



NEWARK TOWN COUNCIL

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DEVOLVED SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Devolved Services Committee held on Monday 28th September 2015, in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

Membership Present:	Councillor	D Lloyd (in the Chair)
	Councillors	R A Crowe Mrs G Dawn (Ap) P Duncan (Vice-Chairman) K Girling D Hyde D Jones (A)
In attendance:	Councillors	Mrs R Crowe, Mrs J Whicher, R Williams, L Goff, T Roberts MBE
Apologies for Absence	Councillors	
Officers Present:	Town Clerk	Alan Mellor
	Deputy Town Clerk	James Radley
	N&SDC Business Manager – Parks & Amenities	Phil Beard
Taking Notes:		Helen Crossland
	There were no members of the public present.	
Venue:	Council Chamber, Town Hall	

DVS04/15/16 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 7th September 2015 were **AGREED** and signed as a true and accurate record.

DVS05/15/16 Matters Arising

Cllr P Duncan asked if the actions agreed at the first meeting were for discussion, or whether they would be the subject of another meeting.

The Chairman responded that this meeting was specifically to discuss Public

Conveniences, but that he was able to update Members on some of the points:

- (i) 240 volt electricity supply to more market stalls; Ian Harrison is working on this.
- (ii) Creation of a 'Town Team'; the Chairman reported that a first meeting had been held with 'interested parties' as the first move towards this.
- (iii) Business Improvement District for Newark; the Chairman reported that he had met with someone this afternoon and agreed that the way forward is to first decide what the bid should be.
- (iv) Options for introducing different stalls layout; nothing to report yet.
- (v) Market Promotion and marketing strategy; the Town Clerk said that there is real interest, certainly from the District Council, to try and link together and promote Newark as a destination.

The Chairman informed Members that reports on the above would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee to update on progress.

DVS06/15/16 Declarations of Interest

It was **AGREED** to accept Members declarations as and when they arose during the meeting.

DVS07/15/16 Public Conveniences

The Town Clerk went through the report in the Agenda. Newark Town Council now has the control of how these services are operated.

Cllr L Goff joined the meeting at this point.

The current operational arrangements for Public Conveniences were then reviewed by Members which led to the following discussions:

1. Living Wage; the Town Clerk informed Members that there is budget provision for an increase for the staff up to the 'Living Wage'.

Cllr K Girling asked what the impact would be, per annum. The Town Clerk responded that if the rate of £7.20 were introduced this would be 8% and if the rate of £7.85 was set, this would be a 10% increase.

Cllr K Girling made the point that the report stated that when staff were off sick, or on holiday, staff 'doubled up'. He asked if anyone had looked at this in more depth as this could be a more efficient way of staffing the service.

The Town Clerk explained that the doubling up system was reliant on casual staff being available for the additional shifts required.

2. Conditions of the Public Conveniences; a question was raised as to whether there had been any negotiation with the District Council during the devolution agreement period about the condition of the toilets and their liability for this. The Town Clerk responded that no provision had been made; the Town Council had their own R & R fund for the toilets.

Another point was raised as to whether there are any negotiation still taking place regarding Devolved Services. The Chairman said there was only 'tweaking' necessary now.

Cllr D Lloyd then outlined the Devolution Agreement for the benefit of Cllr K Girling and re-iterated that the final agreement was much better than the first one

which had been offered.

Cllr P Duncan asked what the cost would be to close the London Road facility, and would the Town Council be able to let it.

The Town Clerk said that this would need to be worked on; he was not able to give these figures without carrying out more investigations. He reported that the original thinking was that a facility like McDonalds could use the building – this would appear to be an attractive proposal, however, there has been no real work carried out to look at this possibility.

3. Charging policy; currently only one of the facilities has a charge, which is St Marks. The question was asked as to how much it would cost to introduce a charge at the other toilets; the Deputy Town Clerk said that barriers would be approximately £5-6k per unit, and 2 per site would be required.

The Chairman asked if an assessment had been made as to whether the income matched the use of the St Marks facility; the Town Clerk said it had not, and that more work needs to be done.

The Town Clerk said that if a charge were introduced, with a reduction of 25% to take into account seasonal changes etc, then he estimated that London Road may take £5k, and Tolney Lane maybe £6k. He also said that putting a charge on the toilets may sort out some of the elements of anti-social behaviour that had been experienced previously.

Cllr T Roberts MBE joined the meeting.

A question was asked whether the toilets would need to be manned full-time if a charge were introduced; after discussion it was agreed that it would be a possibility that staffing levels could be reduced but again, more work was required to look at this.

Phil Beard stated that having attendants on duty does add value but there is scope there for reducing it.

The Town Clerk said that quite clearly the attendants are not fully occupied all of the time; there are times when they are not working and this sometimes led to public perception that they have nothing to do. With attendants on duty, you still have some control over the type of people that go into the toilets.

The Chairman asked if there is CCTV coverage at the entrances to the toilets. The Deputy Town Clerk said that CCTV does give a 'general view' but is not particularly directed at the entrances.

4. Bowling Club and the use of London Road; Phil Beard informed Members that part of the reason to keep open the 24hr facility was for the Bowls Club. There was a feeling that it was maybe not right that the bowlers should be the only ones to have access to these toilets.

Mention was made of the fact that London Road had won the 'Loo of the Year Award' previously.

5. St Marks; there was a discussion regarding the original covenant on this building and the fact that when it was sold, it seemed to 'disappear'.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the lease had got a provision that the building must only be used as a toilet facility for 10 years – this expires in 2021.

6. Opening Hours; the Chairman asked what the logic was behind the opening and closing hours of each facility. Phil Beard said that it was probably just historic.

The Town Clerk pointed out that these hours are not set in stone; the Town Council can decide what hours all of the facilities are to be opened and closed.

Cllr K Girling pointed out that we do not know yet the impact of the new Civil War Museum on our Town visitors.

The Town Clerk also reminded Members that the Tolney Lane facility is very flexible, and is opened on certain additional occasions (Newark Festival for instance).

The Chairman said that in his opinion, a phenomenal amount of money is spent on the Public Conveniences.

Moving forward, the following actions were agreed:

1. Each site to have an analysis of the cost of running; projected income should be included.
2. A condition survey of each site should be carried out (including St Marks)
3. CCTV – find out what is required for this.
4. Hours of opening to be reviewed – this to include staffing.
5. The National Living Wage issue to be referred to the Personnel Sub-Committee (following the next meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee).

The Chairman said that once this information is available, the Committee will be in a better position to make decisions about the Service.

Meeting Closed:	7.45pm	Next Meeting:	Monday 2nd November 2015
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