

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the online Newent Town Council Meeting held on 26 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,

Also present – Town Clerk, and 3 members of the public

Cllr Heathfield & Assistant Clerk joined during the public session, one member of the public left after the public session

Public Participation Session:

One member of the public addressed the Council regarding antisocial behavior issues at the lake. The resident emphasized issues relating to cycling, loud music and the benches situation behind her property.

42.1 Apologies – Cllr Mrs Selwyn had advised in advance that she would be late for the meeting. Cllr Mrs Odhiambo advised that she would need to leave at the meeting early.

42.2 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs Gooch advised of an other interest in agenda item 9.6 Forest of Dean District Council – Taxi/Private Hire Licensing Policy Consultation 2021 and stated as such she would not leave the meeting but would observe and not take part in discussion or voting.

42.3 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 April 2021

Cllr Mrs Gooch requested it be recorded that she did not feel the minutes relating to item 41.6 were a true reflection.

Resolved: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 April 2021 were approved subject to the following amendment – P. 912 41.6, there were 7 abstentions. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Draper Seconded Cllr Mrs Moseley, 10 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention.

42.4 Clerk's update and matters arising from previous minutes

Correspondence has been sent as required. All other items are being progressed.

From a previous meeting:

Question raised by Cllr Mrs Gooch on 8.3.21 – I would like it confirmed that the Legal agreement between Newent Initiative Trust and Newent Town Council covers the Council's legal expenses.

The legal agreement does not specifically state this. A resolution was made at Council and Newent Initiative Trust was notified this was a stipulation of the Town Council accepting responsibility.

Mobile CCTV camera - unfortunately, we are unable to move the mobile CCTV camera as requested by the Police, as Gloucestershire County Council will no longer give permission for our mobile CCTV cameras to be connected to lamp posts due to the weight of the equipment. The maximum weight of equipment allowed is between 5 & 5.5 kg and the cameras weigh approx. 11 kg.

- 42.5 To ratify the Staff Committee's recommendation to amend working hours of the Grounds Maintenance Assistant post and to appoint a temporary litter picker for summer weekends.

Members gave consideration to the Staff Committee's recommendation.

Resolved: The recommendations be approved. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Duffield, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley, All in favour.

- 42.6 To consider arrangements for return to face-to face meetings from 7th May

Members gave consideration to the limited options with regard to suitable venues when returning to face-to-face meetings from 7 May. The favoured venue was the Community School given that it had disabled access, plus ease of parking. Cllr Beard added that it also had a basic sound system to allow fixed microphones around the table. **Resolved:** The Community School be the best option and that the venue would be required for at least three months. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Duffield, All in favour.

Cllr Mrs Selwyn joined the meeting at this juncture.

- 42.7 To consider report regarding appointing a Proper Officer and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) in the absence of the Proper Officer and RFO – Cllr Mrs Gooch

Cllr Mrs Gooch considered the Council was currently in breach of its Standing Orders as it did not have anyone to stand in for the Proper Officer and RFO when they were absent and that this needed to be addressed. An argument was put forward that this was not the case and that the Proper Officer and RFO prepared beforehand so there was no need for anyone

else to step in when she was absent for leave etc and this would only be required in unforeseen circumstances.

Cllr Beard expressed his disappointment, as did the Chair of the Staffing Committee that the paper written by Cllr Gooch coming before the Council referred to existing staff members taking on the role, without the matter having been discussed with them officially. Cllr Mrs Gooch stated that an email had been sent to the Staff Committee and did not received a response. Cllr Mrs Gooch advised that she had taken the matter up with the Gloucestershire Association of Town and Parish Councils who had clearly indicated that the Council needs to know when the Proper Officer and RFO is absent, who is stepping into those roles. The Clerk advised that she too had taken advice and that the Council did not need to appoint someone else in the short term when she was away. Cllr Mrs Gooch referred to the post not being covered for a longer period time. **Resolved:** This matter be taken to the Staffing Committee and for a definite response be made and to be brought back to Council. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Duffield, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley, All in favour.

42.8 Finance

42.8.1 To approve accounts to be paid

£

Payments made since last meeting

	Payment Type BACS/Cheque	Total
Mainstream Digital		22.97
NDP	BACS	4150.00
Ermin Plant	BACS	562.99

Payments to be considered

Safpro	Chq	13.44
BT	BACS	1224.00
Viking	BACS	45.88
Peninsula	BACS	195.70
Siemens	BACS	168.00
South West Councils	BACS	660.00
NALC	BACS	38.93
GAPTC	BACS	1432.90
Grundon	BACS	212.84

Resolved: The above expenditure is approved, to a value of £8727.65.

Record of Voting: Proposed by Cllr Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Heathfield, All in favour

42.9 To review bank mandate and banking arrangements

Members were furnished with proposed signatories on the Council's bank accounts as well as on-line banking signatories. Cllr Mrs Howley reminded Members that those members acting as signatories on the accounts would not be permitted to undertake internal checks. **Resolved:** The bank mandate and banking arrangements are agreed as per the proposed signatories. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Howley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Odhiambo, All in favour

Cllr Mrs Odhiambo left the meeting at this juncture.

42.10 To consider response required to correspondence/consultations received.

42.10.1 Gloucestershire Assoc Town & Parish Councils – Request for questions to be submitted for the meeting with the Police Superintendent on 27 May 2021.

It was agreed to ask if the Police were reviewing having a Police point/Station on a permanent basis in the Forest of Dean area.

42.10.2 South West Councils – To consider membership renewal

One Member enquired how did membership to South West Councils differ from membership with Gloucestershire Association of Town & Parish Councils? The Clerk explained South West Council dealt with employment law/HR matters and Gloucestershire Association of Town & Parish Councils dealt with local government enquiries. **Resolved:** Membership with South West Council be renewed. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Duffield, All in favour.

42.10.3 Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management – to consider renewal of membership

Members considered renewal of membership to the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management **Resolved:** Renewal of membership be agreed. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, All in favour

42.10.4 Newent U3A Historic Building Group – invitation to attend A New Time-Line Newent – The Gloucestershire Dendrochronology Project online talk on 19 May at 2.00 pm

It was agreed Cllrs Mrs Marcovecchio, Ms Birkan, and Mrs Gooch would attend.

42.10.5 Gloucestershire Association of Town and Parish Councils – A call for resolutions for the AGM on 24 July

Resolved: Propose Town and Parish Councils move to livestream their meetings to make democracy more open and seek to improve standards. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded, Cllr Ms Birkan, All in favour

42.10.6 Forest of Dean District Council – Taxi/Private Hire Licensing Policy Consultation 2021

Members were in general agreement and support of the policy. It was agreed that Members would make their own comments to the consultation.

42.10.7 A resident – Complaint regarding the Lake and request for a bench to be moved

A long discussion ensued with regard to a resident's complaint regarding anti-social behaviour at the Lake and a resultant request for a bench to be moved. Members agreed that the issues raised needed to be reported to the Police and the Street Warden with a request that the area be monitored. The Clerk advised that the Police would try to increase patrols at times the resident felt the anti-social behaviour increased. She further advised that the District Council was not able to give specific times when the Street Warden could attend, however she was in regular contact with him and that he always responded to complaints and reported back on them.

Resolved: A dialogue be kept with the Police and to revisit the matter in three months to see if there is any improvement. Also to look at cost of appropriate signage and to put an appropriate message on Facebook/website regarding anti-social behaviour. Further that the bench be removed only as a last resort. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley, All in favour

42.11 Planning

42.11.1 Planning applications to be considered

P0645/21/FUL Carswalls Cottage, Tewkesbury Rd, Upleadon, Newent

Erection of an agricultural workshop

Resolved: No Objection **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Mrs Duffield, Seconded Cllr Mrs Draper, 12 in favour

P0653/21/APP Land at The Willows (also known as Sirocco), Horsefair Lane

Approval of reserved matters (access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) in relation to outline permission P0317/20/OUT (allowed on appeal APP/P1615/W/20/3261805) for a low carbon energy efficient self-build dwelling. Discharge of conditions 04 (site levels), 05 (foul and surface water drainage), 06 (access and parking), 07 (electric vehicle charging) and 08 (construction and method statement).

The Clerk advised that a revised application had been received that day and suggested Members might wish to defer this to the next meeting when there would still be sufficient time to respond within the timescale given.

Members were in agreement to this course of action.

P0 449/21/FUL 8 The Scarr, Newent

Proposed extensions and alterations. Demolition of existing lean to side and rear extension.

Resolved: No Objection **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Ms Duffield, Seconded Cllr Ms Birkan, 12 in favour.

P0712/21/FUL Land at Malswick adjacent B4215, Newent

Construction of working section of canal, complete with a firm tow path to one side as well as a level mowngrass path to the remaining side and two culverts to allow for existing water courses to continue to flow unrestricted below the level of the canal itself. (Resubmission

Resolved: No Objection providing existing access is stopped up.

Record of Voting: Proposed by Cllr Mrs Gooch, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley, 8 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions

P0045/21/Discon Newent Community Centre, Ross Rd, Newent Discharge of condition 04 (biodiversity enhancement) relating to planning permission P1219/12/FUL

Resolved: Record of Voting: Proposed Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Odhiambo, 11 in favour, 1 abstention.

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

Consent

P0627/21/TPO Newent Lake, Lakeside, Newent
TPO cancelled – work carried out under a 5DN 1x 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.

P2149/20/FUL Spring Bank, Malswick, Newent

Change of use of land for the stationing of 9 log cabins for
tourism/holiday occupation use (existing mixed uses; part
residential/part commercial/part base use to otherwise continue).

P0303/21/LD2 Newent Converters, Midwinter Transport Ltd,
Strawberry Hill, Newent

Certificate of Lawfulness issued

- 42.12 To consider the working group’s proposed amendments to the fishing rules for 2021/22 and to consider the proposals to make available a maximum of 20 permits per year, available on a first come first serve basis, for people who live outside of the parish and wish to fish the Lake

Members were in support of the proposed amendments to the fishing rules for 2021/22 and to give the opportunity for a limited number of people who lived outside of the parish to fish. **Resolved:** The proposed amendments to the fishing rules be approved and a maximum number of 20 permits per year are made available on a first come first served basis, for people who live outside of the parish who wish to fish the Lake. The permits would be

charged at £50.00 each. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs Wadley, 12 in favour.

42.13 To adopt the updated Community Emergency Plan

Members considered updating the Community Emergency plan. The Clerk confirmed that she had consent in writing from all those named in the Emergency Plan. One Member considered the Council should bear in mind that the Plan was for any type of emergency, and was not necessarily a flood plan – with reference to the inclusion of hydrosnakes.

The Mayor confirmed this will be a live document and updated on a regular basis. **Resolved:** The document be accepted. **Record of Voting:** Proposed by Cllr Beard, Seconded Cllr Mrs M Duffield, 10 in favour, 2 abstentions.

42.14 To consider supporting the NHS and frontline workers day on 5 July 2021

Members considered the suggestion to mark the day by agreeing to raise a NHS Social Care & Frontline Workers' Day – 5 July 2021 flag and to lead a two-minute silence at 11 am and the Nation's Toast at 1 pm. **Resolved:** The middle sized flag of the options put forward be purchased at £49.31 and that the two minute silence and Nation's Toast be observed. **Record of Voting:** Proposed Cllr Mrs Howley, Seconded Cllr Mrs Marcovecchio, All in favour.

42.15 To consider requesting the Forest of Dean District Council to relocate the recycling banks in Lewall Street Car Park to a less intrusive position

Members agreed that the recycling banks were often overflowing and unsightly, particularly to visitors to the Lake given their location in the car park, adjacent to the Lake. A suggestion was made that they be moved to the other side of the car park in the corner, by the wall next to the Good News Centre, however it was acknowledged that on a previous occasion when attempting to relocate the bins, this area was considered not suitable given the area was raised and created health and safety concerns.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Howley and seconded by Cllr Mrs Wadley that the Council consider the containers detract from the Lakeside setting and request Forest of Dean District Council move them to a less intrusive position.

Cllr Mrs Gooch put forward an amendment – add Newent Town Council consider the aims and objectives of the Community Engagement Policy and

this is adhered to before the Council consult with them. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Wadley.

Resolved: The Council consider the containers detract from the Lakeside setting and request Forest of Dean District Council move them to a less intrusive position but that the Council consider the aims and objectives of the Community Engagement Policy and this is adhered to before the Council consult with them. **Record of Voting:** 9 in favour, 3 abstentions.

The Clerk asked how the Council would like to take this forward. This to be by advertising on social media, website, noticeboard and New Ad – a six week consultation.

42.16 To receive committee/representative reports and Mayor's update

The Mayor gave a short committee/representative report and update. She advised she attended with the Deputy Mayor two services to mark the death of the Duke of Edinburgh – on 11 April to meet with Rev S Mason to say prayers and place flowers in St Mary's churchyard and on 17 April a Church Service in St Mary's.

Newent Youth Action Group – the Mayor attended to talk about nature trails the Council has already created, to give YAG & Youth Facilities more inspiration for its own work. Also the Group now has a Facebook page and YAG has decided to consider organising a litter pick with the Girl Guides.

The meeting was declared closed at 20.57