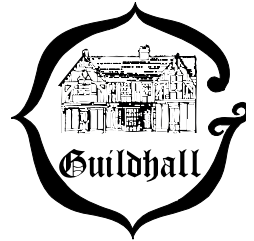


# Newport (Shropshire) Town Council



## MINUTES OF A MEETING

held on

**Wednesday 8 March 2006**

at

**The Guildhall, High Street, Newport**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** D. L. Halliday – Town Clerk

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Cllr. Martyn Edwards.

### **261/05-06 PRESENTATION TO MRS EDITH FLETCHER**

The Town Mayor presented a gift to Mrs Fletcher to mark her retirement as an employee of the Council and extended the thanks of all members for her loyalty and dedication.

### **262/05-06 SUSPENSION OF MEETING**

There being no members of the public wishing to raise issues with the Council, the meeting continued without suspension.

### **263/05-06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **264/05-06 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)**

The Town Mayor welcomed Mr John Knight to the meeting to discuss his ideas to forward a town-wide response to the LDF as it relates to Newport and its immediate environs.

Mr Knight prefaced his comments with a short introduction detailing his background of four decades of service with local authorities dealing with infrastructure issues, one appointment specifically relating to Statutory Land Use Planning.

When he initially read the LDF consultation documents he felt very despondent about the proposals for Newport and responded as an individual. He then found out that other organisations had felt the same and had expressed similar arguments against the proposals. Mr Knight therefore felt there was merit in drawing together all these interested parties be they local authorities, community organisations or individuals to share their thoughts and prepare a coherent argument to support the best options for planning the future of an ancient and historic market town.

The main concern which seems to run through all groups who have responded to the LDF is the proposal to develop 500-600 homes on two Greenfield sites under Options 3. There appear to be two main reasons for objecting in that the proposals do not confirm to the Regional Spatial Strategy and they do not come out as the best option under sustainability tests. It appears that despite these very good arguments against the Borough Council's preferred Option 3, it is unlikely that they will change their submitted plan to the ODPM but instead will beef up their justification for proposing this option. It is therefore important the ways are found to oppose the submitted plan at a strategic level.

Individual sites will present individual problems and as a result other objectors may be brought forward arguing against more detailed proposals. At a Public Inquiry however, it is better to argue the strategic reasons for not supporting a proposal. If it then appears that the Inspector is minded to approve the proposal, the specific issues can then be raised and be pushed for incorporation into the final planning decision.

It is also important to bear in mind that not everyone locally will be against Option 3. Some will genuinely believe and state that it will bring benefits. There may well be some benefits but it is important to weigh these against the disbenefits.

The question therefore becomes how a united front might be formed to take the objections forward.

Mr Knight initially considered forming a steering group with representatives from different groups focussing on preparing the technical work to counter the plan but the local MP cautioned against this as not necessarily being reflective of the democratic process.

This brought into sharp focus the need for the Town Council to be a catalyst in this enterprise as the duly constituted and elected body who are also statutory consultees. A small group could carry out the technical work to be done to plan forward for objections to the next submission stage and prepare to take matters to public enquiry with these findings being presented to the Town Council for use in its arguments against the LDF.

Another important role for the Town Council is its membership of CPRE where planning advice could be sought free of charge.

The technical work could take time to assemble. It is important to demonstrate the history of the growth of the town and possible planning stumbles of the past before one develops plans for the future. The census and other recently prepared statistical reports will need to be examined to prove that benefits do not automatically come with increased housing. Indeed if Option 3 went ahead, the demands of a higher population for different levels of service might only be sustainable by the building of even more houses. The new buzz word driving the planning process is sustainability. It is important to ensure that those who are responsible for assessing sustainability if they find that the tests do not meet the objectives, do not simply change the wording of the objectives to meet their findings.

Following this presentation there was a full and frank discussion of how the Town Council should proceed. It was decided that the Newport Regeneration Partnership present the ideal organisation to act as co-ordinators to develop the strategy and argument against the LDF as all the main objecting groups and bodies are already members. The new facilitator Mrs Frances Harper is already actively involved in the LDF consultation and has been working closely with Mr Knight and the Town Clerk.

There would be no illegality if the Partnership chose to establish a small working party to develop the strategy, and whose work remained confidential from other members until

completed. A perfect example of such a group functioning within a legally constituted local authority is that of the LDF Steering Group at the Borough Council.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the **Regeneration Partnership form a small steering group to examine means of fighting the Borough Council's preferred Option 3 for Newport under the LDF, and present solutions which can be shared amongst all partners, to present similar and cogent arguments when the second consultation phase is initiated.**

It was further **RESOLVED** that the underspend by the **Partnership of approximately £2000 of grant money in the current financial year proposed to be returned to the Town Council, be instead held, if it is felt that advantage could be gained by updating the Consultation Report on Newport prepared for the Partnership, to gain more information to argue specifically against the LDF proposals.**

Members also **RESOLVED** to invite **Church Aston Parish Council and the electorate of Church Aston to participate in the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for 7.00 p.m. on 5 April 2006 at The Cosy Hall, to which Mrs Jackie Leask, who is leading the LDF officer group at the Borough Council, has been invited.**

The Town Mayor thanked Mr John Knight on behalf of all the members for his valued attendance at the meeting.

## **265/05-06 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a. A list of the Town Mayor's engagements is **attached at Appendix 'A'**.
- b. The Town Clerk informed members that the Telford Samaritans AGM will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 26 April 2006 in the Training Room at 115 King Street, Wellington. The Guest Speaker will be from Combat Stress.
- c. The Town Clerk informed members that she had put forward the council's work to repair and refurbish the Cemetery Chapel and Railings for consideration of an award in the International Green Apple Awards 2006 for the Built Environment and architectural Heritage and was delighted to tell them that the Council is one of the

winners. The level of category is retained until the presentation on 15 May 2006, at the Kensington Roof Gardens for which one free £95 ticket to lunch and the award ceremony is available.

Full details are **attached** at **Appendix 'B'**.

It was **RESOLVED** that the **Town Mayor represent the Council and that the Council sign up to the additional package to feature the Chapel in the National Treasures Guide Book 2006, all details included additionally in Appendix 'B' at a cost of £515 plus VAT.**

**266/05-06 MINUTES**

The Minutes of meetings held on 9 February 2006 and 1 March 2006 were approved as a true record, subject to the insertion in the heading of Minute 260/05-06 of the word "Staff" before "Vacancies".

**FINANCE**

**267/05-06 Finance Report**

The Finance Report for February 2006, **attached** at **Appendix 'C'**, and the payments therein, were approved / ratified.

**268/05-06 Thank You Letters**

Members noted Letters of Thanks for grants awarded had been received from:

- (1) Shropshire & Mid Wales Kidney Patient Association
- (2) Telford & Wrekin Arthritis Support Group
- (3) Severn Hospice
- (4) The No Name Theatre Company
- (5) Newport Olympic Gym Club

**269/05-06 Grant Application – Crucial Crew 2006**

Members considered a request to sponsor Crucial Crew 2006 to which Newport Junior School has been invited to attend between 15-16 May 2006 and **RESOLVED to award a grant of £430.00**. This was adjudged to have a positive impact under the Crime & Disorder Act.

## **PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **270/05-06 Planning & Economic Development Committee Meeting – Minutes**

Members noted the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2006.

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

### **271/05-06 Local Council Review – March 2006**

Members noted receipt of the Newsletter.

## **NATIONAL & REGIONAL GOVERNMENT MATTERS**

### **272/05-06 Letter from MP**

Members noted a letter from Mark Pritchard MP detailed at **Appendix ‘D’**.

### **273/05-06 The Standards Board for England – March 2006**

Members noted receipt of the newsletter distributed with the Local Council Review.

## **TELFORD & WREKIN BOROUGH COUNCIL (T&WBC) MATTERS**

### **274/05-06 Enquiry Reference 290622 – Redevelopment of Telford Town Centre**

Members noted two responses regarding the designation of letters sent by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk as “Complaints/ Enquires” **attached at Appendix ‘E’**. They still feel that there must be a better way to filter letters for the Chief Executive without referring them as Enquires or Complaints.

### **275/05-06 The Marshfields and Audco Sports and Social Club**

Members noted correspondence between the Borough Council and Mark Pritchard MP **attached at Appendix ‘F’**.

### **276/05-06 Tourism and Newport**

Members noted correspondence between the Borough Council and Mark Pritchard MP **attached at Appendix ‘G’**.

Members asked that the Town Clerk bring to the attention of Mr Richard Bifield Newport's recent successes in being the only Shropshire entrant in Britain in Bloom 2006 and the second award of a Green Apple for the built environment.

**277/05-06 Environmental Impact Assessments**

Members considered a letter from Mark Pritchard MP following correspondence with Cllr Keith Austin, both letters **attached** at **Appendix 'H'**.

**278/05-06 Street Naming and Numbering**

Members considered suggestions to name the new development at Slaters Lane and **RESOLVED** to offer Church View as a suitable name for the development.

**279/05-06 Telford & Wrekin CVS**

Members noted that the information package for affiliated members is held in the Council offices.

**RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION**

**280/05-06 The Adams' Eleemosynary Charities Scheme**

Members were asked to review the Town Council Nominative Electors posts on the above charity and **RESOLVED to nominate Cllr John Evans and Cllr Brenda Flowers**. It was noted that the charity had not met for some time and it was felt this may be of benefit to review all appointments.

The existing representatives Mrs Eva Allen and Mr Malcolm Miles are to be thanked for their service.

**281/05-06 Regeneration Partnership**

Members were informed that Cllr David Adams is now also representing the Canal Trust on the Partnership. In the event that the Town Council's voting representative, Cllr Glyn Gratton, is unable to attend a meeting, Cllr Adams is not allowed to vote twice. It was therefore **RESOLVED to nominate Cllr Treagust as the second Town Council representative**.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY

### 282/05-06 Community Safety Committee Meeting – Minutes

Members noted the Minutes of a meeting held on 22 February 2006, **attached** at **Appendix ‘J’**.

### 283/05-06 Street Furniture within the 20 mph zone

Members considered a motion from Cllr John Evans **attached** at **Appendix ‘K’** and **RESOLVED to adopt it**. Work on Town Council property will be funded from balances. The Town Clerk will write to the Borough Council requesting their co-operation with repainting of street lighting columns.

### 284/05-06 T & W BUG Minutes

Members noted the Minutes of a meeting held on 20 February 2006 **attached** at **Appendix ‘L’**.

## LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (L&ES)

### 285/05-06 The John Whitehead Memorial Bench

The Town Clerk apologised to members about some concerns expressed with regard to the siting and colour of the memorial bench but explained the combination of circumstances which led to this.

After consideration it was **RESOLVED to resite the second black bench at the location at Daniels Cross**. It was further agreed that the dedication plaque should read:

“Oyez, Oyez”  
In memory of John Whitehead  
Newport’s Town Crier  
Sadly missed 2005

### 286/05-06 S&News – Winter 2006

Members noted receipt of the newsletter and Agenda for the AGM to be held on 1 April 2006.

### 287/05-06 CPRE Fieldwork – March 2006

Members noted receipt of the newsletter.

**288/05-06 Burton Borough Sports Hall**

Members noted a report from Cllr Irene Evans **attached** at **Appendix ' M'.**

**289/05-06 Cemetery Sculptures**

The Town Clerk informed members that two sculptures to be placed in the Children's burial area have been ordered and will hopefully be in place by the date of the Cemetery Inspection in May 2006.

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Signed .....

Dated .....