



Newark TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2024

Friday 9th February 2024

Dear Councillor

You are summonsed to attend a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee at **7.00pm** on Wednesday 14th February 2024. This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Gleadell
Town Clerk

Pre-Group Meetings

(if required)

1	6.00	Independents for Newark	Committee Room
2	6.00	Labour Group	Pickin Room
3	6.00	Conservative Group	Old Robing Room

Committee Membership

Cllr P Ball
Cllr I Brown
Cllr D Campbell
Cllr T Collier
Cllr B Corrigan (Chairman)
Cllr E Cropper
Cllr S Crosby
Cllr S Dickinson
Cllr L Geary
Cllr J Kellas
Cllr D Ledger
Cllr D Moore (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr G Rix
Cllr N Ross
Cllr L Roulstone
Cllr M Skinner
Cllr M Spoors
Cllr P Taylor

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

WEDNESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2024

1	Apologies for Absence		
2	Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 17 January 2024	Minutes Attached	Page 5
3	Declarations of Interest from Members <i>Relevant Legislation: Localism Act 2011 s31</i>	Verbal	
4	Monthly Payment Schedules	Report Attached	Page 9
5	Cemetery Fees and Charges	Report Attached	Page 15
6	Lilley & Stone Trust Appointments	Report Attached	Page 23
7	Sherwood Avenue Tennis Court Grant	Report Attached	Page 25
8	Town Hall Maintenance Challenges/Issues	Report Attached	Page 29
9	Recommendations & Update from AECT Working Group	Report Attached	Page 33
10	Newark Town Hall Hospitality Business Development	Report Attached	Page 35
11	Recruitment of Deputy Clerk	Report Attached	Page 37
12	Exclusion of the Press and Public <i>Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2)</i>	Report Attached	Page 41
13	Buttermarket Rents & Hire Fees Review	Report Attached	Page 43



Newark TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 17th January 2024 in the Council Chamber, at the Town Hall.

Membership Present:	Councillor	B Corrigan (Chairman)
	Councillors	P Ball I Brown D Campbell T Collier E Cropper S Crosby S Dickinson (Ap) L Geary J Kellas D Ledger (Ap) D Moore (Vice-Chairman) G Rix N Ross L Roulstone M Skinner M Spoors (Ap) P Taylor
Apologies for Absence:	Councillors	S Dickinson, D Ledger, M Spoors
Officers Present:	Town Clerk	Matthew Gleadell
Taking Notes:	Executive Assistant	Helen Crossland
	There was one member of the public and one member of the press present.	
Venue:	Committee Room, Newark Town Hall	

FGP70/23/24 Minutes of the last meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 22nd November 2023

The Minutes of the last meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday 22nd November 2023 were proposed by Cllr B Corrigan, seconded by Cllr N Ross. A vote was held and they were **AGREED** with the following amendment:

FGP62/23/24 – Kiddey Stones

Para 15:

Cllr B Corrigan then proposed ‘Newark Town Council is willing to consider this is principle but would want more details about where they would be sited and what security measure would be in place, before they make the decision and that N&SDC should meet all costs involved.’

FGP71/23/24 Declarations of Interest

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

FGP72/23/24 Monthly Payment Schedule 08/24 & 9/24

Cllr B Corrigan proposed, and Cllr D Moore seconded the Monthly Payment Schedules 08/24 and 09/24

Members **NOTED** Payment Schedule 08/24 in the sum of £228,633.52 (two hundred and twenty eight thousand, six hundred and thirty three pounds and 52p) and Payment Schedule 09/24 in the sum of £179,168.59 (one hundred and seventy nine thousand, one hundred and sixty eight pounds and 59p).

FGP73/23/24 Revenue Budget & Precept 2024/2025

The Chairman asked Members to **NOTE** an error on page 27 of the Agenda Item. Paragraph 4 *‘The attached budget shows a shortfall of income against expenditure of £35,121.00’ - this figure should read £20,121.00.*

Debate then followed with regard to the draft budget as presented to Members by the Town Clerk.

Concern was raised that some of the proposals were too conservative regarding income – Town Hall Hire fees, and the Town Hall Bar.

It was also **NOTED** that certain costs had been included, in anticipation of new staff being hired (previously reported) to deal with bookings in the Town Hall.

Members felt that Town Hall Hire fees should be raised by enough to cover those costs.

Allotment rents – the forecast was less than the ‘actual’ for last year – more should be put into this (£500). Various discounts on allotments were also discussed – the Town Clerk was asked to check if any increase had been allowed for in the budget figures.

The Chairman pointed out that there were some difficult decisions to make; with increased costs, reducing income and forecast housing growth was nowhere near what had been expected.

Looking at an 11% increase, from the papers presented, it does not include anything in the R & R Fund.

The choice would be to either increase income and reduce costs, or a combination of both.

The Chairman suggested that Members look at other income before deciding on an increase in the precept.

More discussion followed which included having a detailed business plan for the Town Hall, which would include events and bar costings. It was agreed that more data would be required from other businesses for this.

Another member of the public joined the meeting at this point.

Cllr L Geary proposed that the budget for Town Hall Hire Fees should be raised by £25,000; this was seconded by Cllr B Corrigan and **AGREED**.

The Town Clerk reported that he had already increased the Cemetery Income by £15,000 since the meeting last week. He pointed out to Members that he was looking at a 4 year timescale with the figures, not just next year.

The following was proposed:

£5,000 increased income on Plinths

Increase allotments income to £10,000.

Increase Cemetery fees income by £5,000.

The Chairman said that with the above in mind, this would now give a £15,000 surplus, not a £20,000 deficit.

Debate then moved to the proposed rise in the precept of 11%. There was a long discussion about the actual amount of money that people would have to pay.

The Town Clerk informed Members that he fully understood the concerns, but if there was no increase this year, Councillors would be delaying the pain – he was trying to spread the pain over the next few years.

The Chairman asked the Town Clerk to update the budget with the things that had been agreed at this meeting, and proposed that the conversation about the precept be deferred to the meeting of the Full Town Council next week. This was seconded by Cllr D Moore and **AGREED**.

The Chairman then invoked Standing Order 4 (4) to allow the meeting to continue for another 30 minutes.

FGP74/23/24 External Audit 22/23 and Internal Audit 23/24

It was proposed by Cllr B Corrigan, seconded by Cllr D Moore that the results of the 22/23 External Audit be **NOTED**.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Cllr L Geary declared a non-pecuniary interest as she was now employed by Lincolnshire County Council.

Cllr B Corrigan proposed, Cllr G Rix seconded that subject to advice from the Councils accountant confirming that no accounting difficulties arise, the transfer of shares from the CCLA Doris Bainbridge Investment Account to the CCLA Property Fund Investment Account was **APPROVED** so as to put the Doris Bainbridge account into the correct financial position as explained in the Agenda Report.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

Cllr B Corrigan proposed, Cllr G Rix seconded that Assurance Lincs be appointed to undertake the 23/24 Internal Audit on the basis of the Agenda Report.

A vote was held and this was **AGREED**.

FGP75/23/24 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Cllr B Corrigan proposed, Cllr D Moore seconded, that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972) the press and public be excluded from the next Agenda Item debate on the grounds that the Committee's remaining business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, and the public interest in disclosing the information.

The members of the public and press left the meeting.

FGP76/23/24 Tolney Lane Land

The Town Clerk went through the Agenda Report. He pointed out that there could be risks if this land were to be disposed of.

Discussion then followed with regard to either leasing the land or selling it. Some concerns were raised about the possible inappropriate use of the land.

Some Members thought it would be better to sell the land then the Town Council would no longer have the responsibility for it.

Other Members agreed with the principle of leasing the land.

The Town Clerk was asked to investigate both of the options above, and to bring another report back to this Committee for further discussion.

Meeting Closed:	9.30pm	Next Meeting:	Wednesday 14th February 2024
------------------------	---------------	----------------------	--

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	MONTHLY PAYMENT SCHEDULE
REPORT BY:	MATTHEW GLEADELL (TOWN CLERK)

1. Recommendations

1.1 Members note the payment schedule 10/24.

2. Background

2.1 Payment Schedule 10/24 appended to this report.

3. Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

None.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

AUTOPAY

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT SCHEDULE 10/24

31.1.24

Voucher Number	Payee	Budget	Amount
1196	ADT	TH Maintenance and Equipment	80.78
1197	Alcock, Sean	Travel Expenses	24.05
1198	Ao Cumbernauld	Payroll	12939.07
1199	Aquaid	Refreshments	24.30
1200	Arco Ltd	Uniforms	47.71
1200	Arco Ltd	Market Equipment	31.24
1201	Bodkin, Leigh	Market Promotions	150.00
1202	Burton & Dyson Solicitors	Consultancy Fees	640.80
1203	C & G Hydraulic Services Ltd	Mowers	198.00
1204	Canon UK	Market Printing & Stationary	79.88
1205/1206	Cleaning Supplies Ltd	TH Maintenance and Equipment	307.20
1207	Cleaning Supplies Ltd	PC Cleaning	171.71
1208	Clickwaste Uk	Cemetery Up Keep	802.79
1209	Cope Occupational Health	Occupational Health	108.00
1210	Derry Building Services	P & O/S Maintenance & Equipment	142.50
1211/1212	Derry Building Services	TH Maintenance and Equipment	339.64
1213/1217	Derry Building Services	PC Repairs and Maintenance	2061.67
1218	East Midlands In Bloom	Newark in Bloom	40.00
1219	Easy Safety	Consultancy Fees	1194.00
1220	EDF	Market Electricity	10.38
1221/1222	EE	Telephones	258.28
1223/1224	ENVA	Market Refuse	1939.21
1225	Equals	Bank Charges	12.00
1226	Equals Money	Equals Money SW	102.79
1227/1228	Everflow	Water	376.44
1229	Farmstar	ENV Equipment	40.00
1230	Gower Consultants	Computers	879.95
1231	Iliffe Media	Market Promotions	36.00
1232	Laneys Lettering	Cemetery Fees	67.50
1233	Lexic Ltd	Occupational Health	372.00
1234	Lidsters of Worksop	Memorial Tabs	640.37
1235	Lidsters of Worksop	Cemetery Tablets	693.25
1236	LITE LTD	Christmas Lights	19719.60
1237	Marshall & Sons	Boardwalk	24000.00
1238/1239	Newark Community First Aid	Market Promotions	448.00
1240	Newark Community First Aid	Christmas Lights Event	448.00
1241	Newark Community First Aid	Civics	175.00
1242	Newark and Sherwood DC	P & O/S Maintenance & Equipment	480.00
1243	Newark and Sherwood DC	Cemetery Fees	844.00

1244/1245	Newark and Sherwood Locksmiths	Allotments Repairs & Maintenance	2980.24
1246	Newark Security Services Ltd	POS Security	939.12
1247	Notts County Council	Subscriptions & Licences	1450.00
1248	Notts County Council	Pensions	1098.93
1249	Notts County Council	Payroll	14042.24
1250	NTC Pay Account	Payroll	47157.02
1251/1252	PAS LTD	Consultancy Fees	360.00
1253	Quadient	Postage	202.96
1254	Russells Ltd	Mowers	907.20
1255/1259	Screwfix	Uniform	192.91
1260	Screwfix	ENV Tools	14.99
1261	Screwfix	TH Maintenance and Equipment	34.99
1262/1263	SCS Ltd	Computers	219.99
1264	Second Element	Maintenance & Equipment	420.00
1265	Security 2	TH Bookings	455.40
1266	Shredall	TH Maintenance and Equipment	123.60
1267	Skipit Ltd	Cemetery	330.00
1268	Sunbelt	TH Maintenance and Equipment	40.54
1269	T.C. Harrison	Vehicle Running Costs	60.00
1270	Teleshore UK Ltd	Cemetery Equipment, Tools & Materials	88.80
1271	The Governors House Ltd	Mayors Allowance	45.00
1272	TIS Ltd	TH Maintenance and Equipment	731.50
1273	Travis Perkins	Cemetery Upkeep	258.00
1274	TSG	Computers	828.00
1275	Unison	Unison	171.15
1276	VIA East Midlands	Market Promotions	605.00
1277	Viking	Stationary	76.28
1278/1281	Virgin Media Business	Telephones	370.87
1282	Walden Consultants Ltd	Consultancy Fees	1182.44
1283/1284	Walters Cleaning Services	TH Maintenance and Equipment	324.00
1285	Watch it Security	Cemetery Upkeep	911.42
1286	We Design Maps	Market Promotions	300.00
1287	Worthington G	Vehicle Running Costs	80.08
		Total	147928.78

DIRECT DEBITS

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT SCHEDULE 10/24

31.1.24

Voucher Number	Payee	Budget	Amount
1288	BT	Telephones	61.24
1289	Gas Direct	TH Bar	1.08
1290	HCP Capitol UK LTd	Mayoral Vehicle	288.28
1291	Natwest Card	Recharges	526.00
1292	Natwest Card	TH M&E	204.07
1292	Natwest Card	Printing & Stationery	124.02
1293	NSDC	Rates	6180.00
1294	Total Energies	TH Electricity	1035.33
1295/1297	Total Energies	ENV Electricity	96.59
1298/1301	Total Energies	Market Elecricity	124.69
1302	Total Energies	Market Elecricity	4.91
1303/1305	Total Energies	PC Electricity	1271.16
1306	Total Energies	Buttermarket Electricity	17.35
1307	Total Energies	P & O/S Electricity	204.22
1308/1309	Total Energies	TH Gas	3073.50
1310/1313	UK Fuels	Vehicle Running Costs	129.80
1314	Worldpay	Bank Charges	198.62
		Total	13478.54
		Grand Total	161407.32

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	Cemetery Fees and Charges
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members adopt an increase in Cemetery Fees and Charges as outlined in this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 A periodic review of the Councils charges for cemetery and burial services is now due.
- 2.2 Since the last review, the Councils overhead costs for delivering Cemetery services have increased significantly and therefore the dependency on the tax payer to fund a growing difference between the overall running costs of the Cemetery and income generated has also grown considerably. Those cost increases have been well documented as part of budget considerations in recent months.
- 2.3 Attached to this report as Appendix 1 is a table which benchmarks Newark burial costs with other local authorities. These should be treated with some caution as every cemetery is different in size and scale, every authority has different operating overheads and it is therefore impossible to benchmark on an exact like for like basis. Newark Cemetery has a large population of trees which generate costs for safety inspections and maintenance which a cemetery that is open with no trees will not incur.
- 2.4 For most family's funerals thankfully do not occur too often. They typically represent single one-off large costs for dealing with a single funeral once all costs of a funeral director, coffin, grave costs or cremation etc are taken into account.
- 2.5 The costs generated from grave fees help towards the Council maintaining the large 23-acre Cemetery with its impressive variety of trees and pleasant grounds. The London Road cemetery is used not just as a Cemetery but also as a green space with dog walkers, runners and pedestrians all making use of the expansive grounds.
- 2.6 The attractiveness of the Cemetery is recognised through its designation as part of a Conservation Area and inclusion in Newark in Bloom judging routes.
- 2.7 Attached to this report as Appendix 2 is a breakdown of current fees and an illustration of how different percentage increases in fees will impact on additional revenue generation.

2.8 Out of Area Fees

An individual interred in the Cemetery who is not from Newark will attract double burial service fees.

The current rules are set out below.

- 9.2 The fee for the Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial shall be doubled where the purchaser of such Grant was not ordinarily resident within the Parish of Newark.
- 9.3 Similarly the fee for interment shall be doubled where the deceased was not ordinarily resident within the Parish of Newark, except that the Council would grant a concession not to pay double fees for an interment in the case of:
- those of state retirement age and requiring nursing in residential or hospital care outside of the Parish who have a minimum five years' residence qualification that extends to the date of their moving in to residential or hospital care;
 - such concession to remain available to qualifiers for a period of ten years from the date of their moving in to residential or hospital care;
 - such concession would exclude those who have left the Town of their own volition then returned to residential or hospital care in the immediate neighbourhood.

The rationale for the rules is that as the deceased did not pay Council Tax in Newark when alive they had not contributed to the running costs of the Cemetery. In view of the diminishing space in the Cemetery it is suggested that members consider substantially increasing the non resident uplift to perhaps 4 or 5 times that of a resident fee. This will help to generate additional income but also deter some interments taking place due to the cost and thus prolonging the remaining space in the Cemetery for use by Newark tax paying residents.

There are always cases where it may seem unfair to apply the uplift. An example may be an individual who lived and worked in Newark all of their life until retirement when they then moved to live with family elsewhere. They paid their Council Tax during their working career to Newark authorities. There may therefore be cases where subject to the family proving a case for discretion to be applied that such discretion is exercised. This can only ever be considered on a case-by-case basis and it is suggested that officers are given authority to exercise discretion where exceptional circumstances arise.

Changes to Services Proposed

Triple Depth Graves

It is recommended that triple depth graves are removed as a service due to safety concerns. The grave depths involved for the first interment in a triple depth grave are challenging due to the soil type in the Cemetery. A high-water table combined with soil conditions creates a much higher risk of grave collapse.

Additional Spoil Removal Charge

From time-to-time requests for larger graves are received that exceed the standard 7ft by 3ft grave opening. This involves additional labour and costs. This is especially so where larger coffins or caskets are involved. A charge of £180.00 is recommended. This is based on comparable costs charged by other authorities for this service. There have been approximately 10 larger grave requests in the last 12 months.

Walled Graves / Vaults

Although current fee schedules provide a cost for this service, building a walled grave or vault is a process that would require a third - party contractor. It is suggested that this service is charged bespoke on application rather than a fixed cost being advertised. This allows quotes to be sought and a price agreed based on actual overhead costs.

Bench Memorial Plaques

The Council owns 2 benches in the Cemetery which are pre prepared for the addition of memorial plaques. These have been in situ for a number of years. The demand for plaques is

low with only 2 ever sold for engraving. The current cost of a plaque is £360.00. It is recommended that the cost is reduced to £150.00 in an effort to increase interest in the sale of the plaques. The Council already owns benches and plaques and the only overhead cost is engraving which costs £25.00.



Interments Outside of Specified Hours

More and more regularly requests are received for burials to occur outside of ordinary working hours, namely evenings and weekends. This is not a service currently offered.

It is recommended that the Council seeks to offer out of hours burial services subject to payment of an additional burial premium. Staff consultation will need to be undertaken to assess willingness to work additional hours from time to time before offering this service.

Additional costs for staff overtime will be incurred and this will be factored in the premium charged for evening and weekend burials.

If members are willing to support this move to offering this service it is suggested the Clerk be given devolved authority to initiate consultation with staff and develop the logistics for the offer and the charges to be applied.

Exhumations

Exhumations are very rare. The Clerk has only been involved in 1 private exhumation whilst being in local government and operating burial services in the last 11 years. That particular exhumation attracted officers from other burial authorities to observe and learn from the process due to the rarity of them occurring.

When exhumations do arise they are heavily regulated and require careful planning, management and delivery. The current cost in Newark is £1923.00 for a full body. Other authorities charge much more than this. Where exhumations are for bodies that may still be decomposing, it may not be appropriate for in house staff to undertake the work and an external specialist sub contracted for the work. A cost of £4,000 is suggested for an exhumation to cover the potential for sub contractor involvement and bring Newark more in line with other authorities.

2.9 Future Burial Provision

The Cemetery working group recently attended the first meeting at which the future of Newark burial provision was actively discussed. There is a lot of work to be done on this subject. Whatever direction the project heads in, there will be significant additional costs for future burial services in Newark be it as a consequence of legislative changes that allow greater re use of graves or pursuance of a new Cemetery site. Increases in burial fees will contribute towards securing future burial provision in Newark. The service can be used to help to fund its future.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

- 3.1 **Financial** – The level at which burial fees are set is not subject to any strict criteria. It is for every burial authority to determine what they consider to be appropriate. As Newark has not had a rise for a number of years, combined with rising overhead costs and future costs for sustaining burial provision in Newark all a factor, it would seem entirely reasonable for a helpful increase to be applied. It is suggested that where a percentage increase is settled upon, that the resulting figures be rounded upwards to the nearest £10.00.

It should further be noted that income from the Cemetery directly impacts on the level of Council Tax payable to Newark Town Council. The greater the income the less of a need there is to seek as much Council Tax to pay for the Cemetery services.

The Clerk believes it would not be unreasonable to apply an increase of up to 20% with 10% of the additional revenue going forward ringfenced towards future burial provision be that works to support re-use of old graves or a new site or both and the other 10% applied towards general overhead increases in delivering the burial service.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

Cemetery Fees Comparison

	Newark		Sleaford		Notts City		Mansfield		Southwell		Bassetlaw		Lincoln	
	Resident	Non Resident	Resident	Non Resident	Resident	Non Resident	Resident	Non Resident	Resident	Non Resident	Resident	Non Resident	Resident	Non Resident
Stillborn child or not older than 1 month	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	£339.50	£339.50	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	£162.50	£325
Child 1 month to 12 Years	£306	£612	£120	£240	CFF	CFF	£339.50	£339.50	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	£162.50	£325
Child exceeded 12, but not exceeded 16	-	-	£195	£390	CFF	CFF	£339.50	£339.50	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	£162.50	£325
Person over 12 years	£553	£1,106	-	-	CFF	CFF	£339.50	£339.50	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	£162.50	£325
Person over 16 years	-	-	£438	£870	CFF	CFF	£700	£700	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee	£162.50	£325
Person over 18 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	£331	£331	£690	£1,380	£635	£1,270
Interment of Cremated Remains	£117	£234	£144	£288	£243	£243	£204	£204	£172	£172	£295	£590	£95.00	£95.00
Purchase Rights of Burial for 50 years	£553	£1,106	£390	£780	£1,741	£3,121	1478 (4' x 9')	1793.75 (4' x 9')	£428	£428	£1,010	£2,020	£620	£1,240
Purchase Rights of Cremated	£215	£430	£150	£300	£260	£260	820 (4' x 4' 6)	995 (4' x 4' 6)	£240	£240	£555	£1,110	£162.50	£325

APPENDIX 2 – ATTACHED AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	Lilley and Stone Trust Appointments
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members determine their position as to Town Council representatives on the Lilley and Stone charitable trust.

2. Background

- 2.1 Newark Town Council has historically been granted 3 trustee positions on the Lilley and Stone charity. 1 of those positions is an ex officio position for whoever undertakes the role of Mayor. This is part of the constitutional arrangements of the trust.
- 2.3 Following the recent resignation from the trust of Cllr Glenis Rix, Cllr. Paul Taylor and Cllr. Pamela Ball there are now vacancies on the trust.
- 2.5 Members are asked to determine if they wish to provide other members to take up either of the 2 vacant positions.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

3.1 Legal/Risk

In the absence of Town Council representatives, the trust may be forced to seek consent from the Charity Commission to alter its constitution to operate without Town Council representatives. If that occurs the Town Council may never have opportunity to provide trustees again in the future.

3.2 The objective of the trust is.

1) to advance the education of pupils at schools situated in Newark and Balderton by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities not required to be provided by the local education authority;

(2) for the public benefit to promote the education (including social and physical training) of people under the age of 25 years who are attending or have attended schools in Newark and Balderton in such ways as the trustees think fit, including by:

(a) awarding to such persons scholarships, maintenance allowances or grants tenable at any university, college or institution of higher or further education to those in need of financial assistance.

(b) awarding to such persons prizes in recognition of their academic, artistic, creative, moral or physical achievements.

(c) providing their education (including the study of music or other arts), to undertake travel in furtherance of that education or to prepare for entry to any occupation, trade or profession on leaving any educational establishment.

(d) assisting in such ways as the charity trustees think fit any charity whose aims include advancing education of persons under the age of 25 years in Newark and Balderton by developing their mental, physical and moral capabilities through leisure time activities.”

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

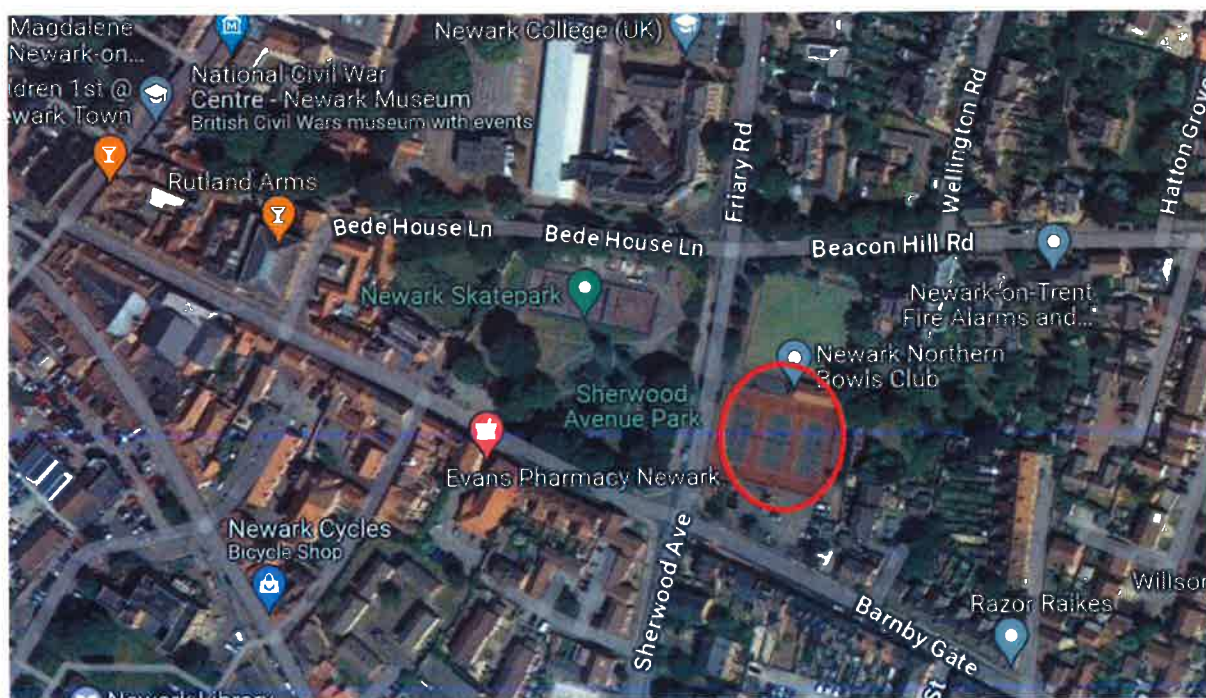
SUBJECT:	SHERWOOD AVENUE TENNIS COURTS GRANT
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members approve the acceptance of the Lawn Tennis Association grant in the sum of £21,160.40 detailed in this report, and support the provision of in-house match funding for the grant in the sum of £2,500, plus electrical connection work costs of £3,283.25.

2. Background

- 2.1 Newark Town Council owns and manages the tennis courts on Sherwood Avenue which are located next to the Bowls Club (aerial map below for those less familiar with the location).



- 2.3 There are 3 floodlit outdoor hard courts on the site. The courts operate on a pay and play basis with a car park style coin only ticket machine next to the access gates. It is suspected the courts are regularly used without a ticket being purchased. The ticket machine itself is of a certain age and regularly jams. Representatives from the bowls club will from time to time carry out ticket checks with users. Usage is understandably much higher during summer months.
- 2.5 The Bowls Club members are finding it increasingly harder to manage the courts. Age and illness has seen a drop in their volunteer base and they welcome removing the courts from their responsibility.
- 2.6 The grant proposed will help pay towards achieving the following:
1. Patch repairs of the court playing surface.
 2. A full repaint of the court surface.
 3. Provision of a new digital automated access gate.

Items 1 and 2 are both areas of work that had been on the radar for addressing in the near future.

Item 3 will provide an access solution that takes away any involvement from the bowls club and potentially increase revenue from the courts. This is explained further below.

2.7 Gate Access System

Key points:

- Online booking of courts via the LTA website. (example link to another venue below). The Newark site would look and operate the same as this one.

[Hollycroft Park | Tennis Courts | LTA](#)

- Online bookings will generate an access code that is entered by the user when visiting the site.
- The access gate communicates with the floodlights and automatically turns the lights on ready for a booking during darker months.
- Much easier to change booking charges compared to a car park coin operated meter.

Risks / Issues:

- The access system will only work for members of the public who are internet savvy / have a smart phone / have a bank account and payment card.
- Although efforts will be made to publicise any change to access arrangements there is a fear of vandalism of the entry gate from youngsters who we know currently use the facility but who may not be able to engage in a new booking system. Free access periods for youth sessions (after school period 4pm to 6pm) may be considered to help combat this concern.
- Access difficulties where technology malfunctions may cause user frustrations that are not present currently.
- There is a danger of a staff member being called out to deal with any access difficulties. The gate does come with a manual override key should there be technology challenges. The LTA advise that have installed these gates across many sites and have had very few problems.
- There is concern over abuse of the access i.e. users refusing to leave a court to allow a new booking to get underway. The booking system does allow for users that abuse the system to be prevented from booking.

On balance the opportunity to modernise the courts and use the changes as a trigger to promote their use with a digital access system that will feel very comfortable for the demographic most likely to access the courts appears to be an opportunity worth pursuing.

The Newark Tennis Club who use the courts during the winter when their grass courts are unavailable are supportive of the changes proposed.

The £3,283 cost is to get a power supply and suitable power infrastructure to the gate. As part of the grant scheme this has to be organised by the court operator and not the LTA contractor. All other works must be done by the LTA appointed contractor as a condition of the grant.

3. Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

Financial – In anticipation of the need for re-lining the existing courts a budget of £1500.00 had been included in the current 23/24 budget for this purpose. This can be applied towards the match funding.

There is therefore a further £4783.25 of costs that had not been factored in as part of the current year budget planning. In order to offset these costs Council should note that s.106 funding has been confirmed for the Sherwood Avenue pavilion building in the sum of £17,993 (see s106 planning condition below).

Community Facilities Contribution: the sum of seventeen thousand nine hundred and ninety three pounds (£17,993.00) for the maintenance, repair or enhancement of facilities at Sherwood Avenue pavilion Newark and in the event of its demolition, closure or relocation any reasonable replacement for it or such other similar scheme as the Council may in its absolute discretion deem appropriate.

These funds are specified solely for the pavilion so cannot help with the tennis court project. The funds will however more than cover the planned costs of solar panel installation on the pavilion rather than using existing CIL funds. On this basis it is suggested that £4783.25 of CIL funds are utilised on the basis that the Climate Change Group will then still have additional unexpected funds of £13,209.75 at their disposal being costs that had been expected to be spent on solar panels which can now be used elsewhere (the solar panels quote for the building is £7,300 and there will be planning related costs of circa £1500). Any remaining s106 could be utilised to invest in other energy saving measures and improvements in the pavilion. The Clerk is currently working with NSDC officers to finalise the release of the s.106 funding which has been paid by the developer to NSDC who are now holding those funds.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	Town Hall Maintenance Challenges / Issues
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members note the contents of the report.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report is to provide members with an update and overview of ongoing repair works, future repair works and general maintenance challenges within the building.

- 2.2 Newark Town Hall is a Grade 1 Listed Building and as such as it is heavily protected by conservation legislation. Even the smallest of maintenance works can require advice and input from the Conservation officer. Other works can require Listed Building Consent applications. This of course adds an additional layer of cost to maintenance.

2.3 CURRENT PROJECTS / PREVIOUSLY REPORTED PROJECTS**Internal Decoration:**

The internal decoration of key areas on the 1st floor of the building is in progress with the Pickin Room and Chamber now completed and the Ballroom soon to get underway.

Large areas of the building have been subject to in house decoration from council caretakers with more areas to come. These areas are of lower value for Conservation purposes and therefore an in-house approach is possible. Higher value areas require a more specialist external approach. Suitable advice and guidance have been secured from the Conservation officer in support of this work.

A scaffold tower has recently been acquired by the Council with a number of staff having undergone suitable training in its use. This has been necessary to improve staff safety when working at heights but opens opportunities for more in house decoration maintenance work.

The paint specifications for paint used in the Chamber, Pickin Room and to be used in the Ballroom have been recorded. This will ensure future touch ups of small marks and scuffs in the higher value areas can be done in house. In the past there is evidence of works that have not sought to paint match which is contrary to conservation standards.

Boilers and Heating System

New boilers subject to a recent tender exercise and approved by the Council are due to be installed in May. This is to allow a period during install without heating whilst warmer weather is present to ensure comfort of users of the building.

Next Phase: The next phase of heating work will be to look at a new control system. Existing controls are as old as the boilers and at the end of their life. A move to a new digital control approach with areas of the building zoned to improve efficiency will be the aim. This will allow areas not in use to be turned down / off whilst other areas in use can be set higher. This work will be subject to a tender process.

Further Phase : Extending heating into the Collonades/Buttermarket is also to be considered in the future.

Glass Dome Roofs in Collonade Units

Last year Council approved repair works to the glass dome roofs. These works have eliminated water ingress during heavy rain by around 80%. This work involved replacing rotten valleys

between the domes. Some residual leaks are being investigated. Old glazing seals are now considered to be the cause of the residual leaks and repair costs are being investigated.

Wine Store Roof

Due to heavy water ingress a replacement of the wine store roof was approved prior to the May 2023 elections. Progressing the work has been delayed whilst other projects have been pursued. The current roof is a breach of planning and is not an approved addition to the building. The replacement to be pursued is an approved design. Challenges around access to the area for undertaking works in the biggest obstacle. This is detailed below.

2.4 EMERGING PROJECTS / ISSUES

1st Floor Toilets

The toilets on the first floor (used for large functions) are gravity fed from a water tank in the loft area of the building. During well attended functions where regular toilet use is occurring, the water volume demand through toilet cisterns and sinks (especially in the ladies toilets) exceeds the volume that the tank in the loft can supply and maintain. Very quickly toilets stop flushing leading to toilet blockages.

Various options are being explored to eliminate this problem however it is expected that costs will be significant. There is fear that the pipe infrastructure is accustomed to lower water pressures and that increasing pressure to ensure a suitable supply may lead to leaks developing in the pipework.

Fire Alarms

The age of the current fire alarm system is such that upgrades will be required. The process of upgrading is made harder due to the fact that the fire alarm system for the Town Council part of the Buttermarket is linked to the District Council part of the Buttermarket. NSDC have upgraded their alarm system as part of recent works in the upper part of the Buttermarket.

NSDC are keen to separate the systems to aid with the autonomy of maintenance, repairs and control. Whilst separated systems would still have some interface between them to mutually alert each system to a detection, logistically based on the current structures separate systems would appear to be advantageous.

Reviews of fire risk assessments in the Town Hall have identified areas where additional detection would be advantageous.

Roof and Gutter Repairs and Maintenance

There are a number of roof and gutter repairs needed however access to the work areas is not easy as more particularly detailed below.

Missing tiles on the main roof structure are starting to cause some water ingress on the 2nd floor.

Recent high winds removed some felt covering from the former rents and rates annex.

The gutters are in urgent of need being cleaned and minor repairs in some areas are required.

2.5 Access Challenges

The Town Hall is a large building of significant height. Accessing various roof areas safely presents a real problem.

There are currently various projects that are likely to require scaffolding including roof and gutter repairs, wine store roof replacement, glass dome roof seals replacement and potentially some solar panels if the Climate Change group are able to navigate the planning process for such an exercise.

Accessing the roof structures adds significant cost to any job. A recent quote for the roof of the former rents and rates office of around £3,500 is made up largely of scaffolding costs.

The Clerk has suggested to the Operations Manager that we investigate installing scaffolding once to allow for various projects to be undertaken rather than paying every time for individual

jobs. This is being explored currently. It may even prove cheaper for the Council to buy its own scaffolding rather than hire scaffolding for what could be a couple of years or more. As an alternative rope access solutions are also being investigated. This is generally cheaper than scaffolding involving specialist contractors who work whilst suspended from bespoke designed anchor systems that work for the building.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

- 3 **Financial** – The Town Hall will always be an asset that requires costly and intensive maintenance.

Members will be kept up to date on issues identified in this report and will be involved where financial regulations require in any tender processes and matters that have budgetary impact and considerations.

The Council does have a reasonable sum of Town Hall Maintenance and Repair reserves however that could be very quickly used up with no current fiscal ability to replenish those funds due to much wider financial challenges.

Risk Issues – Risks arise where active maintenance is not undertaken and essential repairs are not carried out. Individual risks within different projects will be assessed as part of those projects.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	Recommendations and Update from Arts, Events Culture and Twinning Working Group
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The following recommendation from the Arts, Events, Culture and Twinning (AECT) Working Group is made:

- That Newark Festival budget allocation of £25,000 in the 24/25 financial year is diverted to Newark on Sea.

2. Background

- 2.1 The AECT working group has met to consider the funding position in relation to Newark on Sea.
- 2.2 The principal grant application for 2 years' worth of funding of Newark on Sea has been unsuccessful however a number of further smaller applications have now been submitted however if successful these will not meet the full cost of Newark on Sea.
- 2.3 In order to ensure that Newark on Sea goes ahead the AECT group would wish to prioritise Newark on Sea over a Newark Festival event and divert the Newark Festival budget for this purpose.
- 2.4 The AECT will be working with the Clerk and other officers to explore other event opportunities in lieu of Newark Festival. There are various event delivery partners in Newark and opportunities to support other events will be explored so as to mitigate the impact of the loss of Newark Festival. Utilising the Brass Explosion budget as an opportunity to combine brass with other music offerings is to be considered. As other grant positions become clear any surplus budget not required can help to support other partner event opportunities.
- 2.5 As a reminder in anticipation of the unavailability of the Castle grounds during the August bank holiday weekend the AECT group had already proposed a cut to the Newark Festival budget and had planned to deliver a smaller free music event in the town centre.
- 2.6 In the last 2 years Newark Festival has been supported by Towns Fund Cultural Heart funding and Arts Council grant funding. That funding is not available for Newark Festival in the 24/25 financial year.
- 3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues**
- 3.1 Contained in the report.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	NEWARK TOWN HALL HOSPITALITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members approve the appointment of Kelly Chandler to undertake a feasibility and venue revenue potential assessment of the Newark Town Hall.

2. Background

- 2.1 Members have adopted a budget for the 24/25 financial year which includes salary provision to support the recruitment of a new member of staff whose role will be to maximise the Town Hall's potential as a venue for hosting weddings, events and other functions.

Members also increased the income forecast for the Town Hall for the 24/25 financial year as part of the budget debates in anticipation of the appointment of a new hospitality manager.

- 2.2 It is clear that the Town Hall offers a stunning venue for a variety of functions and has clear potential for being used much more than it presently is. No current Town Council staff have any dedicated background in the hospitality industry, especially the wedding market which is seen as a prime market to target for increased use of the Town Hall.
- 2.3 In difficult financial times it is hard to be at all confident over the potential that the Town Hall offers for increased revenue. Although the potential is clear, quantifying that potential is beyond the skills, knowledge and experience of the current Town Council officers.
- 2.4 The proposed report from the recommended consultant will provide members some confidence as to the venue revenue potential, will provide an outline venue marketing strategy, will provide guidance on recruitment of a new employee in the hospitality industry and generally allow members to progress with the benefit of early input from an industry expert.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

Financial – Quotes from 2 consultants are attached to this Agenda as pink papers. The Clerk has virtually met with both consultants prior to producing this report.

The timing of undertaking a report is such that the costs of the report could be met from the salary budget for the proposed new employee. This is on the basis that by the time the report is concluded, and members have reacted to the report decided on the direction of travel for a new employee, and any subsequent recruitment the first couple of months' salary costs in the next financial year will not have been incurred.

Environmental – Increased usage of the Town Hall will increase the Council's carbon footprint. Work being investigated by the Climate Change Working Group involves decarbonisation of the Town Hall. Some offset of any increased carbon footprint arising from greater use of the Town Hall may be achieved through any decarbonisation work that is pursued.

Risk – Simply proceeding with the appointment of a new employee without any careful analysis of the hospitality market potential carries serious risks of adding greater cost to the Councils overhead costs that may not be covered by increased Town Hall venue revenue. As a core risk management exercise commissioning an external hospitality expert to guide the Council on the venue potential allows members to make an informed decision before proceeding, or not, with any hospitality appointment.

The recommendation from the Clerk would represent good prudent governance given the significant investment involved in the appointment of a new hospitality employee.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

SUBJECT:	RECRUITMENT OF DEPUTY CLERK
REPORT BY:	MATTHEW GLEADELL

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 **The Personnel Sub Committee** are recommending the appointment of Richard Walden Consultants to undertake and manage the recruitment of a Deputy Clerk. In doing so the Council will resolve to proceed on the basis detailed in section 2.6 of this report.

- 1.2 If the recommendation above is agreed, the Clerk recommends the appointment of a recruitment panel who shall be given authority to adopt the job description, person specification and contractual terms of the post and conduct interviews with candidates. They will also have authority to deal with any operational decisions required in relation to the recruitment process. A total of 3 Councillors is recommended. The Clerk would suggest the current Leader, Chair of Personnel Sub Committee and the Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The panel is either to be given authority to agree the final appointment or be asked to make a recommendation to the Finance and General Purposes committee as to the final appointment.

2. Background

- 2.1 Members have adopted a budget for the 24/25 financial year which includes salary provision for a Deputy Clerk.
- 2.2 The need for a Deputy Clerk has been identified by virtue an of independent report which has assessed the Councils current operational undertakings whilst also recognising significant work to be undertaken in investigating and potentially pursuing a range of new revenue generating opportunities.
- As has been well documented as part of the budget and precept work the Council has a challenging few years ahead. Providing capacity for the Clerk to develop new revenue streams, evaluate potential service savings and generally steer the Council through a difficult period greater capacity is needed in the workforce.
- 2.3 Richard Walden is a respected consultant in the Town and Parish industry and previously handled the recruitment of the current Town Clerk. His experience and understanding of Newark will be helpful to any recruitment process.
- 2.4 The Clerk is very happy to undertake the recruitment process in house however time wise the process would take much longer than utilising an external consultant who can focus fully on the process.
- 2.5 A proposed timescale for recruitment provided by Richard Walden is attached to this report.
- 2.6 It is considered that the working relationship that the Council enjoys with Richard Walden and his knowledge of the Council is such that the usual financial regulations requiring 2/3 quotes being obtained before commissioning a service are suspended.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

- 3.1 The recruitment costs can be met from the salary budget of the Deputy Clerk for the 24/25 financial year. This is on the basis that the timeframe for recruitment and any notice period of the successful candidates is such that the early months of the new financial year will see no salary costs payable and this create a saving in the 24/25 budget.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

Newark Town Council
Action Plan for recruiting and selecting a Deputy Town Clerk

Indicative date	Stage
14 February	FGP agrees appointment of Consultant to manage the recruitment process as set out in this paper. FGP appoints an Appointments Panel of, say, three councillors. FGP decides if it wishes to delegate to the Panel the authority to make an appointment or simply to make a recommendation to the full Sub-Committee.
w/c 19 February	Consultant not available this week
w/c 26 February	<p>Consultant meets with Panel informally (by Teams if necessary) to explore the key attributes the Council is seeking in a Deputy Town Clerk. If conducted remotely this could be followed by approximately an hour's training/ refresher on relevant employment law and selection techniques and questioning. This can be a more in-depth session if the Panel wishes.</p> <p>Consultant then drafts revised job description, person spec and terms and conditions of appointment Based upon the Panel's requirements for approval (by email) by Town Clerk and the Panel</p>
4 March	<p>Consultant drafts for Panel approval (by email) a detailed Recruitment Pack comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome from Town Mayor/ Council Leader Vacancy Advert highlighting that applications will be especially welcomed from clerks to smaller parish councils (preferably CiLCA qualified) with financial experience who are seeking to develop their skills and experience of managing a larger organisation. Brief Summary of current status of Town Council, its political composition, key objectives and major services/ projects Budget Calendar of Meetings and key civic events Job Description including key objectives of post and detailed responsibilities Person specification Terms and Conditions of Appointment (includes salary and initial support/ professional development programme/ interviews Electronic Application Form Notes on "How to Apply" <p>It is suggested that the pack be given a "professional" appearance through utilising the services of a graphic designer. If the Council does not have a graphic designer whom it would normally use, the consultant has worked previously with an excellent designer who usually charges up to £60 per page.</p>
w/c 11 March*	<p>Digitally advertise the vacancy via SLCC, NALC, Notts principal Councils, Clerks forums, social media. Consultant and Town Clerk will also actively promote the vacancy amongst clerks in Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire.</p> <p>*The Consultant has limited availability this week and would need the Town Clerk to undertake most of this stage, or the Consultant would be able to do so the following week.</p>
5 th April	<p>Closing Date for completed applications</p> <p>Town Clerk and consultant be authorised to consider all applications and only present to the Panel those which they believe meet the approved criteria.</p>
8 th April	Appointment Panel agrees shortlist of 3 or 4 shortlisted candidates. Presentation topic to be agreed.

Two Day Assessment Centre

Provisional programme:

Day One

- 10.30 Welcome by Town Mayor and meet Panel
- 11.00 Tour of Council facilities (minibus accompanied by Panel members if available) but paying especial attention to the Town Hall, Admin/ Finance staff and a demonstration of the current accounting system
- 13.00 Lunch for candidates and Panel
- 14.00 Informal meeting of all candidates with Town Clerk and Consultant to explore the duties of the post in greater detail and to answer any general questions from the candidates
- 15.00 30 minute Group session (all candidates plus possibly existing senior NTC staff to provide information and participate) discuss a key current issue for the Town Council. Subject to be advised at start of the session.
- 15.45 lots drawn for order of interviews
Panel agrees interview questions (drafted by Consultant) and who will be asking what
- 19.00 Evening reception for all candidates and all Town Councillors to give them the opportunity to meet the candidates

Day Two

- From 10.00 Each candidate gives a presentation up to 10 minutes on the agreed topic followed by approx. an hour for formal interview.
- 10.15 Candidate A
 - 11.30 Candidate B
 - 13.15 Lunch
 - 14.00 Candidate C
 - 15.15 Candidate D (if needed)
 - 16.30 Panel deliberates and judges each candidate against the person specification taking account of application form, written report, staff feedback, group exercise performance, presentation and interview results.
 - 19.30 (if necessary) Special meeting of FGP to consider Panel's recommendation and confirms appointment.

23 April Formal offer subject to satisfactory references
References taken up for successful candidate

1st May Contract issued and a start date agreed

1st June (earliest target date possible, assuming one months' notice)
new Deputy Town Clerk starts employment