

Cinque Port Town of New Romney



Mrs C. Newcombe
Town Clerk
and
Responsible Financial Officer

Town Clerk's Office
Town Hall
New Romney
Kent TN28 8BT

Tel: New Romney 01797 362348

Ref: CN/3005

31st March 2025

Dear Councillor,

SUMMONS TO ATTEND AN ESPECIAL MEETING OF NEW ROMNEY TOWN COUNCIL, TO BE HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, NEW ROMNEY, ON MONDAY 7TH APRIL 2025 AT 6.45PM.

You are hereby summoned to attend the above-mentioned meeting of New Romney Town Council to consider the under-mentioned business.

Yours sincerely,

C Newcombe

Mrs C Newcombe
Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Email: town.clerk@newromney-tc.gov.uk

Members of Public are welcome to join this meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: New Romney Assembly Rooms and New Romney Town Hall have restricted access for people with limited mobility; please enquire for details.

Anyone displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 should NOT attend the meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. Who can participate in a New Romney Town Council meeting?

Members of the Public and Press may attend this Council meeting, except at such times as certain sensitive personal, legal or contractual matters may be considered in private and confidential session, when Members of the Public will be required to leave the meeting.

**ESPECIAL FULL COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY 7TH APRIL 2025 AT 6.45PM**

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES:**
To receive the apologies of Councillors unable to attend and approve reasons for absence.
- 2. DISPENSATION TO PARTICIPATE:**
To receive and note any applications granted by the Town Clerk, on behalf of the Town Council, for dispensation to participate in Meetings of New Romney Town Council.
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**
Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant or Personal Interests they may have in items on the agenda this evening.
- 4. CIL FUNDS ALLOCATION (Encs):**
To approve use of identified CIL funds to offset Maude Community Centre FFE / Landscaping requirements (see report)
- 5. TEMPORARY PARKING PROVISION (Encs):**
To consider temporary parking provision at The Greens, Littlestone (see report).

NB: Reports or notes of the Personnel Committee will be considered as Private & Confidential as they concern staff matters; and all legal or contractual information, documents, agreements or reports may be considered likewise. Other items may be considered as private and confidential if the Town Council deems that it is in the public interest to do so.

Town Clerk – 31st March 2025

New Romney Town Council

Especial Full Council Meeting 7th April 2025

Agenda Item 4: Allocation of CIL funds

The Maude Community Centre Project is now nearing completion. It is essential that the order for Furniture, furnishings and equipment is placed in order that the facility can be opened to the public in a ready state.

A great deal of work has been undertaken with the assistance of a specialist consultant, Hatfield Interiors, to identify furnishing requirements for the community centre and to develop a schedule of required items, together with total costs for supply, delivery and installation.

Hatfield Interiors carry out the due diligence for the Council by seeking the best available quality of items of furniture sourced from a range of suppliers, taking account of the available budget. All furniture and furnishings are of commercial / hotel quality for significantly improved longevity of use. Through discussion with the sports clubs regarding best use of the clubroom area, together with discussions about intended use of the community hall an appropriate schedule of furniture and furnishings was developed. Initially, the total costings were in excess of the £62,500.00 identified within the project budget for FFE. Various alternative, lower cost options were substituted, whilst maintaining the best available quality for a lower cost until a final cost of £54,686.20 has been achieved, inclusive of delivery and installation.

However, Councillors should be reminded that it was agreed by resolution that the sum of £62,500.00 identified for FFE should form part of the overall project contingency sum in order to be able to take the project forward with adequate contingency in place.

Project contingency funds remained relatively healthy, with only minor cost amendments being incurred month on month until unanticipated additional scope of s278 works was required by KCC at a cost that was significantly greater than that which had been budgeted for, based on what was originally anticipated. This, in addition to the need for a height barrier across the car park entrance to prevent unlawful incursions, has resulted in contingency now being depleted to approximately £56,000.00.

Furthermore, the recent emergency gas repairs, which resulted in the Kent Structures s278 highways works permit being suspended, has incurred a further 2 week delay on the project at an estimated cost in the region of £25,000.00. Fortunately, there is a budgeted client sum of £25,000.00 for additional acoustic measures which will not now be required since the acoustic measures required will come within the provisional sums provided by the contractor. Therefore, this should just about be absorbed without further impact on remaining contingency. Nevertheless, the additional delay means that there is still now some 10 weeks remaining to project completion – with a projected completion date now being 17th June 2025. This results in there remaining some need for caution as to how much of the contingency sum will remain for FFE provision.

The Council has ring-fenced £30,000.00 of General Reserves for the Maude Community Centre Project if it is required and has authorised the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council and/or the Chairman of the Project Steering Group to approve expenditure up to that amount.

In the current circumstance, it will be necessary to utilise that sum to place an order for FFE as the Council cannot allow this brand new facility to be delivered to the community without being ready for use. However, there remains a need for a further £25,000 approximately to furnish the facility to a standard befitting of this brand new community facility. It would be sensible to limit use of any of the remaining contingency to a maximum £15,000.00 (leaving £40,000.00 approximately in contingency – noting that all large provisional sums have been settled* at the current time and only smaller provisional sums remain to be settled). In light of usage of the authorised £30,000.00 of General Reserves, any remaining contingency at project completion should then be returned to General Reserves to offset this.

Approximately £10,000.00 shortfall is, therefore, required to be funded before the order for FFE can be placed and it should be noted that there is an estimated 10-12 week lead time, so it is imperative that the order is placed within the current week if the facility is to open ready for use.

The Town Council is currently holding £30,921.04 In CIL funds which must be used for projects that benefit the community. The Maude Community Centre is by far the biggest project for the benefit of residents of New Romney and so it would be entirely appropriate to allocate £10,000.00 of the available CIL funds to Maude Community Centre FFE provision. This will enable the Council's FFE order to be placed and the Community Centre to be delivered to the community as anticipated.

In addition to the issue of FFE, there is another matter of Maude Community Centre finish that has been commented on several times by the architect, the project management team and other consultants and this relates to the area of grass between the two buildings which will be an enclosed outdoor area.

It has been noted that whilst the design was for this to simply be a grassed area, as children will regularly playing in this area, it will very soon become a bald dirt area – and, in winter, a very muddy area that will look extremely unattractive. Therefore, not for the benefit of the children (albeit that it would be better for outdoor play anyway) but having delivered a brand new, multi-million pound facility to the community, it would be extremely disappointing to be left with an ugly area of mud in the middle of the facility and would be far better completed with a rubber crumb surface.

This has been costed but was set aside to ascertain what contingency might be available. However, as it will not be possible to utilise remaining contingency, since it is not possible to know what will be remaining, in the same way that use of CIL for Maude Community Centre FFE will be an entirely appropriate use of CIL, it would also be an entirely appropriate use of CIL to fund the rubber crumb surfacing that will result in this important community project being completed to the standard befitting of this facility, including the overall site. The cost of rubber crumb surface was costed at £16,000.00. However, as this was approximately 2 months ago, Synergy has advised that it would be safer to budget for up to £20,000.00. However, if the final costing is below that budget, unused CIL funds can remain for alternative community project(s).

*TBC by Synergy; Clerk to report

Recommended Actions:

(i) Approve allocation of £30,000.00 of CIL funds to the Maude Community Centre Project for (i) FFE up to £10,000.00 and (ii) Rubber crumb surfacing up to £20,000.00

Town Clerk

31/03/2025

AGENDA ITEM 5

New Romney Town Council

Especial Full Council Meeting 7th April 2025

Agenda Item 5: Temporary Parking Provision

FHDC Councillor Thomas has been advised that the Cast Road Car Park is shortly to be closed off for up to a year whilst the Beach Hut Project gets underway.

This is necessary due to Health and Safety Regulations and this area being a construction site for the afore-mentioned period.

Regrettably, it would appear that the District Council omitted to inform all affected parties of this point. This means that there will be no access for up to a year for New Romney (TS Veteran) Sea Cadet Corps, NRTC beach hut tenants, several individual residents whose homes back onto the car park and who have a legal right of access, and the Hub on the Beach, which very much relies on the availability of available car parking to encourage local residents to make use of this valuable facility.

Councillor Thomas has highlighted the need to maintain the legal rights of way throughout the project development programme, suggesting the route of a construction site fence line that would facilitate access where it is legally required.

However, this does not resolve the issue that, without convenient car parking as close as possible to the Hub on the Beach, it will deter locals from using it and it is the opinion of the Trustees that this may well result in job losses and, potentially, even closure.

It has been suggested that New Romney Town Council might wish to consider offering assistance in the form of temporary parking on a designated area of The Greens for the period when the Coast Road Car Park is closed off.

I have agreed to put this to the Council for consideration – but have highlighted a number of issues that would need to be resolved / agreed with the District Council in order that such an offer of assistance can be made – subject to the Town Council being minded to do so, of course:

I have advised the relevant District Council Officer that regarding potential use of an area of The Greens, Littlestone, for temporary parking, provision, agreement would have to be subject to the following condition:

- 1) The offer for use of a designated area of The Greens for temporary parking provision must first be approved formally by the Town Council (I advised that the Proper Officer cannot authorise this as there is no delegated authority to do so, however, in consultation with the Chairman, it has been agreed to put this matter to the Council

The District Council was also advised that further conditions of temporary use would need to be considered carefully before any agreement is entered into:

- 2) A height barrier to be installed in the perimeter line (currently bollard and rail) of The Greens adjacent the car park entry road, together with security fencing or concrete blocks to partition off the designated parking area. This must be undertaken at FHDC cost.
- 3) The area to be fully reinstated by FHDC and at FHDC cost. once the area is no longer required
- 4) FHDC – with the support of NRTC – must seek and obtain any consent required from Natural England due to the SSSI status of The Greens.
- 5) It will not be possible for NRTC to install and police a payment kiosk / ticketing facility, so the Town Council should consider requesting a compensatory sum to be payable in advance to NRTC for temporary parking provision (Sum to be agreed) or installation of ticket machine and policing of payment to be undertaken at FHDC cost and all ticket proceeds payable to NRTC.
- 6) The Town Council should consider the additional protection of a legal agreement being drafted to identify all conditions of temporary provision (to be prepared by NRTC solicitor at FHDC cost)

It should be noted that whilst there is a covenant pertaining to an area of The Greens providing that it shall not be used as a public car park, this covenant relates to the opposite end of The Greens and would not, therefore, impact on any agreement to utilise an area of The Greens adjacent Coast Road Car Park for temporary parking provision.

Nevertheless, Natural England imposes strict rules on The Town Council about vehicular access routes and nature and frequency of use of areas of The Greens.

The Town Council cannot allow open access across The Greens for temporary parking provision. Any parking area must come directly off the Coast Road Car Park access road and the area must be securely enclosed so that there is no risk of vehicular access onto The Greens (either suitable heavy duty security fencing or large concrete barriers (as used at the Sports Field recently to prevent unlawful incursion)).

Actions:

- To consider use of a designated area of The Greens for temporary parking provision whilst the FHDC beach hut project works are being carried out.
- To consider protective clauses (see above) to be applied to any agreement for temporary use of a designated area of The Greens.

END