



NEWPORT (Shropshire) TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
held on
Wednesday 22nd January 2020
at
The Guildhall, High Street, Newport**

PRESENT: Cllrs Lyn Fowler
Tom King
Alan Lloyd
Tim Nelson
Mrs Stiles
Mrs Dyas
Mr Elkes
Mr Loewendahl

IN ATTENDANCE: Louise Tunks – RFO / Deputy Town Clerk

L&ES/46/19-20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Nil

L&ES/47/19-20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Nil

L&ES/48/19-20 PUBLIC SESSION - There being no members of the public wishing to speak the meeting continued.

L&ES/49/19-20 MINUTES - Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23rd October 2019 be approved as a true record.

L&ES/50/19-20 FINANCE - Members noted a copy of the latest L&ES income & expenditure report.

L&ES/51/19-20 Budget and Fees – Members noted a report on the 2020-21 budget and fees resolved at the Town Council Meeting in January;

***TC/169/19-20 - Precept / Budget Setting** - Members had met on numerous occasions in recent months to discuss aspects of the budget for 2020/21 and noted that an agreed final draft budget had been proposed (along with a set of fees) at the December 2019 Town Council meeting.*

*With there being no proposed amendments to the budget for 2020/21 members **RESOLVED** that a precept be issued, requiring Telford & Wrekin Council to pay Newport Town Council £471,500 (Four*

hundred and seventy one thousand five hundred pounds) to meet its expenditure for the financial year 2020/21.

Town Council Fees -Members RESOLVED: the table of fees at Appendix 3 be approved for the financial year 2020/21

L&ES/52/19-20 NEWPORT IN BLOOM - Members noted a report from Newport in Bloom (extract at Appendix 1). Members were informed that the colour scheme for 2020 will be Purple & white with lime green / dark green foliage.

Members were advised that following the success of the watering last year, Newport in Bloom had authorised for Idverde to undertake the watering in 2020.

L&ES/53/19-20 Canal Trust – Members noted a report from the Canal Trust and Cllr Nelson (extract at Appendix 2). Cllr Nelson also gave a verbal update with regards to canal signage, gates, proposed works and the black shed. Cllr Nelson asked members if the Town Council would carry out the planning application process with assistance from the canal trust for the lock gates, Members agreed for officers to submit the planning application with support from the canal trust and submit payment from N/L 4355 canal enhancements.

L&ES/54/19-20 Christmas Lights Switch-on

- a. Members received a report on Christmas light Switch on event held on 29th November 2019, Members considered debrief on what worked well and what could be improved on Members **RESOLVED to;**
 - I. **Defer the discussion of the fair being held to the next Town Council meeting in February**
 - II. **Defer the Guildhall event guest list to the next Town Council meeting in February**
 - III. **Members agreed to reflect the report and comments made on the night and create a list of proposals to confirm the event schedule for 2020 at the next L&ES meeting.**
- b. Members **RESOLVED to set a date of Friday 27th November 2020 as the forthcoming Christmas Light Switch on date.**

L&ES/55/19-20 Heritage Open Day – Members considered once again taking part in the National Heritage Open Days by holding tours in the Guildhall for the public. The Festival runs from 11th September to 20th September and **RESOLVED to holding the event on Saturday 19th September 2020.**

L&ES/56/19-20 ALLOTMENTS - Members noted a report from the allotment officer on the allotments (**extract at Appendix 3**), Members were advised that there was still an amount of £1512.30 owed to Water Plus for the period of 21 February 2019 to 13th November 2019. Members acknowledged that NTC have not received invoices since October 2016 and agreed that water has been used and monies were owed however members agreed that the amount of £1512.30 owed to Water Plus for the period of 21 February 2019 to 13th November 2019 is a miscalculation. Members **RESOLVED to pay the invoice for £1512.30 continue to receive invoices for future bills and regularly monitor the meter readings.**

L&ES/57/19-20 ALLOTMENTS – Members were advised of the following minutes;

L&ES/45/19-20 Budget Recommendations 2020-21

Expenditure - Members were asked to identify priorities for the L&ES committee that are likely to have an impact on budgetary recommendations for the financial year 2020/21. **Members discussed the insufficient income for Boughy Road and Meadow View Road allotments to cover maintenance/ water and skip hire (twice per year), Members asked the officers to produce a comparison to other local allotments.**

R&F/32/19-20 Allotments Members received a report with regards to Allotment charge comparison.

Members discussed the rising costs in water usage including the latest very large invoice received for Meadow View Road allotments and discussed options for reducing the charges. Members also discussed the rising costs in skip hire for both sites. Members expressed that they envisage the allotments becoming cost neutral. Members asked the RFO to;

- ***Turn off the water immediately at the mains on both sites and monitor the readings to rule out a possible water leak.***
- ***Continue to dispute and investigate the large invoice received for 3 months usage.***
- ***Cancel the direct debit for both allotment sites and pay via invoice by debit card until the dispute is resolved.***
- ***Discuss further action required at the next L & ES meeting.***

Members were advised that the L&ES recommendations for a comparison is still under construction and that the R&F recommendations with regards to the water supply have been undertaken.

Members were given a draft list of items of expenditure in providing the allotment service.

Members were asked to consider and confirm if the items should be included as a benefit in the fees for allotment holders or not.

The Officer asked members to confirm for future reference which of the benefits listed were to continue as benefits and which items should not be included, to establish a cost neutral allotment service.

Members **RESOLVED to consider all expenditure and confirm at the next L&ES meeting in April their proposals.**

Allotment Extension

Members expressed that the allotment extension contain wider community benefits to include green gym plot, plots more diverse and Apiary friendly.

L&ES/58/19-20 CEMETERY & AMENITIES OFFICER REPORTS

- a. Members noted a report on the cemetery (**appendix 4**)
- b. Members noted a report on St Nicholas Churchyard (**appendix 5**)
- c. Members noted a report on Amenity Areas (**appendix 5**)

L&ES/59/19-20 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Members RESOLVED that ‘in view of the special nature of the business about to be conducted, (*that is*; St Nicholas Churchyard lamp replacement quotes) it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA

Leisure & Environmental Services Committee Meeting
To be held on Wednesday 22nd January 2020

L&ES/60/19-20 St Nicholas Churchyard lamp replacement quotes

Members received a report on the Churchyard lamp replacement quotes and **RESOLVED that there was not enough detail on the lamp detail to award the works and therefore asked the officer to contact each contractor to obtain further information to enable a contractor to be appointed.**

Signed.....

Date

_____end_____

LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MEETING
NEWPORT IN BLOOM REPORT – JANUARY 2020

Fundraising: November Quiz Night £580.00.

Fundraising Events 2020: Street Collection April & September. Plant & Book Sale 30th May. November Quiz. Christmas Fair early December.

Baskets & Planters to go up Sunday 31st May 2020. Come down Sunday 4th October 2020. The colours this summer, purple and white flowers, dark and light green foliage.

Ide Verde confirmed okay to water this Summer.

New Projects: Refurbish the Beds in front of Masala Restaurant. Replanting trees damaged down the Old Railway Line. Approximately 30 trees, plus 40 Saplings. Church Aston Cubs to help with the planting. Continue with planting the Canal footpath.

We have been approached by a horticulturalist who is interested in how the pool or reservoir near Juniper Row could be given a facelift. We hope to meet up in the next few weeks to see if this is possible.

By the summer we hope to have in place new Newport in Bloom signs to all entrances into town. We are awaiting confirmation on sponsorship from business in and around the town for each one.

We shall not be entering any competitions this year.

Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust (SNCT) Report for the January 2020 meeting of the Leisure & Environment Committee

The gate project is progressing well:

- The steel plates have been removed from one side of the gates. This has revealed the nuts holding the steel plates on the other sides. I keep dousing the nuts in diesel (a good penetrating lubricant) and will try to unscrew them in a week or two
- I have had an onsite meeting with a contractor who sees no problem in cutting the gates down. I have a quote from him for cutting the gates, transporting them to Newport and positioning them in the lock
- The gates are held together by 3 horizontal bars at the top, centre and bottom. I now know that the gates need to be cut above the centre locking bar, so only the top one will be left to hold them together. I have located a company who will make me some suitable steel bars to be screwed in place to prevent the timbers from “spreading” when we cut them. If he can find enough suitable off cuts he will do them for very little
- Thanks to Louise and Adrian Corney I am in touch with T&W’s Engineer’s Office who will provide me with a plan of the Town Lock area so that I can apply to Historic England for their formal approval of the project

The SNCT have held a number of workparties recently along the canal in Newport:

- *November*

At the request of Telford & Wrekin Council we teamed up with Newport in Bloom (NIB) to clear the back of the Shell Garage, which borders Town Bridge and the canal. The trees there had become very overgrown, partly blocking the path and were dropping significant quantities of leaves each autumn which quickly turned to mush, making the path difficult to walk. The aim was to coppice most of the trees, leaving a few as features. It was a very successful event, with a large amount of brash piled up ready for T&W’s contractor to remove. Very useful help was received from some Harper Adams University students and one very energetic councillor as well as the NIB and our own volunteers.

- *December*

Some 18 months ago we planted over 500 young trees to create a new 120 metre long hedge on the offside of the Meretown Lock section. We then had the hottest, driest spring that anyone can remember and a lot of the saplings died. In December we checked over half of this hedge, removing each tree cover and checking for survivors. The Woodland Trust had kindly donated 100 new saplings which we used to replace the ones that had failed. In the Autumn we will apply to the Woodland Trust for another tree pack so that we can do the rest of the hedge.

- *January*

The following month we moved to Tickethouse Lock where, starting with a wall of undergrowth in front of one of the bridge buttresses, we clear felled the area, revealing the stonework and stopping the encroachment of an amazing quantity of interwoven briars, some of which were growing in the stonework. The lock was

cleared so that the water could run through it again, allowing the flow to clear the accumulated sediment.

The two new signs for Polly's Lock (the western end of the canal in water) and the Newport Wharf/Basin are almost ready. The metal frames are in the Black Shed and I will be ordering the graphic panels in the next few weeks

John Myers

Newport Town Lock area - in the heart of the Town

When John Myers and I, and then Barbara Deason and I recently reviewed the steps in hand and proposed for the Town lock/Town bridge canalside area, we realised there was a lot going on!

In hand/under discuss/being progressed

Black Shed into NTC ownership for shared community use and eventual restoration

Restoration of gates to Town lock (Subject to planning permission)

Drain for the towpath S of Town Bridge

Removal of the overgrown tree(s) by Town bridge

Root removal and bed preparation of the bed below Town bridge

Resiting of the two dog poo bins to nearby but no longer next to the bench below Town bridge, and the information signs by Town lock.

Island clearance below Town Bridge, and then planting/landscape

These are all good works. I hope the canal basin/lock area was more acceptable to the RHS judges last year. Many and heartfelt thanks to Adrian Corney for his irreplaceable support.

Proposed

Resurface of the Town lock edging. To replace the variety of unhistoric, damaged and unattractive surfaces that now border the lock.

Currently there is tarmac, river cobbles set in concrete, 2'x2' concrete slabbing and brick pavers, all in various states of (dis)repair. Furthermore, the steps down on the towpath side of the lock, down that is to the passage under the bridge, are degraded, the timber risers rotted, pavers missing etc, That there are steps at all is not mobility scooter/wheelchair friendly. We can do better than this. We can make a 1:20 graded slope to replace the steps, and surface the whole with appropriately attractive and 'heritage' materials.

Replace the canal interpretation board next to the Eco board, in Eco board (Vandal proof) standard. We have been requested by T&W to introduce a consistency of signage style.

Replace the Hellebore bed canal interpretation signage see above.

Locate a canal 'utility barge' (Non working) on the wharfage by the Black shed, and garden it.....

Dredge the basin and put a narrow boat on it....

Install a life size canal barge horse sculpture....

Many of the Town's visitors find their way down to the canal lock and basin, and remark "We didn't know this was here". They then observe how nice it is. Very many of the town's residents already use the walking and visual amenity the canal and Basin/lock area presents. It is worthwhile trying to invest and improve in this area. Next steps are to look for quotes as necessary. And progress!

16th January 2020

Leisure & Environmental Service Committee

NEWPORT TOWN COUNCIL ALLOTMENTS

AIM

To provide a general overview of the management of the allotments and issues addressed

POINTS TO NOTE

The skips have been removed and at the moment it is quiet at the allotments. The returned plots are being allocated to the applicants on top of the waiting list, there are 2 more plots available in Meadow View Road and 1 in Boughey Road.

The council has a current allotment waiting list of 39 applicants.

We are in liaison with Harper Adams University regarding sectioning, fencing and cultivation of the new extension site once we take possession of it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No Recommendations

**Cemetery Report for the L&ES Committee Meeting
to be Held on Wednesday 22 January 2020**

BACKGROUND

(Note: this is a working document that has been updated since the Leisure and environmental meeting in January, to keep you informed of the more notable ongoing matters. Not all ongoing matters are reported in this document. Some of the items on this report may have been completed by 22 Oct). Members are encouraged to personally visit the Cemetery before attending the meeting.

DISCUSSION

Maintenance

Ground Water Monitoring (Environment Agency)

The Town Council regularly tests water quality to ensure that burials do not contaminate the water course. The Environmental agency produces guidance through its ground water pollution documents. A Contractor undertakes the task for us.

Water Monitoring took place in December

The EA minimum requirements for monitoring of groundwater in new cemeteries is three years after the first interment which in our case was early 2017, Therefore it is recommended another year of monitoring on the same programme is undertaken, It is recommended that water monitoring is continued as part of a maintenance plan with either monitoring twice per year or once a year.

Maintenance

Maintenance works as follows have been undertaken to the entrance of the Cemetery to improve the visual of the area;

Western Power undertook works to reduce the branches on the trees from the lines at the entrance to the Cemetery on Tuesday 14 January 2020.

Cemetery Trees

Three memorial trees were planted in the woodland section in Newport Cemetery in December.

Drainage

Following the collapsed area of road in the Cemetery it has also been identified that water is currently not being able to move freely via drainage over the adjacent development land and that there appears to be a blockage of some kind. NTC have been working with Persimmon homes and Telford & Wrekin Council drainage department to find a resolution for this blockage and drainage moving forward.

Hard-core roads

The hard-core roads had the pot holes filled in December

There has been a number of complaints with regards to the surface of the Carpark and the mess it makes during wet weather on visitors cars and shoes –I would recommend to evaluate the cost the road resurface when undertaking quotes for the hole reinstatement to identify the cost of replacing the permeable hard-core with tarmac.

3rd October 2018 to 11 January 2019

Introduction:

Interments have continued at a reasonably steady rate over recent years. The last quarter is on average 14% lower than January 2019 quarterly report (Jan 2019 report = 7 / Jan 2020 = 6).

pre purchase levels are the same (Jan 2019 report 2= – Jan 2020 report = 2).

Memorials Permissions levels are the same (Jan 2019 quarterly report = 9 – Jan 2020 quarterly report = 9).

The increase in the level of fees over recent years has not deterred vast numbers of people from choosing to bury in Newport Cemetery.

1. Burials and Interment of Cremated Remains:

Burials in new graves	1
Burials in re-opened graves	2
Interment of cremated remains in new plots	1
Interment of cremated remains in re-opened plots	1
Woodland burials	1
Woodland cremated remains interments	0
Total	<u>6</u>

2. Grants of Exclusive Rights:

New burials	1
Burials - Pre-purchases	0
New Cremated Remains Interments	1
Cremated remains interments – Pre-purchases	0
Extension of Exclusive Rights	0
Total	<u>2</u>

3. Memorial Permissions

To erect a new monument	5
Additional Inscriptions	4
Replacement monument	0
Total	<u>9</u>

Louise Tunks
Cemetery Officer

Amenity Areas ,St Nicholas Churchyard Report
and Tender Maintenance information
Amenity Areas

General: The amenity areas are considered to be in a good general condition as a result of the standard maintenance and upkeep.

The following Planning applications has been submitted;

- Crown lift up to 2m and 20% crown reduction to 1no. Pear tree in the Guildhall car park
- Multi stemmed silver birch tree Lower Bar bed – crown raise by up to 2 meters and 20% crown reduction

Churchyard Maintenance

The Churchyard is considered to be in a good general condition as a result of the standard maintenance and upkeep.

Churchyard maintenance

A few members have raised anticipations that the Churchyard is in need of a revamp.

A site meeting has taken place with St Nicholas Church PCC to discuss options for the churchyard grounds – Cllr Nelson will give a verbal update at the meeting for members to consider.

The following Planning application has been submitted for St Nicholas Churchyard;

- Felling of 1no. Lime tree (T1),
- Removal of deadwood to 1no. Robinia tree (T6)
- Crown thin and lift up to 3.5m to 1no. Maple tree (T31)

It is also scheduled to pollard all lime trees before 31 March 2020 (Panning authorisation is already granted for this work until 2025)

Tender / Maintenance information

Members should note that following the tender process the following contractors have been awarded the following contracts as from 1st April 2020;

- **St Nicholas Church - F & DR Perry**
- **Amenity Areas – Idverde**
- **Cemetery – F & RD Perry**
- **Allotments - (Boughey Road & meadow View Road) – Idverde**
- **Planting – Countrywide Ground Maintenance**