

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF HUNSTANTON HELD IN
HUNSTANTON TOWN HALL ON
FRIDAY 23RD JANUARY 2015 AT 6.30 PM

Present: Mayor C. Bower Deputy Mayor: J Johnson

Town Councillors: C Earnshaw G Smith A Boardman M Ruston
A Murray D Parton S Ellis R Davies
G Gooderson J Maiden D Harrington

Also present:-

7 x members of the Public
NCllr & BCllr R Bird
Town Clerk
Press x 1

Prayers The Mayor led members in prayers.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Light, Clutton and Thomson all of whom were on vacation, Cllr Devlin who had a problem at home and the Deputy Town Clerk who was unavailable due to a prior engagement.

2. Public Question Time

Mr. P Richardson of Sandringham Road commented that two events held in the hall, namely the Christmas Tree Festival and the Pantomime had been excellent.

Mr. D Jones of Clarence Road reaffirmed what he had voiced at the previous meeting, this being that planning always throws up contentious issues and therefore needs to be transparent. Decisions should not be made behind closed doors. He thought the last General Purpose Committee meeting had shown that some Councillors were not aware of the Shopfront Guide, some Councillors were not responding to the Planning Chairman and some not even reading the documents.

The Mayor asked for a show of hands as to which Councillors were aware of the Shopfront Guide, all but one was aware. Cllr Earnshaw thought it was the job of the Planning Chairman to make them aware.

Mr. T Parish asked why HTC had not responded to the CPRE questionnaire regarding lighting. The Mayor explained that HTC is not responsible for lighting in the town however, Cllr Murray had responded on HTC's behalf.

Mr. Parish explained that he was a Heacham Parish Councillor and that residents of Heacham were asking why HTC were supporting the proposed roundabout considering the impact it will have on Heacham. Cllr Bower advised that the Highways Department considered a roundabout the safest option and that most of the objections had come from Heacham residents.

Mr Parish questioned why HTC was making such a decision when they would not support a roundabout further down the A149 a year ago.

Cllr Ruston reminded the meeting that the recommendation had not yet been adopted.

The Mayor advised that a further 5 minute public question time was available at the end of the meeting.

3. Police Liaison Officer

Sgt Bane had sent the following report:

Please accept my apologies this month as I am unable to attend. I would be grateful if you could appraise councillors of the report below, which has been compiled up to 20th January 2015 from 12th December 2014.

We have recorded 25 offences during this period which is an increase of 12 crimes for the same time a year previously.

This variance appears to be as result of an increase of theft offences this year.

Burglary Other than dwelling. A business premises was broken into where a number of items were taken overnight. A charity shop suffered an attempt by persons who tried to force a door, but gained no access.

Violent Crime. 3 Common Assaults, two related to the same offender who assaulted 2 persons and was arrested. A third offence where an elderly resident has assaulted their neighbour and this has been dealt with by the Restorative Justice process.

Criminal Damage. 6 reported incidents of Criminal Damage. One relates to damage to a boarded up window of a retail premises, another two relate to two vehicles damaged overnight in the same location, a fourth is a neighbour who damaged a fence for which he has been charged, a domestic related damage incident and damage to a toilet roll holder in local public toilets.

Theft. Six of these relate to shops, 1 person has been arrested and charged for one of the offences, a second has been given a penalty notice and a third has been released due to evidential difficulties. Three other thefts relate to theft of a handbag when it was left on a bus and not recovered, a pair of glasses taken from a work premises and money stolen from a residential home. We have had 3 reported thefts from motor vehicles where wallets and handbags have been left on display, and the third one was a theft from a roof box containing piping on works van. One report of 2 locked cycles stolen from a residential address days before Christmas.

The final crime relates to possession of Cannabis where the offender was charged.

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

BCllr Beal

The Clerk read out the following email from Borough Councillor Beal:

As you are probably aware I was reported to the borough council about my behaviour at one of your council meetings. The borough legal dept after looking at papers and video clips decided I had no case to answer and advised I send my reports rather than in person. It is with regret that I do not attend in person but I am too busy to play along with little boys games.

ITEM 1 The borough has found a new game to go along side the Pitch & Putt behind the cliff top car park. It's Football Golf and is a fantastic new game as it says you kick a larger ball instead of hitting it with a club. You can have leagues and tables. I have attachments but can't send them with this Email so I will try separately. This should be up and running for Easter if not early summer. (The Clerk distributed details on this).

ITEM 2 The car park sign on the disused toilet block on South Beach car park is all broken and I was told today that a new one is ready to be put up.

ITEM 3 As councillors will know I have been wrestling with a car park initiative for over a year now but hopefully it is nearly resolved so I hope to have news in my next report.

ITEM 4 The tennis courts on the recreation ground do not get any use from the town's people so I am trying through talks with the borough to make access to them easier and will report further progress.

ITEM 5 I have just heard that the grant that the sailing club needed to finish of the work on the sailing club has not been awarded and were not successful in their bid this time. Details are a bit sketchy as to why hopefully full reasons will come through next week.

ITEM 6 The public toilets issue is still on going and I understand we are waiting for costings.

If any councillor has anything to report to me please feel free to get in touch.
Cllr Boardman voiced his disapproval with the first paragraph of this email.

BCllr R Bird

Cllr Bird gave a written report which he had distributed to members and is attached to these minutes.

In addition Cllr Bird reported:

- that he had attended a meeting concerning the Lifestyles Event. The 2014 event had not been a great success with £60k being ploughed into it with an attendance of 80,000 people.
- the NORA site in King's Lynn was given £1 million but the Borough Council were having to write it off as there were no finances to pay it back.
- hoping to get walking football arranged. Participants must be retirement age and can walk only, not run.
- the issue of McCarthy & Stone using car park spaces keeps going back and forth.
- the idea of a new retirement village if going forward.

5. Norfolk County Council

Cllr Bird had nothing else to report but invited questions.

Cllr Maiden asked if Cllr Bird had spoken to David Higgins and if he had responded to the Hopkins Homes application. It is now not going to Committee until March. Cllr Bird advised that he would circulate any information through the Clerk.

Cllr Boardman advised that with extra buses using the bus station, the McCarthy & Stone proposal of using this as a site exit would raise health & safety concerns. Cllr Bird reported that this idea had now been dropped. He has put a new proposition to the portfolio holder. It was clarified that the Borough Council owns the bus station.

The Clerk asked what happened to the money in the gritting pot from last year as the winter was mild and what would happen if this year was mild. Cllr Bird advised that the money was put back in the bigger pot within the Highways Department.

Cllr Bird advised that there was two options to get Collingwood Road gritted:

1. a volunteer scheme.
2. a pilot scheme for parish/town councils to take funding from precept for extra gritting.

The Clerk reported that HTC had also been advised that they could swap the gritting of roads.

6. Mayor's Remarks

We are all aware of the announcement a few weeks ago that RAF Mildenhall is closing. Lt Col John Peake rang me to say that although the 67th Squadron would be moving to Germany, he wanted to make it clear that their relationship with the Town was, and would continue to be, very important to them.

West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group held a drop-in event in the Town Hall on the 12th January for people to have their say about how health services in West Norfolk can be made fit for the future. The Contingency Planning Team (CPT), commissioned by the health regulator Monitor, has been working with patients, clinicians, GPs and staff working in organisations across the NHS in West Norfolk to find a system-wide solution to the financial and quality challenges currently faced by the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

A Health and Well-being Festival, organised by Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk County Council and Norfolk's Living Well Healthy Communities, was held on Saturday, 17 January 2015 in the Community Centre, with health professionals offering their services to local people. Those who attended had the chance to:

- Take advantage of a health check, take part in cookery demonstrations.
- Find out about managing a long term health condition.

- Meet the local policing team and find out about personal safety and courses available.

In a recent report a councillor wrote that he had described a Council decision to a member of the public as "misguided". There has long been a convention that once a decision has been made, all councillors support it in public. I am perfectly content that someone should say they voted against - this is often indeed a matter of public record. However, to criticise the decision is unfair and potentially insulting to other councillors, This has been raised with me by others, and it is something which is happening all too often. I request that it stops.

Next Wednesday The Deputy Mayor and I will be attending the KLFM Sports awards in the Corn Exchange. Finally a date for diaries - the Mayor's Reception will be held on Friday 10th April 2015 at 7pm.

7. Minutes – confirmation of
Meeting of the Town Council held on 12th December 2014.
RESOLVED (unanimous) the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 12th December 2014 be signed as a true record.
8. Minutes-matters arising
There were no matters arising.
9. Questions
No questions had been submitted by Members in accordance with Standing Orders.
10. Committee Recommendations
Consideration was given to the adoption of recommendations made at the meetings of General Purpose, Finance, Quality Council & Town Hall Management Committees held on 14th January 2015 Copies of the minutes of these meetings had been distributed to members prior to the meeting.
Cllr Maiden proposed, in view of Heacham Parish Council's objections, and in view that HTC has not carried out a consultation with its residents, recommendation 5.3 should be removed and referred back to the General Purpose Committee.
A lengthy debate ensued as to the merits of this. Cllr Maiden's proposal was lost 4 in favour, 7 against and 2 abstentions.
RESOLVED (9 for, 3 against, 1 abstention) the recommendations made at the meeting of the General Purpose Committee held on 14th January 2015 be adopted.
Cllr Ruston advised that, after discussions with the Clerk, and seeing as both the Borough and County Council had frozen their precept, HTC should do the same and amend item 10 to £148k from £149k.
RESOLVED (unanimous) the recommendations made at the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 14th January 2015 be adopted with item 10 being amended to £148k.
RESOLVED (unanimous) the recommendations of the Quality Council Committee meeting held on 14th January 2015 be adopted.
RESOLVED (unanimous) the recommendation made at the Town Hall Management Committee held on 14th January 2015 be adopted
11. Accounts for Payment
To consider and authorise for payment Schedules of Accounts for the Town Council No. 15/10a, the Tourist Information Centre No. T15/10a and the Community Centre No. 15/10a. Copies of the schedules had been distributed to members prior to the meeting. The Clerk explained that regulations state the Facilities Manager is entitled to have her eye test paid for by HTC.

RESOLVED (unanimous) Schedules of Accounts for the Town Council No. 15/10a, the Tourist Information Centre No. T15/10a and the Community Centre No. 15/10a be approved for payment.

12. Working Parties
Members received a copy of the latest membership list of the HTC Working Parties which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. The list was accepted.
 13. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Pre-Submission Document
Consideration was given to making a response to the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Pre-Submission Document deferred from the General Purpose Committee held on 14th January 2015. A response being required by 23rd February 2015. A copy of Cllr Murray's analysis of the document had been previously emailed to members.
A discussion took place as to the number of dwellings allocated.
The Mayor thanked Cllr Murray for all his hard work.
RESOLVED (7 for, 6 against) no response required.
 14. Understanding Your Council's Finances
Consideration was given to attendance at a workshop to more fully understand the council's finances and councillor involvement in the accounts. The cost of the workshop being £35. A copy of the details had been distributed to members prior to the meeting.
RESOLVED (unanimous) no members to attend this course due to closeness of elections.
 15. The Black Art of Minute Taking
Consideration was given to attendance at a course to demystify the key areas of minute taking and provide valuable tips on producing professional minutes, the cost of the course being £35. Details of the course had been distributed to members prior to the meeting.
RESOLVED (unanimous) the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to attend.
 16. Dropped Kerbs in Hunstanton
Correspondence from a Hunstanton resident, Mrs J Leeder, regarding the poor provision of dropped kerbs in Hunstanton, which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, was received. Consideration was given as to any action to take.
RESOLVED (unanimous) request Sally Bettinson from NCC Highways attend along with Mrs Leeder. Also request a map of dropped kerbs throughout Hunstanton.
 17. Correspondence
A summary of miscellaneous correspondence received since the last meeting was available for members at the meeting.
 1. **David Elvidge** letter dated 20th December 2014 re: Oasis Swimming Pool
 2. **Dick Melton** undated poem re: lighting on path to Tesco.
 3. **Dick Melton** letter dated 8th January 2015 re-surfacing concrete road from Kit Kat site to fairground.
 4. **Chris Smith** email dated 21st January 2015 re:- proposed roundabout on A149
- # 4 At the request of Cllr Gooderson, the Clerk read this item out in full.
- # 1 Cllrs. Parton and Maiden requested a copy of this item.

- # 3 At the request of Cllr Murray, this item was read out in full and also he requested a copy.
It was requested that the Clerk find out if this was a private arrangement.

18. Public Question Time

Mr. Clive Brewer of Manorfields Estate thought from the LDF point of view that the A149 roundabout issue appeared to have been resolved. Mr Parish remarked that it had not been resolved as the planning application had not yet been presented.

Mr Parish said, as a Heacham Parish Councillor, they will not stand by and allow a roundabout to go ahead. Once the Heacham planning application is dealt with next week then all their energy will be put in to opposing this. Someone, somewhere, has decided they do not want to lose votes, hence why access will not go through Hunstanton.

Mr. Stephen Boston commented that he had not seen the application however, having been a bus driver for many years, he was aware that a roundabout was better than traffic lights as it gave a better traffic flow.

The Mayor advised that Hopkins Homes made many presentations and had responded to residents in view of access not going through the Manorfields Estate.

Meeting Closed at 8.22pm

Councillor's report from Richard Bird to the Town Council

Alive Leisure, CIC's, Flood defences and tax

I read the other day that the franchise for the rail link between London & Edinburgh was about to be re-assigned to another privately owned company, this after the Government was forced to run it themselves for a substantial period after the failure of Stagecoach Railway Company to fulfill its obligations and forfeited the franchise. The Government has a duty to fulfill these responsibilities and as such was obliged to create a company for the interim.

The Government has done all it can to privatise industries that, in my opinion, may have been better left as government departments. The justice departments of the Probation Service and the Child Support Agency, both cases in point that are about to, at least in part, be privatised.

The water companies, the power industry, the telecom business, the rail industry and now parts of the National Health Service, plus many more are companies that many would argue would have been better for the nation left under state control, I am sure the debate will continue for years to come. That's why we have elections to choose the parties that we believe would do the best for us.

Locally at the Boro' Council has done some privatisation of its own, Alive Leisure, is a charitable company established to manage the leasehold theatre (not the Princess in Hunstanton that is leased to a local group) and sports leisure assets of the Boro', its main purpose for being established was to save ratepayers money, a suggestion we would all applaud I am sure. The buildings are the same, the staff are the same, the promotion and prices are the same and the only real difference to us consumers is that there is a tax ruling change that should in theory save the Boro' and us the ratepayers approximately £500,000 per year. The board is made up of a well-respected group of people from our local community and their philanthropic standing is supported by the inclusion of members voted into office by the electorate. Nothing is ever 100% perfect in this world, but in my opinion, this is about as good as it can get, provided we do not allow complacency to creep in of course!

The Boro' council asked this week for the Norfolk County Council to endorse its latest privatisation proposal. The coastline between Wolferton Creek and Hunstanton Cliffs has been under review for over 4 years, brought to local attention by leading activists in the leisure and caravan industry the inquiry sought to do two things, the first to establish a method of reducing the erosion by way of engineering and the second to establish methods of local funding.

The engineering aspect has been heavily debated with many months of research conducted, I for one have always complained that without any

budget this exercise was entirely futile, using the analogy of walking into a car showroom without knowing how much money you have to spend, how can you possibly know if you want a Bentley or a Robin Reliant.

The finances were always considered a secondary issue with most avenues of how money could be raised locally coming to nothing due to various legal complications, suggestions about raising the town/parish precept, raising local commercial rates, raising money in specific parts of the Boro', and others all proved to be non starters.

For those not up to speed with this situation I should advise you that national/central Government has put down a dictate that in many coastal areas, this one included, they will no longer pay 100% of the erosion and flooding defence cost. So in our case only 25% will be supplied through the Environment Agency and national Government, the rest, 75% has to be produced by some sort of local donations, levy or taxation. Locally the annual cost for the beach recycle is about £150,000, and without it the caravan sites and some properties would probably be inundated with sea water. Heacham and Snettisham being the most at risk. The Environment Agency and the Boro' Council have agreed, shortly to be ratified, the establishment of a Community Infrastructure Company, this company will ask for voluntary contributions from various as yet unspecified groups of flood defence beneficiaries like the caravan, beech hut, chalet and other users. to raise the funds needed.

Norfolk County Council was unable to endorse the proposal, for a myriad of reasons, including the lack of a business plan, confirmation that the tax rules, only instated this month, had been correctly considered, that the contributions will have to be voluntary as there is NO legislation in law to enforce payment, that no council Members would be on the board of directors, that the type of company was confirmed as correct and most critically that the Norfolk County Council would NOT underwrite the company in the event of its failure. John Dobson and I both N.C.C Councillors for this coastal area have warned of this dilemma for many months, It will be interesting to see if the Boro' Council and Environment Agency takes any notice of these events.

Women's running courses for beginners

The Hunstanton Alive Oasis will be organising running for beginners, the course starts on the 11th of February and the time is 6-30. The cost is just £15.00 for the whole six week course. You can find an application form in the Tourist Information Centre or the Alive Oasis leisure centre . For further information contact 'Alive Sports Development 01 553 818015 or 818017.

Retirement village gets closer

Hunstanton's plans to create a retirement village with a dementia facility took a step closer recently. The Local Development Framework document has

now been published highlighting the retirement village as part of the plan. This effectively takes another small step towards the establishment of the much needed facility. We await further developments.

New Bus company starts on the K.L. to Hunstanton route.

Starting on the 26th January the new 'LYNX bus company' Whose company title is 'Coastal Red Ltd', will operate from K.L bus Station to Hunstanton bus Station, main points on route being Dersingham, Snettisham and Heacham with a normal stopping service. It will operate 7 days a week with an hourly service.

Web site:

<http://www.lynxbus.co.uk/>