

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council meeting held in the Council Chamber on 29 April 2014

PRESENT

Town Mayor:	Mrs J R Belson
Councillors:	
Mr F Choudhury	Mr B Hester
Mr T Morland	Mr E Seward
Mr R Sims	Mr D Spencer
Mr A Thirtle	Mr D Turner
Mrs B West	Mrs V Uprichard

The meeting opened at 19:05

10957 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Seward and Uprichard declared interests in matters relating to Leadership of Place and Town Team respectively.

10958 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bull, Peck, Robertson, Rose and Wexler.

10959 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2014 were received as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

The minutes of the special meeting held on 9 April 2014 were received as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

The draft minutes of the Town Meeting held on 1 April 2014 were received. Cllr Uprichard noted that she had sent apologies for non-attendance. This was confirmed by the Town Clerk, who would amend the draft accordingly.

10960 **MATTERS ARISING – FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

All matters arising would be discussed under the relevant agenda items.

10961 **REPORT FROM THE POLICE**

PCSO Barnetson 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 Friday 6 June 2014 at 19:00.

The current priorities in North Walsham were:

- Anti-social behaviour in and around the underpass from Northfield Road through to the Industrial Estate: The area had been patrolled regularly between 27 March and 28 April. Five youths had been seen congregating there on one occasion, but there had been no further incidents.

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- Anti-social behaviour in Sadlers Wood: The area had been patrolled regularly, but only young children had been seen in the area.
- Graffiti around Mundesley: There had been no new incidents.

The police currently had all but two of the gate keys to the Memorial Park, but had agreed with the Town Clerk that a new, full set would be provided.

10962 REPORTS FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS

A written report had been received from Cllr Seward (Annex B). Cllr Seward noted that Norfolk County Council had now voted to change its governance from a Cabinet to a Committee system. He further noted that the application to redevelop Lidl and the adjacent property was closely scrutinised. Unfortunately Cllr Timewell had been unable to contribute anything on his areas. He was unable to attend due to scheduling clashes, as most of his parishes met on the same night.

Cllr Lloyd gave a verbal report. He noted that

- North Norfolk District Council had written to the Sports Centre Support Committee to advise that they wished to introduce changes. No terms of reference had been issued, and District Councillors had not been informed.
- The gun sign at Melbourne House had not broken any rules. However, the proprietors had now asked that the liquor licence be rescinded. This had been accepted. A retrospective application had been made to transform the building into a multiple occupancy premises.
- Some resurfacing work had been done in Mundesley Road Car Park. The Town Council and District Councillors had been informed of this, and NNDC had apologised for this oversight.
- There had been a number of complaints from the area around Hamlet Close and the Acorn Estate about dog waste and waste bags not being disposed of appropriately. NNDC had asked its waste contractor, Keir, to clear the area, but had to be asked to revisit to do a proper job. This had prompted complaints about the quality of NNDC services.
- Cllr West noted that she had sent information to Cllr Lloyd regarding grants that might be available.

Cllr Uprichard gave a verbal update on the planning application for the car wash at 29 New Road. The Development Committee had deferred a decision following a hotly debated meeting. She had felt the application was likely to be approved, but planning officers had instead proposed deferral to allow a site meeting (on 1 May 2014) to discuss with the applicant ways to meet the various objections submitted. The car wash had, in the meantime, ceased working on Sunday.

10963 REPORT OF THE TOWN MAYOR

A written report is at Annex C.

10964 PUB WATCH

Cllr Hester reported on the meeting held on 24 March 2014. The main points raised had been:

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- Encouraging shops selling alcohol to join the scheme, helping to prevent alcohol-related disorder across the town. It was felt that larger chains such as Sainsburys would be unwilling to do so.
- Encouraging those pubs that did not attend the meetings regularly to do so and benefit from receiving and sharing intelligence
- Five new names had been added to the Pub Watch list for various offences.

Cllr Hester confirmed that he had updated the meeting on progress with regard to the retention of CCTV cameras, and that the Police had mentioned a reduction of cameras. The Town Clerk confirmed he had written to Inspector Brooks regarding the mention of CCTV camera reduction, but had received no response. It was felt that if the lighting in Bank Loke was improved, the camera at the Black Swan could cover this area.

The meeting had also received an update on the enforcement notice on 4 Market Place.

10965 BITTERN LINE

Norman Lamb MP was seeking to arrange a meeting with Greater Anglia, Network Rail and Norfolk County Council, to be attended representatives of the Bittern Line Partnership. He had asked that the Town Council be represented. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would attend and report back to the Town Council.

10966 CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU

The Town Clerk had met NNDC on 10 April 2014 to discuss its partnership agreement with the Norfolk CAB. A copy of that agreement had now been received, and the Clerk would draft an agreement covering North Walsham Town Council's financial contribution and requirements using this as a model.

10967 DEFIBRILLATORS

The Town Mayor reported on the press launch for the new defibrillators, held outside Aroma on 7 April 2014. There was no progress to report on the installation at Coral Bookmakers.

Cllr Uprichard asked that the Town Council reconsidered the signs currently placed in the town, as the defibrillator at the Kings' Arms was no longer necessarily the nearest. Cllr Turner reported that there was a big sign on the wall at Manor Road School, which the Clerk was asked to look into.

10968 PAST TOWN MAYORS

A guest at the Civic Dinner had suggested to the Town Mayor that consideration should be given to having a badge honouring former Mayors, which they could then wear at official functions. She was seeking the views of Councillors, and had asked the Town Clerk to obtain quotes. The Town Council agreed to consider further, and noted that such an item needed to be suitable for both male and female former Mayors.

The Town Mayor also proposed a change to the display of the photographs of former Mayors. The current arrangement meant that the top row of photographs would be lost every few years. Sheringham Town Council used a multi-photo frame containing

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smaller photographs of former Mayors, and this might help to keep an important part of the Town's history on permanent display. Following a discussion about the merits of a digital frame, as proposed by the Town Mayor and seconded by Cllr Spencer

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to look into the multi-picture frame option and bring proposed costs to the next meeting.

10969 SPEED CAMERAS

Cllr Seward advised the Town Council that Norfolk County Councillors were supportive of the Partnership Grants system, under which the Town Council had secured part funding for the height signs on the approach to Cromer Road Bridge, and were likely to keep the programme going. It might be possible to bid in for an ongoing, rolling programme to introduce new speed signs in the Town. Bluebell, Marshgate and Happisburgh Roads in particular could benefit from this.

10970 NORTH WALSHAM BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The Town Clerk reported that he had held meetings with representatives from the Industrial Estate, the Chairman of the Chamber of Business, and individual business owners. The common themes arising from these meetings were misunderstandings about the respective roles of County, District and Town Councils and a need for closer cooperation and better communication. It was suggested that the Town Council may wish to consider hosting a round-table discussion with businesses or a surgery-type open day.

During discussion, while it was agreed that Councillors did not represent businesses, these businesses did employ many their constituents. It was thought that the Leadership of Place project might be able to help engage with businesses. The suggestion to hold surgeries was felt to provide a good opportunity to meet with residents and businesses. As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Sims

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Clerk be asked to sound out the local community about surgeries.

10971 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(a) The Town Clerk's papers on IT problems and software licensing were received. It was confirmed that Computer-Assist offered both the cheapest package and best value for money. As proposed by Cllr Seward and seconded by Cllr Spencer

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Council purchase new hardware from Computer-Assist, with a cheaper source explored for office software.

(b) Cllr Hester's report on the Town Council's website and proposed update was received. The Town Clerk had neither the appropriate expertise nor resources to do such work, and had readily agreed to his offer to help. It was confirmed that

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appropriate security was built into the website through the content management system, and that managing content to ensure that it was appropriate and non-political would be easily accomplished by giving Council staff the final approval for uploads – if content was not approved, it would not appear on the site. The Town Mayor thanked Cllr Hester for his excellent work. As proposed by Cllr Hester and seconded by Cllr Seward

It was **RESOLVED**

That the Town Council website be updated as soon as possible, incorporating appropriate management and security measures.

(c) A discussion followed about the potential of social media such as Facebook and Twitter for communicating the Council's work and interacting with constituents. Cllr Hester noted the example of criticism of the current website on the North Walsham & District Community Archive Facebook page as an example of feedback and the potential to get things done – the comments had been acknowledged in real time and the website updated within a few days. Councillors would need to help administer the use of such media.

10972 LEADERSHIP OF PLACE & TOWN TEAM

(a) Cllr Seward had arranged a meeting to discuss the next steps for the Leadership of Place project.

(b) The Pop Up Shop had closed down in the last week for a variety of reasons – the licence agreement had come to an end and the landlord wished to let the property. A report on what the Town Team had achieved to date was now available. Cllr Seward would pass this to the Town Clerk to extract the relevant sections for the Town Council.

10973 FINANCE

(a) The statement of payments and receipts to 25 April 2014 was received and approved. The Town Mayor queried the refunds for non-attendance at the Civic Dinner. This had been normal practice, and instructions had been left accordingly. It was agreed that arrangements for future events would be reviewed.

(b) The comparison of actuals against estimates was received and approved. This showed underspends in several areas, and confirmed that there was sufficient cover in the 2013/14 Admin estimate to cover the cost of the new IT equipment.

(c) The Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk – Finance had met with Mr Roger Canwell to discuss internal audit, and had agreed to appoint him. He had already provided helpful advice on preparing and submitting the end year accounts.

(d) The Town Council was asked to consider the use of online banking solely to check statements and balances. This would allow more up to date figures to be presented at Council meetings. This was agreed. The bank forms would be prepared for signing by all relevant account signatories.

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10974 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meetings held on 25 March and 15 April 2014 were received.

10975 FUN DAY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2014 were received.

10976 CORRESPONDENCE

- Victory Housing Trust had written on 31 March 2014 to advise on the outcome of their recent review of the 68 garage sites owned across North Norfolk. It was to spend £535k improving 28 sites, and a further £93k to convert six more into car parking. It would also explore whether planning permission could be obtained to build new homes on 15 sites, and selling the other 19 to invest in building new affordable homes elsewhere. Two sites for which pursuit of planning permission was proposed were in North Walsham.
- Norfolk County Council had provided details of the number of incidents of traffic striking the Cromer Road Bridge. There had been 39 such incidents since 2001. The Town Council found this surprising, and felt that the County Council did not seem overly concerned. It was agreed that the number of strikes was indicative of a problem, and proposed that the Town Clerk write to Neil Seago setting out its concern and asking Highways to consider whether they could do more to prevent the incidents.
- Further letters had been received from Norman Lamb MP's office regarding dog waste in the Town. The problem was acknowledged. It was proposed that the matter be raised at the Safer Neighbourhoods Action Plan Group meeting on 6 June. The Town Clerk would review Town Council responsibilities and respond to Mr Lamb accordingly. The wider issue of dog control would be raised at a future meeting.

10977 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Defibrillators

Pigeons in Market Place

Lighting on Bank Loke

Norfolk Citizens' Advice Bureau – draft partnership agreement

Speeding in North Walsham

Social media

Dog control

Cllr Seward left the room at this point.

10978 CCTV

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The Town Mayor reported that the agreements between the Sheringham, Fakenham and North Walsham and the District Council were to be signed at a press photo call on 30 April 2014.

10979 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

As proposed by Cllr Spencer and seconded by Cllr Choudhury

It was **RESOLVED**

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

10980 OCCUPANCY OF COUNCIL OFFICES

The Town Clerk reported on an exchange of correspondence with the District Council regarding the Deed of Agreement for the office space. A revision was needed as business rates were now to be separated out from the service charge and paid direct by the occupants. A draft side letter had been prepared confirming the agreement of both councils to the variance, and it was suggested that the Town Clerk could sign this on behalf of the Council. As proposed by Cllr Choudhury and seconded by Cllr Spencer

It was **RESOLVED**

That the variance be accepted and the Town Clerk be asked to sign the confirmation letter on behalf of the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 20:50