

NORTHWICH TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 1ST MARCH 2021 VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

Present: Cllr K Rimmer Town Mayor

Councillors: Cllr D Bowden Cllr A Cooper
Cllr S Naylor Cllr. B. Cernik
Cllr G Emmett Cllr M. McNamee
Cllr A Stott Cllr. Ms. G Edwards left the meeting at 7.00 p.m.
Cllr Mrs. J. Illidge Cllr. Mrs. A Lockett
Cllr Mrs. K Cernik Cllr. Ms. H. Rowlands left the meeting at 7.30 p.m.
Cllr Ms. A Gerrard – joined the meeting at 6.20 p.m.

Also present: Chris Shaw Town Clerk
Liza Clansey Assistant Town Clerk
Theresa Cash Council Secretary/Mayor's P.A.

NTC 20/111 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM LSEP REGARDING THE LOSTOCK SUSTAINABLE ENERGY PLANT

Nicholas Roberts and other representatives addressed Members. Gave background to the company and the amended proposals at LSEP. Company is a joint venture comprising Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners and FCC since 2012 and are investors in renewable energy. FCC Environmental Global are a leading recycling energy and waste management company. They wish to maximise the use of the facility by increasing the amount of waste which enables production of more sustainable energy. Speaker gave statistics showing benefits of electrical energy and also showed the expected generation of 600 jobs. The amendment will show increase of input with a high number of vehicles to and from the site, and increased operating hours, with vehicles exiting A556 and on to Griffiths Road as their route. HGV movements will be more complex increasing from 131 to 217 arrivals over a 16 hour delivery period. (07.00 to 23.00) Air quality and transport assessments will be carried out. Company intend to submit plans to the Department for Bus, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for the variations by Summer 2021. Questions were then asked by Members.

Cllr. Emmett asked about using the rail transport lines located close by as an alternative to road – this will be investigated in the future as a feasibility study when sources of waste are identified.

Cllr Naylor stated that 90% of the public are against this proposal. A previous variation was for output increase and no further traffic. One year on and this is showing the need for a huge increase of both. Griffiths Road is unsuitable for such increases in traffic movement and Northwich residents have never been in favour. Previous planning was agreed by Central Government only, had it come before CW&C and other Local and Parish Councils it would be overwhelmingly opposed, based on public opinion, and is a travesty to have got these proposals approved.

Date.....

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Cllr. K. Rimmer
Town Mayor

Cllr. B Cernik in agreement with Cllr. Naylor's comments, and added that this is not a particularly efficient process in burning waste generating carbon dioxide. It is not sustainable as in the future will be using more recyclable packaging etc. The 'sustainable' term is misleading as will create more CO2 than necessary and is not compatible with the Climate Change agenda. This was answered that there are 2 ways of dealing with waste, landfill or incinerate to produce energy. Speakers explained residual waste streams, the Plant offsets energy generates fossil fuel and reduces methane from landfill. Cllr. Cernik added that taking into account transport costs, company still not prepared to consider the rail transport possible alternative.

Cllr. Cooper asked what output would Northwich get? Speaker quoted output figures. Cllr. Cooper went on to state that planning approval was granted approximately 10 years ago. Dong Energy who also operate a plant already generates energy. Considers the technology for this proposal outdated. Speaker answered that there will always be a residual waste and water that needs to be managed. Made comparisons to how technology differs from a few years ago, the Plant is as efficient as possible.

Cllr. K Cernik asked what the expected lifespan of the Plant. The Plant should be 25-30 years of useful life but forecasts show there will always be a need for this facility. Also asked how far will the catchment area be? This is still under review so is not possible to say if waste will come from a specific area. Cllr Cernik has worries regarding the traffic coming from further afield to Northwich, Cllr. B Cernik asked regarding being able to source waste in order to use rail link already discussed. Speaker answered that waste will be predominantly from the North West, but need to determine precise contracts within catchment area.

Cllr Bowden asked about pelleting process, could this be an option transported to the Plant? Another company has looked at this but decided not commercially viable or safe.

Cllr. Naylor finally added that from the outset in 2012 the people of Northwich have been deceived. Asked the company to be honest with people, need to see how the Plant realistically will look with steam and output, not like the one presented to Members. Cannot agree that 600 jobs will be generated, and certainly not from the local workforce. Northwich people have been let down at every stage. Speaker briefly discussed original plans and does appreciate Cllr. Naylor's concerns.

The Town Mayor thanked representatives for their presentation to Members.

NTC 20/112 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM MATT BRYAN REGARDING E-SCOOTERS FOR NORTHWICH

Due to illness the speaker was unable to attend

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**Cllr. K. Rimmer
Town Mayor**

NTC 20/113 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE OR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs, S Eastwood. (Leave of absence granted) C Fox, L Nelson and J. Thomas. Cllrs T. Melville and M. Rowley were not present.

NTC 20/114 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interest under the following categories:

- Pecuniary Interest
- Outside Bodies Interest
- Family, Friend or Close Associate interest
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Cllr S Naylor declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr A Cooper declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr. K Cernik declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr. B.Cernik declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr. G.Edwards declared an interest in any matters relating to Cheshire West and Chester Council

NTC 20/115 OPEN FORUM

There were no speakers.

NTC 20/116 SIGNING OF THE MINUTES

- 6.1 The minutes of Town Council Meeting held on Monday 1st February, 2021 be confirmed and approved as a true and accurate record.
Proposed by Cllr Cooper, seconded by Cllr McNamee Minutes to be signed by the Mayor. All in favour.

NTC 20/117 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- 7.1 To note Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on Tuesday 16th February 2021.
Noted by Cllr Stott
- 7.2 To note Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 16th February, 2021. Noted by Cllr Rimmer.

NTC 20/118 PCSO REPORT

Report given by PCSO included recent Shoplifting in Supermarkets, CCTV studied and suspect dealt with. Anti-social behaviour in town centre car parks at night. Police are regularly patrolling. Begging in town centre, not specifically reported by businesses or shops. Speeding enforcement carried out at various times and places.

Cllr. Illidge is aware of speeding near to the Infirmary. PCSO confirmed this is on their list to visit over the next few days. Cllr. B Cernik mentioned that residents complain about the speeding on the new Winnington estates. PCSO explained they have been to the area, but as the roads are not adopted yet, there are no speed restriction signs, so unable to enforce at present.

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Cllr. K. Rimmer
Town Mayor

Cemetery Chapels

The stained glass windows that were previously vandalised a few months ago have now been fully repaired and installed. Police enquiries are still ongoing. Cllr. Rimmer requested that the Guardian Reporter (present) highlights this matter and the very high cost to Council Tax payers to have these repairs carried out, all due to vandalism.

AED's

Contact has been made with the Community Centre, Winnington Village who agreed an AED could be positioned outside the building. This has now been completed today, with thanks going to Cllr. K Cernik for making the initial contact on our behalf.

Park Benches

All our benches are now being fully refurbished within our parks ready for the summer months.

COVID Recovery

We continue to work with partners on the COVID recovery for the town centre, offering support to community groups and businesses. Working with Northwich BID we are now looking at the following for the town centre.

- Thorough spring clean of the town centre
- Increased cleaning of neglected areas.
- Start to introduce small events on a weekly basis to slowly increase footfall and support local traders.
- Return of the Artisan Markets in May.

Cllr. Rimmer asked what the events will look like, but there are no specific plans as yet.

Town Centre Flooding

NTC continue to offer support to local businesses where needed following the flooding. This has included the loan of pumps, dehumidifiers and barriers.

Following discussions with Highways, sandbags are now stored at our depot. These can be deployed as needed at short notice by our staff.

Town Centre Telephone Box

NTC have purchased the telephone box outside the Penny Black due to it not being viable for BT to keep it in use. There have been several ideas as to its future use. It is going to be brought into use as a floral display to coincide with the in-bloom competition we enter each year. Town Clerk will now obtain costs to have the kiosk refurbished and frames fabricated to hold the planters.

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Cllr. K. Rimmer
Town Mayor

NTC 20/120 COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION

Due to the recent resignation of Cllr. Gavin Erlam, CW&C have been notified of the casual vacancy, which has also been published on our website. If no election is called, Members can decide if they wish to co-opt going forward. The Town Mayor Cllr. Rimmer wished Mr Erlam all the best for the future.

At this point the Assistant Town Clerk advised that funding has been offered from the Edsential for a Playscheme over the week of Easter holidays for Victoria Road School. Church Walk were unable to take up this offer as the school is having work undertaken over the Easter period.

NTC 20/121 FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations as follows:-

Office 365 – to award Element Hosting the contract to manage NTC domains and Office 365 accounts at a cost of £2669.15 per annum

AED's – to reposition existing NTC AED's outside to ensure 24/7 accessibility for the community. Total cost of £1950.

Sunflower Friendly Town – to support Northwich BID, Barons Quay and Rotary in making Northwich a Sunflower Town. Financial contribution £500.

These recommendations en-bloc proposed by Cllr. Emmett, seconded by Cllr. Stott. All in favour.

Approved

NTC 20/122 KRAZY RACES

This event was originally planned for 2020. Due to the current uncertainty regarding large scale Events, this has had to be postponed again for this summer. Discussions have taken place with the Events Organiser, and CW&C Events Team and will now be rescheduled for 2022, as the safest option. It is hoped this event will be the biggest and best event the town has ever put on and want as many people as possible to take part and attend.

NTC 20/123 CW&C COUNCILLOR UPDATES

Cllr B Cernik advised regarding the Strategic Outline Business case for Winnington bridge. 3 models considered with cost analysis parallel road structure to be 2 bridges with improvements to road junctions. New bridge will cross the flowing part of R. Weaver and used as a walkway and cycle route. Cost anticipated to be in the region of £20m. CW&C does not have funds at present, so would have to rely on Central Government and other stakeholders. No specific plans in place, and timescale will depend on receiving funding.

Cllr. Naylor reported on the Town Centre Flooding. Meeting to be held (tomorrow) with United Utilities, CW&C, Environment Agency and business owners. Members of the Public will be able to question Council Officers and other Agencies. Acting on behalf of the residents and to establish who is accountable for the situation.

Date.....

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**Cllr. K. Rimmer
Town Mayor**

Cllr. Cooper advised regarding the public open space at the front of the former Market site which businesses are keen to see open for the summer as an events space. Cllr. Naylor added that as with the open space provided for use by the community, any events would need to be approved by CW&C. The Town Clerk will work closely with the Events Team at CW&C. Will provide open space for businesses in that area, and boosting town centre trade.

Mid Cheshire Hospitals are exploring possible move to the Weaver Square site, dependent on costings and how much space available. Would be available for a revamped market or housing.

Cllr. Bowden asked regarding the flood damage to various footpaths close to the 'Blue Bridge'. Cllr. Cooper offered to take up this matter, as is outside the Northwich boundary. Town Clerk will also take up with Environment Agency and Canal and River Trust.

Cllr. Rimmer asked regarding Council Tax. Cllr. Naylor advised that of the 4.99% increase, 3% of this is imposed by Central Government for Adult Social Care. CW&C have worked very hard to protect local services. Cllr Rimmer has had several residents asking will there be cuts to disabled services? Cllr. Cooper added that Adult Social Care (disability services included) is increased by 40%. Cllr Naylor advised that possibly direct payments to Clients to purchase their care packages. Cllr Cooper would need to know specifics or evidence of cuts, with Cllr. Naylor adding that as this is a public meeting and specifics unknown is subject to personal opinion. Cllr. K Cernik added there is no evidence that disabled services are being cut, and cannot answer rumours.

Cllr. Rimmer states BRIO is closed due to lockdown, and therefore no provision for public toilets. Projected that it will be 4/5 years before they will be available in Weaver Square and is not acceptable. It is his intention to contact the Leader of CW&C to see if facilities may be installed even as a temporary measure.

Cllr. K Cernik mentioned that rules are changing in respect of allocated housing based on need. CW&C are currently building houses within the borough.

NTC 20/124 OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from Members.

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NTC 20/125 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of the next Full Council Meeting (Zoom Virtual) will be held on **Tuesday 6th April, 2021** at 6.00pm. Usual details will be sent prior to this meeting. (Please note the date follows Bank Holiday.)

Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.

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**Cllr. K. Rimmer
Town Mayor**