

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held in the Council Chamber on 30 September 2014

PRESENT

Deputy Mayor: Mrs B West (Chair)
Town Councillors:
Mrs J R Belson Mr E Seward
Mr G Bull Mr D Spencer
Mr F Choudhury Mr A Thirtle
Mr T Morland Mr D Turner
Mr C Peck Mrs V Uprichard
Mrs R A Rose Mr B Wexler

District Councillors:
Mrs V Gay Mr E Seward
Mrs V Uprichard
County Councillors:
Mr E Seward

The meeting opened at 19:00

PART I:

11074 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Town Mayor, Town Cllrs Hester and Robertson, District Councillor Lloyd and County Councillor Timewell.

11075 POLICE REPORT

PC Drew, local beat manager and PCSO Reynolds submitted the report, covering a two month period over the summer holiday (Annex A). A total of 153 crimes were on the books for the period; although this was acknowledged to be high, and was an increase of 29 on the same period in 2013, some were historical. It was also important to note that the reported figures included parishes around North Walsham.

Key points included:

- There had been an increase in assaults, but a number were domestic-related
- Youths in general were a problem in the town at the moment, especially in the churchyard, parks, Sadlers Wood and Pigneys Wood. A number of youths were on Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, a step short of a Conditional Behaviour Order (ASBO). Once a CBO was in place, the police could place restrictions/controls on individuals. Officers were also working with the parents of these youths.

The next priority setting meeting would be held at the Atrium on Wednesday 22 October 2014, commencing at 19:00. The priorities remained anti-social behaviour in Sadlers Wood, Memorial Park, Acorn Road Park and Pigneys Wood.



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11076 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

As proposed by Cllr Rose and seconded by Cllr Thirtle, it was **RESOLVED**

That the minutes be signed as a true record of the meeting on 29 July 2014.

11076 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

As proposed by Cllr Thirtle and seconded by Cllr Spencer

It was **RESOLVED**

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

11077 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Bob White from Showcase Gallery, Market Place had spoken at three previous meetings regarding proposals to improve the town centre. He asked that the Town Council be proactive on Market Place improvement plans, and suggested that there should be the widest possible consultation with residents and the business community on the current proposals as would have a long term impact on the town.

The Deputy Mayor thanked Mr White for his contribution.

11078 RECONVENING OF MEETING

As proposed by Cllr Thirtle and seconded by Cllr Choudhury

It was **RESOLVED**

That the meeting be reconvened.

11079 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Written reports from Cllrs Seward and Lloyd are attached at Annexes B and C respectively. In addition, Cllr Seward reported on the following:

- The Northfield Road building previously occupied by County Council Social Services staff in fact belonged to Department of Health Property Services. He had approached them regarding their intentions for the site, but had yet to receive a reply.
- A report on Mundeseley Road Car Park would be submitted to NNDC Cabinet on Monday 6 October. Two options were being proposed for resurfacing the car park at a total cost of £70,000 to £95,000. The source of the funding remained unclear. Income was expected to be about £6,000 per year.
- The demolition of 4 Market Street had been completed. The owner of the property now wished to market it, and had no interest in landscaping.
- The recent amnesty day for hazardous materials at Coltishall had brought in over 1,000 customers, at a facility that normally has about 250 visitors per day.

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11080 NORTH WALSHAM PUB WATCH

The Town Clerk reported on the meeting held at the King's Arms on 29 September 2014. A note of key points is at Annex D.

11081 VODAFONE RURAL OPEN SURE SIGNAL PROGRAMME

A number of Councillors expressed discomfort at being asked to endorse a product. Although it was acknowledged to be a helpful step, it was not clear how this would impact on other network users.

As proposed by Cllr Bull and seconded by Cllr Belson, it was **RESOLVED** by majority vote (9 in favour, 4 opposed)

That the Town Council would not support approaches from single commercial providers for endorsement of their products.

11082 NORFOLK RCC 'Thinking Fuel – Buy Early' CAMPAIGN

This was essentially asking if the Council or other organisation was interested in setting up a community group to support bulk buying of fuel. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Bull, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Council could not take a lead on this, and instead the information would be posted on its Facebook group.

11083 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ON BACTON ROAD

At the previous meeting, Cllr Lloyd had asked the Council to consider requesting a trod footpath between The Shires and the town centre. The land needed for this was owned by Norfolk County Council, and such a path would cost between £1,000 and £2,000. Highways had confirmed that this seemed to be a suitable project for the Parish Partnership Grant Scheme, which was being repeated in 2015/16. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Belson, it was **RESOLVED**

That this be put forward for discussion in the Estimates for 2015/16.

11084 STREET LIGHTING AT BEECH DRIVE

The Town Council was the sole provider of street lighting at Beech Drive, with one light approximately a third of the way down. Local police had been unable to find any reports of anti-social behaviour. However, Cllr Seward noted that the Town Council had money in reserve and should consider releasing from unallocated reserves the £2,300 needed to erect a new light. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Belson, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to consult with residents to ascertain the best location for a new light, and to make arrangements with the contractor for the necessary work.

11085 BUS STOPS ON POUND ROAD

Norfolk County Council Infrastructure Department had submitted a request for a pair of new bus stops, which was supported by Sanders. It was noted that Pound Road was

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already busy, and that if stops were placed here there could be serious impacts on traffic flow particularly at busy school hours. As proposed by Cllr West and seconded by Cllr Wexler, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Infrastructure Department be asked to visit the site at known busy times and produce a feasibility report, and to defer consideration of the request until this was available.

11086 UPKEEP OF DRAINS, VERGES AND TUNNELS ALONG THE BYPASS

It was noted that all the drains were overgrown and blocked. There was a danger of vehicles aquaplaning when it rained. There had also been complaints about trees and hedges along the bypass. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Turner, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to write to the Highway Engineer to request clearance of the drains and reduction of trees and hedges.

11087 PLAY EQUIPMENT AT WOODVILLE PARK

The Town Council was supportive of the request. Cllr Uprichard advised that the maximum grant from the NNDC Big Society Fund was £15,000, and that the Grant Board would look for match-funding or better and evidence that children had been consulted about what they wanted. As proposed by Cllr West and seconded by Cllr Spencer, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk work with residents and GAP to identify requirements and potential sources of grant funding, and report to the next meeting.

11088 FUTURE USE OF LAND AT SPA COMMON

The Town Clerk reported that there appeared to be no consensus among neighbours in Spa Common about forming a trust to manage the land as a nature reserve. There remained on the book two approaches regarding grazing licences. Cllr Thirtle entered a proposal from a constituent that the land be considered for a dog-friendly park. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Thirtle, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk write to the representative of Spa Common residents to advise them that a decision needed to be made at the next meeting (on 28 October) on the future use of the land, and that if they were unable to agree a way forward, then the other two options would be considered.

11089 ADOPTION OF PHONE BOX IN WHITE HORSE COMMON

A request that the Town Council adopt this phone box had been received from a group of local residents who wished to transform it into a book and DVD exchange. It was noted that a similar request had not proceeded due to an issue with the disconnection of cabling. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Belson, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to research the background and report back in October.

B

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11090 FORMER YOUTH CENTRE BUILDING

Following on directly from the discussions at the earlier meeting of the Planning Committee, it was **RESOLVED**

To ask the Town Clerk to write to Norfolk County Council expressing its disappointment at the lack of marketing of the property, when interest had been expressed by a community group in regenerating the building as a community museum and it seemed no-one else had been able to bid. The letter should also convey the Council's concern that the building had been left empty for a considerable time, and it was not clear what other uses had been considered prior to the sale. Details of all Norfolk County Council's discussions relating to the building would be requested. Finally, the County Council would be asked to ringfence the capital receipt from the sale to Lidl in order to fund a similar community facility in the town for North Walsham and the surrounding communities.

11091 MARKETS

The Town Clerk reported on the support expressed via Facebook for Saturday markets. It was acknowledged that this was not quite as simple as it appeared.

An approach had been received from the international Food & Craft Fayre to hold a continental market between October and Christmas. This market had previously come to the town on two successive Palm Sundays, but a third appearance had fallen through as agreement on a date could not be reached.

As proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Spencer, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to pursue dates either side of the Christmas Lights switch-on.

11092 MUNDESLEY ROAD CAR PARK

The Town Council had opted not to take on this car park when offered by NNDC due to the repair costs and liabilities associated with it. However, this resolution would, if adopted, mean net loss of 57 free car parking spaces in or near the town centre, with a knock on impact on local businesses. It was agreed that the NNDC Cabinet needed to have a proper discussion with local members, the Town Council and the Chamber of Business on future car parking provision in North Walsham, and that they should not continue with the policy of "one size fits all" which disadvantaged North Walsham. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr West, it was **RESOLVED**

To ask the Town Clerk pursue meetings between interested parties to discuss future options and seek a policy change at NNDC.

11093 PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

A query was raised regarding the payment shown for badges for former mayors. The figure shown was correct and could be broken down into the cost of the die (£300), the up front cost of 10 badges (which the Town Council would recover, £400), and VAT. No further questions were raised on the report.

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11094 STATEMENT OF TOWN MAYOR'S CHARITY INCOME 2013/14

An amended statement had been requested by Cllr Belson to show the donation from Roy's, which had not gone through the Town Council's books.

11095 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meetings held on 29 July and 9 September, and the note of the meeting between the Town Clerk and Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12 August, were received.

11096 DEVELOPMENT & AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2014 was received.

11097 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence had been received from:

- Dr Wendy Thomson CBE, Managing Director, Norfolk County Council (12 September 2014) advising councils if the County Council's budget and priorities for 2015/18. The Council is seeking further reductions in spend and will consult on any specific options which, if implemented, would represent a significant change to the nature or level of services people receive.
- Tony Turner, Property Manager, NNDC (28 July 2014) updating the Town Council on the progress of work to restore the building
- Norfolk County Council Bridge Management and Design team on new signage on the approach to bridges in the town. This programme was running alongside the installation of the VAS sign on the approach to Cromer Road Bridge. Cllr Seward had approached the Road Safety team to ask that the VAS sign was in place as soon as possible, in light of the most recent bridge strike.
- Letter from Swafield & Bradfield Parish Council (30 July and 5 September) asking the Council to liaise with Norfolk County Council regarding the installation of passing bays along Little London Road. Cllr Seward said that, although this was outside his area, he was meeting the Highway Engineer and would raise this with him.
- Letter from the Rotary Club of North Walsham (8 September 2014) inviting the Town Mayor, Councillors and staff to North Walsham's Charter Night on Friday 14 November.

11098 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Councillors asked that glass recycling bins and the proposal for a dog park at Spa Common be included on the next Agenda.

11099 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be asked to leave the Chamber as per Standing Order 36.5

RS

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Part II: Closed Session

11100 NORTH WALSHAM CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU OFFICE

The Town Clerk had written to the Chief Executive, Norfolk CAB, on 1 August 2014 enclosing the second and final instalment of the grant funding for 2013/14, as approved by the Council at its meeting on 29 July 2014. Included in the package were final versions of the Partnership Agreement the Town Council sought in order to safeguard its granting of public funds and secure the CAB presence in North Walsham. A further letter had been sent on 3 September, but no responses had yet been received.

Cllr Seward reported that NNDC had serious concerns about CAB, including its funding, and felt that the Town Council should engage District Council support on a way forward.

It was noted that the North Walsham office had previously been a friendly and valuable unit, when it was a purely local office. This had changed for the worse since it joined up with Norfolk CAB.

It was noted that there was nothing to prevent NNDC and towns agreeing to fund, and entering into a service agreement with, a different CAB service.

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

That the Town Clerk be asked to write to Norfolk CAB to ask when the agreed improvements to the town's CAB office would be completed, and to write to Chief Executive NNDC expressing the Town Council's concerns about the level of service, lack of communication and lack of progress and ask for a discussion on how to address this jointly.

11001 COUNCIL PROPERTY

Cllr Rose updated the Town Council on the registration of properties it owned. The valuations of Market Cross, Bacton Road and Mundesley Road Cemeteries, Spa Common and The Butchery would cost £750 excl. VAT. Three further properties were ready for the registration process, and would then be valued.

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

That authority be delegated to the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Clerk to oversee the process and make necessary payments for registration and valuation.

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

To allow updates on proposals to improve Market Place and CCTV installation to be received by the Town Council.

11002 MARKET PLACE IMPROVEMENTS

Cllr Seward reported that there was no consistency of support from the Chamber of Business. The Highway Engineer had attended the most recent meeting of the Chamber to brief members on the available options, and had asked that the

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Chamber give its formal response to the consultation process by 17 October. Given the lack of support, it was likely that the £50,000 Highway allocation would be lost to the town. Work on a proposed bus lay-by was continuing as this was funded separately. The Highway team was looking at options outside the Post Office/Telephone Exchange and in New Road Car Park. It was highly unlikely that a bus lay-by in Market Place would receive support from Highways.

11003 CCTV

It was agreed that press coverage of the re-launch of CCTV coverage of the town centre should be arranged.

The meeting closed at 21:25

RS