

Newtown Community Association – Annual General Meeting

Saturday 20th February 2016 at 10am

in the community hut in Belmont Park

Minutes

Present: Su Aves (Secretary), Richard Branston (Councillor), James Leigh (Hut maintenance), Rory McNeile (Chair), Sally Palmer, Steve Palmer, Michael Parrott (Vice Chair & Publicity), Saxon Spence, Richard Westlake (Councillor), Jackie Holdstock (Hut Bookings Manager), Gay Smith, Fiona Daughton, John Staplehurst, Carrie Davis, Steve Aves, Jo Farquharson, T.Hunter, Natalie Vizard, Nikki Millican.

Apologies: Joan Bond, Derek Burnside (Treasurer), Jacky Cox, Elena Milego, Roger Spackman (Councillor), Peter Montgomery (Webmaster), Lou Fearn, Chris Dent, Kat Thomas, Peter Morgan, Maggie Wilson, Pauline Williams

There were 19 present and therefore the meeting was not quorate.

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Action by:</u>
1	Welcome from the Chair Rory welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	Apologies for absence. As above. We require 20 people present at the meeting who all live in the area of benefit (Newtown), as this was not the case we were not quorate and it would not be possible to elect any new committee members at the AGM. Any new members could be voted at the next Public Forum meeting which would become an Extraordinary Meeting.	
3	Review of minutes of the previous AGM meeting. The minutes of the 21 st February 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair.	
4	The Annual Report of the Management Committee. Rory read the 2015 report, which is available on the NCA website. The report was accompanied with a slide show which included events run at the hut during the year: cafes, social groups, and the diverse range of hut users. There was a 13,000 footfall in the community hut during the last year. Thank you to the Newtown Community Art Project and Fiona Daughton for her work. A presentation of flowers was made to Jackie Holdstock in recognition of her excellent continuing work as Hut Bookings Manager. A particularly big thanks was given for Su Aves who has served as secretary for the last three years and is resigning at this years AGM. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Su from the NCA committee.	

5	<p>Statement of Accounts. Rory confirmed that Derek Burnside's compiled Statement of Accounts showed that NCA was in a healthy position. Those persons present at the AgM were offered the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the Statement of Accounts of which copies were provided, there were no questions asked.</p>	
6	<p>Appointment of Independent examiners for the coming year</p> <p>It was not required to appoint independent examiners this year as the our level of income is below £25,000. Saxon Spence said that it was important for the accounts to be audited, it was agreed that an internal audit will be carried out by a Holding Trustee, to be indentified by the management committee. The Holding Trustee will sit down with Derek Burnside to check the accounts are done properly.</p>	
7	<p>Election of members of Management Committee</p> <p>It was confirmed that Su Aves is not standing again and has resigned as Secretary. Work has been done with the help of Jacky Cox to advertise for another secretary. The secretarial role can be carried out by other members of the committee until a new Secretary is appointed. Rory has moved out of Newtown so to be elected as Chair he will have to be co-opted by the committee at the next meeting. The AGM was not quorate so the whole of the committee will need to be elected at a later date.</p>	
8	<p>Hut matters.</p> <p>Confirmation of rates. – Jackie Holdstock confirmed that the rates were raised in the last year to £7 for occasional users and £6 for regular users per hour. It was agreed that this was a very good low rate. The stated aim to keep it at a low rate to keep it at an affordable rate. There was no immediate plans to change the rates, however relating to the new building the rates will need to be reviewed.</p> <p>Natalie Vizard asked if party bookings were the same rate and whether party rates could be reviewed? Carrie Davis suggested that regular users could be charged a different rate private bookings. Saxon Spence proposed that the charge for a one-off private bookings (not by regular users) that finish after 9pm should be increased to £10 per hour. The Management Committee will discuss this at their next meeting.</p> <p>Party bookings after 9pm - It is estimated that a complaint happens approximately once in every ten occasions when the hut is hired after 9pm. If a hirer break the rules and use it after the allotted time then they are asked to pay for he extra time they were in the hut.</p> <p>Within the last two weeks the Express & Echo reported that the Police were called to Belmont Park after complaints of approximately 50 young persons in the park who were compliant when the Police asked them to leave the area. It is believed that these people were private users of the hut although NCA have received no complaints regarding this booking.</p>	
9	<p>The vision update. Recently the Management Committee decided to try a 'Plan B' for a new building. The costs of the original building plan had escalated from an original £375,000 to over £750,000. NCA had employed a grant finder which was not successful and therefore this agreement ended approximately 18 months ago.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Branston had put the Management Committee in touch with Exeter University to assist NCA with funding applications, although this had been helpful the failure of grant applications and the difficulties concerning the Big Lottery Fund application, the committee had decided that a 'Plan B' alternative design would hopefully be more realistic.</p> <p>James Leigh explained that he had made contact with Home Lodge and sent them the plans of the original new building design and asked what Home Lodge could provide. A representative of Home Lodge had visited the site and architect's drawings were then sent to us. James showed these architect's drawings to those present at the AGM.</p>	

The new designs include a large room, with a second room with retractable wall, kitchen, toilets with disabled toilet, and a table store. We need to respond to the architect's suggestions. James therefore asked if members of the community could add their comments to the design on post-it notes that were provided at the meeting.

Su asked what the construction of the outside of the building would be? James confirmed that it would be wooden cladding.

The estimated cost of these designs were considerably less than the original ones. It was agreed that the Management Committee should obtain estimates from at least two other tenders.

Since we started raising funds for a new building we have a promise of £170,00 so far. We have recently had a response from the council regarding the New Home Bonus money, and Section 106 money NHDC, the deadline for this to be spent has been extended until the end of March 2017. We will need to ask the Bernard Sunley fund if the deadline in respect of their £20,000 can also be extended. NCA have recently had a meeting, facilitated by Councillor Richard Branston, with the company MACE who are hoping to build student accommodation, a similar size to the Print works) in Belgrave Road. They gave encouraging signs about supporting NCA and a new hut. We have not heard yet from them although they have not yet obtained planning permission. Any funds obtained from MACE would be a goodwill gesture only (i.e. not Community Infrastructure Levy money, otherwise known as CIL), they have a separate section that deal with grants by the trustees.

Councillor Richard Westlake explained that money from the DCC awarded for this project has to be spent by May 2016 and that money may be taken back. We need to aware of this. There are guidelines in the rules of spending this money. NCA will need to go for a resubmission for planning permission in due course.

Richard also explained that a councillor in Teignmouth has a new scheme where Tesco is donating all the 5p for plastic bags to a charity. We could apply for this. Grants are available for between £5,000 and £10,000. Steve Palmer suggested we ask other supermarkets if they have other schemes.

Richard Westlake also suggested the idea of crowd funding. He also suggested that an asbestos survey of the existing community hut would have to be carried out before it was demolished.

Saxon Spence asked if there was a 'Plan C' design? Rory McNeile confirmed that there was not at this stage and the committee would concentrate on 'Plan B' for the next year.

Su Aves explained that Peter Morgan, a Newtown resident and Environment Officer at Paignton Zoo, would like to be involved and may be able to help us.

Carrie Davis supported the idea of a larger building, and explained that the choir needs a larger room in the building as they are becoming a bigger group. Carrie also pointed out that the hut was very full at the Winter Warmer.

Jo Farquharson asked if the Big Lottery grants will be focussed on? It was explained that we do not have time available to go for the Lottery Fund so we are going for other grants.

Jo also enquired about the Kingfisher and Printworks buildings. It was explained that money has already been committed from both of these projects.

Fiona Daughton suggested that people think they have given their opinions early on and so do not think they need to be involved, therefore we need to report on updated. It was agreed that we will try and update as much as possible particularly on Facebook (as posters etc have recently been taken down in the park by the council).

Natalie Vizard asked what grants can we go for from ECC? Councillor Richard Branston explained that Su Aves is applying for grants in respect of new play equipment.

	<p>Saxon Spence suggested that Park Life should be involved, people see it as a public building not just a community building, maybe it needs to be seen more as a public building than a building just for Newtown.</p> <p>Rory McNeile asked those present at the meeting if anyone could help the committee then this would be appreciated. There was a broad agreement with the committee that the newer designs sound more realistic.</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>Park Update – Path re-route, Slide replacement. Su Aves explained that she had been communicating with Exeter City Council with regards to the path realignment and the removal of the blue slide. The slide was built in the 1970s and was given a 10-15 years lifespan. The slide has two years left on the current insurance and would need work doing to it, the council had therefore already decided that it would be removed in two years time. With the path realignment taking place now the decision had been taken to remove the slide now. The path would be slightly wider and be moved away from trees so that some of the path would enter what is now the play area. The large London Plane tree had been removed for safety reasons. The council have left the stump, a pile of logs had been placed in the children's play area, and chippings had been used in the garden area. There will be three new trees in the park including a Veitch Crab Apple tree which will be planted in the Sensory Garden.</p> <p>There is no money from ECC for a new slide, Su showed different designs for new slides that ECC have sent her, these range in prices between £50,000 and £60,000.</p> <p>The Council are going to add a carousel (there is currently no spinning item in the park). This new equipment can be used by children with disabilities and can seat up to 5 children. ECC have confirmed that consultation for one piece of equipment is not required. The equipment would be positioned in the play area closest to the Sensory Garden.</p> <p>Su explained that if more equipment was required then funds would need to be raised and a consultation carried out with the community.</p> <p>Saxon Spence said that children must be consulted, also that Newtown School should be included as the families, children and school use the park. Saxon will raise it with the school.</p> <p>Jo Farquharson said that it was quite a shock to see the path and tree going. Was there a discussion in advance with the ECC? It was explained that Galvin Short (of ECC) came to the last Forum to explain why the tree, slide would be removed and the path moved to protect the London Plane Trees, Galvin had listened to views from residents at the Public Forum meeting.</p> <p>Natalie Vizard will contact Sue Lawrence at Park Life to find out what she can do to help with the park.</p> <p>It was agreed at the meeting that nobody was against the carousel on the basis that it was not a replacement for the Blue slide.</p> <p>It was also asked if ECC can add a permanent 'big blue slide' on a slope of the park which has been used at Exeter Respect and at the Food Festival.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Exeter Community Forum Strategy Consultation. Rory McNeile explained that the Exeter Community Forum was formed to bring community groups together, ideas are shared to give a coherent voice. Initial meetings are open to the community associations and other groups within the city to decide on what the CIL money should be spent on. Exeter Community Strategy was developed by a consultant employed to develop it. Consultations occurred on this e.g. at St James. Steve Aves attended this consultation and reported at the AGM that St James has different issues to Newtown.</p> <p>ECF will designate the £3.5 million over 10 years, so £350,000 per year for all the groups. Funding will be used to support groups to take forward their projects. A link to the published Draft Strategy is on our website. The consultation ends on 24th February 2016. Replacing the Newtown Hut is on the strategy. Rory McNeile is attending the next meeting.</p> <p>In April the strategy will be presented to the council.</p>	

12	<p>Exeter University Community Wardens update. Rory Cunningham sent apologies. Fiona Daughton, a resident of Portland Street, explained that there had been a spate of wing mirrors being smashed in the street. The Police were involved, Rory Cunningham was contacted and was helpful.</p>	
13	<p>Future Events for 2016</p> <p>Respect Festival: 11/12 June – no paperwork yet</p> <p>Great West Run: October – no paperwork yet</p> <p>Upcoming NCA Events</p> <p>Rhino Café's – Feb 27th and May 21st</p> <p>Food Festival – September</p> <p>Winter Warmer - December</p>	
14	<p>Report from the councillors. Councillor Richard Branston confirmed that Faraday House and Eaton House (social housing) have been renovated with new windows, kitchens and bathrooms. Raleigh House and Magdalen Cottages are also to be renovated. Magdalen Cottages are currently empty prior to the works.</p> <p>The crossing by the Vue Cinema close to the Paris Street roundabout is very dangerous. Under the plans for the new development of the bus station Devon County Council have decided to have two new crossings further up the road to make it more safer for pedestrians.</p> <p>Councillor Branston has been contacted by a resident of Gordon Road about the bin in the park by the corner of the hut. Those at the meeting felt that sometimes rubbish from parties in the hut is incorrectly put in that bin rather than the commercial bin by the hut. It was felt that a larger bin, especially with a lid, would be more suitable.</p> <p>AOB</p> <p>Saxon Spence spoke about 'Exeter Food action' which is based in Spinning Path. Saxon left some leaflets. They have obtained funding to continue the summer food cooking working with allotment holders and schools – they could be at the food festival in September.</p> <p>Our Exeter City Council Ward is now St Leonards and Newtown.</p> <p>County Council boundaries are all changing and we will be possibly be in the area of St Sidwells and St James.</p>	
15	<p>Next open Forum meeting dates 2016 at 10am Sat 14th May, Aug, Nov Sat AGM 18th Feb 2017</p>	

