

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
19 May 2015

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on 19 May 2015**

<b>Town Mayor:</b>	Mr R Sims
<b>Town Councillors Present:</b>	
Mrs A Abbs	Mr P Oakes
Mr G Bull	Mrs M Seward
Miss A Canham	Mr A Thirtle
Mr F Choudhury	Mr D Turner
Mr A Fryer	Mrs B West
Mr B Hester	Mrs E Wheeler

The meeting opened at 19:00. The Town Mayor welcomed Councillors to the final meeting of this Town Council.

**Part I: Open to the Press and Members of the Public**

The Outgoing Town Mayor welcomed members to the first meeting of the new North Walsham Town Council. He noted that had been a pleasure to serve on the Council and to work with the members of the previous Council, and wished the new Town Mayor well for the coming year.

**1 Election of Town Mayor for 2015/16**

Following a proposal from Cllr Hester seconded by Cllr Bull, it was **RESOLVED**

**That Cllr Brenda West be elected Town Mayor for 2015/16.**

**2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Melville, and accepted.

**3 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2015/16**

Following a proposal from Cllr Abbs seconded by Cllr Oakes, it was **RESOLVED**

**That Cllr Barry Hester be elected Deputy Mayor for 2015/16.**

**4 STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

A copy of the current Standing Orders had been placed in the Councillors' Handbook circulated to all members. A draft revision had been prepared inline with the latest NALC model, and would be circulated to the new Personnel & Grants Committee for

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
19 May 2015

review. Financial Regulations would be redrafted in accordance with the latest model, and circulated once this had been completed.

**5 REVISION AND UPDATE OF COUNCIL POLICY DOCUMENTS**

A number of documents needed to be either revised or written, including Byelaws (as agreed by the previous Council) and the Media policy.

**6 TRAINING FOR MEMBERS**

Training for new Councillors was considered important. Three places had been booked on a Finance for Councillors course scheduled for 10 September at County Hall in Norwich, and it was recommended that these were taken. If additional places were needed, the Town Clerk would investigate available space and alternative dates. The Town Clerk was investigating an induction/refresher session which would hopefully include an NNDC Planning Officer.

It was **RESOLVED**

**That all Councillors undertake induction/refresher training, and that the Town Clerk seek to arrange this in-house.**

Cllrs Abbs, Oakes and Seward agreed to attend the Finance course.

**7 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

Subject to further additions from absentees and co-optees, the following Committee memberships for 2015/16 were agreed:

Planning: Planning Committee was attended by all Councillors

Personnel & Grants: Cllrs West, Hester (except on staffing matters), Abbs, Bull, Canham, Fryer, Oakes, Seward

Development & Amenities: Cllrs West, Hester, Abbs, Bull, Oakes, Thirtle, Turner

Media & Information: Cllrs West, Hester, Canham, Wheeler

Christmas Lights Group: Cllrs Bull, Canham, Choudhury, Fryer, Seward, Turner

Funday: Cllrs Canham, Seward, Turner, Wheeler

**8 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL FINANCE CHECKERS FOR 2015/16**

Cllrs Abbs, Oakes and Seward agreed to take on this important role in monitoring the Council's financial procedures.

**9 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO EXTERNAL BODIES**

Subject to further additions from absentees and co-optees, the following representatives for 2015/16 were agreed:

Regenerate North Walsham: Cllr Hester

Youth Committee: Cllrs Oakes, Abbs

Neech Loan Trustees: Cllrs West, Abbs

North Walsham Community Association: Cllr Wheeler

Poors Allotment Charity: Cllrs Canham, Choudhury, Seward

Friends of Friesenried Association: Cllrs Bull, Thirtle

Bittern Line Partnership: Cllr West

North Walsham Citizens' Advice Bureau: deferred pending County Council review of funding

Safer Neighbourhood Team: Cllrs Bull, Fryer

Griffon Area Partnership: Cllrs West, Hester

North Walsham in Bloom: Cllr West

North Norfolk Community Transport Association: deferred pending discussion between Town Clerk and NNCTA on requirements

North Walsham Chamber of Business: Cllr Hester

North Walsham Pub Watch: Cllrs Hester, Oakes

World War I/World War II Commemoration Group: Cllr West

Leadership of Place: Project remains under review. Cllr Thirtle will represent Town Council if it is revived.

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
19 May 2015

10 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was **RESOLVED**

**That due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed, members of the public be excluded from the meeting as per Standing Order 36.5.**

The meeting closed at 20:31

**Part II: Press and Members of the Public Excluded**

**12 USER RIGHTS LEGAL ADVICE**

A summary timeline was circulated to help new Members understand events since the Town Council was informed by NNDC of the proposed sale (Annex A). The Town Mayor provided further detail on the previous discussions with the NNDC Portfolio Holder for Assets and senior officer, noting their views that the Town Council's claim to user rights was irrelevant and that it had received the benefit of low rent for many years. The Council had subsequently agreed to seek advice from Nick Hancox Solicitors Ltd, as Mr Hancox had specific expertise in the field of successor councils' user rights under the Local Government Act 1972.

It was **RESOLVED**

**That the Town Clerk be asked to draft and circulate to all members a letter to Mr Blatch as per the advice issued by Mr Hancox, and to propose a further meeting with the full Town Council.**

Cllr Canham left the meeting at 19:58.

**14 OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL OFFICES**

It was agreed that Cllrs Thirtle, Oakes and Choudhury would join the Town Mayor and Town Clerk at a meeting with Mr Mike Hicks, landlord of the former Mobility Shop, on 21 May to discuss the premises and possible terms.

It was confirmed that the Town Council had a duty to the Information Office, having been instrumental in setting the service up. Accommodating the service in the town centre was important, but may lead to an additional cost that local taxpayers would have to pay.

It was **RESOLVED**

**That the Information Office would be accommodated in a suitable location for the service by the Town Council following a projected move.**

**15 CO-OPTION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL**

Following established procedure, the Town Council was committed to a process of advertising formally any vacancies that arose and through the Personnel & Grants Committee, to interview any candidates who expressed interest in co-option. It was noted that six candidates had already expressed interest through informal advertising via Facebook and word of mouth.

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
19 May 2015

Instructions from the Returning Officer to proceed with co-option to fill any vacancies following the election had now been received and the process could now begin officially.

It was **RESOLVED**

**That no changes be made to established procedure, and that the Town Clerk be asked to prepare and post the advertisement of vacancies as required by law.**

**16 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT AGAINST A MEMBER**

The Town Clerk was required by law to report that two written complaints had been made against a Member of the Council, following an incident at the recent VE DAY 70 celebration at War Memorial Park.

It was **RESOLVED**

**That the Member concerned be invited as per legislation to a meeting of the Personnel & Grants Committee to view the complaints and respond to them.**

The meeting closed at 20:31