

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 31 January 2017**

**Chair:** Cllr B Hester

**Town Councillors Present:**

Cllr G Bull	Cllr F Choudhury
Cllr P Edge	Cllr A Fryer
Cllr R Harris	Cllr Melville
Cllr R Murphy	Cllr M Seward
Cllr R Sims	Cllr S Stuckey
Cllr D Turner	Cllr B West
Cllr E Wheeler	Cllr J Witte

**District Councillors Present:**

Cllr E Seward

**County Councillors Present:**

Cllr E Seward

Prior to the meeting the Town Mayor made a presentation to Ms Alex Hurrell, who had reported for Archant Group (North Norfolk News/EDP) for a number of years on Council meetings but was now leaving that role.

The meeting opened at 19:00. The Town Mayor welcomed Cllr Richard Harris to the Town Council following his by-election success.

**Open to the Press and Members of the Public**

**1 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**(a) Declarations of Interest**

None were raised.

**(b) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Canham and District Cllr Lloyd.

**(c) Minutes of Town Council meetings**

As proposed by Cllr Edge and seconded by Cllr Melville, it was **RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2016 be signed by the Town Mayor as a true record of that meeting.**

**2 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING TO ALLOW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

As proposed by Cllr Witte and seconded by Cllr Seward, it was **RESOLVED**

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

**That the meeting be adjourned in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to permit public participation and external reports.**

**(a) Crime report**

No report was available. The Town Clerk would contact North Walsham Police for an explanation.

**(b) Reports from District and County Councillors**

County and District Councillor E Seward gave a verbal update to the written report from County Cllr Seward at Annex A.

**(c) Public participation**

Mr Matthew Smith updated the Council on the North Walsham Play/Town Council Woodville Park play equipment project.

As proposed by Cllr Stuckey and seconded by Cllr Murphy, it was **RESOLVED**

**That the meeting be reconvened.**

**3 REPORTS FROM THE TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

Details of events and meetings attended by the Town Mayor are at Annex B.

**4 ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

**(a) Cedar House car park access route**

Cllr Seward had entered a written proposal that “the Council should carry out the work to collect evidence that the footpath from Hall Lane to New Road through the car park of Cedar Court has a long-standing record of usage with a view to submitting an application to the County Council for it to be a legally permitted public right of way”.

Cllr Seward supported the proposal with the following:

- Elderly and disabled people struggled to get around the corners at Hall Lane and Church Street because of the narrow pavements.
- The Cedar Court site had been closed off on 23 December 2016, without notice from NNDC.
- Continued use over many years meant that there was a case for the route to be considered a public right of way.
- The Town Council should be seen to do the best it could for elderly and disabled residents, and was best placed to make an application to create a public right of way through the site.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- The Town Council needed to think of the town as a whole (ie 13,500 residents)

By

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

- At least three local residents supported the closure as it had meant the footfall past their homes, especially at night, was no longer a problem
- There was no way that historical usage could be measured with any accuracy.
- The building, and site, were now unoccupied, and given the nature of both it made sense on health and safety grounds that the site should be sealed
- There were other routes into the centre of town, and all needed to be taken into account before seeking a legal right of way.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Melville. The Council **RESOLVED** by majority vote

**That it did not support the proposal, and would therefore not investigate or apply for a legal right of way.**

**(b) Electoral review of North Norfolk**

The Boundary Commission's detailed proposals for the North Walsham Ward structure were as follows:

**West Ward: 5 members**

Taking in the Norwich Road, the Aylsham and Cromer Roads (west of the rail line and bypass), Millfield Road and Station Road estates and Bradfield Road residential areas, the town's main industrial estate and extensive rural area to the west of the town (out from Skeyton Road to North Walsham Wood and north-west to Lyngate Farm) which are in the current North Walsham West and Erpingham County Electoral Division

**North Ward: 2 members**

Taking in the Lynfield Road residential area to the east of the bypass and west of Mundesley Road and a small more rural area around Rookery Farm, which are in the current North Walsham East County Electoral Division

**Town Centre West: 1 member**

Being that part of the current North Walsham West district council ward east of the rail line – i.e. the Market Place, town centre and Yarmouth Road; which is in the current North Walsham West and Erpingham County Electoral Division

**Town Centre East: 2 members**

Taking in part of the existing North Walsham East District ward (New Road, Memorial Park, and the Spencer Avenue and Norfolk Homes Estate, and a small part of the North Walsham North district ward north of Hall Lane towards the cemetery and Sainsbury's, which are in the current North Walsham East County Electoral Division

**East Ward: 6 members**

With the same boundary of the proposed District Council ward taking in large parts of the existing District Council North ward (east of Mundesley Road, Bacton Road, Acorn Road, Melbourne Road / Stanley Road and Bluebell Road / Marshgate areas) and East Ward (Brick Kiln Road, Happisburgh Road, Spa Common and White Horse Common), which are in the current North Walsham East County Electoral Division.

If approved, this would come into effect at the 2019 Local Government Elections.

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**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

There were no proposals to comment formally on the consultation.

**(c) Norfolk Parish Training & Support Service**

Norfolk PTS was seeking subscriptions to its newly launched support service for parish and town councils in Norfolk. An annual subscription of 1% of the precept total (to a maximum of £500 for the largest councils) was payable for membership. As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Seward it was **RESOLVED**

**To defer consideration and await further information.**

**(d) Neighbourhood Planning**

North Walsham was earmarked for a lot of development over the next 20 years. The shape of the town centre couldn't be changed, and this meant that traffic movement around the town needed a wider view. Section 106 commitments from developers – currently on a piecemeal basis – did not and could not cover the town's infrastructure needs if it was to cope with the expected growth. It was agreed that many developers treated the Council with contempt, and made minimal contributions to the infrastructure. Given that NNDC had indicated that the new Local Plan might provide for much of what might be included in a Neighbourhood Plan, the significant cost of producing the latter was a concern if it might then be invalidated by the Local Plan. However, there was no reason a Town Council policy document could not be developed.

As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Witte, it was **RESOLVED** by majority vote

**That the Town Clerk be asked to set up a stakeholders meeting that included County, District and Town Councillors, local businesses (including Sanders Coaches) and external groups with input from expert advisors.**

**(e) Street naming (Persimmon Homes development)**

Members would suggest additional names to the Town Clerk.

**(f) Street furniture (bench at 4/4a Market Street)**

The bench recently removed from Mundesley Road Car Park was available to re-use, but Highways permission for street furniture would be needed. North Walsham Police had objected to seating in the vicinity of the 4/4a site due to concerns over creating a gathering point near to the local pubs. It would therefore be important to consult with both Highways and the Police before taking any action.

**(g) Naming 4/4a Market Street**

Several names were mentioned including Church View, Church Hill and Church Approach. It was noted that the area had previously been known as Church Approach. The Town Clerk would carry out further research into this, including contact with Rev Cubitt.

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

**(h) Lighting at Black Swan Loke**

The Council's lighting contractor had submitted a quote of £3,995 to install a lamp in the Loke on the external wall of Coral Bookmakers. This was higher than installing a lamp and post at the Black Swan end of the Loke. Further quotes would be sought, including solar lighting.

**(i) Merger of Funday Committee and Christmas Lights Group**

Both groups had done a considerable amount of work on the issues the Town Council had advised on when the matter was considered previously. On that basis, each group had independently agreed to separate from the Town Council and to merge into a single group. This had then been ratified at a joint meeting of the groups on 18 January 2017. If agreed, Standing Orders would need to be amended. The Council was now asked to ratify this decision as the groups fell within the Council structure. As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Sims, it was **RESOLVED**

**In principal to ratify the decision to cede from the Council and merge into a single group, subject to detailed information on how and when this would be accomplished.**

**5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**(a) Matters decided under delegated powers**

Action under delegated powers included payments for December invoices due and consideration of planning applications.

**(b) Footpath between New Road and Hall Lane**

Research on the footpath that exited onto New Road adjacent to the Bowls and Snooker Club had established that it was in private ownership, having been purchased for £1. An application had been made to the Land Registry for details so that the owner could be contacted.

**6 FINANCE**

**(a) Expenditure and receipts**

Members asked that the Funday and Christmas Lights expenditure be shown separately, and not simply highlighted. As proposed by Cllr Witte and seconded by Cllr Choudhury, it was **RESOLVED**

**That the Payments & Receipts report for December 2016 be approved.**

As proposed by Cllr Bull and seconded by Cllr Witte, it was **RESOLVED**

**That the payments to date for January 2017 be approved.**

**(b) Insurance**

A draft schedule of insured items was presented to Members. The following points were noted:

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

- The new Woodville playground equipment and War Memorial Park slides and swing should be added;
- Christmas lights equipment needed to be covered until the changes discussed at 4(i) above;
- Consideration should be given to insuring against a percentage loss of roadside seats, rather than insuring all at the same level of risk. (the Town Clerk explained to Members that insurance was driven by the level of risk the Council was prepared to accept, and that it was valid to assume a lower risk if agreed);
- SAM speed awareness signs needed to be added to the schedule;
- The Town Clerk was asked to investigate whether or not the CCTV cameras were appropriately covered under the service contract.

As proposed by Cllr West and seconded by Cllr Bull, it was **RESOLVED**

**That the schedule be accepted subject to changes regarding the above points and agreement by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk that everything was covered appropriately, with a report to the February meeting.**

**7 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

**(a) Bittern Line Partnership**

The Partnership had considered pedestrian access under the railway bridge, but found there were no quick cures to improve safety. It may be possible to introduce stronger traffic controls, and consideration would be given to bringing Sheringham- and Norwich-bound trains in on the same platform.

**(b) Second Homes Council Tax**

A meeting had been scheduled for 10 March 2017 at County Hall, Norwich, to be attended by Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP and Steve Blatch (NNDC).

**(c) Flooding**

A follow-up to the meeting hosted by Mr Lamb in August 2016 was due shortly.

**8 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

The following meetings and events were scheduled:

- a. Thursday 2 February – Markets Group
- b. Tuesday 7 February – Media & Information Committee
- c. Tuesday 21 February – Development & Amenities Committee
- d. Tuesday 4 April – Annual Town Meeting (Community Centre)
- e. Friday 12 May – Civic Dinner (Community Centre)
- f. Tuesday 30 May – Annual Meeting of the Town Council
- g. Sunday 18 June (tbc) – Civic Service (St Nicholas Church)
- h. 23-25 June – Funday weekend
- i. Sunday 23 July (Fun Fair arrives; open 26 – 29 July)

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**31 January 2017**

- j. Sunday 13 August - 3rd Annual Westover Charity Dog Show (War Memorial Park)
- k. Saturday 25 November – Christmas Lights Switch-On
- l. Sunday 17 December – Christmas Market

**9 CORRESPONDENCE**

*[Cllr Melville left the meeting at 20:45]*

The following items were received:

**10 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

Quotes for lighting at Black Swan Loke  
Footpath between New Road and Hall Lane  
Merger of Christmas Lights Group and Funday Committee  
Neighbourhood Plan/Local development strategy (recurring item)  
Street naming  
Bench siting  
Information Office relocation

*[Cllr Melville returned to the meeting at 20:50]*

**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

As proposed by Cllr Choudhury and seconded by Cllr Murphy, it was **RESOLVED**

**That, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2), members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed.**

**11 VOLUNTEER AWARD and COUNCILLORS AT OFFICES**

Members discussed nominations for the Council's Volunteer Award for 2016, to be presented at the Civic Dinner on 12 May 2017.

Members were reminded that staff shared the offices with Registration Office staff, and should respect the officers' needs when meeting Council staff, which should be by appointment.

The meeting closed at 20:55.