

## NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 12 November 2014 at 7 pm at The St Bartholomew's Church Centre Newbiggin by-the-Sea.**

### PRESENT:

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

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** 10 members of the public

### PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- A member of the public referred to the comments submitted by the Town Council in relation to the planning application for the town centre development; the comments of the Conservation Officer; a petition from twenty per cent of the local population wanting to retain the existing buildings and enquired if the Town Councillors would withhold a financial contribution to any scheme that involved demolition.

The Chairman advised that the response had been the consensus that was reached between the Town Councillors on the matters regarding the proposed construction not in keeping with the Conservation Area or sympathetic use of materials together with parking issues and individual Councillors had been free to make their own observations. No money had been paid to Arch or NCC although the Town Council remained unanimously in favour of a town centre scheme incorporating local services. The planning application had been withdrawn and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would be meeting with Arch to learn of its proposals.

- A local resident referred to contradictory views about plans that had been seen prior to the consultation for the planning application and the Chairman confirmed that Town Councillors had seen only the ground floor plan and artists impression which had changed when formal plans were subsequently published. He reiterated the principle in favour of bringing services into the town centre.
- It was stated that the people of Newbiggin were entitled to representation and wanted the existing buildings retained. A member of the public wanted to know if they could be confident their views would be taken forward when private meetings were taking place. The Chairman had attended only one meeting which had confirmed the support of the County Council for development in Newbiggin. Town Councillors did try to represent the views of the community although this had to take account of all representations they received. The Town Council would respond to specific plans as they came forward.
- Reference was made to previous Town Council minutes and the public toilet references woven through them and a resident raised the issue of confidentiality. It was confirmed that this related to the normal issues of commercial confidentiality involved in property acquisition and development involving other parties.

- A local resident referring to the intended meeting with Arch asked that public consultation be requested so that views could be put forward. It was confirmed that such a request had already been made and would be followed up.
- In response to a question regarding the current public toilet project the Chairman advised that the initial underpinning works had been completed with the site reinstated awaiting project developments for the facilities that were needed in the town.

**C042/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Burns; Peden and Thompson who were attending the Academy Awards Celebration.

**C043/14 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**C043/14 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Grant Committee held on 08 October 2014 were received.

**C044/14 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

Councillor Rogers declared a non pecuniary interest in the Wansbeck Food Bank.

**C045/14 ANNUAL RETURN ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS FOR 2013/2014 and EXTERNAL AUDIT**

It was reported that the External Auditors had completed the audit of the Annual Return which incorporated the accounting and governance statements and the satisfactory report of the Internal Auditor as previously reported. This confirmed that the information in the Annual Return was in accordance with proper practices with no matters of concern and the Town Clerk was thanked for the work in relation to the Council's accounts.

**RESOLVED that: the Auditor's report Annual Return and Accounting Statements be agreed.**

**C046/14 ST MARY'S CHURCH WOODHORN – GRANT SUPPORT**

Councillor Rogers reported on developments with the plan to renovate St Mary's Church at Woodhorn with an application to be developed for Grant Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A Committee was progressing a pre-feasibility study on the building ahead of the main application to establish the condition of the building and clarify that aspect of repair required as a result of roof splay and investigate the condition of the walls. A separate application to fund this initial work had the support of the County Councillors. The importance of this building to the local community had been confirmed in the Local Plan in 2010 when it was ranked fourth with 38 per cent in the top priorities.

**RESOLVED that: the Town Council welcomed the report and endorsed the planned grant process.**

**C047/14 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION NEWBIGGIN BRANCH – REMEMBRANCE DAY CONTRIBUTION**

A small budget was maintained to contribute to the local branch of the Royal British Legion and the Town Clerk had been notified that costs associated with the Remembrance Services relating to the bands meant it was no longer adequate. In line with the practices of other local councils these costs should not be met by the charity. Reference was also made to the cleaning of the two Memorials and plaques and that further improvement works were to be carried out at Memorial Park including the removal of the wreath art feature.

**RESOLVED that: the budget be increased by £250 from balances and the donation be made to the Royal British Legion to include the additional costs.**

**C048/14 WANSBECK FOOD BANK - CONTRIBUTION**

The Town Council had been invited to again support the work of the Wansbeck Food Bank and it was confirmed that there were local families in significant need.

**RESOLVED that: a contribution of £300 be approved.**

**C049/14 PORTAS DONATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS LIGHTING**

The Town Clerk reported that the Portas Team had offered to donate £10,000 towards further Christmas lighting in the town that would have to be arranged for the following year. It had to be acknowledged that switch and time clock works would be required to each column and that there would be annual revenue costs in the region of £200 for each additional motif for electrical testing and installation.

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) the offer from the Portas Team be gratefully accepted;**
- ii) additional revenue costs be incorporated in the next budget.**

**C050/14 PIT WHEEL PROJECT**

An opportunity had arisen with County Neighbourhood Services to have a half pit wheel transported and installed near the entrance of the former Colliery. The works including the construction of a concrete plinth would cost in the region of £2,500 which could be met from current balances. Members were keen to support this scheme and look at the suggested site.

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) the scheme to install a half pit wheel at the Colliery be agreed;**
- ii) The costs be met from balances.**

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