



NEWARK TOWN COUNCIL

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FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 10th January 2018 in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

Membership Present:	Councillor	D Lloyd (in the Chair)
	Councillors	M G Cope (Vice-Chairman) Mrs C Barker-Powell Mrs I Brown M Cleasby Mrs R Crowe R A Crowe Mrs G Dawn P Duncan Ms H Gent (A) K Girling L Goff S Haynes D Hyde D Jones (A) T Roberts MBE M Skinner R Williams
Apologies for Absence:	Councillors	There were no Apologies
Officers Present:	Town Clerk Markets Manager	Alan Mellor Ian Harrison
Taking Notes:	PA to the Town Clerk	Helen Crossland
	There were no members of the public present.	
Venue:	Council Chamber, Town Hall	

FGP58/17/18 Minutes of the last meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 6th December 2017

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6th December 2017 were **AGREED** as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

FGP59/17/18 Matters Arising

FGP57/17/18 – Cemetery

Cllr P Duncan spoke with regard to the Kidney Stones which had been discussed within this Minute at the last meeting. He thought that the Town Council should at least know if there was any value to the Stones before deciding what to do with them. He suggested that someone with appropriate professional expertise should take a look at them. Cllr Duncan also had some photographs of the Stones and a report obtained from the Curator; it was agreed that a copy of them both should be circulated to Councillors for the March meeting of this Committee.

FGP60/17/18 Declarations of Interest

It was **AGREED** to accept any Declarations of Interest as and when they arose during the meeting.

FGP61/17/18 Payment Schedule 8/18

Members **AGREED** that payment in accordance with Payment Schedule 8/18 in the sum of £164,098.46 (one hundred and sixty four thousand, and ninety eight pounds and 46p) be **APPROVED**.

FGP62/17/18 Street Collection Licences

Members **AGREED** to recommend to Newark & Sherwood District Council that the following application for a Street Collection Licence be **APPROVED**:

- (i) Marie Curie, on Saturday 3rd March 2018.

FGP63/17/18 Voluntary Body/Community Events Grant Applications

Members **AGREED** to grant the following application for free use of the Town Hall:

- (i) Free use of the Ballroom to hold a talk on 'The Death of King John, The Battle of Lincoln and the First Siege of Newark 1218, at a cost of £138.00 on Wednesday 18th July 2018, for Collingham & District Local History Society.

FGP64/17/18 Internal Audit Report

Payroll – 1.4

Cllr Mrs R Crowe said it was of concern that some overtime claims had not been authorised, but noted the proposed action.

Payroll – 1.10

Cllr S Haynes thought that the method of backing up was somewhat antiquated; general discussion followed and it was noted that were a lot of other ways of backing up data, off the premises.

Cllr M Skinner suggested that the current IT provider to the Town Council be asked

for advice on this.

During the discussion, Cllr K Girling asked how long the fire-proof safe was actually fire-proof for; the Town Clerk agreed to find out and report back.

Asset Management – 6.8

Cllr Mrs R Crowe asked if the time scale for the list had been given to the Officers involved; the Town Clerk said it would be issued nearer the year end with other instructions for the completion of the final accounts.

Newark Market – 8.9

Cllr Mrs R Crowe asked how the arrears noted had been allowed to accumulate. The Market Manager responded that this usually happened through absenteeism of licensed traders who are required to pay rents even when they do not attend. He reported that the debts noted had now all been cleared, but in the meantime another licensed trader had been off, so there would be new arrears that will be collected.

Members then **ACCEPTED** the Internal Audit Report and **ENDORSED** the proposed actions in response to the report's recommendations.

FGP65/17/18 Newark Market Strategy

The Market Manager went through the Agenda Report. He asked that Members view the report not only for Newark Market, but also for the Town Centre.

The Market Manager pointed out that he had initiated the provision of a coach bay on Appletongate and was to request Notts. County Council to invite its use also as a bus stop on town centre routes (6.5). He also said that promotion of the market could be boosted by some further investment, involving specialist support (7.4).

Members were then invited to ask questions and the following points were raised:

- Do the markets staff check to see that the traders actually sell the goods that they have said they would; the Manager responded that they do, but this can be an issue in the run up to Christmas when 'casual' traders sometimes put out goods that they have not declared on their registration.
- The possibility of a shuttle bus service in Newark; what social media is used? The Manager informed Members that there is a Facebook page, and they also use Twitter.
- Footfall in the Market Place – technology can be used to measure this. If possible, Members asked if this could include qualitative research i.e. why visit/why not, why shop on market/why not. This information may already be available in the Carter Jonas report commissioned by the District Council.
- Incentives for second stalls – the Manager informed Members that good discounts are given to traders who take multiple stalls.
- Card payments – how many traders can accommodate this; the Manager reported that he thought 5 or 6 traders can now do this.
- Quality, not quantity, of stalls should be borne in mind.
- The stalls do not seem to have any particular 'structure'; the Manager said that this should get better once all traders use the 'skirts' that have been provided. They have all been issued, but some traders are still on holiday.
- Promote the Market on the Town Council's website.
- Do more to attract coach parties; the Town Clerk informed Members that there had been a meeting earlier in the week of the Town Team. Over the last year

there were over 100 coaches that visited Newark, and the Town Team are trying to come up with a 'package'.

- Not enough is made of the 'Royal Market' brand. More focus should be put on getting this across in a distinctive and intelligent way. The Manager responded that this could be part of the 'push' to make more use of social media to help with this.
- There is a delicate balance between trying to attract new traders, and retaining them.
- Charity stalls – if there is space could there be more than one made available; the Manager reported that he would be contacting some charities in the near future.
- Could the total stalls available graph be broken down into days (page 75 in the Agenda)? The Market Manager agreed to do this.

Members then **CONSIDERED** the proposed Action Plan for Newark Market as in the Agenda Report. It was **AGREED** that the Actions in Appendix A should be **APPROVED**.

FGP66/17/18 Business Continuity Plan

The Town Clerk went through the report.

Cllr Mrs R Crowe asked where the Town Council would operate from if there was a major incident, and asked if Castle House had been considered. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate this position.

She also asked where the Plan would be kept.

The Town Clerk informed Members that all the people involved would have a copy of the plans, and would be keeping them at home.

Cllr S Haynes asked if there was the facility for Officers to work remotely; the Town Clerk said that there was not currently that facility.

Members then **APPROVED** the draft Business Continuity Plan, with the following change:

- (i) To include a specific location from which to operate in the immediate aftermath of the loss of the Town Hall.

FGP67/17/18 Personnel Sub-Committee Minutes

Members **RECEIVED** the Minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee Meeting held earlier in the evening.

Meeting Closed:	8.40pm	Next Meeting:	Wednesday 7th February 2018
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