



**NTC 20/05     REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- 5.1 To note Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2020  
Noted by Cllr. Eastwood.
- 5.2 To note Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Noted by Cllr Nelson. Cllr. Emmett mentioned he is available to take up his place again on the Finance and General Purposes Committee having had to step down recently due to work commitments. Noted.
- 5.3 To approve minutes of the Extraordinary Committee Meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2020. Proposed by Cllr. Emmett, seconded by Cllr. McNamee. All in favour.

**NTC 20/06     TOWN MAYOR’S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor attended the following events during March up to the COVID19 pandemic lockdown.

Sunday March	1 <sup>st</sup>	146 Northwich	Sqdn	Graduation Ceremony
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March		Hope52 – Zac’s House		Official Opening

A revised Proforma was presented to Councillors which includes wording around the rules in relation to COVID19 for any Organisers wishing to have the Town Mayor attend events/functions. Approval of the Council was requested and approved. Proposed by Cllr. Nelson, seconded by Cllr. Rowley. All in favour.

**Approved**

Cllr. Mrs. A Gerrard left the meeting at 6.10 p.m.

**NTC20/07     TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

**1.0 COVID 19 update**

Since the pandemic began in March and the lockdown was put in place Northwich Town Council officers, staff and Councillors have been working closely with partners to support the towns residents and businesses wherever we can. We have worked with CW&C Council, Northwich BID, Snow Angels, Rotary clubs and local support groups to help them deliver services throughout the community. Some has been financial help along with officer and admin support for local groups.

The Council has continued to operate fully throughout and has given support and advice to neighbouring Town & Parish Councils regarding cemeteries, play areas, grounds maintenance and cleansing.

The office has been open for enquires via phone and email throughout but has been closed to the public, some of our office staff have been working from home but are now all back working in separate offices and buildings. All outside staff have again been in throughout the pandemic working to strict measures ensuring all our services have been delivered.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all NTC staff that have worked throughout this difficult time along with all other key workers who have kept us safe and well.

Cllr. Rimmer asked regarding Public toilets. This has been raised and the matter brought to the attention of the Borough Council. Cllr. Emmett mentioned a scheme used in other towns. Cllr. Naylor mentioned that BRIO Leisure Centre have toilets open for use.

Date.....

.....

**Cllr. K. Rimmer  
Town Mayor**

**2.0 Northwich Town Centre Recovery**

We have been working with CW&C Council, Northwich BID, and Barons Quay to support the town centre in re opening over the next few weeks. We have spent some time in the town centre applying tape for social distancing, signage and speaking with local businesses to see what support they require going forward. Footfall within the town centre is beginning to pick up and hopefully this will continue to rise with the opening of further businesses.

**3.0 Artisan Market**

The ever popular Artisan Market will return on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August and will be situated in Barons Quay due to current COVID with restrictions in place. Additional measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of the public and also the traders and will include additional signage, hand sanitisers and enhanced cleaning. There will be no NTC Councillors stand.

**4.0 Northwich Town Council Owned Play Areas**

All of our play areas closed at the beginning of the lockdown on the instruction of the Government, but our open spaces remained open with additional signage in place asking for visitors to adhere to social distancing. Over the last 2 weeks our play areas, skate parks and small kiosk have re-opened with safety measures in place, additional signage has been installed on all sites and hand sanitiser is available outside the kiosk in Vickersway Park.

**5.0 Northwich Town Council Owned Allotment Sites**

All of our allotment sites have remained open again with additional signage in place and we have had a surge in requests for allotments during lockdown with our sites now fully occupied.

**6.0 Events**

Events happening within Northwich have mostly been cancelled or postponed and these included Verdin Music Festival, Krazy Races, River Festival, Northwich Pride and the NOW Festival. We are still to make a decision on what the Christmas Extravaganza will look like and are waiting for further guidance from the Government. This will be an agenda item for the September meeting when a decision will be made.

**7.0 Anti-social Behaviour and increased Littering**

We are receiving some complaints in some of our parks of increased ASB and an increase in litter. We will be installing additional bins, increasing our frequency of visits and working with residents, police and other partners to work to resolve this issue.

I will keep members informed of any actions that need to be taken.

**8.0 Summer Bedding**

Our staff have been busy planting thousands of bedding plants around the town centre and installing hanging baskets and planters to give a splash of colour during the summer months, this work has been part funded by the Northwich BID who we continue to work closely with to make the town a fantastic place to visit.

**9.0 Old Hall Play Area**

Installation of a new Trim-trail will be completed within the next few weeks. The existing teen shelter will be removed to accommodate the installation, Unfortunately we have been experiencing increased ASB within the park since it re-opened in early July with additional visits from NTC staff to remove litter and broken glass. We have also removed a plastic picnic bench that was set on fire and is beyond repair. This will be replaced with a steel bench.

**10.0 Verdin Park Play Area**

All equipment for the new play area at Verdin Prk has been fabricated and delivered to the installer ready for installation. Contractor to confirm a start date and works will start. Existing equipment will be removed over the next few weeks.

Date.....

.....

**Cllr. K. Rimmer  
Town Mayor**

**11.0 Verdin Park Gates and Piers**

The gates and piers were removed from Verdin Park for Health and Safety reasons a few years ago following damage from vehicles over a number of years. NTC has worked with CW&C Council and Historic England to have the gates and piers reinstalled.

Original plan was to replace the piers with new ones due to the existing damage and to re-position these following refurbishment at the hospital entrance with new, lighter gates. The original gates would then be refurbished, mounted on the new piers at the main entrance.

Following discussions, Historic England wished the original piers and gates be refurbished, made safe, and returned to their original position. Gates have already been totally refurbished and are looking amazing so this now leaves the original piers to be repaired and re-installed.

Three tenders were sought, but only one Contractor – Walker Conservation Ltd., submitted a quote to carry out these extensive works. Piers will be re-installed with stainless steel rods to ensure they are structurally sound and safe to take the refurbished original gates.

The cost to refurbish 2 piers and re-install will be £9,746.25

Would like to commence these repairs as soon as possible and instruct Walker Conservation to carry out the works. It is also noted, the Tender document was opened under the usual procedures. Proposed by Cllr. Nelson, seconded by Cllr. Emmett to go ahead with the works as outlined. All in favour.

**Approved**

**12.0 Walk around and Danefields Play Area**

During July Town Clerk was invited to a walk around Danefields with local PCSO's, Ward Councillors and Community Safety Wardens. This, in an effort to speak to residents regarding any concerns they have on the Estate. Most residents raised the problems with ASB in the play area which is under our ownership and these concerns were discussed.

Following this, NTC staff are now instructed to open and lock this play area on a daily basis in an effort to reduce the ASB. Current opening time is 8.00 a.m. closing at 7.00 p.m. hours will reduce during the winter months to locking at dusk. The area will also be cleaned and checked every day for any damage. Cllr. Cooper asked about the group set up Friends of Danefield.

**13.0 May Annual General Meeting 2020**

As agreed previously among members, May's AGM is now postponed until May 2021 with all Committee Members and Outside Body representatives to remain the same. Proposed by Cllr. Nelson, seconded by Cllr. Bowden.

**Approved.**

Cllr. Rowley mentioned he wished to stand down as Chair on Planning and Environment due to work commitments. Cllr Rimmer pointed out that until new Committees are formed in 2021, there is a Vice Chair of that Committee who will step in.

**NTC20/08 AGA 2019/2020**

The Annual Governance and Accountability return for 2019/2020 has been distributed among Members prior to this meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Nelson, seconded by Cllr. Cooper. All in favour.

**Approved**

**NTC20/09 INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT YEAR END 2019/2020**

To approve the Internal Auditors report previously distributed among Members prior to this meeting. Proposed by Cllr. Nelson, seconded by Cllr. Emmett. All in favour.

**Approved**

Date.....

**Cllr. K. Rimmer  
Town Mayor**

**NTC20/10 SCHOOL SUMMER PLAYSCHEMES**

ATC gave update on the current Summer Playschemes. A full report was distributed to Members prior to this meeting but the main points contained are as follows:-

Further to discussions with Witton Church Walk and Victoria Road Primary Schools, both schools keen to hold Playschemes if they could be carried out safely.

Multiplex providing activities again this year to include basketball, archery, cricket, football and gymnastics. Also advice on healthy eating and living, all carried out under strict COVID 19 procedures and guidelines. Events run Monday to Friday 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Places are free and are offered initially to children on free schools meals and SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities) children. Remaining places offered to others until places are filled. Mid Cheshire Catering provide packed lunches to every child. Funding provided by Edsential and the full cost covered totalled £14,546 along with additional funding of £500 from Asda (subject to approval by Asda)

The Playschemes are working extremely well. Members update will be provided at the end of the Playschemes. Cllr. Emmett enquired where publicised. Multiplex do their own publicity exclusively with schools participating. Cllr. Bowden mentioned about Waking Rugby which takes place at Moss Farm. Cllr. McNamee asked if other activities are planned other than sports. At present no other activities planned, depends on funding available, but could be considered going forward. The criteria is keeping children active within a safe environment.

**NTC 20/11 CHURCH WALK PADDLING POOL**

A full report from the Town Clerk was distributed to Members prior to this meeting. The main points covered were:-

Due to COVID 19 Government restrictions the pool remained closed. No routine preparatory works carried out, and no seasonal attendants recruited during lockdown.

Recent changes with effect from 11<sup>th</sup> July by Government to allow outdoor swimming pools to open.

The works we would need to carry out now to allow opening would be:-

Pump Room and system servicing, Pool surface repairs, painting of shop, deep clean of pool surrounds and toilets, staff recruitment and training.

There would be restrictions on numbers allowed in the pool area and a ticket system would have to be introduced. We do not have a system in place or the staff to carry out such duties.

Staffing would be required as follows:-

- 1 Pool Attendant to clean pool, empty litter bins and clean toilets regularly.
- 1 Leisure Attendant to man the kiosk
- 2 Staff members to manage visitors entering and leaving and detailing information for Track and Trace system.
- Additional support within the office to manage booking system.
- Potential hiring of security staff to deal with any ASB.

Other local outdoor pool operators appear to be keeping their similar facilities closed for the same reasons. It would not be realistic after taking into account the needs above to have the pool open for approximately 4 weeks. Councillors decision requested to accept the proposals detailed above.

Proposed by Cllr. Rowley, seconded by Cllr. Nelson. All in favour.

**Approved**

**NTC 20/12 VICTORIA INFIRMARY NORTHWICH (VIN)**

Cllr. Naylor gave update to Members. CW&C Cllrs. Cooper, Naylor and Cernik are wanting normal services to resume at the Hospital following last weeks' press statement information that these will not be restored until at least April 2021. Have got in touch with our M.P. Mike Amesbury for backing to reinstate normal hours. A petition is in place. The Councillors are keeping up pressure on James Sumner. Cllr. Cooper reiterated the steps being taken. Further meeting planned in August. Cllr. Bowden added that he has been an out-patient at VIN and it continues to be a massive asset to the Town. Staff working under very difficult circumstances, but offer quality care.

Date.....

.....

**Cllr. K. Rimmer  
Town Mayor**

**NTC 20/13 NORTHWICH AED'S**

Over the last 5 years NTC have been working with partners to install AED's throughout the town. All AED's that we install are 24 hour accessible and are maintained and serviced by ourselves. Working with local members and Rudheath and Witton Together, we are now able to install a further 5 devices in the following locations – Leftwich Estate, Middlewich Road, Castle, Winnington and Rudheath. The facilities will be installed within the next few weeks and will be registered with NWS with their exact locations.

**NTC 20/14 CW&C MEMBERS UPDATES**

Cllr. Cooper updated members on matters covering the last 4 months.

**COVID19**

CW&C response was a dashboard with data for areas. Various stats gathered including current infection and mortality rates. Volunteer response has been incredible with over 2000 across our borough helping communities. This model has proved good practice across other areas. Explained about Food Hubs.

**Test and Track**

Public Health England have call centres dealing with calls. CW&C Team has followed up –door to door if necessary. Data sharing to local Governments. Going well.

**Recovery**

Attending meetings with NTC, BID CW&C Officers in relation to Town Centre opening. Footfall now 70-80% of normal. Some businesses fairing better than others. Cllr. Bowden asked about local information, any changes to behaviour opposed to national? Figures available for borough only, not individual towns. Cllr. Emmett has studied figures on the dashboard - COVID deaths opposed to general deaths under normal circumstances. Cllr. Fox added the need for mindfulness of Data Protection, not to label individual areas.

**Town Centre Regeneration**

Barons Quay now have occupancy of 76%. Mentioned new businesses about to open shortly. It is however, unclear what the long term impact will be over the next few years.

**Weaver Square**

The outdoor market is now demolished. CW&C are consulting with BID and businesses. Outdoor seating and landscaping possible, this would help surrounding bars and cafes etc. There will be more consultation later in the year.

**(Cllr. A. Stott joined the meeting at 7.05 p.m.)**

Cllr. Fox advised the area of space within Barons Quay has allowed for Social Distancing amid initial criticism. Cllr. Naylor reiterated there are some good ideas to promote Northwich as an experience other than retail. Cllr. McNamee would agree that landscaping as opposed to parking would be a better option. Cllr. Rowlands enquired what type of landscaping – tarmac had been mentioned. Cllr. Naylor replied this was yet to be discussed – whatever people find pleasing, but not just the cheap option. Cllr Emmett asked about an outdoor performance area. Cllr. Naylor confirmed this is being looked at. Cllr. Fox mentioned Pocket Parks- treatment of seating similar to Pocket Parks can have a quick turnaround to put into place. Suggested partnership with BID Groundworks. Cllr. Bowden spoke about major strategic decisions in respect of Barons Quay. People are looking to staying local, it should be recognised the greater potential for street living, weatherproofing is vital. Recreational and shopping habits will see a change in future years.

Cllr. Cooper concluded that we are facing uncertain times – working from home, less commuting and a worklife/family balance.

**Date.....**

.....

**Cllr. K. Rimmer  
Town Mayor**

**Northwich Library**

Report seen on possible Library Services moved to Barons Quay. No decision has yet been made, will be consulted when proposals ready. Very popular among local people, and much loved. The present building needs restoration. The move to Barons Quay would include easier access, adult education, and free up the existing building for alternative uses. All factors being considered, and will go out to consultation.

**Moss Farm**

CW&C currently working with a Sports Consultancy as to the future use. A large investment is available. Options could look like – Improved cycling and walking from Winnington Village, improved car parking, new pitches etc. Will keep Members updated as to proposals presented.

**Cycling**

Government want bids for cycling routes infrastructure. CW&C has been awarded funding and discussions have taken place how to spend for improved access to Town Centres, transport hubs etc. CW&C Highways looking to top up this money from the Northwich Transport Strategy which is available. CW&C are currently improving line painting around the town for cycle routes/paths. CW&C have cycling storage available, and any suggestions as to where these may be sited, please let Cllr. Cooper know. CW&C are also currently offering free Adult Cycling Courses.

**Dane Valley Urban Forest**

Following flooding in the Town Centre, CW&C propose to deliver a tree planting target to develop an Urban Forest around new property development in this area. This will do a lot to reduce the water table. Cllr. Rowlands mentioned the Dane Valley Community Orchard of which she is a supporter. Mersey Forest is interested in planting trees on various sites to regenerate areas such as the Orchard. Cllr. Emmett mentioned the recent Outline Planning application at Saxons Lane. Cllr. Cooper gave information he is aware of, e.g. suitable drainage not on the Plans. Traffic issues have been highlighted to Planning Officers. A decision will be made based on Consultee responses, and there appears no reason to reject the application. Cllr Cooper went on to pinpoint various reasons as to why this was approved, and has sympathy with those who opposed. Reiterated it is only Outline Planning sought at this stage. Cllr. Melville asked about a possible Conflict of Interest with Canal and River Trust and the applicant. Cllr Cooper agreed to contact Cllr. Melville outside the meeting to discuss his concerns.

**NTC 20/15 OUTSIDE BODIES**

Cllr. Stott is on the Rudheath and Witton Together Partnership Board, but has been asked to become Vice Chair. His application has been sent in for consideration.

**NTC20/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of the next Full Council Meeting (Virtual) will be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 6.30pm. Usual details will be sent prior to this meeting. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

Date.....

.....

**Cllr. K. Rimmer  
Town Mayor**