

Newton Parish Council

Minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 21 September 2016 at 7:30pm
in Car Colston Village Hall

Councillors present: Carlyle, Dobson, Forward, Goulder, Shouler, Simms & Topping

Borough Councillor Lawrence

Officer in attendance: Sharon Pyke

Also present: 12 members of the public

Immediately following the opening of the meeting, the agenda was halted as Councillor Dobson questioned the legitimacy of the meeting. The locum Clerk could see no reason not to proceed as the statutory notice had been provided to call a meeting. Borough Councillor Lawrence suggested that the meeting proceed & those concerned Councillors take up any issue with Rushcliffe's Monitoring Officer. The Acting Chairman called a vote on whether to proceed. It was agreed the meeting should proceed. The locum Clerk enquired if Councillors Dobson & Goulder would be participating in the meeting, a response was received that they would decide as the meeting progressed.

77/16. Chairman

To elect the Chairman of the Council & to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillors Goulder & Simms were both nominated & seconded.

AGREED: Councillor Simms is elected as Chairman & signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

78/16. Vice-Chairman

To elect the Vice Chairman of the Council & to receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillors Carlyle & Goulder were both nominated & seconded

AGREED: Councillor Carlyle is elected as Vice-Chairman & signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

79/16. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence & to consider whether to approve reasons given

All Councillors were present

County Councillor Cutts sent her apologies

80/16. Declaration of Interests Pecuniary & Non-pecuniary

To receive declarations of Interest on agenda items

Councillor Forward declared a non-pecuniary interest in minute ref. 88/16, Planning

81/16. Minutes

To approve and sign the minutes from the meeting of the 27 July 2016

The minutes were signed subject to confirmation whether Councillor Morgan was present at July's meeting.

82/16. Public Recess – 15 minutes

To receive representation from the Public on items on the agenda

Borough Councillor Lawrence provided an update on the current Romany stay which has been extended due to a medical problem with one of the children. A resident reported fly-tipping & human faeces down toward the industrial estate. Borough Councillor Lawrence said they were in a better spot than previous Romany stays & that Rushcliffe Council had assigned a Liaison Officer who was talking with the Romany. The Romany stay has created secondary problems as land-owners have increased their security resulting in entrances gates to the industrial estate being closed which has resulted in heavy goods vehicles having to use Wellington Avenue. Borough Councillor Lawrence said any temporary Romany stay incurs unexpected charges & that the law treats travellers differently to members of the public. A resident asked if any preventative measures could be taken in the future. The difficulty is the land the Romany is on is managed by the Highways Agency as it is Crown property. The Council Liaison Officer has said that this group of Romany has kept their word in the past & moved on when they said they would. Councillor Goulder said green spaces around Wellington Avenue where temporary concrete blocks have been placed would be subject to landscaping changes such as raised embankments.

For some time a Working Party has met which consist of a mix of residents & Councillors, to discuss play provision, since Phase II of the Newton development appears to be some way off. The delivery of Phase II would bring community facilities & infrastructure. The Parish Council has recently consulted the community on the provision of Play Areas. No locations have been agreed nor any solutions chosen. It is felt the existing play area is unsuitable for some age groups. Councillor Shouler & consultant Lee Sycamore will present the findings from the community questionnaire in minute ref 86/16, Play Area. A resident suggested that for one of the potential sites a drainage survey is required as the area has a tendency to become water logged. It was confirmed that all of the necessary surveys would be conducted as part of any planning application. Councillor Shouler also made mention that rather than tarmac, rubber matting that allowed grass to grow through has been made a provision within the plans so as to encourage efficient water drainage.

Councillor Shouler said that the Working Group's motives were to do the best by Newton.

83/16. External Reports

To receive any reports from Borough, County Councillors or the Police

Borough Councillor Lawrence reported:

- The situation regarding the travellers was reasonably quiet
- The findings from the Electoral Commission will mean changes to the County Council in May 2017 although it will not impact Newton

84/16. Councillor Vacancies

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No election was requested therefore the 2 vacancies are available by co-option at the next Parish Council meeting. To agree to advertise vacancies on the noticeboards & website

Borough Councillor Lawrence appealed to those members of the public who had turned out for the Parish Council meeting this evening to consider stepping forward to make Newton community stronger.

AGREED: to advertise the vacancies with the intention of co-opting at October's meeting.

85/16. Romany

To discuss issues arising from the Romany stay & agree any actions

This agenda item refers to the previous Romany stay on Wellington Avenue.

There had been some frustrations aimed at the Parish Council by some residents but there was little the Parish Council could do as the Parish Council is not the land-owners. The Borough Council were involved in liaising with the Trenchard Close Residents Company & the Romany. The Borough Council supplied basic domestic hygiene equipment & co-ordinated the clean-up operation after the Romany had left. Once the Possession Order was served the Romany moved on within 3 days. Councillor Golder responded by saying the Romany moved on after bailiffs were contracted rather than the result of the Possession Order. The Trenchard Close Residents Company had incurred charges of circa £1,500 for the hire of the concrete blocks & for the clean-up work. Borough Councillor Lawrence said that the Borough Council had followed due process.

86/16. Play Area

To receive a report & any recommendations from Play Area Working Group. To discuss & agree next steps

Lee Sycamore, a consultant to Newton Parish Council & Councillor Shouler gave separate updates on the proposed Play Areas. Lee Sycamore re-iterated that nothing has been decided on the number or location of Play Areas & that the meetings of the Working Group have been open & transparent with the minutes of the meetings published to the website. The presentation on the possible sites & proposed facilities will be published to the Parish Council's website.

Councillor Shouler provided an update on the questionnaire process & the findings. It had been decided to proceed with a hand delivered, paper questionnaire so that every household had the opportunity to have their say. 97 surveys were returned & 2 letters; which is an average response. Overall, 80% were in favour with 20% not in favour. Councillor Shouler took the Parish Council through the findings which also included residents' comments. This presentation will also be published to the Parish Council's website.

Councillor Topping requested that indicative pricing be included to the Play Areas presentation from full development at each of the proposed sites to the cost of a refurbishment of the Play Area on Wellington Avenue.

The Parish Council has previously committed up to £20,000 of match funding in support of grant award applications. The Parish Council now needs to consider how to proceed.

AGREED: to make an October agenda item

Councillor Carlyle said that provided a month to build a costing profile for each site that included insurance & maintenance.

87/16. Finance

To agree payments & to sign the corresponding cheques

Two payments for the Playground inspections & grounds maintenance were presented to the Parish Council for payment. The cheques were signed by Councillors Goulder & Shouler.

It was noted that changes to the bank mandate to include all Councillors as signatories still remained outstanding as well as a change of address for receipt of the Parish Council's bank statements.

The whereabouts of the Parish Council's bank statements needs to be established.

88/16. Planning

Conditional approval: 16/01236/FUL – Conversion of former RAF control tower to single dwelling, change of use of old fire station & workshop to domestic use

Noted by the Parish Council

89/16. The Chairman proposed that the following item on the agenda be closed to the public as it relates to HR issues & that the item should move to the end of the agenda.

AGREED

90/16. Parish Hall

To receive an update on the Parish Hall plans

No response has been received from Nottingham LLP.

91/16. Grounds Maintenance

Status on obtaining quotations for next year's Grounds Maintenance

No progress has been made on this item. Names of contractors to approach to be sent through to Councillor Forward.

92/16. Chairman's Announcements

To receive Chairman's announcements, if any

The Chairman had no announcements.

93/16. Correspondence

To receive correspondence & agree any actions

Councillor Carlyle was in receipt of a letter from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) that had been sent originally to Euan Temple. Also, a letter sent to the White House on Main Street regarding their overgrown hedge has been returned to sender. An approach to be made to the County Council as it is a Highways issue.

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Councillor Shouler had received 2 letters in response to the Play Area questionnaires.

94/16. Future Agenda Items

To consider any items for future meeting agenda

- Misuse of Wellington Avenue Play Area
- The installation of a speed sign on Main Street
- Identify trees with Tree Preservation Orders & whether more Tree Preservation Orders should be considered
- HR Committee to be appointed in line with protocol

Members of the public still present were asked to leave at 9:35pm

89/16. Clerk

- a. To receive an update on applications for the position of Clerk & any recommendations

1 application was received from an applicant who was interviewed by Councillors Simms & Topping. It was felt that whilst this person would be diligent, they were not sufficiently experienced for a challenging Parish Council. Councillor Simms has subsequently spoken with the applicant & explained that it would be too much pressure for a first time Clerk.

The search for a Clerk continues. Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (NALC) has offered to advertise the vacancy & circulate amongst their Clerk network.

- b. To review the contract to support the Parish Council & agree whether to proceed

Euan Temple has administratively supported the Parish Council during the search for a suitably qualified Clerk. Euan Temple has worked for 3 months pro bono. A simple, 'no obligations on either party' contract was circulated for consideration by the Parish Council. The rates proposed are in line with market rates.

The Chairman to discuss with Euan Temple how to manage the arrangement.

Decision to sign the contract deferred until October.

- c. To discuss & agree a way forward for the Parish Council whilst it does not have a Clerk to fulfil the roles of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer

AGREED: To ask Sharon Pyke to continue as locum Clerk for October's meeting.

Meeting closed at 10:04pm