

**NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
2 February 2016**

Minutes of the Development & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 2 February 2016

PRESENT

Chairman:	Cllr S Stuckey
Councillors:	Cllr G Bull
Cllr B Hester	Cllr J Melville
Cllr A Thirtle	Cllr D Turner
Cllr B West	

District Cllr E Seward
District Cllr V Gay

Also present: Mr D Gilbert & Mr M Gayfer (NWTC grounds staff) and Mr M Smith at the invitation of the Town Council.

The meeting opened at 18:30

1 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was agreed that Cllr Stuckey be appointed Chair of the Committee.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Wheeler.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

4 **CO-OPTION OF NEW MEMBER**

As per the resolution of the Town Council on 26 January 2016 (minute ref. paragraph 4(g)), Mr Matthew Smith was co-opted as an external member of the Committee due to his experience in fundraising for play equipment.

5 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 September 2015**

These were agreed to be a true record of the meeting. Minutes of the meeting on 24 June 2015 had been overlooked.

6 **REPORTS FROM GROUNDS STAFF**

The following matters were raised by grounds staff:

- It was noted that a new home would be required for the wheelie bins currently stored in the Council Offices car park once the Town Council moved to new premises. It was also noted that the bins were heavy and difficult to move. The Council's approval to purchase a new vehicle may help with moving the bins, but it was acknowledged that the slope at the Registry Office entrance (should that be the Council's new home) would present a problem.
- A large eucalyptus tree was growing near to the Cemetery Lodge. Tree Hopper had advised several years ago that the tree could present a danger to the property, but AT Coombs had provided a subsequent opinion that it did not and no action was taken as a result. The tree had been recorded on the most recent survey, but again

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no action had been recommended. The Committee agreed that it should be reviewed again, and any necessary action to make it safe should be taken.

- The Committee agreed to recommend to the Town Council that the gates to the War Memorial Park at the top end of Farman Avenue be kept locked over Bank Holidays (in addition to overnight and weekends).
- The pavilion on War Memorial Park (the current base of Poppies Day Nursery) had reportedly been opened by Tommy Cooper. It was agreed that research would be carried out into the opening of the pavilion on the War Memorial Park, as this event might then be commemorated with a plaque.

7 **PARKS**

War Memorial Park:

Mr Smith introduced himself to members. He works at a special needs school in Sheringham, and had successfully raised over £100k last year towards improving play facilities, including previous success in applications to NNDC community funding projects. He was interested in supporting North Walsham Town Council in planning, funding and taking forward updates at the parks. The town and its needs had changed, with increasing numbers and a need for facilities for disabled children and parents.

There had been discussions at previous meetings regarding toilets and refreshment facilities on the park, but nothing had been agreed as yet.

Woodville:

Copies of extracts from catalogues provided by HAGS-SMP and Sovereign were circulated to give members a clear idea of what the Council's allocation of £5k might purchase.

It was reported that Sovereign had not met the standards for installation in schools, and that the structures it provided were all wood. Structures provided by HAGS-SMP had metal bases, with wood above ground, and were considered a better option for this reason. Playdale Playgrounds provided similar equipment to HAGS-SMP, and Mr Smith confirmed he had dealt with all three suppliers previously.

Lead time for providing equipment was usually a couple of months, dependent on whether the items ordered were stock or had to be assembled. It was agreed that Mr Smith would contact Playdale regarding options for the park.

It was noted that the single most requested item in the survey of local children had been a zipwire. Unfortunately there were insufficient funds to install one at this time. A request for additional Town Council funding in the precept had not been taken forward due to other priorities.

Action:

Mr Smith and Cllr Thirtle were asked to work with grounds staff to conduct a survey of the parks and to report back to the Committee.

8 **BLUEBELL POND**

The lease had expired in May 2015. It was agreed that a new lease would be offered for four years, but at the current one year rate.

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Action:

Town Clerk to write to the Bluebell Pond Society.

9 **PARK LANE BUS SHELTER**

This had been passed to the Town Clerk on his return from sick leave as a task that had been overlooked. A study of the lease documentation appeared to show that the current lease expired in November 2053, but this needed to be confirmed.

Action:

Town Clerk to speak to Mrs Anne Rose about the legal documentation. Mrs Rose subsequently confirmed the lease does indeed expire in November 2053.

10 **GRIT BINS**

The spare bin from the barn had been put into use in the cemetery. Grounds staff noted that it would be helpful to have an additional bin in or near to the War Memorial Park. There had also been several requests over the past year or so to consider placing grit bins in various locations. District Cllr Seward reported that Norfolk County Council was currently investigating the option of adding funding back into the Highways budgets; he agreed to investigate further whether this covered the provision of grit bins.

11 **VEHICLES**

The Council was currently paying £936 per year to NNDC for the emptying of dog waste bins in the town. Doubling the number of bins, as the Council had agreed to explore, would result in a proportional increase in this cost. NWTC grounds staff had indicated that they would be willing to take this task on, but would need a suitable vehicle as the tractor was too large to access most sites. It was agreed that a suitable vehicle was needed, but that the grounds staff were in the best position to decide what best suited their needs.

Action:

Grounds staff to look at options for a flat-bed truck/trailer for emptying bins.

12 **CEMETERIES**

Local Plan site allocations:

It was believed that there was approximately 10 years' provision of grave spaces, with up to 400 available to re-use in the Chapel Cemetery. The Local Plan covered a 20 year span, and it would be prudent to consider whether there was any appropriate land for a new cemetery to be created during this period.

District Cllrs Seward and Gay respectively reported that designating land as cemetery land made planning consent easier to obtain, and that having something in the Local Plan may help to prevent to sort of legal battles that had been seen over similar issues.

Action:

The Town Clerk and members of the Committee agreed to research this further.

Border query at New Cemetery:

The Town Clerk had visited the cemetery earlier in the day, and had taken some photographs of the temporary fencing installed by the developer of the adjacent site.

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Grounds staff were asked to keep an eye on the development, to help ensure that the approved wall did not occupy cemetery land.

Use of Chapel:

The two chapel buildings in the Chapel Cemetery were currently used for storage – one containing the old fire engine and bier, and the other tools, mowers and other equipment. As the Council had approved the purchase of an ISO container for storage, it was thought that one of the buildings could be brought back into public use. Further research was needed into what uses were suitable – a quiet area for reflection was suggested, as was a home for the town's Heritage Group and museum (although it was reported that the Group had agreed a suitable location).

13 **SPA COMMON**

Given the issues regarding the use of this land for grazing, it was proposed that the Spa Common land be transformed into an area for wild flower beds and footpaths for walkers/dog walkers that could lead down to the canal. Concern was expressed that a fence encroached onto the Council's land, and this needed to be investigated further. A recommendation to revisit the decision in October 2014 to retain the land for grazing would be taken to the Council.

Action:

Town Clerk to contact Mr E Bullimore regarding his previous proposal to create a wild flower preserve.

14 **MARKET CROSS REPAIRS**

It was agreed that the Council should approach the relevant people regarding planning and scheduled monument consents.

Action:

Town Clerk to write to NNDC and Dept of Culture regarding permissions, and to investigate repair of benching previously carried out by NNDC.

15 **TREE WORKS**

The Town Mayor had previously suggested that NWTC grounds staff might take on tree works where residents were unable to do themselves, given that one member of staff had the necessary chainsaw qualification. This arose from a query raised by an elderly resident in relation to a tree on land adjacent to her own. It was agreed that there would need to be a formal process to identify genuine cases.

16 **STREET LIGHTING**

A request from a resident who was an astro-photographer, had been received regarding a street light outside his house. A decision on this was deferred pending clarification on the Council's bid for funding towards replacing existing lamps with LED lamps.

17 **LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

Members were reminded about the presentation to the Council on Tuesday 9 February by District Cllr Nigel Dixon. District Cllr Seward asked members to consider an area for the proposed bus interchange.

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18 **NORTH WALSHAM FESTIVAL**

It was agreed that the Town Council would seek a road closure order for the Festival finale on Saturday 25 June 2016 (brought forward from 2 July), to run from 4:00pm until approximately 10:00pm.

19 **CAR BOOT SALE**

This event had been requested in previous years, and the Council was happy to comply. It was agreed that permission be granted subject to a Market Manager check.

20 **WORSTEAD FESTIVAL**

At a meeting with the Town Mayor, Gay Webster (editor of Just North Walsham and also a member of the Festival's organising committee) had invited the Council to consider having a tent/gazebo at the Festival to promote the town. It could be interchangeable, with different aspects promoted over the weekend. It was agreed to recommend this to the Council.

21 **WOODVILLE PARK SCHOOLS' SURVEY**

It was agreed that one Kindle would go to a shortlisted entry from each school (Millfield Primary and North Walsham Junior and Infants). As there were sufficient prizes for each entry shortlisted, each one would be allocated a prize.

Action:

Town Clerk to organise a presentation by Councillors and donors to the winners during half term week (w/c 15 February 2016). Local press would be invited.

22 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Cllr Thirtle had met local youths at Trackside to discuss facilities at the park. The ramps needed to be repainted, more litter bins were needed, and seating for parents was requested. It was agreed that the ramps should be repainted and that a site inspection be carried out.

Action:

Town Clerk to arrange for safety inspection and repainting of ramps with non-slip paint, and to seek quote from Freewheel for repairs to ramps.

17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 16 February 2016.

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.

The meeting closed at 20:35.

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24 **WORKS AT MIDLAND ROAD CAR PARK**

This would be discussed further at the next meeting. It was agreed that the car park could be closed for a day so that grounds staff could undertake work to remove trees/bushes/undergrowth and put creosote and reflector strips on the border fencing. Grounds staff would be asked if they would be willing to do this over a weekend (as overtime) in order to minimise disruption to regular users.

Action:

The Town Clerk would bring details of funding available in the Council's budgets for any works to the car park.