

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
29 March 2016

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 29 March 2016
(Meeting held at North Walsham Community Centre due to lighting failure)

Chair: Cllr B West

Town Councillors Present:

Cllr F Choudhury	Cllr A Fryer
Cllr B Hester	Cllr J Melville
Cllr M Seward	Cllr S Stuckey
Cllr A Thirtle	Cllr D Turner
Cllr E Wheeler	Cllr J Witte

County Councillors Present:

Cllr E Seward

District Councillors Present:

Cllr N Lloyd	Cllr E Seward
Cllr V Uprichard	

The meeting opened at 19:00

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

1 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(a) Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

(b) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bull, Canham and Sims.

(c) Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 22 February 2016

The following updates were given:

- The Town Clerk was seeking to agree a date with Insp. Burke's office for a meeting with the Council [*para. 3(a)*].
- NNDC would be asked to report on enforcement action in time for the April Council meeting [*para 6(b)*].
- An order for dog waste bins had been placed with NNDC; officers there were investigating what permissions (eg Highways) may needed with regard to siting.

It was **RESOLVED** that

- **The Town Clerk be asked to organise a presentation for the Christmas Window Competition shield; and**

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- **The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2016, following agreed amendments, be accepted as a true record of the meeting and be signed by the Town Mayor.**

2 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING TO ALLOW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was **RESOLVED**

That the meeting be adjourned in accordance with Standing Order 1.5 to 1.8, to allow contributions from North Walsham Police, District Councillors and members of the public.

(a) Crime report

The crime report for the period 23 February to 29 March had been submitted (Annex A). No officers could be present. PC Gwynn had asked that any questions on the data be passed to him via the Town Clerk.

(b) Reports from District and County Councillors

A written report from County and District Cllr E Seward can be found at Annex B. In addition, he made the following points:

- He had met Insp Burke, and hoped the Town Council would be able to do so soon.
- He encouraged the Town Council to seek an early meeting with Mid-Norfolk CAB, which had won the advisory service tender for the County.
- He continued to press Norfolk Property Services to contact the Town Council with regard to the lower section of Midland Road Car Park.
- District Members are concerned about the issue of planning enforcement. Some difficult and sensitive situations at a couple of sites had dragged on for a considerable time, which created friction. Also concerned that new enforcement team will not be resourced properly.
- The latest edition County Council's 'Your Norfolk' magazine focused on the successes in turning around the County's schools. An Ofsted inspection in 2013 found that the supporting schools programme was ineffective, but by 2014 it was effective. It is now rated so effective that the Education Department is being invited by other authorities to advise on what they are doing. Now under Directorate of Children's Services. The number of children in care stays constant at around 1,050 despite the best efforts of the Directorate.
- He congratulated the Town Council on a third successful bid to the County Council's Parish Partnership Scheme, and hoped for further successes in future years.

(c) Public participation

No members of the public wished to address the meeting.

Following these contributions, it was **RESOLVED that the meeting be reconvened.**

3 REPORTS FROM THE TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

Details of events and meetings attended by the Town Mayor are at Annex C. Cllr Seward took the opportunity to note that the way the Town Mayor interacted with the community was commendable, and offered thanks on behalf of the Council for her efforts.

4 ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

(a) Council vacancies

The Town Clerk was awaiting advice from NNDC on what to do next following the efforts to fill vacancies. It was confirmed that the age criteria stated that 18 was the minimum age for Councillors.

(b) Citizens' Advice Bureau

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk be asked to write to Mid-Norfolk CAB to seek a meeting with senior officers about services to the town and possible grants.

(c) Dogs in St Nicholas Churchyard

The Town Clerk had met representatives from the Church, including Rev Cubitt, and NWIB on 22 March to discuss the ongoing problems with dog mess in the churchyard. A written report from NWIB had already been circulated (Annex D). The Town Clerk had approached NNDC to ask if the churchyard could be considered a local hotspot, as this would bring patrols by officers with powers to issue on the spot penalties to offenders. The Council was asked to consider installing a dog poo bag dispenser in the churchyard; this request was referred to the Development & Amenities Committee for further consideration.

(d) Spa Common

Cllrs Melville, Stuckey and Thirtle had, together with the Town Clerk, attended a residents' meeting opposite the Council's field on 23 March 2016. Residents had agreed an outline proposal to create a wildlife area, which they would tend but would not want walkers to use. A second proposal, to turn the field into an educational area which might be supported by the Songbird Trust, was rejected. At the request of residents, discussion was deferred as all had commitments over the Easter holiday and would not be able to submit a formal proposal in time for this meeting.

It was believed that everyone had a right to access/use common land, which is what the land at Spa Common was. Over the years the land had been rented out for grazing, which meant that these rights had been denied. It was noted that the land was an asset of the town as a whole, not of the village, and the Council was the land owner.

Due to issues around denying access to 'common land' /town assets, it was **RESOLVED** to ask the Town Clerk to seek legal advice on the definition of 'common land' and on restrictions to public access to such land owned by a town/parish council.

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(e) **North Walsham Heritage Centre**

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Stuckey be appointed as the Council's representative at a brainstorming meeting to be held on 2 April 2016.

(f) **North Norfolk Tourism Overview & Management Forum**

Minutes of a meeting held in Cromer on 22 February 2016 (attended by the Town Mayor and Cllr Melville) are at Annex E; a summary of issues discussed at a subsequent meeting on 21 March 2016 is at Annex F.

(g) **Recommendations from the Development & Amenities Committee**

(i) It was **RESOLVED** that the proposed dates for Circus Tyanna (10-14 August) be approved.

(ii) Concern was expressed about the wooden pavilion on the War Memorial Park, which made the park an unsuitable site for a fireworks display. It was thought that discussions were now focused on having the display on the High School playing fields, with spectators viewing from the park. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council should await details of the proposals for the RNW Fireworks Display before making a formal decision.

(iii) Further discussion of the Woodville Park Project was deferred until the April meeting, so that a report on funding progress could be presented.

(iv) Cllr Thirtle continued to experience difficulties in obtaining information about drainage from Highways. An additional issue was that NNDC had indicated that Trackside was in the middle of a flood plain which it was currently modelling as part of its Flood Management Plan. Further information on the potential impacts of this would be shared when available. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council should proceed with plans to install the fencing and gates, but to wait some months for the grass to establish itself before opening the facility to the public.

(v) Quotes had been requested for returning the top section of the car park to its original state. To date only a query had come back. The Town Clerk was asked to provide a report to the April meeting.

(vi) No progress had been made on repairs to Market Cross.

6 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

(a) **Updates:**

(i) The Bluebell Pond Society had accepted the Council's offer of a seven-year extension to the agreement, as set out. This would next be due for renewal in 2023.

(ii) Arts North Norfolk had yet to confirm whether its proposals for performances on the War Memorial Park (Sinfonie Viva; Goldilocks and the Three Bears) would proceed. The proposed boot camp was being advertised on Facebook, and organisers had asked again about storage of heavy items, this time in the garden plot area behind

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the Community Centre. Organisers had been advised that this was not possible as all plots were in use.

(iii) Poor weather had delayed work to raise the oak tree sculpture into an upright position.

(iv) North Norfolk Play had submitted an application to the Charity Commission for charity status. Fundraising for the Woodville Park project was progressing well.

(b) Street lighting

Norfolk Community Foundation had awarded a grant of £14,974 towards upgrading the Council's street lighting stock to LED operation. It was **RESOLVED to record the Council's thanks to Miss Shields for her work in successfully bidding for this funding, and that a press release should be prepared.**

(c) Freedom of Information Act requests

Three requests for an explanation of the increased precept had been received. The Town Clerk was treating these as Freedom of Information Act enquires, and had prepared a standard response. This would be sent to Members.

(d) Technical consultation on the implementation of planning changes

Members were asked to submit any comments to the Town Clerk prior to the deadline of 15 April 2016.

(e) Norfolk County Council consultation on local list for validation of planning applications

Members were asked to submit any comments to the Town Clerk prior to the deadline of 19 April 2016.

(f) SAM2 speed warning signs

The North Norfolk News had carried a report on the new signs, with a photograph taken at the Happisburgh Road site. Cllr Thirtle was thanked for his assistance in installing the signs and changing batteries.

7 FINANCE

(a) Payments and receipts

It was **RESOLVED**

To approve the reports for March 2016 to date and for the period to end February 2016.

(b) Quotes for refurbishing Midland Road Car Park

Discussion was deferred as quotes had not been received.

(c) New tractor

Discussion was deferred until the next meeting of the Development & Amenities Committee on 19 April 2016.

(d) **Insurance**

Following discussion of the quotes and previous history, it was **RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to proceed with the option considered to best meet the Council's requirements for insurance.**

(e) **Playground insurance**

As item (d) above, it was **RESOLVED that the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to proceed with the option considered to best meet the Council's requirements for insurance.**

(f) **Appointment of auditor for 2015/16 accounts**

It was **RESOLVED that Mr Roger Canwell be appointed as internal auditor for 2015/16.**

(g) **Increase petty cash**

It was **RESOLVED to increase the amount of petty cash held to £200.**

(h) **Report on internal finance checks**

Cllr Seward reported that she had completed the checks, and apart from some minor issues (which had been resolved) all was in order.

8 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meetings held on 23 February and 8 March 2016 were received.

9 REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES and GROUPS

(a) **Development & Amenities Committee**

The minutes of the meeting on 16 February 2016 were received.

(b) **Funday Committee**

The minutes of the meeting on 27 January 2016 were received.

10 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS and EVENTS

The following meetings had been arranged for April to May 2016:

- a. 5 April at 7:30pm – Annual Town Meeting, Community Centre
- b. 6 April at 7:00pm – Neech Loan Fund Trustees
- c. 13 April at 6:30pm – Christmas Lights Group
- d. 14 April at 6:45pm – Markets Group
- e. 19 April at 6:00pm – Funday Committee
- f. 19 April at 7:00pm – Development & Amenities Committee
- g. 29 April at 6:45pm – Civic Dinner, Community Centre
- h. 10 May at 6:30pm – Meeting with NNDC on Local Plan

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- i. 17 May at 6:30pm – Planning Committee (**note change to usual practice**)
- j. 17 May at 7:00pm – Annual Town Council Meeting

11 CORRESPONDENCE

The following items had been received:

- Invitation from the Bluebell Pond Society to attend the annual ‘Bluebell Pond Clean’ on Sunday 24 April
- Letter of 17 March from Nick Baker (Corporate Director, NNDC) re improvements to NNDCs Planning service (the Town Clerk had responded to the questions on broadband access and offering the Town Council as participants in the pilot scheme)
- Email of 18 March from Rev Paul Cubitt regarding the Bishop of Norwich’s attendance at the Civic Service on Sunday 19 June 2016
- Letter from Nick Johnson (Planning Services Manager, Norfolk County Council) regarding electronic consultation on planning applications.

12 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Update on email spam
North Norfolk Community Transport
Report from SNAP
Arts North Norfolk and the Information Centre
Town Cryer as an asset

In addition to the items detailed above, items should be submitted to the Town Clerk.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

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 1.5.

Part II: Press and Members of the Public Excluded

13 UPDATE ON PERSONNEL MATTERS

The Town Clerk left the room at 20:17.

The meeting closed at 21:20

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Annex A

Crime Breakdown

47 crimes in total have been reported to police between the dates above. This can be further broken down into the following categories.

Criminal Damage – 4
Theft – 9
Assaults – 10
Domestic non crime – 15
Public Order – 2
Burglary OTD - 1
Harassment-1
Sexual Offences-1
Robbery- 1
Threats To Kill – 2
Possession Of Offensive Weapon - 1

54 crimes for the same period last year.

Criminal Damage – 3
Theft – 11
Assaults – 13
Domestic non crime – 14
Drug offences-2
Harassment-5
Burglary OTD-1
Sexual Offences – 1
Assault Police – 1
Theft Of Pedal Cycles – 2
Threats To Kill - 1

Up and Coming events and initiatives involving the SNT

Our next priority setting meeting will be Wednesday 4th May 2016 at 1900 hours held at the Atrium.
Next pub watch meeting Monday 25th April 2016 at The Kings Arms Public House.

Current North Walsham Priorities

- 1, Criminal Damage in North Walsham
- 2, ASB in and around parks in North Walsham
- 3, Promote Home Security

Citizen Advice Bureau

The new contract for CAB services in North Norfolk has recently been signed by the Mid-Norfolk CAB as the lead body for such services. The funding for the new contract is provided by both the County and District Councils with the District acting as the administrators. It is understood that a circular to Town/Parish Councils will be sent out shortly on the new arrangements. The location of a new office in North Walsham is not yet resolved. Currently the District Council is allowing the CAB to stay on the existing New Rd site until a new location is found and no pressure appears to be coming from the proposed purchasers of the site (Wetherspoons) for early possession. Local members have been asked by the District Council to attend, along with relevant officers and the Cabinet Portfolio holder, a meeting with the Mid Norfolk CAB to discuss the North Walsham office. It is hoped this can take place in April. Local members have advised District Officers that there is a need for the Mid Norfolk CAB to talk directly to the Town Council on the services to be provided in the town along with possible financial support.

Fitzroy Charity

This charitable body has been providing day care and other services from two sites in St Nicholas Precinct for severely disabled persons. Very recently these services have been closed apparently for financial reasons. It is also reported that Fitzroy will be using one of the sites in future as an office. Enquiries are being made with County Social Services about the situation and in particular what will be happening to the clients that attended the day centre.

Highways

The much needed repairs to Lyngate Rd have been completed as cost of over £12k. It appears that a thorough repair job was carried out. It has been previously reported that the Cromer Rd between the traffic lights and the railway bridge was in the programme for much needed repairs later this year and this will be checked.

Over £1.5 million was added back to the highways maintenance budget in the County Council's approved budget for 2016/17 and when the implications of this revised budget for the town are known the Council will be advised. In the meantime, it has been learnt from County Highways that they do not see the need to move the activated sign warning lorries of their height when approaching the town from Cromer on the Cromer Rd from its existing site at the junction with Greens Rd to a site nearer Waitrose so lorry drivers have more warning of the need to use Greens Rd. The cost of doing so was the main reason. It is understood the local police would support such a move as they are often called out when a lorry has to reverse back along Cromer Rd having missed the Greens Rd junction. More evidence of the need to change the location of the sign will be needed and the police could help.

Planning Enforcement

The Council will be aware of several cases in the town of developments taking place without planning consent and that when retrospective applications are made they have to be treated in the same way as planning applications that are made in accordance with the required process.

Only time will show whether the 'name and shame' approach of using the local media to publicly highlight what took place at the Dream Lodge Caravan Park will result in the owners in future applying for planning permission before starting building work. More recently, the

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Council has been aware of garden fences being built on open spaces and sheds/annexes being erected in gardens without the required planning permission. These cases have arisen because of long delays by the District Council's Planning Enforcement Team in addressing these cases and ensuring that planning permission is applied for. It has resulted in some friction between residents in the areas concerned. Currently there is a back log of over 250 planning enforcement cases with the Council having one full time and one part time officer to deal with them. The District Council is forming a new team to deal with all enforcement matters that will include licensing, environmental health and planning. There is concern that this new team will not be adequately resourced but when requests have been made for some of the Council financial surpluses to be used to recruit new staff they have to date been rejected by the controlling Conservative administration.

Eric Seward
23/4/16

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Annex C

Town Mayors Report March 2016

- 10th March 2016: Good Neighbours Website Launch at Arts North Norfolk
(attended with Cllrs. Canham and Seward)
- 18th March 2016: Chairman's Civic Reception, County Hall, Norwich

Attended various Town Council committee meetings throughout this month.

**Meeting at North Walsham Town Council Offices 22nd March 2016
DOG WASTE IN THE TOWN.**

We at North Walsham in Bloom have been very concerned for some time about the increasing amount of Dog Waste in and around the Church Yard.

We have spoken to various dog owners about them allowing their dogs to foul this area and have been met with the comment of ‘other people do it’. This may well be true, but does not solve the problem. I have personally picked up 13 lots of dog poo on our flower beds in the Church Yard on one single occasion about three weeks ago.

It is of concern that it may well get walked into the Church, imagine how this would be received if it happened during a wedding or indeed a funeral.

I have spoken to Taverham Parish Council who have had similar problems to ourselves and have been advised that Broadland District Council have taken their problems on board and they have together come up with a plan which seems to be working.

Dog bag dispensers have been provided in the worst affected areas and although they have not been kept in constant fill, due to the cost, it appears they are working well.

The other approach they have taken is Biodegradable spray paint being placed around the poo. This surprisingly has worked very well. On several occasions when the area around the poo has been sprayed the next day this has been found to have been cleaned up.

Furthermore, I have obtained quotes from S & R prints for signs to be placed in our flower beds. These are for A5 plaques like the ones we have on our tubs etc done on 3mm Perspex or alternatively done on 5mm Foamex. These would obviously be at the expense of NWIB. We have also agreed to include the Guides bed in this expense.

We consider we would need 10 of these to accommodate the Churchyard and the Yarmouth Road beds, which have also suffered since the removal of the litter bins next to the seat at the entrance to Grange Court Road,

Taverham have taken this a step further. They have instigated a Top Dog Campaign which consists of giving out bags containing a ribbon with a bell to be put on the dog’s collar, a leaflet about dog fouling, and inviting people to sign up to a pledge which invites people to agree to report anyone they see committing this offence.

Perhaps if we could persuade NNDC to come on board with us this problem could be reduced to a sustainable level.

In conclusion I would like to add that asking our band of helpers (which at the moment number 11) to work in flower beds heavily contaminated with dog poo is something that Muriel and I are not prepared to do. At present the two of us inspect all beds before the ladies work on them and clear all poo ourselves. Lovely job

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Annex E

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Annex F

Events and meetings attended by Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor, February 2016

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 February 2016 | ATC Remembrance Service; Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor took salute. Attended by other Councillors |
| 22 February 2016 | Town Mayor (and Cllr Melville) attended meeting on Neighbourhood Planning at Cromer |

Report of Meeting with Joe Ballard (Arts North Norfolk) on Friday 22 January 2016

Arts North Norfolk (ANN)

- Annual Report due back from printers w/c 25 January 2016, and will include integration of Information Office.
- As an organisation, ANN needs to raise approx. £79k by the end of May in order to continue at its current level. JB seems confident that this is achievable.
- ANN has a new Chair, and the Trustees have formed a Management Group following criticism at the AGM. JB has asked for a Town Council representative on this group to (a) provide a North Walsham focus and (b) provide oversight of the Council's investment in the Information Office.
- ANN has attracted new volunteers, some attracted by the arts side and others by the Info Office side (although all work on both aspects).

Catch 21

- This is the 'up to 21 years of age' young persons' group formed in the wake of the former Youth Committee. JB needs one Council representative to support/oversee the group; Cllr Stuckey is currently the "unofficial" rep.

Youth Nightclub

- DBS check results required for this venture are still awaited. JB is chasing, and will let me know the outcome ASAP. He understands there may be a query relating to the relationship between the Council and the Kings Arms, but will advise that this should come to the Council to respond.

Information Office

- Lettering for the new signage is ready, and paint is in stock. JB needs time and better weather. Has asked if any volunteers might be available (from Council, Christmas Lights Group, etc) to help sand down, paint, and erect signs.

Town Guide

- JB has obtained quotes for printing 10,000 copies, with the best coming from Norwich Colour Print @ £2,924 for a 40pp booklet. Design/layout would cost in the region of £450, and preparation of a new map suitable for both the guide and interactive web use about £300. Further discussions on content to follow shortly.
- In addition there has been a proposal for a summer 'What's on' guide, an 'Eating Out in North Walsham' guide, and a 'What to do near North Walsham' guide. This crosses into Town Guide territory, at least in part.
- JB has also been speaking to estate agents in the town about a 'Welcome to North Walsham' pack for new residents, which would include copies of various guides to and information

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on the town. They have expressed interest and are prepared to put some funding into the proposal.

Events in 2016

North Walsham Festival 2016

- This will start with a parade to the Funday on Sunday 26 June, and run through the following week culminating in a town centre finale on Saturday 2 July.
- The central theme will be the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 with the programme including
 - o Workshops in medieval arts, music and costume-making leading up to the parade
 - o Episodic plays about the revolt at various location around the town (perhaps run along the lines of the 'ghost walk')
 - o A medieval fayre in the churchyard on 2 July
 - o A finale in Market Place commencing at 6pm on 2 July – JB is hoping to include choreographed battle sequences and an all ages-friendly portrayal of the end of the revolt (mixing actors and puppetry). This will be followed by live music etc with a street fayre and food vendors on hand throughout. Would require a road closure from 4pm; JB has asked if the Council would agree to take this forward and to consult local businesses.

400th Anniversary of Shakespeare's death

- JB is hoping to run a commemorative event on Saturday 23 April, and hopes the Town Council will participate. He is in discussion with the Guinness Book of Records about a possible Shakespeare-related world record attempt
- JB is exploring the possibility of running workshops and possibly other events during the year (for example, bite-size performances of segments of Shakespeare plays relating to markets and performed in and around the markets)

Pantomime 2016

- Discussions are in progress about this. JB favours a 'sort of 1950's sci-fi B-movie re-write' of Mother Goose. Also looking at Snow White & The Seven Dwarfs.

N J Clancy
Town Clerk