

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Newent Town Council held on Monday 14 November 2011 at the Market House, Newent at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr L Lawton (Mayor), Cllr E Wood (Deputy Mayor), Cllr S Barker, Cllr Beard, Cllr Mrs J Bevan, Cllr D Blick, Cllr J Clissold, Cllr Mrs K Draper, Cllr Mrs M Duncan, Cllr A Parsons, Cllr R Pilkington, Cllr B Wellington

Apologies: Cllr J Celino, District Cllr Mrs J Gooch

10.00 Chairman's Announcements

Cllr Lawton updated Members on the Travellers site at Southend Lane. He advised that whilst temporary consent had been given to the Travellers to 31 January 2012, it was his understanding a renewal application had been submitted to the District Council to extend their stay. He advised that this would be processed through the Planning system.

10.1 Approval of Minutes of Council meeting – 10 October 2011

Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting of 10 October 2011 was proposed by Cllr Lawton and unanimously agreed

10.1.2 Matters Arising

P.99 8.1.2 Lighting under the Market House

Cllr Lawton reported that the barriers had been removed from the area around the Market House preventing public access, as the lighting manufacturers had now installed a temporary solution to the lighting cover problem. This effectively was a strip with a rough surface and prevented the slippage as previously experienced. Phillips the lighting manufacturer had advised they would return during the first week of December to replace the lighting strips with a permanent anti-slip cover.

P.100 CCTV progress

Cllr Lawton advised that the CCTV installation at the Cemetery Lodge was now up and running, and was being used by the Police. Cllr Pilkington advised that the system was now holding a few days less data as the hard-drive was filling up very quickly. He added that there had been a further problem with the internet connection due to the CCTV signal being remote from the router but this had now been resolved.

Cllr Lawton took the opportunity to thank Cllr Pilkington on behalf of the Council for the considerable work he had undertaken in the assistance of the set-up of the CCTV system and the new Computers and associated software.

P.101 Computer upgrade

Cllr Pilkington reported that two of the new computers were fully operational and running the new software. The third computer was not operational as yet as the photocopier to which it was connected would not support Windows 7. This matter was being rectified as Xerox were to replace the existing machine with a new current model under a new contract, the cost of which was almost the same as the existing arrangement. This machine would be networked to all of the Office computers so that they will be able to print to it, thus saving the use of expensive ink-jet cartridges.

10.2 Approval of Minutes of Council meeting (Planning only) – 24 October 2011

Approval of the minutes of the Council meeting (Planning only) of 24 October 2011 was proposed by Cllr Lawton and unanimously agreed.

10.3 Committee Reports

10.3.1 Finance & General Purposes Committee

Approval of the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of 24 October 2011 was proposed by Cllr Lawton and unanimously agreed.

10.3.2 Recreation & Environment Committee

Approval of the minutes of the Recreation & Environment Committee of 24 October 2011 was proposed by Cllr Lawton and unanimously agreed.

6.1.4 Newent Rugby Club – Changing Rooms, Recreation Ground

Cllr Lawton reported that he and Cllr Blick had had an interesting meeting with the Rugby Club. They had made it clear that they wished to have their own ground on another piece of land in the town and it was likely that at a future point a proposition would be brought to the Council requesting support in this endeavour. Cllr Lawton advised that he had made it absolutely clear that as matters stand the land that they are focused upon is not in the control of the Town Council. Cllr Blick added that the meeting had been very constructive and urged Members that should matters materialise to give the Rugby Club as much support as it could, particularly as it seemed to be recruiting new members, particularly young players in the community.

6.1.5 Pest Control

The Clerk advised that the District Council had quoted £300 to undertake a pigeon cull in the town. They advised that several business owners in the

town had contributed to this sum when they last undertook a cull, and would enquire if they were prepared to do so further and report back to the Council accordingly.

10.4 Finance & Sundry Payments

Finance & Sundry payments were agreed and considered lawful to a figure of £24,042.51. Cllrs Pilkington Wellington & Lawton declared interests and refrained from voting. Note was made of the large electricity bill received for power used at the Lake by the fountain and the aerator.

10.5 Correspondence

10.5.1 Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service – formal consultation on Integrated Risk Management Plan

Advise they are undertaking a formal consultation on their Integrated Risk Management Plan for the next three years. This will examine the changing risk profile within the county in terms of demography, life risk and behaviours as well as broader environmental change, climate impact and the potential for man-made and natural disaster. It will then present current arrangements for dealing with this risk and areas where they might see a need to extend arrangements or an opportunity to rationalise. Ahead of publishing the full document for consideration later in November they are keen to capture the broadest possible range of opinion on its contents and therefore seek the Council's views on some of the key areas:-

- We believe that there may well be a need to extend our level of support to communities during the crisis phase of flooding. We wish to build upon the work done since 2007 and include a broader range of responders such as volunteer agencies in our approach to such incidents.
- We have a highly trained workforce who repeatedly show their value at times of medical emergency in rural areas. We think there may be opportunities to deploy those same skills elsewhere in the county and work more closely with the ambulance service to ensure that wherever a firefighter can undertake basic life support ahead of ambulance attendance, then they are deployed.
- High-reach appliances (based at Gloucester and Cheltenham) are currently staffed to ensure immediate availability. Modern methods of building construction, firefighting techniques and historical evidence mean that these pieces of equipment are not normally needed in the earliest stages of an incident and so could be staffed in a more cost effective manner.
- Following consultation in the south of the county about responses to road traffic collisions and other technical rescue, a specialist vehicle that had reached the end of its life was removed and more road traffic collision equipment was introduced onto fire engines. We are now considering extending this across the remainder of the country by removing another specialist vehicle, and commissioning a new dedicated heavy rescue appliance which would extend our ability to deal with rescues of a heavier and more complex nature.

- Our retained firefighters provide a superb professional service to small towns and villages. However with economics often dictating that we run with a smaller workforce, to ensure that current levels of service provided are maintained, there may well be opportunities to better organise crew availability to protect communities without creating an over-provision at quieter times.
- Our current response standards measure the time it takes to get an engine to a house fire only if people are trapped. We wish to seek views on extending this to include the Service's attendance to all house fires and road traffic collisions in the country.

Cllr Blick commented on the importance of the retained fire service particularly in a town such as Newent where the buildings are old and terraced in the main streets and where fire could spread rapidly if not dealt with immediately by firefighters on hand to do so.

Cllr Lawton referred to the final paragraph of the letter and suggested the proposal to possibly extend the time measurement to include the Service's attendance to all house fires and road traffic collisions in the county to be a positive move. Cllr Lawton wondered however what they were to do with the data when collected?

Cllr Blick went on to proposed in terms of risk, that many of the roads and lanes in the vicinity were narrow and possibly liaison should take place with the County Council to ensure fire engines could access these areas if necessary. Cllr Lawton suggested however that the size of the vehicles would be taken into account in such circumstances for this reason.

10.6 Business

10.6.1 Planning applications – see attached

Cllrs Beard and Mrs Draper declared a personal interest in Planning application DF9163 P2144/11/FUL – Land at Cleeve Mill, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent

10.6.2 New Community Centre and involvement of Newent Town Council

Cllr Beard advised that the Newent Initiative Trust has immediately available up to £10,000 from GCC Section 106 monies to go to the first stage of design to then put forward to public consultation for the new Community Centre building. He advised that they had identified a suitable and central location for the building – this being on land known as the Paddock, and in the ownership of the Town Council. He asked if the Town Council would give a letter of commitment to being part of the project and to allow use of the land as identified. Cllr Beard said he envisaged the building would be split 800 sq ft for community use and 200 sq ft for Town Council use. He said he believed the town had lost its central focus and a new Community building with the Town Council aboard would retrieve this in this central location.

Cllr Lawton reminded Members that they have previously agreed to be part of the Community Centre and they now needed to agree the preferred site. In the absence of any other suitable sites being identified, Cllr Lawton proposed a vote of acceptance of the Paddock area to be utilised for this project. This was agreed unanimously. Cllr Wellington asked what was the value of the land which was the Council's commitment to the project? Cllr Beard replied that he believed the land would be valued at a maximum of £250,000. Cllr Blick reminded Members that when the Town Council purchased the land from the District Council, there was a clause in the sale that if the Town Council sold the land for development in the future it would be obliged to give 50% of the sale proceeds back to the District Council. It was however acknowledged that the Town Council would not be selling the land in this situation.

Cllr Beard advised that GCC had £130,000 set aside for a new Community building and the Newent Initiative Trust would be looking to sell the Chill Out Zone and use the proceeds to inject into the new Centre. The Town Council would also have funding available from the sale of the Cemetery Lodge and this together with the possible sale of the former Chapel building he believed would realise approximately £200,000. Cllr Beard added with these figures taken into account, there was approximately a £70,000 shortfall in funding.

Cllr Lawton explained the difficulty of disposing of a capital receipt in the form of the Cemetery Lodge into a shared ownership. Cllr Beard however, made it quite clear that the intention was that the new Community Centre building including the whole of the site would fall into the sole ownership of the Town Council. The Newent Initiative Trust given its input would only wish for some protection in being allowed to use the building.

Cllr Lawton advised it was his understanding that there was some £882,000 available to this region from European funding. He advised that whilst the town had received some £70,000 for the Town Centre developments, he believed there was a possibility that further money from this source may be available for the Community Centre project.

Cllr Pilkington made a proposal that the Town Council write a letter of support to the project to the Newent Initiative Trust including the utilisation of the Paddock land and agreeing to share the building. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Draper and unanimously agreed.

10.6.3 Appointment of representative to Town Centre Improvements Group

Cllr Beard proposed Cllr Blick as the Town Council representative on the Town Centre Improvement Group. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs Draper and unanimously agreed.

10.6.4 Christmas Lights switch-on event

The Clerk advised that Mr Street – the event organiser for the Christmas Lights switch-on event has written to request permission to utilise the Council

Foreman to assist with the preparation on the afternoon of the event. This was unanimously agreed.

10.6.5 Representative Reports

Representative reports were received from

Cllr Pilkington	-	Newent Initiative Trust meeting
Cllrs Wellington & Mrs Bevan	-	Glos Highways Seminar
Cllr Wellington		Meeting with Asst Chief Constable
Cllr Barker		Councillor Training Course
Cllr Lawton		Transition Food Event
		Remembrance Sunday Church Service
		Newent Scouts AGM

10.6.6 Any Other Business

Cllr Beard raised his concern about several major incidents recently including youths which had caused Police intervention in the town. He also raised concern about the current level of policing in the town following the closure of the Police Station earlier in the year. Members generally agreed they were dissatisfied with the level of Policing and believed that the public perception was that there no longer were any Police Officers in the town. Members discussed this matter and highlighted various incidents which had and had allegedly taken place including those at the local School and considered the possibility that such incidents had risen due to the Police Station closure. If this was the case the methodology of working by the Police needed to be revisited, particularly as one Member stated she had repeatedly seen the Police patrolling the town in vehicles when she believed they should be doing so on foot. It was ultimately agreed to request the local Super indent or Officer of similar rank to attend a meeting of the Council to answer questions with regard to the policing in the town and the affect the closure of the Police Station was having on it and the level of crime taking place. It was also agreed to enquire when signage depicting the Police Point in the Library would be in evidence on the building.

This concluded the business of the meeting and it was declared closed at 9.30 pm.

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Planning applications received from the Forest of Dean District Council for consideration by Newent Town Council at its meeting on Monday 14 November 2011.

1. DF2045 P2101/11/FUL Mr S McAteer, Fleur, Bradfords Lane, Newent
Two storey side alterations and extension to dwelling including conversion of garage to living accommodation

Comment No Objection

2. DF9458 P2056/11/FUL Mr A Ali, Newent Tandoori, 34 Broad St, Newent
Change of use of shop unit to a restaurant dining area. Erection of a rear extension

Comment No Objection in principle but do object to illuminated signage in a
Conservation area

3. DF4172 P2057/11/LD1 Glebe Contractors, Woodland View Farm, Bouldson
Newent

Application under Section 191 to establish use of Woodland View Farm as a B1
agricultural contracting, landscape maintenance, storage of associated machinery

Comment No Objection

4. DF14127 P1763/11/FUL Mr & Mrs J Chapman, Prestberries Cottage, Blackwells
End, Hartpury, Glos

The Old Granary & Workshop, Court Lane, Newent

Change of use of premises (Old Granary and adjoining workshop) to a two-
bedroomed dwelling

Comment No Objection

5. DF928 P2129/11/FUL Mr R Walker, North House, Stardens, Tewkesbury Rd
Newent

Alterations and extension to provide an end gable single storey extension

Comment No Objection

6. P2118/11/TCA Mrs R Boocock, Peveret Retirement, Daffordil Court, Watery Lane
Newent

Felling of 1 Yew tree

Comment Consider an Arboriculturalist's report should be sought

7. DF528 P2120/11/LBC Newent Town Council, Cemetery Lodge, Watery Lane,
Newent

Cemetery Chapel, Watery Lane, Newent

Repairs to roof of listed building

Comment No Objection

8. DF7370 P0080/11/Discon Mr R Windless, Hillview, Botloes Green, Newent
Discharge of condition (05) hard and soft landscaping attached to application
PO551/10/FUL

Comment No Objection

9. DF6699 P2146/11/FUL Mr M Presley, The Bean Patch, The Scarr, Newent
Retention of temporary accommodation

Comment Object – differs substantially in scale and possible permanence from original application. Would ask for a stop notice to be imposed and a site meeting arranged. Understand ownership of land to be indispute

10. DF9163 P2144/11/FUL Mr P Beard c/o agent
Land at Cleeve Mill, Cleeve Mill Lane, Newent, Glos
Erection of 3 B2/B8 units

Comment No Objection other than landscaping should be fully implemented no later than the first planting season following completion of development.