



Newport (Shropshire) Town Council



MINUTES OF A MEETING

held on

Wednesday 14 July 2004

at

The Guildhall, High Street, Newport

PRESENT: Cllrs: Sally Wiggin – Town Mayor
Glyn Gratton – Deputy Town Mayor
David Adams
Martyn Edwards
Irene Evans
John Evans
Brenda Flowers
George Franks
Glyn Holland
Adrian Meredith
Janette Treagust

IN ATTENDANCE: D. L. Halliday – Town Clerk

61/04-05 **SUSPENSION OF MEETING**

No members of the Public being present the meeting commenced without suspension.

62/04-05 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

63/04-05 **OFF STREET PARKING**

Members welcomed Mr Steve Hollins, the Implementation Manager, Telford & Wrekin Borough Council, to brief the meeting on the proposals to introduce Car Parking charges in Newport.

Mr Hollins stated that a final decision on the introduction of charges will not be taken until 26 July 2004. In the interim, the proposal is to implement charging through a coin-operated Pay and Display system which can be retro-fitted for card payment at a later date. The machinery has to be robust, vandal proof with the money collection box being independent of the meter, usually in the pillar of the machine, with sealed units. Indications are that machines are likely to be emptied twice weekly, possibly

using the services of a Security Company. 3 types of machine could be used with varying power sources (solar, battery or mains).

Solar systems are restricted by the number of powered transactions capable from a fully charged cell, being a maximum of 150 ticket issues per day.

Parking attendants will be patrolling car parks between the charging hours of 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. There will be 10 attendants plus 2 supervisors for the Borough and all Car Parks will be treated identically for charges. It is likely that there will be a dedicated attendant for the two Newport Car Parks.

The policy on how to treat car users wishing to visit the recycling skips is being looked at. Permits for town residents without parking places will cost £50 p.a. to cover administration costs and they will be allocated parking facilities in one or other of the town car parks, not both and not guaranteed availability.

A question and answer session raised the following points of concern:

It was acknowledged that the Stafford Street Car Park is desperately in need of repair and maintenance and this needs to be carried out as a matter of urgency and certainly before charging is introduced. Lighting levels are poor and in winter could raise Health and Safety issues for attendants and users alike.

The charging of disabled car users was queried and the lack of any short term free parking e.g. first 30 minutes. The level of charges was still regarded as exorbitantly high.

Members thanked Mr Hollins for his attendance and directed the Town Clerk to write to the Borough Council pulling together all the comments and views raised by members. The response should reiterate the Council's opposition to the introduction of car parking charges.

64/04-05 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. A list of the Town Mayor's engagements is **attached** at **Appendix 'A'**.
- b. The Town Clerk confirmed that a Public Notice Advertisement had been placed in the local press to inform of the resignation of Cllr John Barr and notifying a casual vacancy in West Ward. Members requested that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Barr.

65/04-05 MINUTES

The Minutes of meetings held on 9 June 2004 & 22 June 2004 were approved as a true record.

FINANCE

66/04-05 Finance Report

The Finance Report for June 2004, **attached at Appendix 'B'**, and the payments therein, were approved/ratified.

67/04-05 Thank You Letters

Members noted Thank You Letters for grants awarded to:

- a. Beaumaris Singers
- b. Victim Support Shropshire
- c. Black History Working Group
- d. Samaritans
- e. The Burton Borough School
- f. Friends of St. Nicholas Church
- g. Relate
- h. Oakengates Theatre Youth Summer School

A second letter from Burton Borough School Chair of Governors in respect of the grant to purchase a musical instrument is **attached at Appendix 'C'**. Members welcomed this letter in the light of some unfavourable press coverage of this issue.

68/04-05 Balances

Members considered a policy in respect of Balances held by the Town Council and **RESOLVED that:**

The Town Council holds sufficient funds available to:

- a. **meet the Council's Statutory commitments in respect of Trust Funds held on behalf of other organisations.**
- b. **meet the cost of ongoing Capital Projects.**
- c. **Provides an annual contingency fund of £10,000**

and further that any balances in excess of this are used to reduce the Precept in the subsequent year. Balances are not held indefinitely and are reviewed regularly.

69/04-05 Section 137 – Grants over £2000

Members noted an amendment to Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding financial assistance to any organisation exceeding £2000 in any one financial year.

The requirement now is that the council must attach a condition to the grant requiring the recipient to provide a written report of how the money has been used.

The report must be provided to the council within 12 months of the date of the grant, but it may take the form of an annual report or set of accounts which clearly identify the manner of spending.

The written report has to be deposited with the Proper Officer of the Council (the Town Clerk) and hence becomes a document which members of the public have a right to inspect under the provision of s.228 of the Local Government Act 1972.

70/04-05 Section 19 – Recreational Provision

Members noted the full extent of powers granted under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1975 with respect to the provision of recreational facilities as detailed at **Appendix 'D'**.

They further noted that Section 19 should be taken into account when preparing future budgets and be used to reduce the impact on Section 137 funding.

AUDIT 2003/04

71/04-05 Internal Auditor's Report

Members considered and accepted the Internal Auditor's Report to the Council covering the Audit Period 2003/04 and **attached** at **Appendix 'E'**.

72/04-05 End of Year Accounts for Audit

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the **End of Year Accounts 2003/04 to be submitted to the external auditors "Winross, Hacker, Young" attached at Appendix 'F'**.

73/04-05 External Auditors 2003/04 Annual Return – Additional Assurances Review

Members noted and approved the contents list under Additional Assurances Evidence Review to be submitted to the external auditors and **attached at Appendix ‘G’**.

74/04-05 Annual Return 2003/04 – Statement of Assurance

Members considered, formulated and **RESOLVED to submit the responses to the Statement of Assurance as detailed at Appendix ‘H’**.

75/04-05 Authorisation by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk

It was **RESOLVED to approve the signing off of the 2003/04 Accounts and Annual Return by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk**.

76/04-05 Reappointment of Internal Auditor

It was **RESOLVED to invite Mr R. E. Bennett to act as Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2004/05**.

TOWN PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

77/04-05 Planning & Economic Development Committee Meeting – Minutes

Members noted the Minutes of a meeting held on 9 June 2004.

78/04-05 Local Development Framework Forum Event

Cllr Irene Evans reported on the meeting she had attended on 24 June 2004. It was well attended, interesting and worthwhile. Led by Meredith Evans, Corporate Director for Environment & Economy at the Borough Council, the event highlighted the pattern of local development emerging at regional level. Guidance will be in place to 2021 sanctioned by ODPM. Newport's main issues need to be the use of town centre brown-field sites for housing and retention of current levels of green space and recreational facilities already below national standards.

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION / NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (SALC / NALC)

79/04-05 Wrekin Area Committee AGM – Minutes

Members noted the Minutes of the AGM held on 16 June 2004 attached at **Appendix ‘J’**.

80/04-05 Parish Plans

Cllrs Irene Evans and Janette Treagust reported on a meeting they had attended on 30 June 2004. Most attendees represented small villages and were following the development of Parish Plans arising out to the DEFRA initiative on “Vital Villages”. Whilst Newport has recently had a Town Appraisal and the Strategic Plan developed through the Regeneration Partnership, it was felt that an Action Plan should be adopted by the Town Council and a working group consisting of the following members was formed.

Cllr David Adams
Cllr John Evans
Cllr Brenda Flowers
Cllr Adrian Meredith
Cllr Janette Treagust

They will liaise together with regard to meetings.

81/04-05 Local Council Review – July 2004

Members noted receipt of the Review.

82/04-05 Parish Pump – June 2004

Members noted receipt of the SALC Newsletter.

83/04-05 Telford Football & Sports Foundation

Members considered correspondence concerning the establishment of the Foundation detailed at **Appendix ‘K’** and referred it to the September meeting.

EU MATTERS

84/04-05 West Midlands in Europe – Weekly Newsletter

Members noted receipt of the newsletter.

NATIONAL / REGIONAL GOVERNMENT MATTERS

85/04-05 Town & Parish Standard: 01 (July 2004)

Members noted receipt of the first issue from The Standards Board for England, **attached at Appendix 'L'**.

86/04-05 DEFRA Response to Recycling of Plastics

Members noted letters from Peter Bradley MP and DEFRA relating to queries raised by the Town Council concerning the recycling to plastics and **attached at Appendix 'M'**.

87/04-05 West Midlands Passenger Transport Forum

Members noted that the next meeting will be held on 26 July 2004 at The Shire Hall in Warwick.

TELFORD & WREKIN BOROUGH COUNCIL MATTERS (TWBC)

88/04-05 Shropshire Ambulance Service – Serving Your Community – Spring Edition

Members noted receipt of the newsletter.

89/04-05 Student Accommodation

Members welcomed the response from the Borough Council, **attached at Appendix 'N'**.

90/04-05 Catholic Primary Schools Governing Bodies

Members noted the reconstitution of Governing Bodies in Catholic Primary Schools to take effect from 1 September 2004 and **attached at Appendix 'P'**.

RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

91/04-05 Town Mayor's Guidelines

Members considered the current guidelines for the Town Mayor during his/her term of office, last revised in June 2000 and **attached at Appendix 'Q'**. The item was deferred until a response from the Borough Council on Allowances is received.

92/04-05 BT Payphone – Audley Road, Newport

Members considered BT's proposal to remove the public payphone on Audley Road, Newport, which is loss making.

In September 2002, the Town Council took the step of polling 381 properties in the vicinity of this booth, which was then under

threat of removal because of vandalism and being a focus for public nuisance. Over 40 letters of objection were received and BT duly agreed to retain the booth.

The Town Clerk briefed members on her discussion with BT, the three options being:

- a. remove the box
- b. apply to BT for retention based on need, i.e. location near to elderly persons dwellings etc.
- c. consider meeting the costs using powers granted under the Telecommunications Act 1984 Section 97. Average cost per box per year £1000.

The Town Clerk was directed to write to BT making a case to retain the box on need.

93/04-05 Car Park at The Guildhall

It was **RESOLVED** that **costings be obtained to re-install a security barrier at the access point to the Guildhall Car Park.**

94/04-05 Emergency Committee

The following Councillors will form an Emergency Committee to deal with matters during the August recess:

Cllr Irene Evans
Cllr Brenda Flowers
Cllr Glyn Gratton
Cllr Glyn Holland

COMMUNITY SAFETY

95/04-05 Street Lighting – Car Parking Area near Sandiford Flats

Members of the Community Safety Committee requested costings for a street light to be sited on the mini island on the approach to the Car Parking area at Sandiford Flats. The intention was to encourage people to use the car park rather than parking on the roadway in Roddam Court and causing a traffic hazard.

Unfortunately to provide a light at this point would be extremely expensive because the road would have to be excavated to provide a power supply and then be reinstated.

Members considered an alternative suggested by Central Networks Contacting and **attached** at **Appendix 'R'**. It was

RESOLVED to accept the quotation to a cost of £1302.00 ex VAT, monies to be taken from balances.

LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

96/04-05 The Playing Field

Members noted receipt of the newsletter.

97/04-05 The Journal – Summer 2004

Members noted receipt of the magazine.

Signed

Dated