

NORTH WALSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
25 October 2016

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 25 October 2016

Chair: Cllr B Hester

Town Councillors Present:

Cllr A Canham	Cllr P Edge
Cllr A Fryer	Cllr R Murphy
Cllr R Sims	Cllr S Stuckey
Cllr D Turner	Cllr B West
Cllr E Wheeler	Cllr J Witte

District Councillors Present:

Cllr V Gay	Cllr N Lloyd
Cllr E Seward	

County Councillors Present:

Cllr E Seward

The meeting opened at 19:15, following a presentation to the group of local youngsters responsible for cleaning up the skate park following vandalism over the weekend of 15 & 16 October. The Council thanked the Group, who received awards from the Town Mayor.

Open to the Press and Members of the Public

1 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

(a) Declarations of Interest

Cllr Turner declared an interest in Item 4(b)(iii), as a member of North Walsham Velo.

(b) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Clls Bull, Choudhury, Melville and Seward, with Cllr Thirtle absent.

(c) Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 27 September 2016

The Town Clerk provided an update on actions outstanding, and the Town Mayor reported a follow up with regard to the youth nightclub. He had met Martin Miles of the Kings Arms, who was willing to proceed without the backing of the High School as parents and young people continued to ask when it would go ahead. He was asking the Town Council to continue to support the proposal, to which the Council agreed.

As proposed by Cllr Murphy and seconded by Cllr Edge, it was **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016 be signed by the Town Mayor as a true record of that meeting.

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2 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING TO ALLOW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

As proposed by Cllr Stuckey and seconded by Cllr Witte

The meeting was adjourned in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to permit public participation and external reports.

(a) Crime report

No officers were able to present the report, and the Town Mayor asked that any questions be addressed through the Town Clerk. The Crime Report for the period 30 May to 28 June and 28 June to 26 July 2016 had been received (Annex A). The Town Clerk had sought further information about the ASB nuisance investigation (*Note: PC Gwynn subsequently reported this to be the incident at the skate park referred to above*).

(b) Reports from District and County Councillors

County Cllr Seward's report can be found at Annex A.

[Cllr Fryer left the room at 19:21]

Cllr Seward reported that, following the recent meeting on flooding, residents from other parts of the town that had been affected were coming forward – for example from the lower end of Brick Kiln Road. Cllr Seward was expecting a report from the lead officer at Norfolk County Council next week on the bus interchange.

[Cllr Fryer returned at 19:25]

A summary of the reports given by District Cllrs Gay and Lloyd is at Annex C.

[Cllr Fryer left the room at 19:27, returning at 19:31]

(c) Public participation

A summary of issues raised under public participation is at Annex C.

As proposed by Cllr Murphy and seconded by Cllr Edge, it was **RESOLVED**

That the meeting be reconvened.

Cllr Hester reminded Members and observers to switch phones off or to silent.

3 REPORTS FROM THE TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

Details of events and meetings attended by the Town Mayor are at Annex D.

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4 **ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

(a) **Standing Orders**

As proposed by Cllr Stuckey and seconded by Cllr Witte, it was **RESOLVED**

That Standing Order 1.1 be amended to read *Meetings of the Council shall be held at a venue in North Walsham that is appropriately sized, to be advised by the Town Clerk. Meetings shall commence at 7.00 pm unless the Council decides otherwise at a previous meeting;*

That Standing Order 1.5 be amended to read *Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution of the Council in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2), which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.*

That proposed changes to Standing Order 4.5 in relation to the status of the Christmas Lights Group and Funday Committee be deferred pending a meeting between the Town Mayor and respective Chairs to discuss what they actually wish to do.

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

- (i) **Urban grass verge maintenance:** The Town Clerk had spoken to Norfolk County Council, and reported that delegation of responsibility for maintaining urban grass verges would, if agreed, be given and an index-linked budget of approximately £10,000 (the equivalent of five scheduled cuts per year) would be transferred. The contract would commence from 1 April 2017, and the Town Council would be free to add additional cuts at its own expense. Grounds staff had reviewed the schedule of sites, and were considering the impact on their jobs in terms of time and workload. As proposed by Cllr Sims and seconded by Cllr Turner, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Council would enter into an agreement with Norfolk County Council to take on delegated responsibility for urban grass verge maintenance, subject to a suitable contract being negotiated.

- (ii) **Secure vehicle compound:** This had been considered by the Committee on 20 October at the request of grounds staff, as there was no suitable location to park the tractor and flatbed truck. Apart from asking grounds staff to identify a suitable location (likely to be near the Happisburgh Road entrance), no further investigation had yet been carried out. As proposed by Cllr West and seconded by Cllr Witte, it was **RESOLVED**

That this would be investigated further, and that details of size and costs would be brought to a subsequent meeting.

- (iii) **Base for North Walsham Velo:** the club's chairman had spoken to the Committee on 20 October, and following that discussion it had been agreed that

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a site within the compound proposed at 4(b)(ii) above might be feasible given local support and the health benefits for the community. The club itself would provide a suitable building, and grant funding was available to cover the cost of any equipment it needed, but it needed a site on which to put the building. Following discussion, it was agreed that this proposal should be returned to the Committee for further consideration.

- (iv) **Fees for Council services:** For burials, North Walsham Town Council charged significantly less than either Aylsham or Cromer. As proposed by Cllr West and seconded by Cllr Witte it was **RESOLVED**

That the Development & Amenities Committee should revisit the fee comparison and return with a revised recommendation to a subsequent meeting.

Other town and parish councils in the area charged in line with this Council for temporary garden plots/allotments. As proposed by Cllr Murphy and seconded by Cllr Witte, it was **RESOLVED**

That fees for Temporary Garden Plots remain unchanged.

- (v) **Spa Common:** The ground had now been put right and the fence repaired. It remained a Council asset, and as such should benefit the wider community and not an individual. As had been seen recently in the Planning Committee, common land was easily encroached upon. Following discussion and a vote on the proposal to make this land into a second dog exercise enclosure, which failed to win support, it was agreed that a survey would be carried out on what the residents wanted this ground to be used for.

- (vi) **Replacement slide for War Memorial Park:** As proposed by Cllr Witte and seconded by Cllr Murphy, it was **RESOLVED**

That the quote from HAGS-SMP for the tubular slide would be accepted.

It was noted that residents should be made aware that the Council would need to look at rebuilding its reserves through the precept as a result of the need to replace old equipment.

- (c) **Proposed bus interchange**
Consideration of this matter was deferred.

5 FINANCE

(a) **Mid-Year Reports**

Queries were raised on what constituted “sundries” in the reports. Members were reminded that all expenditure shown had been approved at previous meetings, but

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details of payments dating back across the year were not generally available at meetings. As proposed by Cllr West and seconded by Cllr Canham, it was **RESOLVED**

That the mid-year reports be rejected.

(b) Payments and Receipts

Members were reminded that failure to approve the report without good reason would result in the Town Council missing prompt payment targets and leave it open to possible action by suppliers. As proposed by Cllr Witte and seconded by Cllr Canham, it was **RESOLVED**

That the Payments and Receipts reports covering the period to 24 October 2016 be approved.

6 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Subject to amendments to note absentees from the meetings, the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 27 September and 11 October 2016 were received.

7 REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES/ORGANISATIONS

(a) Markets Group

Receipt of the minutes of the Markets Group meeting held on 1 September 2016 was deferred as they had been omitted from some briefing packs..

(b) Christmas Lights Group

The minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Lights Group meeting held on 7 September 2016 were received.

(c) Development & Amenities Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016 were received.

(d) Funday Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016 were received.

8 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

The following meetings had been arranged for October 2016:

- a. Tuesday 1 November 2016: Media & Information Committee
- b. Thursday 3 November 2016: Markets Group
- c. Sunday 6 November 2016: Market Place street auction
- d. Tuesday 8 November 2016: Dementia Awareness training workshop for Members
- e. Tuesday 15 November 2016: Development & Amenities Committee
- f. Saturday 26 November 2016: Christmas Lights Switch-On
- g. Sunday 18 December 2016: Christmas Market

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9 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The following items were received:

- Letter of 20 October 2016 from North Norfolk Community Transport thanking the Town Council for the annual grant of £1,000 towards support for the Dial-a-Ride and MediRide services;
- Emails from PC Paul Gwynn dated 25 October 2016 seeking a meeting with the Town Clerk to discuss anti-social behaviour in North Walsham, and advising that three 11-year-olds had been responsible for vandalism at the skatepark on the weekend of 15/16 October and were being dealt with under ASB procedures;
- Letter from Mrs M Pitcher received on 24 October 2016 regarding a leaning headstone in the Chapel Cemetery; and
- Letter from Norfolk County Council's Highways Maintenance Manager dated 21 October 2016 advising that the renewed fencing at Spa Common was obstructing a public right of way and that action was needed to correct this.

10 **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

Bus interchange

Nomination of a new Town Council representative to Regenerate North Walsham

Vehicle compound – investigations and costings

Cemetery fees

CCTV

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

As proposed by Cllr Murphy and seconded by Cllr Stuckey, it was **RESOLVED**

That, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2), members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed.

11 Members discussed the way forward on the Information Office.

A brief report was given by the Chair of the Personnel & Grants Committee on staffing matters, and a discussion took place on matters relating to the lease of Cemetery Lodge.

The meeting closed at 21:30

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Annex A

Police report: Crime figures for the period 27 September to 25 October 2016

Crime Breakdown

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

- Criminal Damage – 6
- Theft – 6
- Assaults – 9
- Assault-GBH-1
- Domestic non crime – 14
- Public Order – 7
- Harassment - 2
- Sexual Offences -2
- Mental Health Investigation - 1
- Theft Of Motor Vehicle -1
- Adult protection Investigation – 2
- ASB Nuisance investigation -1
- Vulnerable child report -2
- Hate Incident-2
- Assaults on Police-2

32 crimes for the same period last year.

- Criminal Damage – 4
- Theft – 5
- Assaults – 2
- Domestic non crime – 6
- Harassment - 2
- Sexual Offences – 5
- Vulnerable Child Investigation -1
- Burglar OTD-2
- Theft From MV-1
- Adult Protection-1
- Attempt Burglary-1
- Dog Incident-1
- ASB Nuisance Investigation-1

Up and Coming events and initiatives involving the SNT

Our next priority setting meeting will be Wednesday 30th November 2016 at 1900 hours held at the Atrium.

Next Pubwatch meeting is on Monday 7th November 2016 held at Kings Arms Public House

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Current North Walsham Priorities

1. Speeding in hotspots such as Mundesley and Swanton Abbott
2. ASB in play parks in North Walsham and Mundesley. Also to include the underpass and Sadlers Wood.
3. Crime prevention around Halloween and Bonfire night. To include Supermarket surgeries and school assemblies.

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Annex B

District & County Council Report

County and District Cllr E Seward

County Council Meeting October 17th

The main discussion was around whether the independent inquiry into the ill-fated incinerator project at Kings Lynn that led to the Council paying £34 million in compensation payments to the contractor when it did not proceed should continue. The inquiry has suffered from key witnesses not being prepared to give evidence (they cannot be compelled to do so). The alternative view was that the Council Tax payers needed to know how the Council had lost £34 million. The council decided by a majority of one vote not to continue with inquiry. Local County Cllrs voted for the inquiry to continue.

Devolution

A special meeting of the County Council has been scheduled for November 21st to determine whether the Council will participate in the proposed Norfolk/Suffolk devolution deal to establish a new combined authority with an elected mayor. There are divided views amongst Cllrs over the proposal. If the Council votes to participate in the devolution proposal it can be expected to proceed. What has emerged in recent weeks is that if this happens the residents of North Norfolk will NOT have a vote for the mayor as the District Council voted in the summer not to participate. This also applies to residents in three other District authorities in Norfolk who voted not to participate.

County Highways Engineer's site visit to North Walsham

The author of this report was involved in a number of site visits in the town with Justin le May on October 5th. It demonstrated the need for better drainage maintenance in areas prone to flooding. It includes some properties at the lowest point in Brick Kiln Rd. An informative visit was also made to Drury's to get a better understanding of how the Northfields/Lyngate drainage system operates through the site.

Justin le May has advised that the trees/shrubbery along the by-pass are so overgrown that substantial pruning works are required. A tender exercise for this work is underway.

District Council Management Changes

At the time of writing this report the Chief Executive Sheila Oxtoby departs on October 21st. The interim arrangements are that the Corporate Directors Steve Blatch and Nick Baker will act as joint Chief Executive whilst a review into the senior management structure takes place. Duncan Ellis the current head of Assets & Leisure is the new interim Head of Finance.

All three senior officers who accepted offers to move to Great Yarmouth Council have now left NNDC.

Household Refuse Collection Service

At the time of writing this report a strike is due to commence on Monday October 24th. It apparently concerns refuse collection drivers who are GMB members at the contractors (Kier) Aylsham depot and their grievance is centred on them receiving

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lower rates of pay/ terms than colleagues operating in Kings Lynn (this is disputed by Kier). The majority of refuse collection staff at Aylsham belong to Unite and they are not involved in the industrial dispute.

It is understood that Kier are intending to operate a limited household waste collection service centred on non-recyclable rubbish in black bins. The strike does not affect street cleaning in the town. The District Council are putting together a communication initiative to inform residents what is happening on refuse collection. Under the contract with Kier the District Council has powers to impose financial penalties on Kier if the strike is prolonged and household waste collections cannot take place. An update will be provided at the meeting.

EGS
19/10/16

District Cllr Gay reported that

- The new Permitted Development Order introduced in 2015 meant that applications to turn agriculture buildings into dwellings were almost always allowable; the only exceptions were on grounds of contamination, Highways concerns and exceeding a certain size. This now took precedence over any local policies, including Local Development Frameworks/Local Plans.

District Cllr Lloyd reported that

- BT was consulting on under-used telephone boxes in the District. These may become available for councils to purchase for nominal sums for community uses – such as defibrillators, libraries, etc.
- There was a proposal for a new phone mast to be erected in the town.

Members raised questions on:

- Incinerator costs: The £34 million bill arising from the penalty clause for not proceeding had been paid, but it had left Norfolk County Council finances in a poor state.
- Street cleaning: Members reported that the town was not being cleaned up regularly, particularly on Sunday mornings, and that bins on Hall Lane were not being emptied. The Council was advised to write to NNDC about this issue. 4/4a Market Street was meant to be swept on a daily basis; NNDC would continue to monitor the state of the surface, but it was hoped that this would now settle.

Summary of issues raised in public participation

Mr Duncan Wood gave a brief presentation on North Walsham Velo, which now had 100+ members – with between 60 and 70 out every Sunday morning. The club was seeking premises large enough to house training and meeting rooms. Despite the intervention of the Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP writing to the Atrium and local schools, the only positive response to date had come from the Scout group. Unfortunately their hall was not suitable as they used it on most days.

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Annex D

Town Mayor's Report May 2016

Mayor's Report – Councillor Barry Hester

- 3 October: Councillors' training course (Norfolk Parish Training & Support)
- 5 October: Meeting with Mr R Scammell and Mrs R Matthews (RNW) re St Nicholas Court
- 6 October: Community Groups meeting at St Nicholas Church
- 13 October: Town Mayor's Charity Market Stall for WWI window at St Nicholas Church and the North Walsham Dementia Support Group
- 16 October: The Justice Service at Norwich Cathedral for the High Sheriff of Norfolk
- 22 October: Somme 100 – WWI Commemoration Event at the Atrium

Attended various sub-committee meetings (Markets Group, Development & Amenities Committee, Christmas Lights Group)

Future events:

- 30 October: Assisting with Sunday Market
- 2 November: North Walsham Play meeting
- 6 November: Funday street auction
- 13 November: Remembrance Sunday
- 15 November: The North Walsham Dementia Support Group anniversary
- 26 November: Christmas Lights Switch-On

Deputy Mayor's Report – Councillor Sallie Stuckey

- 16 October: Assisted with putting up Christmas Lights
- 22 October: WWI event at the Atrium
- 23 October: Assisted with putting up Christmas Lights

Future events:

- 6 November: Fireworks at Millfield Primary School