

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Development & Amenities Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber on 14 April 2015

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr R Sims
Councillors:
R A Rose B West
A Thirtle

The meeting opened at 18:55

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs J R Belson and G Bull.

2 **PARK and CEMETERY CLOSING TIMES**

The current Memorial Park byelaws stated that the park would be open from 8:00am until 9:30pm from March to September, and from 8:00am until 5:00pm from October to February. Current practice was to open generally between 7:30am and close at around 7:00pm, later in the summer months when the summer gatekeeper was employed. The Committee agreed that this was not a one-person job, as that would effectively tie the post holder to the town centre seven days a week.

The Committee considered a proposal, put at the previous Council meeting, to leave the park gates open permanently for a trial period. It was thought this would encourage more evening users, such as dog walkers, which would limit some of the opportunities for vandalism that had originally led to the park being locked overnight. It was also noted that the fence/gates were not in any case an effective deterrent to anyone who wanted to get into the park.

The Committee was most concerned about Cemetery access, as there had been some complaints that the gates were being locked ahead of the scheduled time of 4:30pm. It was thought the opening hours could be extended until later in the afternoon/evening, and that the summer key holder may wish to take on this role for the Cemetery permanently. This would allow families additional time to visit graves, and would also increase access times for garden plot holders.

The Committee agreed to take the following proposals to the next Council Meeting:

- (a) **Cemeteries: To open the gates at 8:00am and to close at 8:00pm, with the summer gatekeeper asked to take on the gate duties year-round, and**
- (b) **War Memorial Park: To propose an open-ended trial period in which the gates would be kept open, to be evaluated monthly by the Committee.**

The Town Clerk was asked to speak to the summer gate keeper about the proposed new arrangements, and to North Walsham Police about the proposed arrangements for the park.

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The Town Clerk would also investigate with groundsmen possible solutions to the waste wood/compost pile in New Cemetery, near the garden plots.

3 PARK FACILITIES

The Committee agreed that more picnic-style benches were need to attract families to use the parks. The Town Clerk was asked to obtain prices. It was noted that Jewson's wanted to help the town as there was interest in opening a store here. A bid had already been entered to the Jewson's Community Fund project for Woodville Park, but the company may be able to offer more assistance.

One of the proposals for Spa Common that had been rejected in favour of returning the land to grazing had been to create an enclosed 'dog park'/exercise area, where dogs could be allowed to run off the lead. There had been interest in the idea from constituents and on Facebook, and it was thought that Trackside offered sufficient space to locate a facility. Reference was made to byelaw 14 for the Memorial Park, which referred to control of dogs, and it was agreed that it may be easier to enforce a 'dogs on leads' order if there was an alternative on offer in the town. It was noted that there was nothing like this locally, and therefore a facility like this may encourage visitors into the town. Local veterinary practices and dog training groups were likely to support the idea, and the latter may even seek to hold organised training and socialisation sessions.

The Committee agreed to take the following proposal to the next Council Meeting:

That a specified dog park/exercise area be created at Trackside, and that this would be fenced off to provide safe exercising, socialising and training facility.

Cllr Thirtle and the Town Clerk would investigate Trackside and identify an area that was most suitable for a dog park, and investigate the cost of suitable fencing and gates.

4 WAR MEMORIAL PARK BYELAWS

The Town Clerk reported that the extant byelaws had been published in 1949. The language used was antiquated, and some of the content conflicted with modern practice. The Committee agreed to take the following proposal to the next Council Meeting:

That a review and update of the War Memorial Park byelaws be conducted.

The Town Clerk was asked to investigate how this should be done.

5 UPDATE ON CAR BOOT SALES AT THE DAVENPORT'S/CRANE FREUHAUF SITE

The Town Clerk had written to NNDC seeking advice on the planning and environmental health issues raised by Mr Davenport's planning application for a change of use to permit regular car boot sales. A draft letter to Mr Davenport advising him of the Council's ownership of sole market rights in the town had also been prepared.

The Committee noted that no development of any kind was supposed to take place on the site unless NNDC Environmental Health had been consulted.

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6 **MARKET MANAGER**

Three applications for the post had been received by the deadline. Under the Council's equality policy all three would need to be interviewed. It was agreed that interviews would be arranged from 5:00pm on Tuesday 28 April 2015, and the Town Clerk would send invitations to the three candidates. The interview panel would consist of The Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairman of the Personnel & Grants Committee and Town Clerk. The panel would then report to the Council during Part II of the Council Meeting.

The Committee, in considering the draft job description, agreed to the following amendments:

- Hours would be 4 hours on Thursdays and 5 on Sundays, but that this would be subject to amendment in line with actual requirements.
- Salary to be set in the range SCP14 (equating to £8.44 per hour) to SCP24 (equating to £11.19 per hour), with the starting point at SCP14. This gave a clear progression, and would create a performance incentive.

7 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- The Town Clerk advised the Committee of a potential traders' dispute, between two stall holders. The Town Clerk had received a call from one party to advise him of an incident at Yarmouth Market in which the wife of the other party had accused him of breaking his licence agreement and selling competing stock. The Town Clerk would monitor the situation closely.
- Mr L Gordon, who had ceased trading on the market last year, still owed £168 despite several letters seeking payment. The Committee Chair had proposed writing this off. Members present agreed that this might set a precedent, which they did not wish to do. It was therefore agreed that the Town Clerk would write a final letter to Mr Gordon to seek payment and warning that the matter would be taken further if no response had been received within seven days. Samples could be found on the Small Claims Court website. This would be reported in Part II to the next Council Meeting.

The meeting closed at 20:35