

# NORTH TAWTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk:  
Mrs R Rice

14a The Square North Tawton  
EX20 2EP  
Tel 01837 880121

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council held at the **Council Offices** on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014** at **7.15 pm**.

Present: Cllr S Blood  
Cllr Mrs C Burrow  
Cllr A Gillespie  
Cllr N Morgan  
Cllr S Whiteley  
Cllr Dr P Brickley  
Cllr K Hodge  
Cllr Mrs G Hoggins (Chair)  
Cllr Mrs L Watts

6 Members of the public were present.

## **OPEN FORUM**

Mrs M Pridham has addressed the Council.

Mrs Pridham informed the Council that the drains in Yeo Lane, towards the Cheese Factory and Fore Street were still blocked; there was a problem with surface water from Waterloo Cottage. There was collapsed pipework near the bridge, the area needed sweeping. Two coping stones had not been replaced correctly. The leat needs cleaning, the 5<sup>th</sup> arch of the bridge needs clearing, the Riparian owners should be made to keep the river clear. The "Town Garden" needs tidying up and brambles need cutting back by the seats.

The Chairman informed Mrs Pridham that Jacky Smith, Senior Engineer, West Devon Borough Council had informed the Clerk that the Environment Agency were investigating the matter, the brambles would be cut back by the seats in the "Town Garden" and the Clerk was liaising with Mr Steve Dawe, Highways Officer, Devon County Council for the gulley emptying lorry visit North Tawton before winter sets in.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies for absence were received from Cllr I MacLeod, Annual Leave, Cllr Mrs D Rice, Annual Leave, and Cllr Mrs A Ponsford.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – None made at this stage.

Cllr Mrs G Hoggins, Chairman, reminded all Councillors that discussion should be strictly to agenda items.

## **3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

3.1 The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of North Tawton Town Council held at the Council Offices on Wednesday 16th July 2014, previously circulated, were agreed and signed subject to the following amendments.

Page 2 – delete "everything must be approved by Stuart Todd" and replace it with "we should be relying heavily on the advice of Stuart Todd."

Page 4 – change to word of the final paragraph under item 11:

~~Cllr Dr P Brickley responded. Mr Dowling did attend a Planning Committee meeting, and all the Town Council asked was not to damage the amount of water going to the leat, to repair the fish ladders, but it appeared the cheapest option was favoured.~~

Cllr Dr P Brickley responded. The Town Council's concerns regarding the matter were that Mr Dowling did attend a Planning Committee meeting, and all the Town

Council asked was that the project should not reduce the amount of water going to the leat and to repair the fish ladders.

#### **4. Updates**

- 4.1 The Chairman to update the Council on various issues.
- A thank you letter had been received from Devon Air Ambulance Trust.
  - A letter of thanks had been sent to Mrs C Hughes and Mr and Mrs R Knott for clearing the tree from Moor View Roundabout grassed area.
  - A copy of the signed Section 106 Agreement for Wainhomes had been received which was going to be checked.
  - Kinetica Solar had informed the Clerk that a planning application for an Eco Park had been submitted to West Devon Borough Council.
  - A thank you e-mail had been received from South West Highways regarding Taw Bridge:

*“Just a general confirmation e-mail to all to say following the successful resurfacing works to Taw Bridge on Friday night the bridge has now been re-opened to the public and normal life should resume to the travelling public and businesses in and around North Tawton.*

*I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved and affected by the scheme for their co-operation and support in what was a challenging project to plan and execute. We have managed to re-open the road 12 days ahead of the planned completion of the works (despite the rumours circulating to the contrary) with only a few items of tidying up, scaffold removal and line markings that remain to be completed this week that should not cause any disruption.*

*Thanks to all for your patience during these disruptive works.”*

- 4.2 To receive a brief update from Cllr Dr. P Brickley regarding the Neighbourhood Plan project.
- Focus meetings had been held, there were to be two more organised with organisations and large employers and major land owners.
  - A response to West Devon Borough Council's Call for Sites had been sent, the Neighbourhood Plan Project Group is the Town Council's response.
  - Funding had been received, £7,000 which must be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, we cannot pay for things in advance; this is going to be a serious problem. More funding may be available after 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015.
  - Policies should be drafted by Christmas which will go to public consultation before putting together the final plan.
  - Extracts of the important parts of the plan may be sent to every household, but again funding will be a problem.
- 4.3 Cllr S Blood gave a brief update regarding Denbrook.
- nothing to report except the road works had commenced at Whiddon Down.
- 4.4 Cllr N Morgan (WDBC Ward Member) gave a brief update:
- Nothing major to report.
  - Alan Robinson, Corporate Director at West Devon Borough Council had resigned.
  - Community Land Trusts can be set up to develop housing, workspaces, community facilities.

#### **5. Ongoing issues**

The Action 'Action Log' was updated:

- Highways issues – As no response has been received from Rhys Davies the Clerk was requested to write to the Chief Executive at Devon County Council.

- The Clerk was requested to contact Devon and Cornwall Housing Association asking them to write to their tenants explaining about the rent free months.

**6. NatWest Bank**

The matter of the recent publicity regarding the closure of NatWest Bank was discussed.

After some discussion, which included the closure of the last Bank in Town, concern for residents, the nearest ATM machines 7 miles (14 miles round trip), and the mobile banking service, it was resolved that the Clerk should request a meeting with the Regional Manager, Mr S Allen.

Cllr S Blood stated that he had the mobile number for the Regional Manager, which could be placed on the notice board for anyone wishing to speak to the Regional Manager. The Clerk asked, for data protection, if this number was a personal mobile number or a business mobile number, Cllr Blood informed the Clerk that it was the business telephone number.

**7. 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Opening of the Railway to North Tawton**

The celebrations to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Opening of the Railway to North Tawton were discussed. Cllr S Blood requested permission to write to B.A.R.S.

After some discussion it was resolved that Cllr S Blood should write to B.A.R.S. regarding the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Opening of the Railway to North Tawton.

**8. Press Officer**

The matter of North Tawton Town Council having a press officer(s) to help promote North Tawton in the media was discussed.

After some discussion it was resolved that Cllr W Whiteley and Cllr Mrs L Watts should have joint responsibility to write reports/contact the press to help to promote North Tawton, to be done on an event by event basis.

**9. Postcodes signage**

The matter of postcode signage within the town to help the emergency services locate properties was discussed.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should contact DALC and the Emergency Services regarding this matter.

**10. Commonwealth Day 2015**

The matter of whether North Tawton Town Council should fly the Commonwealth Flag on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015 was discussed.

After some discussion it was resolved to defer the matter. The Clerk was requested to obtain a quotation for the cost of the flag.

**11. Conferences/Courses/Workshop**

The following invitations have been received:

- 11.1. Devon Highways Town and Parish Conference 2014 – 17<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014.  
After some discussion it was resolved that Cllr Mrs C Burrow and Cllr S Blood would attend.
- 11.2. DCC – “Your rivers, your views – Local issues, local action” – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014.  
After some discussion it was resolved that Cllr Dr P Brickley would attend.
- 11.3. CPRE Devon – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014.  
After some discussion it was resolved that if any Councillor wished to attend this Seminar to inform the Clerk. Cllr S Blood was already attending on behalf of Devon Heartlands.
- 11.4. Community Council of Devon Conference – Shrinking state and blooming communities – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

After some discussion it was resolved that if any Councillor wished to attend this Seminar to inform the Clerk.

11.5 DALC – AGM and Conference 2014 – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

After some discussion it was resolved that if any Councillor wished to attend this AGM and Conference to inform the Clerk.

**12. Consultations/Newsletters**

The following newsletter had been received  
Parish Paths Partnership – Summer 2014.

The newsletter was noted and after some discussion it was resolved that Cllr Dr P Brickley and the Clerk should attend the P3 Workshop in Beaford on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014.

**13. Member's Code of Conduct**

The minor changes to the Member's Code of Conduct, as recommended by West Devon Borough Council, and to consider publishing the Member's Code of Conduct on North Tawton Town Council's website was discussed.

After some discussion it was resolved that the matter should be deferred.

**14. Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

The matter of setting up a Working Group to revise the standing orders, if required, with regard to the press and public recording meetings by audio or video, and other matter following the introduction of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

After some discussion it was agreed that Cllr S Whiteley should read through the Regulation and report back to Council.

**15. FINANCE**

**15.1 Invoices.** Members inspected the invoices and bank statements and appropriate payments were made in accordance with bank mandate.

**15.2 Monthly statement** – Members received the monthly statement and agreed to make the appropriate transfer from the reserve account to the current account to allow payments to be made.

**16. Questions/Comments from members of the public**

The meeting was suspended prior to Any Other Business to allow members of the public to comment/ask a question. Time shall be limited up to a maximum of 15 minutes.

Mr M Kennedy commented on the rent for properties in Barkers Way, the problem seems to be that although Devon and Cornwall Housing Association do offer four weeks free rent, the tenants do not know which weeks are free. He also commented that when the tenancies were offered a deposit was not required, but now the Devon and Cornwall Housing Association are asking for a deposit.

Mr M Kennedy also commented on the Localism Act and business rates; Parish and Town Councils now have greater control over business rates.

Mr M Kennedy also commented on the item being discussed with regard postcodes on signposts, he stated that if a call is made to the emergency services via a mobile phone your location is known by the emergency services.

Mrs R Davies stated that she would respond in writing.

Mrs S Knott asked if there was going to be an official opening of Taw Bridge following the rebuilding works.

Mrs C Hughes commented on Neighbourhood Plan funding and understood that Lifton were in the same position. Grants had previously been accessed for the bus shelters; perhaps the Neighbourhood Plan project could apply for further grants.

The meeting was re-opened.

**17. Any other business**

It was reported that some paving slabs needed attention, in particular outside Graylings Fish and Chip Shop, between Kirsty's Café and the Hairdressers. The Clerk would report the matter to Devon County Council.

A question was asked about the missing swing in the infants play area. The Clerk was requested to contact Mr G Cawse.

A question was asked about the redundant astro turf. The Estates Committee would investigate the matter.

It was reported that cars are being damaged in High Street, but it was pointed out that the Town Council cannot do anything about this.

Cllr S Whiteley reported has a lock had been placed on the salt bin in the Memorial Park Car Park, he had a key and the spare key had been given to the Clerk.

**18. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Council shall be 7th October 2014.

Part I of the meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

**PART II**

**EXEMPT REPORTS:**

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

The responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire section on Community Life in North Tawton, Local Facilities and Activities, was discussed. It was resolved that that it would be most helpful if a meeting could be arranged with representatives of the Town Hall Management Committee.

The Woollen Mill and other matters were discussed and it was resolved that a Working Party should be formed to include Councillors and community representatives. A suggested name for this was "North Tawton's Heritage Group". The Group would work in partnership with Devon Heartlands. The Group should have Terms of Reference similar to the Neighbourhood Plan Project Group and should report back to the Council.

Part II of the meeting ended at 9.50 pm.