

It was agreed to purchase the lights and additional feature which was within the Christmas lights budget and in the meantime to write to the affected property owners to establish permission to erect the lights to their buildings.

3.3.9 Former Slades Solicitors building – Cllr Parsons

Cllr Parsons highlighted the unsightly and unkempt appearance of the frontage of the former Solicitors building in the town. The Clerk advised that she had been given to understand the Letting Agent had this matter in hand and had given instructions to clean and repaint and fit a pigeon deterrent to the building on behalf of the Lease Holders.

3.3.10 Transition Newent – Market Stall beneath Market House

The Clerk advised that Transition Newent had been asked to provide more detailed information regarding their proposal to hold a Food Market beneath the Market House which appeared to be set up on a commercial basis. The Clerk advised she had received an email from Transition Newent advising they would now like to hold a seasonal local food stall beneath the Market House, the first one being in Summer – on 30 July and a second one in Autumn on 29th October. Local produce will be donated all proceeds will go to Transition Newent. They further advised that they would be happy to deliver a presentation to the Council to help Councillors understand the work of Transition Newent and the wider Transition movement.

Members agreed before consenting to the use of the seasonal food stall that the Transition group be asked to show that they are a not for profit organisation and therefore not acting on a commercial basis.

3.3.11 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business

It was proposed by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed that the following item of business be heard in Committee under Standing Order 66:-

3.3.12 Quotations for mulching of brash – woodland to rear of Lake

This concluded the business of the meeting and it was declared closed at 10.15 pm.

3.3.4 To give consideration to purchase of trailer – Cllr Blick

The Foreman advised that following purchase of the current Council vehicle it had become difficult to lift the boat on to it due to the increased height. The Foreman suggested the Committee consider the purchase of a suitable trailer which would eliminate the need to lift the boat for transport purposes. It was agreed to seek prices for a suitable trailer and also aluminium ramps together with an electric winch as a possible alternative solution.

3.3.5 Grass cutting contract

Members prior to the meeting were furnished with copy correspondence from the Grass cutting contractor regarding on-going disputes with the standard of cut. Members agreed in order to safe-guard the Council's position to seek legal clarification with regard to the terms of the contract.

3.3.6 Availability of seats in Arboretum

Cllr Parsons advised that the Working party had not yet undertaken an assessment of the seats and availability of space for future seats in the Arboretum but would do so shortly for report back to the Committee.

3.3.7 Toilets – Recreation Ground

The Clerk advised that following the Committee having established a proposal to take on a lease of the toilets at the Recreation Ground, the District Council had responded they were satisfied with the conditions the Committee had imposed. In this regard they suggested that a draft lease be drawn up. Members agreed to proceed on this basis.

3.3.8 Christmas lights

Cllr Mrs Draper reported that she, Cllr Pilkington and the Foreman had met on site to look further into the purchase of additional Christmas lighting. They had concluded they would like to erect coloured string lighting from the Market House to the former Shambles Museum in Church St and to Barclays Bank in Broad Street. This would be at cost of £1,148.00 In addition they wished to purchase an additional "angel" feature at a cost of £148.00 The Foreman advised that there would be a further cost in that an electrician would be required to install further electrical points in Church Street to connect the additional lights.

The Foreman reported that there had been a recent break-in at the Cemetery Chapel building where a number of items had been stolen. This matter had been reported to the Police and the Insurance Company where a claim was being made.

The Foreman further reported that Rospa had recently undertaken an inspection of the children's playarea on the Recreation Ground where only a minor low risk repair to the toddlers' swing had been highlighted.

The mesh cages for the Changing Rooms and guard for aerator were now made and the Foreman was collecting them for fitting the following day.

3.3.2 Lake maintenance – bridge, revetments, aerator

The Foreman advised that the footbridge at the bottom end of the Lake was broken and damaged beyond repair. It was agreed given there was no longer water beneath the bridge to insert a large drain and fill in – this at a cost of £547.00, which compared to replacing the bridge at £775.00.

Cllr Blick expressed his concern that the stone gabions recently installed at the Lake were sinking and that water was seeping in at the rear. This to be monitored. It was agreed that further along the lake edge where the bank had subsided that wooden stakes be inserted to reinforce the area. The Foreman had costed this at approx £400. It was agreed to go ahead with this work but that a site-meeting should take place to assess a long-term solution to this matter. Work to reinforce the area to take place by end of July.

The Foreman advised that he had not been able to get the supplier of the aerator as discussed at the last meeting to undertake a demonstration, as they had said it was not cost effective for them to do so. It was agreed that Cllrs Wood, Lawton and the Foreman would be given delegated power to assess the best option for the purchase of a replacement aerator and that it be purchased at a cost not exceeding the budgeted figure.

3.3.3 Recreation Ground – fencing, maintenance of Playwall

The Foreman advised that the basketball hoop and backplate on the playwall had been broken off by youths hanging from it. Wickstead the Manufacturer had quoted £598.41 to repair. It was agreed that Cllr Wood would look at this with the Foreman to ascertain if an alternative repair could be made. The Foreman further reported that the fence between the road and the children's playarea was constantly being broken down by youths tramping on it whilst climbing over it. The Foreman had priced repairs using a stronger galvanised wire at £380.00. Members discussed the options including green vertical wire which was dismissed as too expensive and it was ultimately agreed to use rail and pigwire to repair. This to be undertaken within the next two weeks.

would be open to the community. They anticipate that the event would be a sports/fun day which would attract families.

Members agreed in principle to such an event but requested more detailed information to be forwarded.

3.2.2 GCC – Consultation on review of subsidised bus services in Gloucestershire

Members were furnished with details of the proposed subsidised bus services in Gloucestershire including the routes directly affecting Newent and the surrounding area. Whilst Members were unhappy at any proposed cut in services, they were most concerned about cuts in outlying areas where people lived without any other means of transport. It was agreed to write to the County Council objecting to the cuts and in particular those in the outlying villages.

3.2.3 Forest Equipment Services Ltd – litter picking

The Clerk advised that following a letter to Forest Equipment Services Ltd advising of the Council's dissatisfaction at the standard of litter-picking on the Recreation Ground, Forest Equipment Services Ltd had replied countering the complaints and suggesting in the circumstances the contract be terminated. Members considered the alternative option of employing the Council's own staff to undertake the week-end work (at Recreation Ground and Lake area) if they were willing to do so. The Foreman who was present at the meeting indicated that both he and the part-time member of staff were willing to undertake the additional work. It was therefore agreed to proceed on this basis, at the same hours as currently contracted to Forest Equipment Services and that the normal enhanced week-end working rate would apply.

3.3 Business

3.3.1 Foreman's work report

The Foreman's work report included notification that the start of work was imminent on the Cemetery Chapel and consequently the contents had been removed to allow for full access to the Contractor. The Foreman reported that the former funerary bier was taking up valuable storage space and as it was no longer functional asked if the Committee still wished to keep it or perhaps consider donating to a local museum. He pointed out that it did have evidence of woodworm. Members agreed that this could be treated and proposed enquiries be made with Gloucester Folk Museum to ascertain if they would be interested in its acquisition.

The Foreman further reported the Committee had required galvanised gutting to be replaced at the Changing Rooms building. He had costed this at £249.49. It was agreed to accept this cost and the Foreman to fit.

NEWENT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Recreation & Environment Committee held on Monday 23 May 2011 at the Market House, Newent at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr L Lawton, Cllr E Wood, Cllr S Barker, Cllr Mrs K Draper, Cllr A Parsons, Cllr B Wellington,

Apologies: Cllr R Beard

3.00 Election of Chairman – Period of Office 2011/12

Cllr Parsons proposed Cllr Wellington as Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Draper. In the absence of any further nominations, Cllr Lawton proposed Cllr Wood which was seconded by Cllr Barker. A secret ballot was taken resulting in 2 in favour of Cllr Wellington, 3 in favour of Cllr Wood and 1 abstention. Cllr Wood was duly elected Chairman and took the Chair.

3.1 Election of Deputy Chairman – Period of Office 2011/12

Cllr Draper proposed Cllr Wellington as Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Lawton. In the absence of any further nominations, Cllr Wellington was elected unopposed.

3.2 Correspondence

Mrs E Seaton, 71 Lakeside, Newent – Oak tree, Lakeside

Mrs Seaton had written further regarding the Oak tree in the ownership of the Council adjacent to her property which she stated was dropping leaves, twigs and small branches on to her car and driveway. She also complained of the mess resulting from bird droppings. The Foreman showed Members a photograph of Mrs Seaton's driveway which he had taken that day at her request. The Foreman advised that since the Arborculturalist's original report that had concluded from inspection that the tree was safe, given Mrs Seaton's on-going concern and complaint he had asked the Arborculturalist when recently in the area inspecting other trees to inspect the Oak tree again. Again no reason for concern about the safety of the tree was given. In the circumstances, Members agreed to write to Mrs Seaton advising as the opinion of the Arborculturalist was that the tree was safe, it could not undertake any lopping of branches from it to eliminate the issues of which Mrs Seaton was complaining.

3.2.1 Two Rivers Housing – Summer event on Recreation Ground

Advise Two Rivers Housing are a social landlord with properties throughout the Forest of Dean including Newent. Advise they are currently planning a series of community events throughout the District during the summer holidays. They would like to hold an event at the Recreation Ground which