



<i>Meeting (No)</i>	Community & Environment Committee (4)
<i>Time & Date</i>	6pm Tuesday 8 October 2024
<i>Place</i>	Neston Town Hall
<i>Document</i>	Minutes

Present: Cllrs Marple (Chair), Davies, Doughty, Griffiths, Marple and Townsend

In attendance: A Duncan (Community & Environment Manager)

PART 1: Items be considered in the presence of the press and public

32 Public Participation

There were no comments from members of the public.

33 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

34 Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Marple and Griffiths both declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 39b because they volunteer for Ellesmere Port and Neston Community Transport.

35 Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Community & Environment Committee meeting held on 11.09.24. The Chair signed the minutes.

36 Community & Environment Manager's Report

The Committee received the Community & Environment Manager's report (CE4/36) and noted several items of expenditure since the previous scheduled meeting:

- Raby Park Road allotment plot clearance works £162.50;
- renewal of annual pest control contract for Raby Park Road allotment site £231.52+VAT;
- Remembrance Sunday traffic management scheme £920+VAT;
- Christmas lights switch-on traffic management scheme £920+VAT;
- Junior Council badges £110.50+VAT (Equals card);
- Junior Council afternoon tea and presentation £68.01 (£25.44 – staff expenses claim, £42.57 – Equals card);
- Annual Purple Guide subscription £25+VAT.

37 Committee Budgets 2024/25

- a The month six Committee budget and the current earmarked reserves were considered.
- b **RESOLVED** to increase the C&E Manager's Equals card spending limit from £150 to £250.
- c An analysis of grants and donations expenditure to date was noted.

38 Committee Objectives 2024

- a The current status of the C&E Committee's agreed objectives was noted.

Chair's initials and date:

- b **RESOLVED** to pledge £450 for the Neston Theatre Arts Festival 2025 from budget 4363 (community event donations).
- c *Committee objective: define the role of a potential ranger service including purpose, remit and resources required.*

It was decided to recommend the draft job description/person specification as detailed in paper CE4/38c for consideration by Council.

It was noted that the draft job description was for a full post and demonstrated how the role might develop as funds permit. Members suggested, however, that the post be 15 hours per week and temporary for 12-months in the first instance, with a requirement for applicants to have access to their own transport. The Committee felt that this would be the most realistic and affordable way to introduce the service whilst also providing time to assess the impact of the role before committing a larger budget. Members agreed that they would welcome the opportunity to revisit the job description once Council had made its decisions in order to refine the job description to reflect what could realistically be achieved within the hours assigned to the role.

- d **RESOLVED** that DBS checks should be undertaken for key staff and councillors working with the Junior Council and that the expenditure should be assigned to budget 4371 (engaging with young people). It was noted that the current fees per application were £16 for umbrella organisation processing and £38 for an enhanced DBS without barred list check.

39 Committee Priorities for 25/26

- a Allotment mains water: a request was made for a sum to be included in the draft 25/26 budget to cover the annual cost of water bills at two sites (sum required to be estimated based on current Parkgate invoice).

Telephone box restoration: it was decided to make a request to Council that £2,256 from EMR 333 (unspent New Homes Bonus) and £1,640.71 from EMR 337 (CIL) be allocated for restoration of the telephone boxes opposite The Royal Oak and on the corner of Landseer Avenue/Raeburn Avenue.

Town Council noticeboards: a request was made to include £4,000 in the draft 25/26 budget to cover the cost of replacement noticeboards in Little Neston and on the front of the Town Hall.

Ranger service: it was noted that an additional sum would need to be added to the C&E budget request for 25/26 to cover ranger service running costs such as initial equipment, uniform, PPE, training and expenses (mileage) but that the amount could not be decided until Council had made a decision about this post.

Cllr Marple left the room and Cllr Davies (Vice-Chair) took the chair for agenda item 39b.

- b A request had been received from Ellesmere Port and Neston Community Transport (EP&NCT) for ongoing annual financial support.

Cllr Griffiths provided an outline of how EP&NCT operated and then left the meeting.

After giving this request due consideration, it was decided to inform EP&NCT that it was not possible to guarantee ongoing financial support to any individual organisation but that the Committee would be happy to receive a grant application for consideration in April.

Chair's initials and date:

Cllrs Marple and Griffiths returned to the meeting and Cllr Marple chaired the remainder of the meeting.

40 Neston Looking Better Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 27.06.24 were noted.

41 Transport Working Group

- a **RESOLVED** to approve Transport Working Group terms of reference as detailed in paper CE4/41a.
- b **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Davies as member of the Transport Working Group.

Cllr Doughty left the meeting.

42 Neston & Willaston Community Partnership Steering Group

The Committee noted a summary of the meetings held on 18.07.24 and 18.09.24.

43 Allotments

RESOLVED to update the Allotments Policy and Allotment Tenancy Agreement to remove permission to keep livestock on any Neston Town Council allotment sites.

44 Community Event Donations

- a **RESOLVED** to approve a breakdown of expenditure for the donation of £1,500 to the Female Society for 2024 Ladies Day entertainment.
- b **RESOLVED** to approve a breakdown of expenditure for the donation of £1,600 to Friends of West Vale Park for the 2024 West Vale Park Family Fun Day. It was decided to inform Friends of West Vale Park that any donation awarded for 2025 would be adjusted to take into account the £1,500 underspend at this year's event.
- c **RESOLVED** to approve a breakdown of expenditure for the donation of £1,700 to the Neston Village Fair Committee for the 2024 Neston Village Fair.
- d **RESOLVED** to increase the 24/25 Neston Music Festival publicity allocation from £1,000 to £1,300 to allow for the additional cost of renewing website hosting for the next three years.

45 Community Grants

- a **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £496 to Neston & District Art Society in support of the spring 2025 exhibition.
- b **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £1,500 to Neston Swimming Club to train a new cohort of younger volunteer coaches.
- c **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £2,000 to Neston Pirate Samba for a 12-month outreach programme.
- d **RESOLVED** to close the grants programme for the remainder of 24/25 and use the remaining budget to fulfil the community request to restore two telephone boxes for community use.

46 Resources for Community Events

RESOLVED to provide delegated authority to officers, in liaison with the C&E

Chair's initials and date:

Chair, to purchase NTC resources for community events at a cost not exceeding £1,500+VAT in total from budget 4301 (community engagement) during 24/25 and 25/26.

47 Telephone Boxes

- a The Committee considered an update (CE4/47a) on the two adopted telephone boxes (opposite The Royal Oak and on the corner of Landseer Avenue/Raeburn Avenue) along with a list of accessible defibrillator locations in the area.

It was decided that a consultation about options for community use for each of the boxes would involve residents living in close proximity and would be undertaken once a restoration timeframe was known. It was also decided that, if there was local consensus that the Landseer Avenue box should be used for a defibrillator, and if this should prove not to be a feasible option, the Committee would investigate the possibility of installing a defibrillator at an alternative location nearby.

- b **RESOLVED** to send a request to BT to remove the electricity supply from both boxes. It was agreed to investigate options for installing solar-powered lights to the refurbished boxes.
- c **RESOLVED** to appoint the Town Council's current groundworks contractor to construct and install new concrete bases for the two telephone boxes at a cost of £1,260+VAT from budget 4208 (environmental improvements).

48 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting would be held on 26 November 2024 at 6pm.

49 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 3: information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

PART 2: Items considered in the absence of the press and public

50 Mains Water Installation at Marshlands Road Allotment Site

It was noted that quotations had been sought from four companies, officers had met on site with three companies and that two companies had submitted quotations.

The Committee considered two quotations and **RESOLVED** to appoint Tiger Utilities to undertake trenching works/standpipe installation to connect mains water at the Marshlands Road allotment site at a cost of £2,100+VAT. £1,000 to be vired from 4213 (environment and sustainability) to 4180 (allotment expenditure). Payment to be made from budget 4180 (allotment expenditure) and EMR 332 (allotments).

Chair's initials and date:

51 Upgrading Standpipe at The Ropewalk Allotment Site

It was noted that quotations had been sought from six companies but that only one quotation had been received. Given the urgent need to replace this standpipe, Members considered one quotation and **RESOLVED** to appoint Tiger Utilities to replace the standpipe with a WRAS-approved lockable standpipe and to complete leak detection work at a cost of £1,200+VAT from budget 4180 (allotment expenditure).

52 Contract for the Provision of Floral Arrangements

To consider an addendum to the current contract confirming the contract end date as 30 September 2027.

This agenda item was deferred until the next scheduled meeting.

53 Restoration of Telephone Boxes

It was noted that quotations had been sought from five companies and that two quotations had been received.

The Committee considered two quotations and:

RESOLVED to appoint Remember When UK to restore the Mk1 GRV K6B telephone box opposite The Royal Oak in Little Neston at a cost of £5,960+haulage;

RESOLVED to appoint Remember When UK to restore the GRV K6D telephone box located on the corner of Landseer Avenue/Raeburn Avenue at a cost of £5,960 + haulage.

It was decided for reasons of economy (reduced haulage costs) that both restorations should be undertaken simultaneously. **RESOLVED** to approve haulage costs of £1,200+VAT. It was noted that this was an estimate and could be subject to increase (it was not possible to give a confirmed quotation at this stage because removal would not be until 2025). Any haulage cost increase to be reported to Committee.

RESOLVED to fit locks to both boxes at a cost of £140 per box.

Restoration and haulage costs to be assigned to budget 4360, EMR 333 (provisional), EMR 337 (provisional) and EMR 329.

As per Financial Regulations, minute 53 subject to ratification by Council as overall combined cost exceeds £10,000.

The meeting closed at 7.58pm.

Signed _____ Date _____