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NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
28 April 2015

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 28 April 2015

Town Mayor:

Mr R Sims

Town Councillors Present:

Mrs J R Belson

Mr E Seward

Miss A Canham

Mr D Spencer

Mr F Choudhury

Mr A Thirtle

Mr B Hester

Mr D Turner

Mr T Morland

Mrs V Uprichard

Mr C Peck

Mrs B West

Mrs A Rose

Mr B Wexler

District Councillors Present:

Mrs V Gay

Mr E Seward

Mrs V Uprichard

County Councillors Present:

Mr E Seward

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

1 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(a) Declarations of Interest

Cllr Seward declared an interest in matters relating to Norfolk County and North Norfolk District Councils; Cllr Uprichard declared an interest in matters relating to North Norfolk District Council.

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Cllr Belson declared an interest in Item 4(b), as a resident on Cherry Tree Lane.

(b) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Bull.

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(c) Minutes of the previous meeting

The agreed minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 February 2015 were challenged in relation to the action on a request for public conveniences on the old site in St Nicholas Court, above 4 Market Street. It was confirmed that the minutes had been accurate, and actions carried out in accordance with Council instructions.

12300

An amendment was required to the date of the meeting referred to, after which they could be signed as a true record of the meeting of 31 March 2015.

2 **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING TO ALLOW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** 12301

It was **RESOLVED**

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

A summary note of the discussions during permitted public participation can be found at Annex A.

It was **RESOLVED**

That the meeting be reconvened.

3 **TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT** 12302

The Town Mayor thanked all Councillors who had attended the Civic Dinner, and reported that £450 had been raised for his nominated charity North Walsham First Responders. He also thanked all volunteers who had participated at the stocks during the Market on 26 April, reporting that a further £100 had been raised.

The Deputy Mayor had opened the new wildlife area at North Walsham Infant & Nursery School on 22 April 2015.

4 **ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

(a) **Trees in New Cemetery, Bacton Road** 12303

It was agreed that the matter had dragged on for too long, and that the lateral work approved by the Council needed to be completed as soon as possible. Crowning was a separate issue, and the Council remained content to be advised by its contracted tree surgeon subject to the annual inspection and regular monitoring.

It was **RESOLVED**

To ask the Town Clerk to

- i. **ensure that the previously agreed lateral work to the beech tree bordering Mrs Lakin's property was expedited, and**
- ii. **set up a regular programme of monitoring by grounds staff working in the cemetery.**

(b) **Request for warning signs on Cherry Tree Lane** 12304

A paper supporting the proposal is at Annex B. The Highway Engineer had checked the accident record for Cherry Tree Lane and noted that there was only one minor incident in the vicinity of the bridge on the Cromer Road side. As a result Highways would not fund any additional signing improvement. However, road markings could be refreshed to increase visibility.

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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**

That the charity element of the stall fees for January to March 2015 be donated to Millfield Pre-School, but that the Council agree an annual theme that interested charities could bid for.

5 **REPORTS**

(a) **Highways issues**

12310

The Highway Engineer had reported on the following:

- i) *Drainage on the bypass:*
A report from the County contractor was awaited, as these drains should have been cleared.
- ii) *Northfield Road parking:*
This had been confirmed in the Traffic Management Programme for the current year, but no date was available yet.
- iii) *Junction of Vicarage and North Streets:*
The current layout was deemed fit for purpose and there were no proposals to alter the existing signs at the present time.
- iv) *Aylsham Road:*
He had visited the site with County Cllr Timewell. Speed humps were likely to generate noise complaints, and were therefore only implemented as part of new build estates where construction was agreed. Two hedge notices had been issued to householders, and the condition of hedges would be monitored. Rangers had been asked to cut back some branches that were obscuring signs, and one sign would be repositioned on the existing post to ensure better visibility. The street lighting section had been asked to check the condition of three illuminated signs near to an on the bridge.

(b) **Hopkins Homes street naming**

12311

The names selected by NNDC were: Hornbeam Road, Kemp Road, Windmill Loke, Smedley Close, Rayna Loke, Durrell Way and Fenn Close.

(c) **Car boot sales at Davenport's Magic Kingdom**

12312

The Town Clerk had written to both NNDC, seeking advice on planning and environmental health issues relating to the site, and Davenport's to advise on the issue of sole market rights (as held by the Town Council) and their application. No replies had been received.

(d) **VE Day 70 picnic in the park**

12313

A small committee had been formed and had met to discuss arrangements. Volunteers were needed to assist with the raising of bunting.

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(e) **Woodville Park upgrade**

Survey responses from the pupils of North Walsham Junior School had now been returned, and would be added to those from Millfield Primary. The prize draws would now be organised.

12314

(f) **Regenerate North Walsham**

The committee meeting scheduled for 13 April 2015 had been cancelled.

12315

(g) **Telephone kiosk at White Horse Common**

The Town Council had now taken legal ownership of this kiosk on Happisburgh Road. The Town Clerk would make arrangements with local residents who had approached the Council to use it as a book/dvd library.

12316

(h) **Street light on Beech Drive**

The Town Council's street lighting maintenance contractor had confirmed submission of the required paperwork to UK Power Networks, but advised that the process leading to switching on a new light could take several months.

12317

(i) **Flood risk consultation**

Norfolk County Council would be holding a presentation on this at the Council Offices on Tuesday 5 May 2015, from 11:00am until 4:00pm.

12318

6 **FINANCE**

(a) **Payments and receipts**

It was **RESOLVED**

12319

To approve the Payments and Receipts Report, subject to checking the Mayor's Charity figures. Once checked, the Report could be signed.

(b) **Actuals against estimates**

It was **RESOLVED**

12320

To approve the Report of Actual Expenditure and Income Against Estimates.

(c) **Draft Accounts and Supporting Statements**

This draft had been prepared for the internal auditor. The statements were received.

12321

(d) **Draft Statement of Financial Activities for the War Memorial Park**

This draft had been prepared for the internal auditor. The statement was received.

12322

(e) **Interim account signatory arrangements**

It was **RESOLVED**

12323

That existing account signatories would continue in the role until replacement had been put in place from the new Council.

BW

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7 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meetings held on 31 March and 14 April 2015 were received.

12324

8 OTHER COMMITTEES

The minutes of the meeting of the Development & Amenities Committee held on 14 April 2015 were received.

12325

9 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

No Committee meetings were scheduled before the election.

12326

10 CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence had been received:

12327

- (a) Mr I Clark had written to suggest that The Feathers public house would make an ideal town hall and information centre
- (b) Mr J Wright had written to apologise for defacing the skate ramps at Trackside
- (c) Mrs H Sadler had written to ask when the double yellow lines she had asked for on Northfield Road would be in place.
- (d) The Bittern Line and Wherry Lines Community Rail Partnerships Annual Report 2014 had been received, and was available electronically for anyone interested.
- (e) The Draft 2015/16 Guide for the Bittern and Wherry Lines had been received, and was available electronically for anyone interested.
- (f) Rev Paul Cubitt had forwarded information about the Heritage Open Days programme for 2015, with the Council Offices suggested as a possible location.

11 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

12328

Dog waste bins
Internal financial check report

It was suggested that pedestrianisation/re-modelling/modernisation of the town centre be a future item for the new Council to take forward.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

12329

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.

BW

Part II: Press and Members of the Public Excluded

12 PROPOSED SALE OF COUNCIL OFFICES

12330

The following properties had been investigated as potential new council offices:

- i) The Fire Station on New Road had been ruled out because it was a choice between one of two offices and shared use of a training room.
- ii) The Registry Office on Kings Arms Street had been ruled out as the available space – a small office and the garages – was unsuitable. Cllr Seward would advise the Town Clerk if Norfolk County Council made further space available at the office. It was noted that access to the office was via a steep slope and therefore not ideal.
- iii) The former Mobility Shop on Vicarage Street would be a feasible option with considerable modifications. It would incorporate all the Council's office requirements, including the Information Centre. To date this was the only feasible option presented to the Council.

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Council should continue looking into the former Mobility Shop, and to maintain contact with NNDC on the accommodation issue.

13 USER RIGHTS LEGAL ADVICE

12331

The Town Clerk had written to Nicholas Hancox Solicitors (Ltd), requesting advice on the Council's legal position and providing all available documents relating to the issue. Mr Hancox's advice was expected soon.

14 ST NICHOLAS COURT

12332

The Town Mayor had asked the Town Clerk to investigate as any powers the Council itself might potentially use in order to bring the thoroughfare in the precinct up to an acceptable and safe standard, following recent Facebook reports of several incidents. A note of this is at Annex C.

NNDC was aware of the incidents, and recognised the need to bring some action forward on safety grounds was a priority. It would be a matter of urgency for the new Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED**

Bwl

To ask the Town Clerk to write to NNDC and Crown Estates, with photographic evidence of the dangerous state of the precinct, seeking urgent action and a meeting to discuss what was permitted.

15 OTHER COMMITTEES

12333

The minutes of the Personnel & Grants Committee meeting held on 15 April 2015 were received.

16 STAFF MATTERS

12334

Councillor Hester declared an interest in the matters for discussion, but did not leave the room. The Town Clerk left the room at 21:15.

It was **RESOLVED**

To accept all the recommendations contained in the minutes referred to at Item 15 relating to staff contracts and salaries.

The Town Clerk returned to the room at 21:30.

Cllr Seward left the meeting at 21:33.

17 MARKET MANAGER

12335

The Deputy Mayor reported to the Council on the interviews held earlier that evening for the Market Manager post.

It was **RESOLVED**

To accept the recommendation of the interview panel and appoint Mr Nigel Clarke as Market Manager.

The meeting closed at 21:37

BW