



NEWPORT & CARISBROOKE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

www.newportwight.org.uk



MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF NEWPORT & CARISBROOKE
COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2021 ON ZOOM
DIGITAL CONFERENCING COMMENCED AT 6.45 PM.

Councillors Present: Cllrs Julie Jones-Evans (Chair), Geoff Brodie, Mary Craven, Andrew Garratt, Steve Hastings, Richard Hollis, Joe Lever, Terry Martin, Matthew Price and Shirley Smart.

Public: 1
Clerk: Joshua Tombleson
Other: 2

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members were joined by a member of the public who wished to raise concerns regarding a planning application for 54 Castle Road and wished to know how to process comments for the application, and also to request if the Community Council would be making comment.

Cllr Smart confirmed that the application falls within the boundaries of Carisbrooke & Gunville and recommended that she raise the issue with the local IW Council representative, Cllr John Hobart.

Cllr Brodie clarified the process for calling applications into the Planning & Licensing Committee for consideration.

The Clerk believed that the application in question was now out of time to be called in following the internal process of NCCC, however offered to pick up the conversation after the meeting to provide some background and answer any other questions she may have.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 2758. | <u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Apologies were received for Cllr Ballington and Cllr Coburn. |
| 2759. | <u>DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST</u> Cllrs. Brodie, Garratt, Hastings, Hollis, Jones-Evans, Price and Smart declared non-pecuniary interests in matters relating to the Isle of Wight Council (IWC) as they are Isle of Wight councillors. |
| 2760. | <u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</u> The minutes of the meeting held on 11 th January 2021 were presented to members. <u>RESOLVED:</u> |

THAT, the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2021 be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

MATTERS ARISING

2736. Property Purchase- Cllr Hastings asked if there had been any progress in the proposed acquisition. The Clerk informed members that the latest offer made during January had been rejected, however he did not feel that we were far off of negotiating a suitable price with another offer being made over the coming days, of which he will inform members of the outcome.

2737. Free Parking Campaign- Cllr Jones-Evans has now received the requested data, however would like to verify its accuracy with the source before sharing with members. Cllr Brodie made members aware that the IW Council draft budget for 2021/2022 had been issued on Wednesday 3rd February and there had been no mention of provisions to allow Newport to be treated equally to other Island towns. He has asked for an explanation from Cllr Ward and as part of this made a suggestion as to how this equality can be met but has not yet received a response. Cllr Brodie assured members that he will be pursuing this up right up until the budget is agreed.

2738. E-Scooters- Cllr Jones-Evans informed Cllr Martin that she has not yet had the opportunity to follow up on the issues he has raised regarding the e-scooters and suggested that she share the relevant contact details in order for him to seek the answers he requires.

2754. Cllr Martin has spoken to Maxine Yule regarding the number 6 bus and several councils are now speaking to Southern Vectis around its funding.

2761. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Members were presented with payments made during January for approval.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the accounts paid in January 2021 be approved.

Members received the income & expenditure report to 31st January 2021.

Cllr Jones-Evans thanked Cllr Brodie and the RFO for the work they put in to producing the information for members, but Cllr Brodie highlighted that this report is mostly the efforts of the RFO.

RESOLVED:

THAT, the income and expenditure report to 31st January 2021 be noted.

GPWP 2021/2022 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Cllr Brodie presented the presented the proposal for members with a summary of the lines which were included. As part of this he read a draft press release which would be submitted to local news outlets, should members approve the budget. The proposed budget would equate to a 2.4% decrease, although with the removal of Council Tax Support Grant by IW Council, this would be a net decrease of 1.4%. Cllr Brodie wished to make members aware that the closest

| | |
|-------|--|
| | <p>comparator town, Ryde Town Council, will be increasing their budget by 8.5% for 2021/2022.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> THAT, the GPWP budget proposal for 2021/2022 be unanimously agreed.</p> |
| 2762. | <p><u>High Street Heritage Action Zone</u></p> <p>Members were joined by Martin Gibson, project manager for the HSHAZ programme, who provided an update for members of the activities carried out since he last attended.</p> <p>Footfall data has now been received and will be published in due course.</p> <p>Assessment will take place on Tuesday 12th February to select which contractor will be awarded the contract for the shop front improvement scheme.</p> <p>An amount of emergency funding has been provided outside of the programme to carry out some repairs to the Guildhall, and a suggestion made for additional work to take place above the budget of the HSHAZ. There is the potential for some additional money in the new financial year, following a full assessment of the Guildhall which will commence soon and a plan put together for its continued maintenance.</p> <p>The programme aims to start case studies on two High Street buildings to look at how they can be brought back into full use, one of which being the property which is being negotiated by NCCC for purchase.</p> <p>Martin has put in an additional bid of £125k to support the cultural activity around the HSHAZ. He is not expecting to be awarded the full amount, although it is still a possibility, and a decision on this is expected to be made imminently.</p> <p>Hampshire County Council has been appointed to manage the People First Zone, and an internal workshop has already taken place between IW Council and Island Roads. A stakeholder meeting and engagement process will take place later in February around this.</p> <p>Direct engagement was planned with shop owners around the frontages during November, however due Lockdown and restrictions, this has not been able to be completed, therefore alternatives ways of this being completed are being considered.</p> <p>A new website is soon to be launched which is promoting both Ryde and Newport High Street Heritage Action Zones, and this should hopefully lead to more publicity in the future.</p> <p>Cllr Craven thanked Martin for the report. She also asked if he knew what emergency work needed to be carried out on the Guildhall. Martin was not directly involved in this aspect so was unable to complete answer but understands it is likely to have been some roofing work which was committed to and potentially some window repairs.</p> <p>Cllr Hollis raised an item which was being discussed at the steering group</p> |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| | <p>concerning the overflowing gutters of shops around the town and how this could be addressed as he did not feel that taxpayers money should be facilitating this activity. Cllr Jones-Evans clarified that this was not part of the HSHAZ but was an item which Lee Byrne had brought forward for discussion in the hope that the HSHAZ could simply facilitate periodic clearances in an attempt to improve the town and reduce costs to shop owners if the costs were spread amongst the business who took up the offer.</p> |
| <p>2763.</p> | <p><u>LAPTOPS FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN</u></p> <p>Members received a brief from the local Community Resilience Co-ordinator, Claire Kennard.</p> <p>As part of her work she had been in contact with family liaison officers at local schools regarding issues which are being experienced by some families whilst their children are learning from home during the current lockdown. One of the issues identified is that some families who are on the financial cusp have insufficient access to laptops for all children to learn effectively from home.</p> <p>Claire had been in contact with Hampshire County Council to see what initiatives were being carried out to tackle the issue, as schools would like to issue laptops to families where the need has been identified, but have means of doing so. Purchasing new laptops is unfortunately not an option as the cost is too great. Claire highlighted some similar schemes to that being proposed which are being run in some areas of the Island.</p> <p>Cllr Smart mentioned that she had spoken to Nine Acres Primary School and they have now put in an order for additional laptops, however she is waiting on a call back to let her know how many they will find themselves short.</p> <p>Cllr Hollis asked why the schools don't know exactly how many they need. Claire proceeded explained that the figures are currently unclear because although the liaison officers know exactly which families are in need, they do not yet know how many other families have limited access but could do with additional devices.</p> <p>Cllr Brodie felt that the topic being discussed was straying into education territory. He explained that the council has a Covid Recovery budget, of which £10k was used to help the town centre by supporting a free parking scheme in December 2020, but the laptop proposal is not part of a recovery in the way the budget was intended to be used. He urged the council to be conscious that the pandemic is still ongoing and there may be other things they wish to support with the budget in the future. Cllr Brodie made members aware that the school within his ward, Barton Primary School, who are in an area of deprivation are managing, including those families on the cusp. IW Council Cabinet member, Cllr Paul Brading, assured Cllr Brodie last week that everything is in hand and no child who needs a device will go without.</p> <p>Cllr Smart stated that IWALC are also looking into this and as soon as she has information to share with members she will do so.</p> <p>Cllr Price spoke of his personal circumstances and that he had made technology available for his children, who are of Primary School age. Reiterated that the</p> |

families which this proposal is looking to support are those families who have fallen through the cracks of other support channels.

Cllr Hastings said that he agreed with both sides of the argument, having listened to the views expressed by his colleagues. He agrees with Cllr Brodie that it isn't strictly Covid Recovery, as per the budget, but feels that it is the right thing to do.

Cllr Garratt thanked Cllr Brodie for clarifying the purpose of the budget being discussed. He felt that if an organisation came to the council, requesting the sum of money in the form of a grant application for the same purpose, then members would likely be minded to award the funds, so therefore in practice we should look to do the same in this instance. The sum is not great and is a worst case scenario. He is very mindful of what Cllr Brodie said and that the council are custodians of the public purse, but this an initiative that we should be looking to support. He is aware of scenarios exactly as described where families have fallen through the cracks and people who are falling behind due to lack of accessible technology through his role as a tutor.

Cllr Hastings asked Claire if she had thought of contacting the IWC IT department to see if they can assist in any way. Claire said that her manager does not attend the local resilience forum and only looked at the Newport area, therefore IWC were not contacted in this way. She was given contacts by IWC for Hampshire County Council. If situation changes then clearly they will not have to provide the numbers which have been estimated and therefore less money potentially spent. She stated that from her discussions it appears that secondary schools have the greatest demand.

Cllr Hollis said that on reflection of the discussion held, children of the parish should be supported but the scheme should be strictly controlled.

Cllr Jones-Evans agreed and said a lot of work had put into the proposal.

Cllr Brodie asked for a named vote as the council was looking to spend against an unnamed budget.

A named vote was taken:

For

Cllr Jones-Evans
Cllr Garratt
Cllr Smart
Cllr Hastings
Cllr Craven
Cllr Price
Cllr Lever
Cllr Hollis
Cllr Martin

Against

Cllr Brodie

| | |
|-------|--|
| | <p><u>Abstentions</u> None</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> THAT, NCCC make an appeal to local businesses and individuals to donate laptops.</p> <p>The appeal would be created via the Newport and Carisbrooke Community Council social media and shared by partners, sent out via press contacts.</p> <p>The laptops would be collected and be refurbished and wiped by a contractor. Unviable equipment will be recycled by a certified contractor.</p> <p>Fit for purpose laptops would be then distributed to the school to load software and issue to pupils.</p> <p>NCCC to fund the refurbishment of laptops for pupils in need up to a total of £4,830 from the Covid Recovery Budget.</p> |
| 2764. | <p><u>BIOSPHERE PROJECT</u></p> <p>Cllr Jones-Evans said that as she is mindful of the time, would members like to defer the presentation until the next meeting of full council.</p> <p>Cllr Brodie was happy to defer the item, but as the budget is for consultation is conscious that the expenditure asking to be agreed may be of a different purpose to what has been agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Jones-Evans will send the presentation round to members separately for information and will discuss at the next meeting.</p> |
| 2765. | <p><u>POST OFFICE LANE TOILETS</u></p> <p>The Clerk briefed members on the current status of the project and informed members that an opening would be considered for the following week. The Clerk then invited Cllr Brodie to speak as he was aware of concerns that he would like to raise.</p> <p>Cllr Brodie reminded members that the original anticipated costs to Danfo for the purchase of the toilets was £130k. The previous Acting Clerk had persuaded him to bid for £160k public works loan to cover any costs, though would have been surprised if the final figure had reached this. Cllr Brodie now estimates the total cost to be £215k, after the £5k had been agreed for next years budget.</p> <p>Cllr Jones-Evans agreed with Cllr Brodie that a review of the project needs to take place. Other members also wished to see this.</p> <p>Cllr Craven was also worried and agreed that members need to analyse the project and ensure costs on future projects, such as the potential property purchase, are correct and money is not poured into it unnecessarily.</p> <p>The Clerk said that although the final figures were not in front of him, he wanted to make members aware of some key lines of expenditure which were not</p> |

| | |
|-------|---|
| | <p>originally included in any estimates or budgets which the project could not have been completed without. These lines were of significant costs which account for a majority of the expenditure above that anticipated.</p> <p>The Clerk said that this would be discussed at the meeting of the general purposes working party, and then at a future full council, likely the meeting being held in March.</p> |
| 2766. | <p><u>SHAPING NEWPORT</u></p> <p>The representatives on the Shaping Newport steering group (Cllr Jones-Evans, Cllr Brodie and Cllr Lever) briefed members on what had been discussed at the last Shaping Newport meeting.</p> <p>Pop-up shops had been a great success. Members had previously agreed to fund 6 months rent on a venue for this, however due to lockdown this was not possible to utilize as fully as what would have been desired. Due to this, the keys for the property had been returned early so as to not waste the money.</p> <p>The Shaping Newport Forum was discussed and some potential ideas about how this could be made more engaging in the future.</p> <p>IW Day is looking to be held in Newport this year and hopefully with some help from Shaping Newport they would like to see if this could continue to be held here and built on it for future years.</p> <p>Cllr Brodie shared his feelings that as the current IWC officer who is supporting Shaping Newport has more than one role, it is not able to be championed as fully as what it needs. He spoke of how it had lost its impetus because of the pandemic which is a shame. He intends to question how they can spend the money allocated to Shaping Newport whilst the project is not able to go on.</p> <p>Cllr Jones-Evans agreed that it needs an officer full time. She also made members aware that she had pushed the IWC Director for Regeneration to secure the post office in Newport, however not yet had any success. She had also raised with him the car park on Scarrots Lane and asked why it is being let out privately.</p> |
| 2767. | <p><u>ASSETS AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE</u></p> <p>Cllr Hastings presented the minutes of the last meeting of the Assets & Facilities Committee.</p> <p>Although there was not much to report, Cllr Hastings highlighted that there had been lengthy discussions regarding the Christmas Lights and potential for the future.</p> |
| 2768. | <p><u>REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES</u></p> <p>Cllr Smart said that she will type up the minutes of the next IWALC meeting and circulate to members.</p> |

| | |
|-------|---|
| 2769. | <p><u>MEMBERS QUESTIONS</u></p> <p>Cllr Jones-Evans informed members that WH Smith had pulled out of taking over the Post Office in Newport.</p> <p>The Clerk apologised for not including the Planning and Licensing Committee as an agenda item.</p> <p>Cllr Price raised concern that there is a planning application within Newport North that has not appeared on the press lists which are circulated to members and would like officers to follow this up. This led to a discussion from members around the press lists which are issued by IWC and often having errors meaning an application is not always in the correct position and can sometimes appear under other locations.</p> <p>Cllr Brodie reminded members that the Government had confirmed that elections will go ahead on 6th May unless the pandemic prevents them from doing so. There is still uncertainty if traditional leafleting and canvassing from candidates will be able to take place and fears that the main political parties will capitalise on this with their money and will not be an equal standing for independent candidates. Cllr Brodie asked the council to push Government to allow traditional campaigning if circumstances allow.</p> <p>Cllr Jones-Evans raised this with the Islands MP and is also raising it with Cabinet Office. Cllr Brodie asked if he could draft a letter expressing members concerns, and if members are agreeable, then this can be sent to Cabinet Office on behalf of the council. Members approved of this.</p> <p>Cllr Price spoke of the great success he had regarding the planning proposals at Seaclose Park, and had received public encouragement for more sports and recreational activities to be provided at this site. Newport FC have been approved to be relocated to Racecourse, which he feels is not really in Newport. It has come to light from the developer that there is an appetite to go to Seaclose Park. Cllr Price is keen to see this happen as long as it does not affect or damage IW Festival in any way. A potential relocation to Seaclose could also bring about other significant investments for other sports and recreational activities. He will be launching a survey over the next few days to get public opinion, and if the public do not want to pursue it then he will not, however he feels it needs further discussion and consideration.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> THAT, the meeting be extended by a further 5 minutes.</p> |
| 2770. | <p><u>HEALTH AND SAFETY</u></p> <p>None.</p> |
| 2771. | <p><u>NEXT AGENDA</u></p> <p>Biosphere</p> <p>To be sent to the Clerk.</p> |

2772. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting shall be held on Monday 8th March 2021 on Zoom Digital Conferencing.

Contact: Joshua Tombleson – 01983 559119 or clerk@newportwight.org.uk

CHAIR

DRAFT