

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 14 October 2015 at 7 pm at the St Bartholomew's Church Centre Newbiggin.

PRESENT:

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

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: 12 members of the public

OPEN SESSION

- Referring to the issue of planning consent for the town centre development a local resident enquired about the timetable for demolition of the existing buildings. The Chairman advised that this was not yet known but referred to the conditions attached to the planning consent one of which required a contract to be let for the development to be carried out before demolition could take place.
- The same resident concerned about the closure of the Post Office and its effect on local businesses advised of rumours concerning the sale of the property for a different business purpose. The property was owned independently of the Post Office franchise and the Chairman confirmed that he had been advised of ongoing discussions with parties in the town to operate the service but nothing more at this stage. Everyone would welcome a quick positive resolution to re-instate a much needed local service.
- The intended demolition of the buildings on Front Street was again raised by a local resident concerned over the risk of vermin spreading when demolition commenced and was assured that relevant precautions would be taken by the developer. Issues over parking arrangements and the location of plant during the demolition and construction period were raised and again one of the planning conditions required agreement of such arrangements prior to commencing these operations.
- An objector to the town centre planning application asked how it was that it could be approved by the County Council in view of the number of objections which did not appear to have been taken into account. The Planning Committee had received all of the papers which were substantial and contained all of the objections and heard representations at the meeting so were aware of all of the issues. Members had to balance the best interests of the whole community.
- A fear that changes or additions would be made to the development were expressed in view of previous experience and the meeting was advised that a condition required the development to be constructed in accordance with the approved plans. Any changes would require a further application that would be available for public consultation. It was also confirmed that the application was not the County Councils but even if it had been it was the normal national process for statutory Planning Authorities to determine their own applications in accordance with the planning requirements.

- A local trader was concerned that there was still no evidence of new connections for additional Christmas light features particularly where new lamp columns were being installed as part of the street lighting renewal programme. The Chairman referred to meetings and discussions with Neighbourhood Services and a recent county presentation regarding the programme and the Town Clerk advised that he had received assurances from the Street Lighting Manager that the works would be completed by the end of the month. The low powered lamps were apparently to be replaced by the contractor at no cost to the County Council.
- Reference was made to the ongoing dialogue with the County Council and Active Northumberland in connection with the programme for the four day Tall Ships event planned for next year in Blyth and opportunities to host visits or promote Newbiggin by-the-Sea. Relevant officers had been advised.

C046/15 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M Boon.

C047/15 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 09 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. It was confirmed that the decision regarding the community newsletter was in principle and possible costs were not yet known.

C048/15 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 09 September 2015 and 30 September 2015 were received for information.

C049/15 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Grant Committees held on 09 September 2015 and 28 September 2015 were received for information.

C050/15 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 28 September 2015 were received and approved.

C051/15 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS No new interests were declared at this point.

C052/15 COUNTY COUNCIL – LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2016-17

Members were invited to consider any priority submissions to the County Council for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan for 2016-17. Previously support had been indicated for two safety measures following the request to introduce a 20 mph speed limit in the Emerson Road area of the Colliery and parking restrictions in Bridge Street where vehicles were parking and reversing out into Front Street endangering pedestrians. Members supported both matters and were advised that the existing traffic order limiting access to Bridge Street could be enforced by Northumbria Police and in the short term should be referred to the Community Officers.

The Chairman also referred to developments in the town and looking ahead felt that the County Council should be asked to look at extending the road at Central Parkway from the Academy to the roundabout at Woodhorn Bridge. It would be compatible with Core Strategy representations for future development and recent strategy for the reintroduction of trains and a possible SENRUG phase 2 to Newbiggin.

RESOLVED that the Town Council:

- i) Recognizes the serious hazard from vehicles in Bridge Street and requests the County Council to look urgently at the problem to provide a suitable solution;**
- ii) Agrees the priority request for the Emerson Road area;**
- iii) Requests the County Council to start the process to establish the road link to Woodhorn Bridge.**

C053/15

NEWBIGGIN TRADERS ASSOCIATION – SECOND CHRISTMAS TREE

Members were invited to consider a recent request from the Newbiggin Traders Association seeking to have a second Christmas tree provided at Dixon's Corner this year as part of the town's seasonal lighting display.

Substantial investment was taking place with the acquisition of additional motifs extending the displays at Spital entrance; Gibson Street; Front Street; Woodhorn Road and town centre motifs replaced. New switches and time clocks were being installed this month in another twelve lamp columns.

Some initial information had been obtained by the Town Clerk regarding the requirements for the additional installation; subsequent annual storage testing and installation costs and there were concerns over the timescale for additional works.

A local trader outlined his view of the history of the request and associated costs and the Chairman confirmed that the first formal approach to the Town Council had been the previous week.

Members expressed a number of reservations including possible precedent and the need to look closely at the ongoing costs and means of funding and requested further information.

RESOLVED that: the Town Clerk investigate the actual costs and timescale for a second tree with the County Street Lighting Division and advise Members urgently by e-mail.

URGENT BUSINESS There were no items of urgent business requiring decisions of the Town Council and the Chairman agreed to the following information item:

Councillor Dixon raised the need for better public toilet facilities following complaints from visitors and it was noted that those within the Bowling Pavilion at Milburn Park were often inaccessible owing to the gates being locked.

C054/15

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act relating to financial and business affairs.

C055/15

CHRISTMAS LIGHTING QUOTATIONS

A report was tabled concerning the tender exercise for the installation of the Christmas lights including all of the new features. Some financial information was not available for unavoidable reasons and Members wished to have a complete picture before deciding how to proceed.

RESOLVED that: a report be circulated as soon as possible with full information from all tenderers.

Councillors M Peden and A Thompson declared non pecuniary interests as members of Newbiggin by-the Sea Partnership Limited and withdrew from the meeting prior to consideration of the following item of business.

C056/15

GAP FUNDING – YOUTH DEVELOPMENT TUTORS

Following on from discussions at the Finance Committee further information had been obtained from the trustees but it now transpired that Big Lottery grant had been approved much earlier than anticipated. The Trustees of the Partnership had expressed their appreciation for the Council considering gap funding but it was no longer necessary and the youth development work would continue without interruption.

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