

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19 February 2014 at 7 pm at the Newbiggin Sports and Community Centre.

PRESENT:

Councillors: W Rogers (Chairman)
L Burns M Cholerton R Dixon
M Peden S Todd

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: 4 members of the public

The Chairman opened the meeting with prayer.

OPEN SESSION

There were no questions from members of the public.

PRESENTATION – Newbiggin by the Sea Genealogy Project

The Chairman welcomed Hilton Dawson who gave a presentation of the local genealogy project to which local people were making valuable contributions to document stories; demonstrating value and respect; learning about past times in Newbiggin; shared bonds of genetics experience language and history; sense of identity and perspective on the future.

A major resource was being built up with an on-line database held on Myheritage available to everyone free of charge and was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund to 2015 and increasingly photographs documents voice and video recordings would be added. The grant aid allowed the employment of a part time development officer to work in partnership to significantly increase the database; train volunteers; hold workshops and events; scan documents and produce displays newsletters and publications.

It was believed that this was the first project of its kind in the world aiming to achieve a database of everyone who had ever lived in Newbiggin by the Sea and contributions were spreading across the world. Longer term aims included developing a Family History Centre to provide a venue for on-line access and link organisations housing material and exhibition base. The Town Council was encouraged to support the direction of the project and Members were appreciative of what had been achieved.

C095/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Thompson.

C096/13 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

C097/13 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Grant Committee held on 15 January 2014 were received for information the Committee having acted under delegated powers.

C098/13 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

No new interests were declared at this point.

C099/13 EVENTS LEAFLETS

Information had been requested and arrangements were in hand to finalize details of events being arranged by various organizations. The same arrangements as last year for design printing and distribution were agreed although if the printing could be completed in time then initial distribution could take place at the Alnwick event on 19 March.

RESOLVED that: The Town Clerk make arrangements for the design printing and distribution of the Events Leaflet for 2014.

C100/13 2014 PROJECT WORKS PROGRAMME

The Town Clerk referred to the inclusion of budget provision to undertake environmental improvement schemes around the town and to discussions with Neighbourhood Services commencing with the planting schemes along the bay. It was hoped to implement schemes for the three main areas needing attention at the Horse Shoe Steps; south end of the promenade; Vernon Place/Little Couple ahead of the main summer season and consider other schemes around the town. A small group of Members would develop proposals with Neighbourhood Services.

RESOLVED that: Councillors Cholerton; Peden and Rogers develop a project works programme.

C101/13 LOCAL SERVICE CONTRACTS FOR 2014-15

The local service arrangements had operated over the last two years with County Neighbourhood Services providing the inspection and repair service. It had been indicated that there would be no increase in contract prices for 2014-15 and that there may be some scope to arrange direct early contract works for public seating.

RESOLVED that: the Town Clerk be authorized to enter into Local Service Agreements with Neighbourhood services or arrange local contracts as appropriate for 2014-15.

C102/13 PUBLIC REALM SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS

- 1.1 The Town Clerk reported on a recent approach from Northumberland County Council to discuss the direction of the new administration regarding local service provision and it did not intend to reduce front line services further or to transfer any more local services to Town and Parish Councils.
- 1.2 Existing County and Town services would be delivered to the same standard as the current year but it did recognize that there was little or no prospect for service improvements without a partnership approach with Town Councils. A pilot arrangement to enhance public realm services had been carried out with Choppington Parish Council based on weekly grass-cutting and discussions were progressing with the larger Town Councils where locally branded town services were likely to be introduced based on dedicated area teams.

- 1.3 As the principle could apply to any of the local street scene services Members were asked to consider in principle whether an alternative delivery model with a jointly funded team with its own identity dedicated to Newbiggin to deliver enhanced environmental services in an efficient and cost effective way should be developed further.
- 1.4 Members were generally supportive of the approach but needed to see the costs associated with a flexible dedicated team to cover the environmental priorities of Newbiggin.

RESOLVED that: the Town Council agrees in principle to consider the introduction of a local scheme partnership to enhance public realm services in the town.

Signed by the Chairman: Date:.....