

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held in the Council Chamber on 27 May 2014

PRESENT

Town Mayor:	Mr R Sims
Councillors:	
Mrs J R Belson	Mr B Hester
Mr D Robertson	Mrs R A Rose
Mr E Seward	Mr D Spencer
Mr A Thirtle	Mr D Turner
Mrs V Uprichard	Mrs B West
Mr B Wexler	

The meeting opened at 19:50

10988 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Seward declared an interest in matters relating to Leadership of Place.

10989 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bull, Choudhury, Morland and Peck.

10990 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2014 were received as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

10994 MATTERS ARISING – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The Town Clerk updated the Council on the following matters arising from the minutes

Para 10959: The minutes of the Town Meeting held on 1 April 2014 had been amended to reflect Cllr Uprichard's absence.

Para 10961: The police report had included the incorrect date for the next SNAP report; it will be held on Wednesday 4 June, not 6 June as stated. The police had been provided with a full set of new keys to the gates at Memorial Park

Para 10970: A request for views on Town Councillor/officials' surgeries posted on Facebook had received a large and positive response from residents.

Para 10971: Cheaper sources for Microsoft Office 2010 software had been explored, but had been rejected as offering poor value and/or guarantee. There was no safeguard against failed downloads, one was based abroad, and low site confidence ratings had been recorded in feedback. Given that "safe" options for Office 2010 were approximately the same as (if not more than) Office 2013, it had been agreed with the Town Mayor and Cllr Hester to pursue the latter via a reliable source.

Para 10973 (c): Mr Roger Canwell, who had been recommended as internal auditor by Cromer Town Council, visited the Council Offices on 14 May 2014 and following a discussion had agreed to audit the Town Council's accounts for 2013/14. He had provided some advice and assistance on getting the account in order for audit, and had

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attended on 22 June to conduct the audit. Although he had raised some concerns about the complexity of historical records, and provided advice on simplifying the processes, he had been pleased that the Office was already moving in this direction. He had signed the annual return, which would be completed following the meeting and returned to Mazars ahead of their deadline.

10995 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

As proposed by Cllr Thirtle and seconded by Cllr Rose
It was **RESOLVED**

That the meeting be adjourned to allow time for public participation.

10996 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Brian Morton, from the Matthew Project, was in attendance to provide the Council with an introduction to the work of the Project. Each year the Project ran a long-term (six month) project in an area of Norfolk and Suffolk. North Norfolk was the current focus. As part of the project, the VoiceBox outreach caravan would be located on the Memorial Park on Tuesday evenings from 18:00 until 20:00 for six weeks commencing on 3 June 2014. It was hoped that they could target North Walsham residents by inviting them to discuss issues or problems they faced. The Council was invited to visit once the caravan had been set up.

Funding for the Project came from a number of sources, depending on the service/target audience. It was a charitable organisation and was part of the Norfolk Recovery Partnership. In addition to funding raised by the charity, it could therefore access central and local government funding streams as well as NHS sources.

Cllr Robertson invited the Project to bring the caravan to the North Walsham Fun Day on Sunday 29 June 2014.

The Town Mayor thanked Mr Morton for attending.

10997 RECONVENING OF MEETING

As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Uprichard
It was **RESOLVED**

That the meeting be reconvened.

10998 REPORT FROM THE POLICE

At the request of PC Gwynne, it had been agreed to take the police report ahead of the Town Council Annual Meeting.

PC submitted the monthly crime figures (Annex A). The Town Council was reminded that the next Priority Setting meeting would be held at the Atrium on Wednesday 4 June 2014 at 19:00.

The current issues around North Walsham were:

- Criminal damage to vehicles and property in Badersfield (RAF Coltishall)
- Anti-social behaviour in the Memorial Park.

RS

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'Boy racers' had been congregating at the 29 New Road site, and an accident on which a young girl had been knocked off a moped had been reported. The police were unable to do much as this was private property, and it was the responsibility of the owner to install appropriate barriers to keep people out when the garage/car wash were closed. PC Gwynn would however raise the matter at the next SNAP meeting and ask for more patrols along New Road. It was noted that the landowner would be responsible should an accident occur on his property.

Cllr Seward thanked the police for providing additional information on speeding in North Walsham. He noted that this highlighted the problem of silo working at Norfolk County Council. An example of this had been the recent letter from the Road Safety department stating that funding for a speed sign would not be provided to the town as there had been no accidents on a particular stretch of road. There had been no mention of speed evidence, which could be obtained from the police. The Safety Officer, when pressed, had not been aware that the Highways Engineer had already agreed in principle to this proposal. It was suggested that the police submit this speed data to the Norfolk County Council Safety Officer.

10999 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Written reports from Cllrs Seward, Lloyd and Gay were at Annexes B to D respectively.

Cllr Uprichard noted that the main issue she was working on was the car wash at 29 New Road.

Cllr Seward further reported that

- A report had been published by NNDC containing detailed figures on car parking in the district. A copy had been handed to the Town Clerk, and it could be reviewed in the office. The recently reported proposals to remove evening parking charges and allow free parking from 09:00 until 09:30 had been made by the Deputy Leader of NNDC in a press release. District Councillors and officials at NNDC were not responsible for this, and the comments had not been cleared by Cabinet.
- At the County Council's Annual Meeting, Cllr George Nobbs had been re-elected as Leader, with Cllr David Harrison as Deputy Leader.
- It had been confirmed that 2 homes monies would NOT be used to fund the cost of the incinerator.
- The Bittern Line franchise was due to be renewed in 2016, and the bidding criteria would be set in the next six to twelve months. If the Town Council wished to contribute its views on what should be included, it needed to have an early discussion, perhaps at the next meeting (25 June 2014).

The cutting of grass verges seemed to vary in consistency around the town – some locations had been done, while others (often in the same road) had been left. There had been a previous report on grass cutting, and an agreement by the Town Council to cover some costs. The Town Clerk was asked to research this for the next meeting, along with the bit of land between the New Road car park and the Memorial Park.

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Paint had been reclassified as a hazardous substance with effect from 1 April 2014, and recycling centres were now refusing to accept it. A partial moratorium at some sites had been scheduled in September. The issue had generated a lively debate on Facebook. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Robertson

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to write to Tom McCabe (the Director of Environment, Transport and Development at Norfolk County Council) expressing strong concern about the confusion that exists among residents of North Walsham about the disposal of paint, and concern that environmentally unsound alternatives such as fly-tipping might be used instead.

11000 REPORT OF THE TOWN MAYOR

Cllr Belson had attended the CCTV transfer agreement signing at Sheringham on 30 April 2014.

She and Cllr Seward had met Mr R Scammell of Café Kitale on 9 April 2014 to discuss relaunching the Precinct's traders association. She felt that further meetings would be needed in order to keep the focus on progressing this issue, which would help to resolve the ongoing concerns about legal liability with regard to the common ground in the Precinct. The Town Clerk had been asked to research issues/concerns relating to the Town Council having a representative of such an association.

11001 PUB WATCH

Cllr Hester had provided a written report on the Pub Watch meeting held on 12 May 2014. The main concern was the increase in issues relating to drugs.

11002 SPEEDING IN NORTH WALSHAM

Speeding was one of the most complained about issues in North Walsham, and the Council needed to consider how best to use the sign that had been approved in principle by Norfolk County Council Highways Department. It was noted that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation had written to the Clerk, based on a report from the Road Safety Department, to advise that the bid for a speed sign had not been approved. This decision had apparently been based on data regarding accidents on a single stretch of road, at Bluebell and Bacton Roads. It had taken no account of speeding data, which was available from the police and should have formed the real basis for the report.

Cllr Seward had taken this up with the Cabinet Member, and the result had been the offer of a SAM2 sign. This would be owned and maintained by the Town Council and could be moved to any location the Council wished. The total cost of a SAM2 sign would be £3,500, which under the Partnership Grant scheme meant the Town Council would pay £1,750. It would be a better option as the Town Council would control location based on reported need, and the cost was lower than estimated in the original bid.

As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Thirtle

It was **RESOLVED**

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To

- (a) Ask the Town Clerk to seek a meeting with the Norfolk County Council Highways and Road Safety officers to discuss the details of the SAM2 sign, and
- (b) Write to the Director of Highways to advise that the Town Council could be minded to bid again in future years, that it would expect officers to discuss the content of any such bid with the Council and each other before unilaterally making a decision to withdraw funding, and that it would expect officers to use appropriate data, obtained from sources including the police, to inform such decisions.

It was agreed that this should be copied to Cllr Timewell, who had been appointed as Vice Chairman of the Highways Committee.

11004 MUNDESLEY ROAD CAR PARK

The car park was now back in its poor, pre-repair state. The Town Clerk had contacted the District Council about the issue, and expected to be given further information on Thursday 29 May 2014, when NNDC Property Services would be visiting the Offices.

It was noted that this was tied in with the general issue of parking costs, and the recently issued NNDC report.

11005 BADGES OF OFFICE FOR FORMER TOWN MAYORS

Quotes had been sought from three companies, but the only response to date was from Thomas Fattorini. The quote provided was for Sterling Silver badges, but a plain metal quote was expected in the next few days. Further discussion was deferred until the remaining quotes had been received.

11006 DEFIBRILLATORS

The unit at Aroma in St Nicholas Precinct was now live on the Ambulance Service database. It was expected that the Coral Bookmakers unit would be installed during the week ending 30 May 2014. The Town Clerk continued to look into appropriate signage.

11007 PIGEON NUISANCE AT MARKET CROSS AND OTHER LOCATIONS

It was at this time of year, during peak breeding season, that the problem usually arose.

As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Thirtle

It was **RESOLVED**

To ask the Town Clerk to write to the Environmental Protection team at NNDC to enquire about recent or planned reviews on pigeons in North Walsham.

11008 DOG CONTROL

As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Robertson

It was **RESOLVED**

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To ask the Town Clerk to seek further information from NNDC regarding the new powers they expected have in place in October 2014.

11009 LEADERSHIP OF PLACE

Cllr Seward reported that there were significant sums of money currently held by different authorities in different budgets that could be spent in North Walsham. The opportunity to proceed with improvements could arise very quickly, and the Town Council needed a clear view on what it wished to achieve. The existing plans had required change due to new regulations governing the size of parking spaces.

It was noted that the Chairman of the Chamber for Trade had launched a poll and debate on Facebook on this issue, and there had been support for a public meeting.

11010 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

The statement of payments and receipts to 27 May 2014 was received and approved. Full accounts of the civic dinner could not be produced, as payments continued to be received. These were requested for the next meeting.

Cllr Seward left the meeting at this point.

As proposed by Cllr Spencer and seconded by Cllr Belson

It was **RESOLVED**

That refunds would not be given for non-attendance at the civic dinner, where no notice had been given and the food paid for.

11011 DRAFT END YEAR ACCOUNTS FOR 2013/14

The draft accounts were received. It was noted that these included some North Walsham In Bloom items under the "Assets" heading. The Deputy Mayor confirmed that these were NWIB assets, and were not owned by the Town Council. The Town Clerk noted that these items also appeared on the Town Council's insurance policies, and confirmed that assets and insurance cover were two of the areas that the internal auditor had recommended for further work to simplify and clarify issues such as these.

As proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Rose

It was **RESOLVED**

That the draft accounts be approved and signed by the Town Mayor, subject to the above changes being implemented.

Cllr Rose wished it to be on record that Julie Shields had done an excellent job in a short time on the accounts, and should be congratulated. The Town Mayor concurred, noting the reports were now easier to read.

11012 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Town Clerk's report on the installation of new PCs and the recent email problem was received. Following a discussion on the requirements of the Information Centre, the Town Clerk agreed to reconsider whether they should use a dedicated PC.

B

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The Town Clerk had opted to launch a Town Council Facebook page ahead of schedule, primarily in order to provide an instant outlet for news and announcements – such as the issue of paint disposal.

As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Spencer

It was **RESOLVED**

To create a Media Management Committee to manage the use of Town Council social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

* **11013 PERSONNEL AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2014 were received.

* **11014 PARKS AND CEMETERIES COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2014 were received. The Town Council noted and approved the recommendations to allow an extension to Poppy's Day Nursery and to permit the Matthew Project VoiceBox caravan to be sited on the Memorial park on Tuesday evenings during June and early July.

* **11015 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meetings held on 29 April and 13 May 2014 were received.

* **11016 FUN DAY COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2014 were received.

11017 CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk reported on the following items or correspondence:

- (a) North Norfolk District Council had written 12 May 2014 seeking Town/Parish Council nominations for the North Norfolk Big Society Awards, in the community project and business categories. Each District Councillor and Town/Parish Council can submit one nomination each for the first and second category. The nomination form was available from the Town Clerk.
- (b) Mrs Hazel Sadler had written on 13 May 2014 to follow up her attendance at a Council meeting last year regarding car parking on Northfield Road, North Walsham. She is seeking to ensure that road markings along Mundesley road which she says were agreed last year is on the Highways programme for the current year. The Town Clerk was seeking further information on this issue.
- (c) Mrs Janet Munro had written on 13 May 2014 Asking if the sign for **Pope's Passage** (the narrow passage from Market Place through to the Church Yard) could be resurrected, as it is of historical significance. The Town Council asked for this to be brought to the next meeting.
- (d) UNISON had written on 13 May 2014 to advise the Town Clerk that a trade dispute continues between members of the union and the Town Council in relation to pay. The union is seeking agreement that employers which employ staff under

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NJC terms and conditions will increase the pay of such employees by a minimum of £1 per hour, backdated to 1 April 2014. The union's understanding is that the Town Council is not prepared to agree to the pay increase, meaning the dispute continues and notice of a ballot on strike action is attached to the letter.

It was **RESOLVED**

That this issue be referred to the Personnel and Appointments Committee.

- (e) Mr Richard Baker had written on 17 May 2014 about the lack of sporting facilities in the town", and what he saw as a lack of support for sporting facilities on the Town Council.
- (f) Mrs Donna Hunt had emailed on 25 May 2014 asking if the Town Council knew of a potential home for two potted oak trees, as they were moving to the town in the next week. Pigney's Wood was suggested, and Cllr Uprichard agreed to explore options.
- (g) Mrs Lorraine Henriksen, District Secretary of the North East Norfolk District Scout Council, had emailed on 26 May 2014 to thank the Town Council for its generous donation towards the cost of the St George's Day Parade.

11018 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

The Town Council asked for the following items to be included for discussion on the next agenda:

- Ticketing arrangements for the Civic Dinner
- Bittern Line rail franchise requirements
- Arrangements for cutting grass verges around North Walsham
- Highways and road safety issues
- Badges for past mayors
- Defibrillator signage
- Update on pigeon nuisance
- Report on new dog control powers from October 2014
- Town/Market Place improvement plans
- Pope's Passage
- RADAR keys
- Disposal of hazardous waste
- Lighting in Bank Loke
- Draft agreement with Citizens' Advice Bureau

11019 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

As proposed by Cllr Thirtle and seconded by Cllr Uprichard

It was **RESOLVED**

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That due to the sensitive nature of the matters to be discussed, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

11020 TRANSFER OF CCTV CAMERAS

It was confirmed that the signed and sealed copy of the transfer agreement had been received from NNDC, and that the CCTV equipment was now in the ownership of the Town Council. Cllr Robertson was congratulated on this achievement, following his effort throughout the project and difficult negotiations.

Cllr Robertson reported that NNDC had quoted a cost of £2k to decommission the comms unit at Scrivens and make good the wall.

As proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Uprichard

It was **RESOLVED**

To ask the Town Clerk to obtain quotes from Secure Defence and others for decommissioning the unit and making good the premises.

11021 CONTINUING THE CCTV SERVICE

Cllr Robertson reported that the Town Council had been unable to enter into a formal agreement with Secure Defence until the funds had been transferred from NNDC. For this reason, only one draft contract – for Fakenham – was available to consider, but it was stressed that the detail and figures would be identical for all three towns. With regard to the call out charges listed, it would be for the Town Council to decide whether to use the out of hours services so costs could be managed.

As proposed by Cllr Robertson and seconded by Cllr Hester

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Mayor and Town Clerk be given delegated authority to sign a contract with Secure Defence for the provision of the CCTV service, based on the figures presented in the draft contract.

11022 IMPROVED LIGHTING AT BANK LOKE

Pub Watch had asked that the Town Council consider locating a light in the covered area of Bank Loke, so that the CCTV camera at the Black Swan could pick up images from there. This area was particularly intimidating. It was not clear who owned the land, or if a light would cause problems to residents. This would be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

11023 OCCUPANCY OF THE COUNCIL OFFICES

The Town Clerk had reported at the last meeting that a variance letter had been received relating to the separation of business rates from the service charge. However, an issue had arisen with the invoices – the service charge invoice for the first half of 2013/14 (which the Town Clerk understood included business rates) had come in at £4,500, but the invoice for the first six months of 2014/15 was exactly half this figure (and it was understood to exclude business rates). This suggested an increase in service charge

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which the Town Council had not been advised about. Similarly, an invoice for business rates of approximately £2.7k had been received.

For this reason the letter of variance remained unsigned, and the Town Clerk advised that he would not do so until a satisfactory explanation had been received. If none was forthcoming, or a significant increase in service charge was indicated, the matter would be returned for consideration by the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 21:30

