

NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10 February 2016
at 7 pm at St Bartholomew's Church Centre Newbiggin by-the-Sea.**

PRESENT:

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

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: 11 members of the public

OPEN SESSION

- Referring to previous minutes recording the on-going sand problems at the beach and promenade a local resident advised that he was qualified to operate the type of machinery that had been used recently and was prepared to volunteer his services to assist the local team when necessary. The Chairman expressed his thanks for the offer which would be referred to Neighbourhood Services for their advice on operating their machinery in these areas.
- A local resident enquired as to the remit of the Town Council regarding the inspection of footways particularly in respect of the Avenues and connections through to the Welfare Estate which had also suffered from fly tipping for a number of years. These were matters for the County Council as the Highways Authority and would be referred to Neighbourhood Services. A Councillor reminded the public to contact the County Council concerning such matters so that they were logged in their system.
- The road past the Health Centre to the school identified as Central Parkway was referred to by a local resident who was concerned over the problems of speeding cars; delivery lorry's and buses made more dangerous by the large number of parked cars associated with the Health Centre and the dentists. These matters would again be referred to the Highways Authority to continue the conversations to look for solutions in this area as the large requirement for staff and patients' parking was exacerbated by the permit system recently introduced in the residential street.

An associated issue in this area was the use of 4 x 4 vehicles and motor bikes over the grass mounds in the vicinity of Central Park and over the open spaces to Collingwood and Long Park leading to the grass being churned up. Even the footpath adjacent to the children's play area was being used by vehicles which increased the danger to local children. The use of the 101 service to have these problems logged by the Police was again emphasised and the Town Council would contact the Neighbourhood Police.

- A local resident had produced a copy letter from one of the groups (Seaton Park Medical Group) operating from the Health Centre which was intending to withdraw from the town. The Chairman advised that he would speak to the group to get better facts and seek a corporate response from the community. Referring to the response to the Town Plan indicating the need for improved health centre facilities the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would liaise as facilities were needed in the town without requiring elderly residents to travel to adjoining towns.

- The Chairman referred to a further list of questions submitted by a local resident who was not present at the meeting:
- 1. Under the item 'Newbiggin Development Trust – a way forward' -why did the Chair of the Town Council outline a potential Development Trust Plan involving unnamed business people he had been in discussion with but fail to mention to the Council a meeting he had attended as Chair of the Town Council on the 1st of December 2015 involving a different group of people which also addressed the formation of a Development Trust?

In suggesting a way forward to the Council would it not have been reasonable to outline all potential developments in this area rather than only one?

The Chairman advised that other Members of the Town Council had been present at the meeting and he saw no reason to mention anything further. While not being sure exactly what was meant he had attended a meeting at the Centre with other representatives of the town and another meeting at the Town Council with Portas Town Team representatives. He believed a Development Trust should be independent but accountable to the Town Council on some issues and didn't think that had been seen in the past three years.

- 2. Could the Chair explain his statement made at the Town Council meeting (but not minuted) that he was 'not convinced' the individuals involved in the Town Team Development Trust initiative 'had the necessary skills'?

The Chairman advised that was not what he had said but that he had felt that those involved did not have the necessary range of skills required.

- 3. Please could you explain why the required public notice for the Grant Committee Meeting held on the 3rd February 2016 was not issued?

The notice should have been issued but there had been no opportunity for the Town Clerk to post the notice after confirming the availability of Members for the meeting. While strictly speaking notice should have been given it was for a meeting that the public could not attend.

- 4. Please can you clarify when the Environmental Working Group received delegated powers from the Town Council to make decisions on contracts of this nature and what the financial limits to those powers are?

The Environmental Working Group had not received general delegated powers and would only makes decisions on matters specifically delegated to it. Everything else was information or advisory.

C066/15 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Thompson.

C067/15 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Although no objection had been raised at the last meeting Councillor Burns indicated that she did not agree with the Precept. She also referred to the debate regarding a development trust and wanted to reiterate some of her own views as Chair of the Portas Town Team. The Chairman advised that he could not agree with some of her comments and had allowed her

to speak last in the debate as requested and no vote had been taken.

C068/15 MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 13 January 2016 were received. The Chairman confirmed that he had met with County Council representatives regarding the highway flooding problems. The gullies had been cleared and work would follow up with the drains and make progress in the vicinity of the car wash business.

C069/15 MINUTES OF THE GRANT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Grant Committee held on 03 February 2016 were received.

C070/15 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS Councillor Cholerton declared an interest in item 9 as a member of the Parochial Church Council. The Chairman confirmed that while he was a member of the Church community he was not an officer.

C071/15 ENHANCED SERVICES FOR 2016 – NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

The Town Clerk outlined discussions with the members of the Environmental Working Group with a view to having more impact on the environmental works around the town and more input in the work programme and priorities for enhanced services in the 2016 season. It was hoped that an early start could be made as there was a lot of work to be done to keep the local services up to standard and well maintained.

Members had various comments regarding the profile of the local service; the scope of work to be undertaken; setting priorities and monitoring completion which would be discussed with Neighbourhood Services.

It was recognized that arrangements needed to be made to put the employees in place but detailed work over the core local services could well depend on changes in county standards which were not yet known. There were issues for the Easter holiday period as it would take place before the enhanced arrangements could commence and it was known that there would be no weekend working unless the overtime was paid for by the Town Council. A trial of contingency arrangements would take place with larger bins for the Bank Holiday.

RESOLVED that: the Town Council arrange for enhanced services undertaken by County Neighbourhood Services for the 2016 season within the approved budget.

C072/15 MEETING SCHEDULE

The suggested schedule of meeting dates for 2016-17 had been circulated and the Town Clerk confirmed it was based on the Town Council's usual practice to meet on the second Wednesday except for August and December when the Finance Committee would meet to consider budget recommendations.

RESOLVED that: the Meetings Schedule be agreed for 2016-17 as shown in the appendix.

C073/15 TOWN PLAN RESPONSES

A report had been compiled by the Town Clerk from the responses to the Town Plan consultation circulated throughout the town in the Newsletter. Responses to the questions posed regarding the mission statement; aims and objectives; projects; a way forward with suggested project development over the next 10 years were all very positive.

Overall scoring and first priorities were shown in the tables derived from the indications in Appendix 1 and individual comments and suggestions were included in Appendix 2. All eleven suggested schemes were supported by the community with every scheme being someone's first priority.

The Chairman was pleased with the positive response to the issues and commented on the fantastic response from the public to environmental improvements; enhanced partnership with Neighbourhood Services; Nipper Transport Scheme and Youth Development Schemes which was supported by four out of every five respondents. There would be further detailed consideration of the responses and weighting but all suggested schemes had a positive response.

RESOLVED that the Town Council agree:

- (i) the retention of the mission statement; aims and objectives; the specific existing scheme arrangements in a new edition of the Town Plan all of which were well supported;**
- (ii) to include all eleven new priority projects as set out in the report; and**
- (iii) to examine the additional matters from the public referred to in Appendix 2.**

C074/15 CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY NEWS - THE POINT

The Chairman advised that that this new community newsletter had received a positive response from traders and circulation was increasing with copies to be given free of charge from various venues. A contribution of £500 was requested from the Town Council and as well as a monthly article from the Chair it was suggested that meeting dates and events could be included.

RESOLVED that: a contribution of £500 be made from the publications budget.

URGENT BUSINESS The Chairman agreed to the following item of urgent business:

C075/15 MEMORIAL SEAT AND UPDATES

A request for a memorial seat for Rita Clark had been received by the Chairman who would advise the family of the likely cost and that the Town Council would accept future maintenance arrangements. While it was not possible to install further seats at the Church Point now, except that some picnic tables could perhaps be replaced, there were various other locations around the town.

The Chairman advised that a meeting had taken place with Pam Hartburn on behalf of the Lay Readers for Northumberland who would be celebrating the 150th Anniversary at an event in Newbiggin by-the-Sea at the Maritime Centre on 9th July.

Following on discussion regarding issues arising from the development of the former Windsor School site at the last meeting the Chairman reported that he had visited the site and met with the Site Manager who he had found to be co-operative. Significant quantities of slurry had been removed off site and the base area for the bungalows would soon be ready and utilised for internal parking and the fence line moved back to accommodate articulated lorries.

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