

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the online Newent Town Council Meeting held on 12 April 2021 at 7pm.

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

Also present – Town Clerk, Assistant Clerk, District Cllr V Vesma and 5 members of the public

The Mayor opened the meeting by calling for a one minute silence as a mark of respect following the recent death of His Highness The Duke of Edinburgh.

Public Participation Session:

A member of the public spoke regarding the return to face to face meetings. He advised he had regularly attended Council meetings for over 10 years. He believed the virtual Zoom meetings that had been undertaken in the last year had gone well and that he did not foresee a problem of them continuing, if allowed. He considered the Memorial Hall as the only suitable location for future face to face meetings.

A further member of the public spoke in support of their planning application - P0239/21/FUL Carswalls Farm, Tewkesbury Rd, Upleadon, Newent - erection of a shepherd's hut for the purposes of holiday accommodation with associated works, and gave some background information to it.

41.1 Apologies – there were no apologies - a warm welcome was given by the Mayor to new Council member – Mrs Kay Selwyn.

41.2 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

41.3 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 March 2021

Resolved: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 March 2021 were approved. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Wadley
Seconded Cllr Beard, 11 in favour, 2 abstentions.

41.4 Clerk's update and matters arising from previous minutes

Deed of Variation Grants – The second round of funding has been advertised and the closing date for applications is 5th May.

Correspondence has been sent as required.

All other items are being progressed.

From a previous meetings:

Flooding – GCC are arranging a multi-agency meeting for early May.

Officers have been speaking to suppliers of gauges and are awaiting quotes. Once these have been received, discussions will take place regarding how it will be managed and where it would be best located and how to apportion costs.

Valegro Statue – The following insurance quote has been received from the Council’s current insurers;

“At renewal we can cover on an “All Risks” basis for £45,000 which will be an additional £1,125 + IPT with a £1,000 excess to each and every claim.

We do have a concern around PL from people (intoxicated people) and/or children attempting to ride the statue and potentially falling and injuring themselves so can you please confirm this has been covered off in the council’s own risk assessment?”

The Clerk advised that the Valegro Statue was not insured at present as it was yet to be transferred to the Council. A risk assessment will be undertaken.

Traffic Regulation Order – Responses received from the public consultation have been collated by GCC and a draft report is currently with the Highways Manager for consideration/comment. The report will be considered by the Town Council shortly.

41.5 Finance

41.5.1 To approve accounts to be paid

£

Wages		11550.57
Payments made since last meeting		
	Payment Type	Total
	BACS/Cheque	
Cobalt	15554	300.00
Mainstream Digital	15555	21.90
Newent Auto Centre	15556	244.14
J Smith	BACS	40.00
Ledbury Garden Machinery	BACS	462.33
MKM	BACS	1092.20
SLCC	BACS	246.00
EE	BACS	86.90
Mainstream Digital	BACS	80.82
Kompan	BACS	158.28

Flagmakers	BACS	166.88
Newent Auto Centre	BACS	21.60

Payments to be considered

	Payment Type	Total
	BACS/Cheque	
Chris Hyett	15557	105.00
G D Parkers	BACS	17.98
RJH Technical Consultancy	BACS	2349.00
FODDC	15558	504.00
Glebe Chapel	BACS	450.00
ICO	15559	40.00
GMT Solutions	BACS	117.12
A-Plan	BACS	801.50

Resolved: The above expenditure is approved, to a value of £18,856.22. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Gooch, All in favour

41.5.2 Internal check report – Cllrs Mrs Marcovecchio and Mrs Duffield

Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio advised that she and Cllr Mrs Duffield had recently undertaken the internal check report and found there to be no problems and all in order.

41.6 To consider response required to correspondence/consultations received

41.6.1 Forest of Dean District Council – To consider expressing an interest in the purchase of FloodSax and/or Hydro snakes

Members discussed various ways in ascertaining the best method by which members of the public affected by flooding issues could receive FloodSax and/or Hydro snakes – an alternative to sandbags, and how many such people this was likely to be. It was felt that the letter offering these was unclear as to whether they would be free to the Council or whether there would be a cost.

Resolved: The Town Council express an interest in requesting 100 FloodSax (reusable). **Proposed:** Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Beard, All in favour.

41.6.2 Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils – To consider membership renewal

Members considered the benefits of membership.

Resolved: Renewal be accepted. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, All in favour.

41.6.3 Heartbreak Productions – To consider hosting an open air theatre production

Advise they are booking venues for open-air theatre tours this summer and would like to work with Newent Town Council in identifying appropriate venues in the Newent area. Members were in general support of open-air theatres and expressed a willingness to promote them in the town, however they felt that the Council did not have suitable venues itself. Possible suitable venues were put forward as Tom Roberts Malswick or Glebe Chapel. Cllr Ms Birkan proposed the Lake would be an ideal venue, however this was not seconded as it was felt there were insufficient facilities at the Lake to comply with the requirements.

Resolved: the matter be passed to the Event working group and to see if there is support from the FoDDC to make it feasible. This matter to be brought back the second meeting in May. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley, All in favour.

41.6.4 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – Local authority remote meetings – call for evidence consultation

Cllr Mrs Howley advised that the Clerk would send details to all Councillors who would be asked to give a response to a number of questions and return to the Clerk who would collate them, with the majority view put forward. An alternative view was put that Members make their own comments and put forward individually.

Resolved: Members make their own individual responses. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Beard, 9 in favour 2 against, 2 abstentions.

41.6.5 Taynton Parish Council – to consider request for a meeting regarding Moat Solar Farm

Members were made aware that Taynton Parish Council were very keen to meet with Newent Town Council to discuss the proposed development and that the Council should know their views as soon as possible, as they have very important points/information that the Council needed to understand and to take into account.

A member commented that the Town Council has not yet received the application and the appropriate time to give Taynton Parish Council the opportunity to meet with the Council would be when this has taken place.

Cllr Mrs Gooch proposed that as soon as the application is submitted Taynton Parish Council is invited to a meeting, possibly a separate

meeting to the scheduled Council meeting, to discuss. **Resolved:** The motion was not carried given an equality of votes. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded by Cllr Mrs Wadley, 3 in favour, 3 against, 7 abstentions.

The Mayor stated she felt she would have to support her initial vote against the proposition.

A further proposition was put forward. **Resolved:** No Objection providing the timing of the receipt of the application is such that it gives sufficient time in which to meet with Taynton Parish Council within the time constraints of the consultation period. **Proposed:** Cllr Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Beard, 12 in favour.

41.6.6 Forest of Dean District Council – to consider how the welcome back fund could be used to support Newent

Members considered ideas for the Welcome Back Fund – a £56m fund for safe and successful re-opening of the High Street in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Suggestions put forward were: renewal of seat in St Mary's Churchyard, additional bunting for the town, publicity for businesses in the town who have free wi-fi, and promotional leaflets for the town. A question was raised if funding could be used to support the Heartbreak Productions – hosting an open air theatre production – as discussed under minute 41.6.3

41.7 Planning

41.7.1 Planning applications to be considered

1. P0015/21/Discon Land North of, Southend Lane, Newent
Discharge of condition 10 (Construction method statement) (revised) of outline planning permission P1330/18/OUT
Resolved: No Objection but would like the residents' comments to be taken into consideration relating to fencing and flashing lights. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Beard, 10 in favour, 3 abstentions.
2. P0239/21/FUL Carswalls Farm, Tewkesbury Rd, Upleadon, Newent
Erection of a shepherd's hut for the purposes of holiday accommodation with associated works
Resolved: No Objection. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Duffield, Seconded by Cllr Mrs Draper, All in favour.
3. P0509/21/FUL Woodgate Cottage, Cliffords Mesne, Newent

Erection of a single storey rear extension to form an orangery

Cllr Mrs Duffield lost connection at this point.

Resolved: No Objection. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Gooch 11 in favour, 1 abstention

4. P0542/21/OUT The Willows, Horsefair Lane, Newent
Outline application for the erection of one dwelling (associated works to include vehicular access)
Resolved: No Objection **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Ms Birkan, Seconded Cllr Mrs Gooch, All in favour.
5. P0284/21/FUL Daffodil Court, Newent
Erection of a replacement retaining wall
Resolved: No Objection subject to owners encouraging greenery to grow up gabion baskets to create an improved visual aspect for residents. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Moseley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Howley, All in favour

Cllr Mrs Duffield returned to the meeting.

6. P0455/21/LBC 17 Broad Street, Newent
Replacement door to shop front.
Resolved: No Objection. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio, All in favour.

Cllr Mrs Wadley lost connectivity for a short period at this juncture.

For Information only -

P0627/21/TPO 1 x Turner's Oak – Fell due to safety concerns as root rotting fungi is present. 1 x Common Beech – Fell due to safety concerns as root rotting fungi is present

DECISIONS on Planning applications made by the Forest of Dean District Council for noting by Newent Town Council.

PERMITTED/CONSENT

1. P0285/21/TCA Redwood House, High Street, Newent
Remove low hanging branches from 1 x Yew Tree
2. P2177/20/CPC Newent Sewage Treatment Works, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent
Installation of area motor control centre kiosk

3. P0003/21/Discon Plot 3/3A Glebe Chapel, Glebe Close, Newent
Discharge of condition 03 (surface water drainage details) of
planning permission P1503/19/FUL

4. P0178/21/FUL Atlantic House, Cliffords Mesne, Newent
Alterations to garage to provide first floor home office

APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

P0228/21/LBC 31-33 Broad Street, Newent
Listed building consent for the change of use from a tea room (A3) to
residential (C3).

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

P2177/20/CPC Severn Trent Water Ltd
Newent Sewage Treatment Works, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent
Variation to remove condition 4 (Landscaping and Aftercare
Scheme) relating to planning consent 19/0021/FDMAJW dated
23/05/2019

Permission granted

41.8. Estate Management

41.8.1 To consider purchasing stone for re-dressing lake paths

The Estate Supervisor put forward a report that the paths around the Lake are normally dressed with a small amount of 6mm to dust on top of a type one sub-base. The path re-dressing has not been carried out for 2 years now and the paths are now in need of building up, covering the uneven sub-base in order to reduce puddles and muddy areas. The cost to purchase 20 tonne of 6mm to dust and to lay and compact will cost approx. £1050.00 plus vat.

Resolved: the work is permitted at the cost quoted. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Odhiambo, All in favour.

41.8.2 Request to hold Nature Explorer's activities at the Lake and to consider request to waive the hire charges.

Members were reminded that Nature Explorer had utilised the Lake on previous occasions. Their required usage was for one and a half hours on Thursday mornings from 22 April 2021 to 22 July 2021. The organiser requested the Council continue to waive the charges –

whilst it was granted previously, due to the first lockdown, they have been unable to make use of the time offered.

Resolved: Nature Explorers be allowed to use the Lake at the times/dates put forward and the fees be waived for this period.

Record of Voting: Proposed Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley 9 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention.

41.8.3 To consider quotations for mole control services and award the contract

Members gave consideration to quotations for an annual service contract for the treatment of moles from April 2021- March 2022. Three companies had responded albeit two had not done so validly.

Resolved: Company A is awarded the contract at £105 per month in arrears (equivalent to £1,260 per year). **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Duffield, All in favour.

41.8 To consider the recommendation from the Staff Committee to approve the updated following policies

41.8.1 Absence management

Resolved: the Absence management policy be approved. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Draper, Seconded Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio, All in favour.

41.8.2 Driving at work

Cllr Ms Birkan proposed the sentence (Page 8 - "*our interpretation of this is that drivers should always be close to the vehicle when the engine is left running*") be removed. Seconded by Cllr Mrs Gooch.

Resolved: the proposition failed. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Ms Birkan, Seconded by Cllr Mrs Gooch, 3 in favour, 9 against, 1 abstention.

A further proposition was put. **Resolved:** the policy be accepted as it stood. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, 9 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions.

41.9 To approve the updated Estate Management Plan for 2021/22 – Cllr Mrs Howley, Heathfield and Mrs Marcovecchio

Members considered the Estate Management Plan for 2021/22. Cllr Ms Birkan felt that much of the grass at the Lake was covered with celandines but this offset the dying daffodils and given that there were some muddy areas, the 1st grass cut should be left until late April.

Cllr Beard thanked the Estates team for producing the plan and commended it. He felt that the muddy areas/ruts referred to were as a result of the revetment works that had recently been undertaken in the area and proposed the Plan be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Draper.

Cllr Ms Birkan put forward an amendment – that the grassed areas at the Lake not be maintained until late April. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Wadley

Resolved: the amendment failed. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Ms Birkan, Seconded Cllr Wadley, 4 in favour, 6 against, 3 abstentions.

The first proposition was put to the vote.

Resolved: the Plan be accepted. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, 11 in favour, 2 abstentions.

41.10 Resignation of the Town Clerk and recruitment process – Staff Committee Chair

Cllr Draper advised that the closing date for the vacancy of Town Clerk was on 16th April, shortlisting would take place on 19th and interviews would take place on 23rd April.

41.11 To receive Mayor's update

The Mayor advised that Rev. Simon Mason would be holding a Civic Service following the death of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh on 18 April 2021 at 10.30 am. As Covid-19 restrictions were still in place a limited number of people would be able to attend.

41.12 Cllr Mrs Howley advised to the time constraints of the meeting, the remaining items on the agenda would need to be adjourned to a later time.

The meeting was declared closed at 21.06