

“SCALLYWAGS”! COUNCILLOR’S EPITHET COUNCILLOR NEWMAN IN DISTASTEFUL EPISODE DANGEROUS ERRAND FOR COUNCILLOR LANE OBIATED

C.T. July 22, 1939

MEMBERS of the Christchurch Town Council on Tuesday were astonished by an allegation against his Worship the Mayor (Councillor H. E. W. Laphorne) by Councillor W. E. Newman, in a question asked at the Town Council meeting.

A storm of protest and a dignified reproof from the Mayor followed. Councillor Newman asked: "Is it true that a copy of the "Christchurch Times" is handed in to the Mayor every week for his approval?"

Members of the Council sat aghast at this foolish and personal question. The Mayor's reply was: "I have considered this question for some time in order to decide whether or not to ignore it, or to make a reply. After consideration my answer is, that I most strongly protest against and resent the completely untrue implication.

"After the work I have contributed to the matter of National Emergency, I think it is a very poor return and very poor thanks for what I have done."

A few moments' silence followed, and then Councillor J. C. Wyatt asked: "Is there no way in which we can prevent these impertinent and useless questions being preferred to the Mayor in open council? I hope that it will be made abundantly clear that my colleagues and myself entirely disassociate ourselves with such 'scallywags.' "

Councillor Pawley supported Councillor Wyatt, and deplored that such an idle and entirely unfounded and impertinent question should be preferred to the Mayor.

Alderman Norman Barnes: "Several of us have sat in that Mayoral chair, and all of us have tried to do our level best. You, sir, have done your very best, and I am sure all will agree with me that it is a highly successful best. You have my entire sympathy in having to sit there and listen to such insults. I deplore the fact that any member of this Council could have the lack of courtesy to ask such a question."

Other Councillors were eager to contribute to the castigation of the offending Councillor but the debate was closed.

This most recent and most discourteous of a series of similar allegations made against the Mayor from time to time demands firm reproof. Previously this journal has ignored Councillor Newman's wild statements as being too ill-considered and lacking in substantiation for record. In this case, however, at the personal request of a number of Councillors, we publish the full facts, in order that the Central Ward may have an opportunity of assessing the calibre of their Council representative.

Coun. Newman has also addressed a letter to this journal for publication, dealing with Fire Brigade matters. It, however, contains personal attacks upon worthy and respected members of that body and as such constitutes a most undesirable manuscript for printing. The fact that it has been "published" to us alone constitutes a reprehensible act. It is, therefore, withheld.

CATCHMENT BOARD AFFAIRS.

Arising out of the minutes of the last meeting, Councillor Lane asked what had been done with regard to supporting the Catchment Board in their difference of opinion with the

Ministry with regard to the training wall to be erected to stabilise the outfall of the local rivers.

The Mayor: "No reply has been received yet."

Councillor Lane: "Do you anticipate anything being done in this connection before we have lost another summer?"

The Mayor: "It is difficult to say. Negotiations are taking place, but if there are any serious objections to the scheme, it will mean an enquiry."

SCHOOL APPLICATION.

The Town Clerk read a letter from Mr. Osborne, of Highcliffe, asking that permission be granted to him for the use of the Highcliffe Recreation Ground for the purpose of games, such as cricket and football. The letter pointed out that the applicant was establishing a school in Lymington Road.

The matter was referred to the Municipal Committee.

The following applications to the Council were granted: Permission for the Christchurch Wednesday Football Club to use the Recreation Ground for games during the coming winter; to the Regatta Commute for the erection of a paling on the Quay to afford greater vision to the whole of the Regatta crowds; to the Highcliffe British Legion for the use of a portion of land owned by the Council on the cliff top as a car park in connection with the Highcliffe Carnival on August 2nd.

LAND FOR BURE LANE WIDENING.

The Council approved the recommendation of the Municipal Committee to accept the offer of the War Office to convey to the Corporation approximately 1½ acres of land off Bure Lane for road widening and public open spaces. The considerations for such a conveyance were stated to be the payment of a sum of £200; the erection of fences of an approved type on the boundaries; the provision of two drinking places for the benefit of cattle grazing on War Department land; and all improvement works to be carried out within the next 12 months.

CAR PARK.

A section of Cameron Road is to be authorised as a car park. A recommendation of the Highways Committee that a portion of the western side of the road extending from a point 136 ft. from Purewell in a northerly direction for a distance of 100 ft. was approved, and the Royal Automobile Club is to be asked to erect signs.

It was also resolved to make up Avon Run Road, subject to the consent of the Minister of Health at a sum of £760 4s. 9d.

DUSTBINS ESSENTIAL.

Local housewives must provide suitable dustbins under the Public Health Act, and the Council passed the recommendation of the Public Health Committee confirming this as a local bye-law.

The resolution binds residents to provide "a receptacle of galvanised iron or other suitable impervious material of sufficient strength and thickness and of a capacity not exceeding three cubic feet."

BOYS CLUB OFFERS HIGHCLIFFE LAND.

It was decided to set up a special committee entirely disassociated with the Council to consider a generous offer made by the Highcliffe Boys Club of land for a recreation ground at Highcliffe. Thanks were also expressed to the club.

BUILDERS AND A "STRENGTHENED ROOM."

"Arising out of the recommendation of plans for approval by the Town Planning Committee, Councillor R. E. Gray asked whether the houses referred to had been provided with an extra-strengthened room, an A.R.P. necessity recommended by the Home Office.

The Mayor: "The Borough Surveyor asked all builders to co-operate with the Council in this matter, but it has had little or no effect."

Councillor Gray moved the reference back of the plans before the Council in view of this.

Councillor T. Markham: "What power has the Council in this matter?"

The Mayor: "We have power to make a request but cannot enforce it."

The Borough Surveyor (Mr. E. B. Wise): "All builders have been requested to do this, but excepting in one instance, this has not been carried out."

On a vote the reference back was lost. Councillor Stevens, speaking on behalf of the Allotments Committee, said that it was recommended that the Corporation should negotiate with the owner of land used for allotments at Burton, with a view to purchase. He explained that this had been in view for a number of years, and might prove useful in connection with borough extension.

MAYORAL SELECTION COMMITTEE.

The following Aldermen and Councillors will choose your Mayor for 1940: Alderman Cawte, Councillors Pawley, Preston, Stevens and F. D. Lane. The only change from last year is that Councillors Stevens and Lane have been substituted for Councillors McArdle and Gray.

SAFETY FIRST.

The Council are anxious to recover certain historical documents of public property, which are believed to be in the possession of Mr. Herbert Druitt, local antiquarian.

Councillor Lane said that to the best of his knowledge the documents had been in Mr. Druitt's possession for the past 15 years, and he (Councillor Lane) had been pressing that they should be returned since 1932.

He suggested that a member of the Council should be deputed to see Mr. Druitt in this connection. There were immediately suggestions that Councillor Lane should undertake the mission, and amid much laughter, which recorded double forte, when Alderman Barnes said: "We cannot allow Councillor Lane to undertake this, we should never see him again!"

Eventually the Town Clerk was instructed to play for safety and to write a letter to Mr. Druitt.

The Mayor warned residents that in future all sirens were to be used as signals of air raids. The fire call in future would be signalled by the explosion of a maroon. During the night, the system of private bell calls will be made to firemen.

BEACH CAFE.

It was recorded in the committee minutes of the previous meeting that a letter from the Town Clerk of Bournemouth stating that the proposed agreement to appoint managers for the beach undertakings would cause a breach of the covenants in the lease of Mudeford Beach to Christchurch was considered. It was decided that the Town Clerk should again seek counsel's opinion on this matter.

Mr. Tomlin, the architect of the proposed beach managers, was also interviewed at this meeting, and he explained plans of the proposed cafe at Mudeford. He stated further that the cost of this cafe would be between £4,300 and £4,500.

It was suggested that provision should be made for a staff rest room and Mr. Tomlin stated that provision for this could be made at an additional cost of about £60.

In reply to questions, Mr. Tomlin stated that the cafe would accommodate about 350 persons when the roof garden was used, in addition to the ground floor accommodation, and that if the proposed roof garden was omitted there would be a reduction of cost of about £600.

It was proposed by Councillor Wyatt and seconded by Councillor McArdle that in the event of the proposed agreement being entered into, the plans amended as suggested at the meeting for the erection of a cafe at Mudeford be approved.

At the vote, however, that motion was lost, those voting against explaining that they considered it premature to approve any plans until the agreement was executed.