

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
27 January 2015

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 27 January 2015

PRESENT

Town Mayor: Mr R Sims (Chair)

Town Councillors:

Mrs J R Belson	Mr A Thirtle
Mr B Hester	Mr D Turner
Mr T Morland	Mrs V Uprichard
Mrs R A Rose	Mrs B West
Mr E Seward	Mr B Wexler
Mr D Spencer	

District Councillors:

Mr N Lloyd Mr E Seward

Mrs V Uprichard

County Councillors:

Mr E Seward

The meeting opened at 19:00

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

11191. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Seward and Uprichard declared an interest as local Members of NNDC in the proposed sale of the Council Offices to JD Wetherspoon, on advice from the NNDC Monitoring Officer.

11192. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from Cllrs Bull and Peck were received and accepted.

11193. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Cllr Hester updated the Council on progress on the proposed under-18s nightclub event at the KA. There would be a meeting on 29 January 2015 between himself, Inspector Kersty Brooks (North Walsham Police), Mr Martin Mills (landlord, the Kings Arms), and Mr Paul Oakes (RNW Youth Committee Chairman) – ref para 11164.

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

That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting held on 16 December 2014, and be signed by the Town Mayor.

11194. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

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



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That the meeting be adjourned to allow contributions from District Councillors and North Walsham Police.

11195. REPORTS BY LOCAL MEMBERS OF NNDC

In addition to his written report at Annex A, Cllr Seward reported that:

- NNDC had agreed a valuer for 4 Market Street, and therefore the purchase of the site was proceeding. It was expected local Members would be consulted and that planning consent would need to be sought. St Nicholas Church had asked that consideration be given for access to the Churchyard via the landscaped area, but it was known that Highways had concerns about this.
- A review of the CAB was being conducted by relevant County and District Council officers, who would also consider the views of parish and town councils. The review team had met with North Walsham Citizens' Watch.

Cllr Lloyd expanded on the points raised in his written report (Annex B), reporting that:

- The Football Association required a twelve year commitment from North Walsham Town FC in order to release the funds the Club was seeking for ground improvements. Club officials were yet to respond to his enquiries about the latest offer of increased length of tenancy,
- He had investigated the ownership position regarding the pathway at Acorn Road following several enquiries from constituents. He had been advised that ownership was unclear, but that NNDC did not own it. Adoption of the path by NNDC would need the agreement of the legal owner. It was noted that, although not marked on maps as such, it was considered by locals to be a public right of way.

11196. POLICE REPORT

PC Drew presented the report for December 2014 (Annex C), noting that:

- The recorded drugs offence was for possession,
- The police felt they were currently on top of the issues with regard to youths, through an ongoing programme of interventions,
- Speed checks had been carried out on Brick Kiln Road following complaints of speeding, and four fixed penalty notices had been issued over the course of the previous week,
- Four arrests had been made following a number of burglaries in the wider area and this appeared to have resolved a number of incidents

11197. RETURN TO FORMAL SESSION

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

That the meeting be reconvened.

11198. PUB WATCH

The report of the Pub Watch meeting held on Tuesday 6 January 2015 can be found at Annex D.



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11199. REGENERATE NORTH WALSHAM

Cllr Hester reported on the meeting of RNW held at the Council Offices on 21 January 2015. The group had now agreed a Statement of Intent, and would discuss a constitution. RNW members were content that the Artisan Markets be moved to Sundays, following a recommendation on road closures. The market had outgrown the original plans, and needed space to expand. A visit to Poundbury to view progress on its local plan had been arranged for 2 March 2015, and Councillors were invited to attend. RNW would be providing transport.

11200. ELECTION NIGHT PARKING

A request had been received from NNDC to permit overflow parking on the Memorial Park during the election count, which would take place at the Atrium. As proposed by Cllr Wexler and seconded by Cllr Spencer, it was **RESOLVED**

That permission be granted, subject to NNDC agreeing to make good any damages caused to the park surface and to provide appropriate marshalling and security.

11201. PARISH PARTNERSHIP SCHEME PROPOSALS 2015/16

There were no further proposals. As proposed by Cllr Uprichard and amended by Cllr Seward, and seconded by Cllr West, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked

- To invite County Cllr Timewell to make a presentation to the Town Council about road safety, and to view the safety issues along Aylsham Road, and
- To ask Highways to consider action on overhanging hedges along Aylsham Road.

11202. MIDLAND ROAD CAR PARK

NNDC had written to the Town Council on 16 December 2014 stating that the lease on Midland Road Car Park would end shortly, and that repairs would be needed prior to handover. A subsequent invitation to consider extending the lease had been received on 16 December. As proposed by Cllr Spencer and seconded by Cllr Thirtle, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to respond to NNDC's invitation seeking a further two year extension, and make arrangements to repair the surface.

11203. MEMORIAL PARK TRUST

The external auditor had queried why the Memorial Park accounts formed part of the Council's main accounts AND were reported separately to the Charity Commission, and felt that the latter was unnecessary. It was felt that the Park had been gifted on this basis on an "in perpetuity" basis. The matter was deferred to allow the Town Clerk more time to discuss the issue with his predecessor and others.

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11204. NORTH WALSHAM TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Cllr Lloyd's report to the Town Council had set out the latest developments with regard to the Green's Road site. It was noted that the ground had been earmarked in the current Local Development Framework for housing development, and that this made reference to the Club seeking alternative sites. It was unclear what progress had been made on this, and suggested that the NNDC Chief Executive be primed to answer this during her visit of 24 February. It was further noted that the Local Development Framework was due to be reviewed following the May elections, and would be subject to consultation with town and parish councils and the public.

11205. REGENERATE NORTH WALSHAM YOUTH COMMITTEE

An invitation had been received from the Chairman of RNW's Youth Committee asking that the Town Council nominate a representative. As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Uprichard, it was **RESOLVED**

That Cllr Spencer be nominated to the role of RNW Youth Committee Representative.

11206. INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

NNDC had commissioned a study of indoor sports facilities in the District. The Town Clerk would complete the survey on behalf of the Town Council, noting that the town's indoor facilities were well used.

11207. SPA COMMON GRAZING LICENCE

The Town Clerk reported to the Town Council that a licence had been agreed and signed by Mrs Debbie Mair, a North Walsham resident, to graze four ponies on the land in rotation with another site to allow the grass to replenish. The terms of the licence, renewable by agreement, require vacant possession on or before 18 January 2016, with a licence fee of £333 payable.

11208. NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAY ENGINEER

The Town Clerk had met with the Highway Engineer in early January 2015. Further issues to report included several tall trees that needed to be cut back, the bridge warning sign at the top end of Cromer Road being obscured by vegetation, and overgrown hedges requiring traffic to take evasive action along Aylsham Road.

11209. GEOCACHING

A request to place some geocaching units in Memorial Park had been agreed by the Town Clerk, as this popular activity might encourage visitors into the town. Grounds staff would be advised so that the disguised transmitters were not mistaken for rubbish.

11210. WOODVILLE PARK

The Town Clerk reported on a very helpful meeting with NNDC regarding bidding to the NNDC Big Society Fund. The information gleaned from this would be used in completing the application. Quotes had already been obtained from two suppliers, as required for the application. A survey had been prepared for circulation to local schools, and would be sent out shortly.

Spencer

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11211. RECYCLING

County Cllr Seward advised the Town Council that the report received in response to its submission on access to recycling facilities remained subject to budget approval, and that the current County Council did not support budget proposals that reduced access times to recycling centres in Norfolk.

11212. PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS

The Town Clerk reported that work to install a new street light on Beech Drive and urgent tree maintenance work highlighted in the annual survey report had been commissioned. As proposed by Cllr Uprichard and seconded by Cllr Hester, it was **RESOLVED**

To approve the Payments & Receipts report.

11213. UPDATE ON PROPOSED SALE OF COUNCIL OFFICES

At the meeting with NNDC Deputy Leader and Corporate Director on 19 January 2015, NNDC had reiterated that any reasonable relocation costs would be considered. Issues that the Town Council needed to consider when looking at alternative sites included:

- o Cost
- o Size
- o Storage
- o Length of lease
- o Security against passing on similar costs again in future
- o Availability.

Concern was raised that retail units had been among the options considered, which conflicted with concerns raised in the planning consultation process about the loss of retail units to other uses.

It was reported that Planning Officers at NNDC had yet to be approached by JD Wetherspoon with regard to submission of an application. Concern was raised that press statements by NNDC might endanger the independence of the planning process.

The Town Clerk reported that advice had been received from NALC Solicitors earlier in the day, and that this stated that a sale could not proceed until the requirements of Clause 23(8) of the 1973 Property Order (SI No 1861) had been met. The response further advised that the Town Council should consider instructing a solicitor to provide expert advice on its rights and interests under the Order and to act on its behalf in discussions with NNDC.

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

That the Town Council delegate authority to the Working Group to identify and instruct a solicitor with appropriate local government law experience, as advised by NALC Solicitor.

Cllrs Seward and Uprichard, as District Councillors, abstained from the vote.

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11214. PRECEPT 2015/16

The Town Clerk had circulated some options based around both future rental and future purchase costs. However, given the uncertainty over the Council's position, it was suggested that there was insufficient information on which to base a significant increase to the precept. It was confirmed that current reserves, incorporating proposals being made for 2015/16, would provide sufficient cover for legal costs and three months' rent.

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

- That Estimates Option 2, giving a precept of £189,323 including £19,275 grant from NNDC, be adopted. This would mean a 'per household' precept of £46.68, which equated to an increase of £1.20 or 2.5% per household per annum. [*Note: the increase per household figures shown here follow a technical correction arising from the council tax base figure used for the calculations; the original figures presented to the meeting were £0.59 and 1.28%*]
- That the Town Clerk be asked to draft a press statement for issue to the local press and web sources.

11215. DATES OF FORTHCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday 10 February:

- Personnel & Grants Committee (grant applications)
- Planning Committee
- Personnel & Grants Committee (personnel) – moved from 3 February

11216. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk reported on the following correspondence received:

- Letter from the Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP (dated 8 January 2015) on behalf of constituent Mrs E Dennis, regarding the closure of Market Place for continental and farmers markets and stalls in direct competition with local shops. The Town Clerk had responded to this letter following discussion with the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- Letter from RNW (dated 26 January 2015) formally requesting road closures for farmers' markets to be held on 1 and 29 March 2015.

11217. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Nominations for Council Awards
Traffic on Vicarage Street

11218. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

As proposed by Cllr Thirtle and seconded by Cllr Wexler, 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.

BWS

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Part II: Press and Memembers of the Public Excluded

11219. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR FOR THE EAST WARD

The minutes of the special meeting of the Personnel & Grants Committee were received. The Committee explained the reasons for its recommendation of Miss Andrea Canham. There followed a discussion of systems used to interview prospective candidates in recent years, noting that the Council had settled on the current system. As proposed by Cllr Wexler and seconded by Cllr Rose, it was **RESOLVED** with one abstention

That Miss Canham be co-opted onto the Town Council, and that the Town Clerk be asked to carry out all necessary arrangements.

11220. PROPOSED SALE OF COUNCIL OFFICES

The minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town Council held on 13 January 2015 were received.

11221. MARKETS

The Town Clerk explained to the Council that Highways had advised that Saturday road closure applications would be rejected as there were two objections on record from Market Place businesses. However, as both would support Sunday closure the advice was to apply for a package of closures which could be justified under a single fee rather than separate fees for each event. As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Wexler, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to arrange for the closure of Market Place on the last Sunday of each month so that events including markets could be staged without traffic concerns.

It was noted that the Personnel & Grants Committee would be considering the proposal for a part time market manager. Most recently this position had been filled on a voluntary basis, but had previously been a paid position. This would relieve some of the pressure from the current team that future market extensions would bring.

The meeting closed at 21:16

BSMS