slot. All residents had been alerted to the meeting and Cllr Moseley met with several and talked to others on the phone.

In future, we need to be seen to engage with the planning process at every opportunity. Your three District Councillors are working together to try to achieve this, but would welcome support from the Town Council.

Public transport

Last time I reported making overtures to Stagecoach about improving the link between Newent and Gloucester. Since then I have connected with Grace Bailey at WS Atkins who is working on travel planning for a development in Newent, and I have explained my ideas and asked if I can be involved in her discussions with the Town Council. Meanwhile in the last few days the County Council has opened a public consultation on a draft Local Transport Plan out to 2041. I have begun scrutinising this with a view to acting as an advocate for Newent's transport needs; and to ensure a 'joined-up' approach I will be joining the Neighbourhood Development Plan team to focus on transport.

There is a day of drop-in surgeries (with a presentation and question-and-answer session in the evening) on 16th March at the District Council Offices.

Scrutiny

As a member of the District Council's Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee I have been questioning and challenging aspects of our operations. One aspect of concern is that next year's draft budget is being balanced by spending reserves. I have been busy analysing the workings behind the budget and identifying opportunities to cut expenses without adversely affecting residents at large. Cllr Moseley and I met the Chief Financial Officer to discuss my ideas, and the budget debate on 20 February will now include amendments proposing savings of about £400,000 a year.

Single-use plastics

The Leader of the District Council, Tim Gwilliam, has approach Cllr Moseley and me to ask if Newent would be interested in becoming the first Forest town to declare itself “single-use plastics free”.

Councillors were given the opportunity to ask questions. Cllr Vesma was asked if he could use a Facebook page (a) to inform residents about upcoming planning applications and (b) where necessary coordinate responses and action by affected residents.

17.9 Planning

(District Councillor Vesma left the meeting at this juncture)

17.9.1 Planning applications to be considered

P1957/19/FUL – Newtown Flat, Newtown Farm, Tewkesbury Road, Newent

Conversion of office building into dwelling house with associated works. **Resolved:** No Objection. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Duncan, Seconded Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio, 10 in favour, 2 abstentions.

P1890/19/FUL – Rainbow Valley, Okle Green, Upleadon

Erection of two storey rear extension with associated works. Demolition of existing single storey extension. **Resolved:** No Objection. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Duncan, Seconded Cllr Beard, All in favour.

P0029/20/FUL & P0030/20/LBC – The Red Lion, 2 Broad Street, Newent

Installation of oven flue, external wiring and lighting and replacement of a first floor window (Retrospective). **Resolved:** No Objection. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Duncan, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, All in favour.

P0031/20/ADV – The Red Lion, 2 Broad Street, Newent

Advertisement Consent for x 2 external internally illuminated Bar & Grill signs above each entrance door and addition of a Lion to existing hanging sign including spotlighting (Retrospective). **Resolved:** No Objection – although the Council is disappointed the Red Lion sign is not also being illuminated. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Duncan, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, All in favour.

P0041/20/APP – Land North of, Southend Lane, Newent

Approval of reserved matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) of outline permission P1330/18/OUT for residential development (up to 230 dwellings), including infrastructure, ancillary facilities, open space and landscaping. **Resolved:** Objection on the following grounds; affordable housing is not evenly distributed throughout the site, there are no visitor bike racks, no dropped kerbs for disabled and cyclist access are shown, a continuous green corridor between the rear of the dwellings in Culver Street and the application site to accommodate wildlife is required. Specific construction routes need to put in place.

The Council would further add that a more adventurous play area scheme would be recommended rather than the standard ones constructed in other developments.

When further investigations are completed in regard to archaeological findings, the Council would request to be advised for historical record keeping purposes. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Beard, 11 in favour, 1 abstention.

17.9.2 To note planning decisions

PERMITTED/CONSENT

P1768/19/FUL – Ferndene, Strawberry Hill, Newent
Erection of two Polytunnel structures and one hardstanding with associated works

P1750/19/FUL – Bellstone, Redmarley Road, Newent

Conversion of light industrial units to 4 no. dwellings and erection of 2 no. carports with associated curtilages, landscaping, bin store and works.

17.10 Estate Management

17.10.1 Market House Stewards – Joe Meek display

Resolved: The request to frame some articles for display in the Market House at a cost of £135.00 is approved. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Howley, All in favour.

17.10.2 Update regarding adoption of telephone box

Notification has been received that there is no electricity in the telephone box and the Council was asked if it still wished to continue with the adoption. **Resolved:** The Council agreed to continue with the adoption of the telephone box. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Howley, 11 in favour, 1 abstention.

17.11 To appoint Councillors to review the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct

Cllrs Heathfield, Mrs Gooch and Mrs Wadley agreed to undertake the review.

17.12 To appoint an Independent Internal Auditor for 2019/20

Resolved: GAPTC are appointed to undertake the Internal Audit at a cost of £360 - £390 + VAT plus mileage. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Davies, All in favour.

17.13 To review the Strategic Plan

2c - Cllr Heathfield gave an update on the Youth Group, which had been promoted on social media.

5m - It was agreed that Cllrs Mrs Moseley, Heathfield, Mrs Howley and Mrs Draper will select the designs for the gateway ready for public display. District Councillor Vesma will also be invited to participate.

5i – This project is costed and ready to go ahead once funding is sourced.

1d – The VE Day Celebration is being progressed and a meeting with other organisations is being arranged.

3g – This will be discussed later on the agenda.

17.14 To request allocation of a free parking day at Lewall Street Car Park

The events working group would like to hold a community event on 18th July and has requested one of the free parking days be allocated for the event. More details about the event will be reported back to Council in due course.

Resolved: The District Council will be asked to allocate one of the Lewall Street Car Park free parking days to the community event on 18th July.

Record of Voting: Proposed Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Duncan, 10 in favour, 2 abstentions.

17.15 To review and adopt the Complaints Procedure

Resolved: The Complaints Procedure is adopted unchanged. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Beard, All in favour.

17.16 To review and adopt the Training Policy/Statement of Intent

Resolved: The Training Policy/Statement of Intent is approved unchanged. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Howley, All in favour.

17.17 To consider report from the Office Accommodation Working Group

The independent valuation of the property had been undertaken and the working group recommended that this option is now discounted.

Cllr Mrs Gooch proposed that a new working group is set up, which was seconded by Ms Birkan. The Mayor requested this decision is deferred until a future meeting, as it was not the agenda item for discussion.

17.18 To receive committee and representative reports

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Cllr Mrs Howley | Events Working Group – Event on 18 th July |
| Cllr Beard | Valegro meeting |
| Cllr Ms Birkan | Forest Volunteer Association meeting |

17.19 Notices and information

Cllr Mrs Howley confirmed that the duck village had been launched on the lake.

17.20 Staff Committee update

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 items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

The Mayor declared the meeting closed 9.04 pm.