

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF HUNSTANTON  
HELD IN HUNSTANTON COUNCIL CHAMBER ON  
FRIDAY 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2013 AT 6:30 PM

Present: Mayor: Cllr E Clutton Deputy Mayor: Cllr C Bower

Town Councillors: R Bird C Earnshaw J Maiden G Smith R Davies  
J Johnson J Smith A Murray S Ellis G Gooderson

Also present:-

3 x members of the Public

BCllr P Beal

Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk

1 x Press

The Mayor led the Council in prayers.

1. Apologies For Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Devlin, Godfrey-Cole, Brister, Harrington, BCllr E Watson & Sgt. R Curl.

2. Residents Question Time

**A Winnington** having read the minutes of the General Purpose Committee meeting, noted it had mentioned that in Eckington residents had been consulted about future plans for the town and this was impressive. He also requested that any future co-option taking place, the candidate be considered from the south of the town.

3. Police Liaison Officer

The Clerk read out the following report provided by Sgt. Curl:

We have recorded 20 crimes in the town since your last meeting. The same period last year saw 25 recorded, including a spate of thefts from motor vehicles which we have thankfully not experienced this autumn.

There are 4 priority crimes to report.

There have been two burglaries. The first, a domestic shed that was forced open and a set of Black & Decker hedge trimmers removed. This took place in the garden of a property in Margaret's Close. The second took place at about 2am last Wednesday morning when the front doors of Whitley Newsagents in the High Street were forced open and a quantity of cigarettes stolen.

The other two offences are violent crimes that are considered more serious than assaults without injury. The first incident classed as a violent offence saw 3 males, 2 of whom appeared to be teenagers push their way into a residential flat, apparently looking for a specific individual. It appears that they went to the incorrect address and the shocked male occupier managed to get them out. One 24yr old man from Heacham has been arrested and is currently on police bail whilst the investigation continues. The second incident was a domestic assault involving visitors to a holiday park. A woman was assaulted in a public area of the complex and the man responsible was arrested and subsequently given a formal caution for the offence.

There were three further assaults, both without injury and all with parties known to each other. Arrests were made in all cases and resulted in two men being cautioned for common assault and

an 18 year old woman from Aylesbury being charged both with assault and criminal damage to a caravan on one of our major parks.

The remaining offences consist of theft and criminal damage. Three shoplifting offences have been reported at Tesco and some money was stolen from a purse that was left in a changing room at Smithdon High School during an event.

In addition to the aforementioned damage to the caravan, damage was caused in the garden of a property on the Bennett's estate, some historic damage was reported to a flat in High Street and a fence had two holes kicked in it at a property in King's Lynn Road. A shop in Westgate also had some minor damage done to a glazed door.

The remaining four offences were damage caused to vehicles. A mini-digger left at works in Redgate Hill had a window smashed and may well be linked to the vandalism at the Bennetts estate. One car had a tyre deliberately cut and two others were deliberately scratched. One of those was resolved at the scene after the offender admitted scratching the car in retaliation for some accidental damage that was done to his own car.

At present the neighbourhood as a whole has recorded 10% less crime compared with last year to date. In respect of anti-social behaviour, the Halloween and bonfire period has been very positive, with virtually no related ASB calls for service in the town itself. There is every reason to remain optimistic about crime and anti-social behaviour as we head into winter.

4. Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

**BCllr P Beal** thanked the Mayor for allowing him to lay the wreaths jointly on Remembrance Sunday and reported that he and Cllr. Maiden had met with Matthew Henry in relation to the O'Quigley's Bar. Mr. Henry had sent a letter to the legal department for checking prior to posting. Cllr Beal had attended a meeting of all the SNAP Chairman where it was agreed a new youth SNAP would be established by students of Smithdon School. It had been attended by youngsters from all years, they were extremely positive and asked lots of questions.

PCSO's now have the powers to issue fines of £75 for dog fouling.

At present no licence plate number is required to be logged in to car par ticket machines.

**BCllr Bird** reported that celebrations for the official opening of the Spinney would take place in February/March 2014. Several Conservative party members have changed their allegiance. Cllr Maiden requested a report from the Regeneration meeting and Cllr Bower reported that improvements would continue to take place throughout the town over the next few years. The suggestion of increases to car parking charges had been discussed in order to raise funds but there had been no conclusions.

Cllr Ellis asked why the Christmas tree was laying on its side in the Spinney and Cllr Bower advised that it would be erected shortly, would have a fence round it and new vandal proof lights.

5. Norfolk County Council

**NClIr R Bird** explained that he is responsible for the area known as the North Coast, this being a large area it was sometimes difficult to get round and visit all the parishes however, Hunstanton was the only Town in that area. NCC has to make £189 million in savings. If those savings could not be found then somebody paying £1000 in council tax would then pay £1600. The Education budget was currently 30% of the total but had already been cut to the bone. 27% of the total budget was for social services, mainly for elderly care and child care. There were 1135 children in care this month. Nobody knows where further cuts can be made as the labour force has already been cut. Any future action will be drastic and draconian.

With regard to the Coasthopper bus service NClIr Bird recommended everyone attend the meeting at the Community Centre on 27<sup>th</sup> November. He had had two meetings with Ben Coulson of Norfolk Green and two meetings with NCC Officers but things are not as straight forward as they appear. He had been researching various legal sections regarding different styles of bus operation.

Any funding cuts to the Coasthopper would occur gradually over a three year period. NCllr Bird summed up by saying that he did not think the bus service would suffer in the short, medium or long term.

6. Mayor's Remarks

The Mayor reported that she had attended 4 Remembrance events, the one on Remembrance Sunday being the most poignant with having the 67<sup>th</sup> Operations Squadron present.

The Mayor reminded councillors that there was a Policy meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November, the meeting to discuss car boots on 26<sup>th</sup> November, the Estimates meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> November and the Carol Concert on 6<sup>th</sup> November.

The Mayor said she would send HTC's best wishes to Cllr Devlin who was having an operation.

7. Minutes – Confirmation of

The minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council held on 11 October 2013, a copy of which had been distributed to councillors prior to the meeting, were considered.

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) the minutes of the Full Council Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013 be approved.

8. Minutes – Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

9. Questions

No questions had been submitted.

10. Committee Recommendations

The Recommendations made at the General Purpose, Quality Council, Finance and Town Hall Management Committee meetings held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2013, copies of the minutes which had been distributed to councillors prior to the meeting, were considered.

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) the recommendations made at the meeting of the General Purpose Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be adopted.

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) the recommendations made at the meeting of the Quality Council Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be adopted.

Finance Committee Minutes: recommendation at Minute 10, Cllr Earnshaw wished there to be further consideration given to the opening of a vegetarian café in the basement and gave the following report:

*You know I am opposed to this now for a number of reasons. I am not opposed to the idea per se. I urge you all to think very carefully before casting your vote. We may think it a nice idea, other café owners may not agree!!! My reasons against are:*

*1. Yet more workload on the Clerk and Deputy. We have recognised that they are working to capacity and they have agreed. It is unreasonable of us to impose more on them, however willing they may appear. There is much to do in meeting our objectives on TIC and Y&CC and getting them onto rock solid footing without any other distraction.*

*Cllr Bird has said so, the auditor said so in his report and we agreed his report, unanimously. We talked last time about our Duty of Care in view of the Clerk's medical condition. Now we are flying in the face of that and wishing to add more work.*

*Has the chairman of the Employment Working party taken any advice on this from our HR advisers, Ellis Whittam? An HR consultant friend of mine has urged us to take great care and emphasised our responsibility. Just last meeting we considered a training course for "Working with Bi-Polar employees" part of which must be acting as considerate, realistic employers.*

2. *We have not mentioned our legal position at all:*

*It seems we are now allowed to embark on commercial activities under the Localism Act 2011 subject to certain conditions:*

*BUT We need to gain “General Power of Competence“ status before we start. The Clerk told BCKLWN in March 2012, when applying for the Y&CC that we would do so as soon as practicable. We have not done it yet. This needs a resolution at a Council meeting that states we meet all the criteria. We comply on elected Councillors and having a qualified clerk however the clerk needs to have done a separate training component on “the exercise of the Power of Competence”. Maybe she holds this qualification, I don’t know for sure? At this the clerk shook her head to say she has not yet done this component.*

*We may need to trade through a separate company?*

*Do we need to apply for Change of Use? Has anyone checked and have we got it in writing?*

*We need to notify the Environmental Health Dept. of BCKLWN. Do we need to change our premises certificate with the Licensing Dept? There is a lot of research to be done before we know our position.*

3. *Competing with established businesses.*

*Have they been canvassed and if so, with what result? All provide vegetarian options. We have already upset the residents of Manorfields. Do we want to upset more? To cover wage cost we need sales of c. £45,000 @ 60% gross margin. We may be in for a rating surprise as the Town Hall has not been re-valued to reflect the restoration of the basement.*

*I propose that this is deferred for 12 months by which time it may be reasonable to embark on a further project. The time is not right NOW and I ask you to think very carefully before you vote on the agenda item as it is written . . .*

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) all recommendations, with the exception of the recommendation at Minute 10, made at the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be adopted.

**RESOLVED** (5 for, 7 against) defer any decision on the basement café for 12 months.

**RESOLVED** (7 for, 5 against) proceed with the basement café as per item 10 of the Finance minutes.

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) the recommendations made at the meeting of the Town Hall Management Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be adopted.

## 11. **Correspondence**

1. **NCC** Temporary Road Closure –Redgate Roundabout 4<sup>th</sup> November; previously circulated to all councillors on 15<sup>th</sup> October
2. **NCC** Temporary Road Closure –High Street 4<sup>th</sup>- 15<sup>th</sup> November to; previously circulated to all councillors on 15<sup>th</sup> October
3. **NCC** Temporary Road Closure –Westgate 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> November; previously circulated to all councillors on 15<sup>th</sup> October
4. **WNVCA** “Lite Touch” circular November 2013
5. **WNVCA** “Have Your Say” leaflet re public consultation NCC cuts
6. **Momentum** Members’ magazine November 2013
7. **NNAB** Norfolk & Norwich Association for the Blind - Annual Report 2012-2013
8. **CPRE** Field work magazine Winter 2013

9. **CPRE** Countryside Voice magazine Winter 2013
10. **Mr J Haslam** email dated 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013 re: false widow spider & public toilets in Hunstanton.
11. **Mr & Mrs P Bowen** letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> October 2013 re: Searles proposed housing development.
12. **Mr M Harriman** email dated 10<sup>th</sup> November 2013 re: Searles proposed housing development and H Bellingham MP's reply dated 6<sup>th</sup> November
13. **Mr R Melton**
- a) letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013 re: conifer hedging thanks.
  - b) letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013 re: various updates + a poem called "Our Dear Old Spinny"

#13A At the request of Cllr Murray the Deputy Clerk read out the letter

#11 At the request of Cllr Maiden the Deputy Clerk read out the letter

#12 At the request of Cllr Maiden the Deputy Clerk read out the letter

Cllr Earnshaw asked if it was written anywhere that the no further building was to take place near the Bennetts Estate. Cllr Maiden reported that it had been the concept that no further building could take place and that is why the only access point would be Harry's Way.

#10 At the request of Cllr G Smith the Deputy Clerk read out the letter

12. Additional Residents Question Time

**Mrs Bird** requested the reply to the letter regarding the Fake Widow spider be read out.

**P Beal** voiced how unhappy he was that the basement café will go ahead, he could not see people wanting to patronise it.

**S Boxhall** also voiced her sadness that HTC had decided to proceed with the café. The Civic Society and Women's Institute had been approached as volunteer workers in the café but had declined.

**A Winnington** advised that he lived next door to the people who had suffered vandalism one night. They had their gate broken and their garden pots thrown against their window. They called the police and were really impressed with how prompt the police reacted and dealt with the whole situation.

Meeting closed at 7.39pm.