

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF HUNSTANTON HELD IN  
HUNSTANTON TOWN HALL ON  
Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Present: Deputy Mayor: J Johnson

Town Councillors; A Murray D Parton D Harrington M Ruston  
S Ellis G Smith E Clutton T Light  
B Davies G Thomson J Maiden G Gooderson (p/t)

Also present:-

3 members of the Public  
NCllr & BCllr R Bird  
BCllr E Watson  
Town Clerk  
Assistant to Town Clerk

Prayers The Deputy Mayor led members in prayers.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mayor Carol Bower who was on vacation, Cllr B D Devlin who was attending a President's Night at Rotary and Cllr CM Earnshaw who was childminding her Granddaughter.

2. Public Question Time

**Mr. David Jones** said he would like to refer to 2 items that he mentioned at the last FCM.

Firstly, he was pleased to note that the Town Team has had a meeting. He has now received the minutes and accounts in response to his FOI request. He thought it made depressing reading as it transpired that the previous full Town Team meeting occurred on 31st July 2013 – that was 20 months ago. This cannot be described as competent project management.

Secondly, Mr Jones said he still had not had a reply to his email to the Mayor which was dated 4th February. This was 44 days ago. He said he would be grateful if the Mayor could be asked how much longer he will have to wait and let him know the answer.

Mr Jones then referred to the recent General Purpose Committee Meeting. He had been unable to attend as he was at the House of Commons with Cllr Maiden attending a meeting with Henry Bellingham MP and Penny Mordaunt (The Minister responsible for Coastal Communities). However, he has viewed a recording of the meeting. He referred specifically to the discussion about Mr Webb's Full Council Questions. There was a rambling discussion which included some inaccurate information, some reminisces from Cllr Ruston about his younger days but more importantly some timely hard facts from Cllr Murray which were sadly ignored. He said he was astonished when the Mayor attempted to massage the density figures for the Land to the east of Cromer Road (The Le Strange land) and the land north of Hunstanton Road Heacham (The Searle's land).

The LDF Pre-Submission Document is quite clear, and unambiguous:

Policy F2.2 Hunstanton - Land to the east of Cromer Road [the Le Strange Land] amounting to 6.2 hectares is allocated for residential development of 120 dwellings.

Policy F2.4 Hunstanton - Land north of Hunstanton Road [Heacham – the Searles land] amounting to 12.6 hectares should be allocated for development of 163 dwellings on 6.2 ha of the site, and open space on 6.4 ha of the site.

Both areas of land allocated for dwellings are 6.2 ha. The Le Strange land is allocated 120 dwellings: the Searle's land is allocated 163 dwellings. The remaining 6.4 ha of the Searles land is in a flood plain and not for building houses on, and is also in Heacham.

**Mr Pat Richardson** asked if Hunstanton Town Council could write to Norfolk County Council about the newly installed Puffin Crossing, what excellent work the contractors had done in a very professional streamlined manner.

3. Police Liaison Officer

Copy of report from P.S. John Bane received 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015 as follows: \_

‘We have recorded 16 offences since the February meeting this year compared to 29 in 2014.

**Violent Crime.** 3 Incidents. 1 ABH (Actual Bodily Harm). The Injured party refused to engage or provide details for an investigation. A Racially aggravated Common Assault, this relates to taxi driver collecting a fare in King's Lynn for a Hunstanton resident and being assaulted on the way to Hunstanton. Offender has been charged with 3 counts. A common assault, involving 2 pupils from local school.

**Theft of Motor Vehicle.** The car was taken overnight from a street in the town when locked and secured.

**Theft.** 2 reported thefts. 1 involving the theft of a charity collection box from a local store and the other relates to items taken from a plot on the allotment site.

**Harassments.** 4 reported matters 1 resident has harassed a neighbour, offending person has been charged. Another local resident has harassed staff at local store and has been charged with this offence. The final two harassment offences relate to 2 parties who have had a long running dispute and saw each other in the town.

**Criminal Damage.** 6 Incidents, Damage to a premises window, a damage to a public toilet where the door and lock had been jemmied, and damage to the fence around the Croquet pitch on the recreation ground. The remaining three crimes relate to vehicles being scratched around the town centre. All these appear to have a different motive.’

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

Cllr Watson reported the Coastal Community bid had been submitted.

She was please that planning approval had not been given for a house on Sandringham Road.

A meeting of the Anglia in Bloom Committee will be held on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Cllr Bird commented that all Borough Council energies were being concentrated on planning and activities in King's Lynn at the moment.

Cllr Maiden asked when the next green meeting would be held.

Cllr Watson said that there was no information regarding this at the present moment.

5. Norfolk County Council

See report from Norfolk County Councillor R.Bird attached to these minutes.

Cllr D Parton asked if there was to be a consultation on speed limits.

Cllr Bird said that he had seen the report in the EDP and was informed he'd get an

email, which he had not yet received. The £30000 quoted was to consist of half from National Government, and half from Safety Cameras. This matter is going into consultation in September. If there are any specific question about this matter, they should be put through the Town Clerk.  
Tidy Tip sites will now continue as before.

6. Mayor's Remarks

In the absence of the mayor, her report was read out as follows;

Mayor's Report 20.03.15

'It has been a quiet month but I have attended the Justice Service in the Minster. We had our own ceremony on Commonwealth Day. It started with a message from the Queen and the raising of the Commonwealth flag at the War Memorial, ably done by the Headboy and Headgirl of Smithdon. The ceremony was completed in the Town Hall with candles and readings. I would like to thank those councillors who attended and The Town Clerk and Facilities Manager for setting up the Town Hall.

That same day I had much pleasure in being at the handing over of the completed houses by Victory Housing.

I am very envious of the Deputy Mayor attending St Winnold's breakfast at Downham Market.

He and I are attending the Mayor's Civic Awards in King's Lynn on the 1st April.  
Happy Easter!'

7. Minutes – confirmation of

Meeting of the Town Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2015 be signed as a true record.

8. Minutes Matters Arising.

Casual vacancy

The Clerk reported that due to the resignation of Cllr. Boardman a Casual Vacancy had arisen. There was insufficient time for an election so the place would be filled by co-option at the April Full Council meeting.

Cllr. Clutton

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Clutton had resigned from the Freedom of the Town Working Party, a meeting was due to be held early April, a new Chairman can be appointed at this time, the Clerk will do the agenda.

Cllr. Clutton had also resigned as HTC representative on the Town Team. As there were another two HTC representatives on the Town Team it was unnecessary to find a replacement.

9. Questions

There were no questions arising.

10. Committee Recommendations.

Consideration was given to the adoption of recommendations made at the meetings of Finance and Quality Council Committees held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Copies of the minutes of these meetings had been distributed to members prior to the meeting

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) the recommendations made at the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 be adopted.

Cllr A Murray said he could not support the recommendation on the Quality Council Committee for the suggested wording of the email policy and proposed sending back to policy review party, as criticism was part of democracy, whistle blowing is important but should not impair the democratic process. This was seconded by Cllr J Maiden, The proposition failed 4 for and 9 against. In favour: Cllrs Murray, Maiden, Harrington and Parton, against: Johnson, Gooderson, Clutton, Earnshaw, Ruston, Smith, Davies, Light and Ellis.

**RESOLVED** (for 9: Johnson, Gooderson, Clutton, Earnshaw, Ruston, Smith, Davies, Light and Ellis. Against: Murray, Maiden, Harrington and Parton) The recommendations from the Quality Council Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> March be adopted.

11. Accounts for Payment

Consideration was given to authorising for payment Schedules of Accounts for the Town Council No. 15/12a, the Tourist Information Centre No. T15/12a and the Community Centre No. 15/12a. Copies of the schedules had been distributed to members prior to the meeting.

Cllr Light asked if it was necessary to pay in advance for the Buffet for the Mayoral Reception 10<sup>th</sup> April. The Town Clerk responded that it was, as the caterer is a small local business. The Town Clerk also asked for attention to be made to an item on the Community Centre Schedule for British Telecom which is for two months which will then be adjusted accordingly.

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) Schedules of Accounts for the Town Council No. 15/12a, the Tourist Information Centre No. T15/12a and the Community Centre No. 15/12a be approved for payment.

12. Town Team Wi-Fi

Consideration was given to joining the free Town Wi-Fi at an annual cost of £120 or a six monthly cost of £90. Cllr Maiden expressed a wish not to join the scheme.

Cllr Murray asked for further explanation of its benefits. Cllr Clutton felt it would be good for advertising tourist information, Sealife and other services.

The Deputy Mayor, James Johnson, commented that he felt that membership was very cheap. Cllr Ruston said he proposed joining considering the benefits and Cllr Light seconded this. In favour of the proposal 10 and three against. Cllr Clutton added that membership could be withdrawn at any time.

**RESOLVED** (10 for, 3 against) HTC to join the Town Team Wi-Fi at an annual cost of £120.

13. Chamber of Trade

The Town Clerk had requested joining the Chamber of Trade at a cost of £10 per annum.

She added that as the Tourist Information is a business which does so much in the town it would be apt to be part of it. Cllr Gooderson proposed joining the Chamber of Trade and Cllr Clutton seconded the proposal .

**RESOLVED** (unanimous) HTC join the Chamber of Trade at a cost of £10 per annum.

14. Correspondence

A summary of miscellaneous correspondence received since the last meeting was available for members at the meeting.

1. **WNVCA** Notice of merger with NRCC, list of updated services.
2. **WNVCA** Funding News March 2015
3. **WNVCA** In Touch news-sheet March 2015
4. **WNVCA** Invitation to a 'Farewell Drop In' at Thorsby College
5. **Dick Melton** letter dated 06<sup>th</sup> March 2015 re: Two Bus Shelters.

#5

At Cllr A Murray's request, the Assistant Clerk read this item in full

Cllr A Murray also requested a copy.

15. Public Question Time

Adrian Winnington in response to the letter from Dick Melton said that the pavements were not wide enough for Bus Shelters on Princes Drive and the residents would not be happy. He also added that he had seen the erection of three story buildings with no space in between and that high density building wasn't good.

Cllr G Thomson asked the date of the 'Farewell Drop In', at Thorsby College and was informed by the Town Clerk it was Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April from 7-9pm.

Watson? Said that the Town Clerk and himself were at the tourism meeting recently.

It seemed that on the London Underground, all the promotion is for Norwich though the website has a huge picture of Hunstanton Cliffs. Cllr Bird said that he felt there should be more of a distinction between North West Norfolk and King's Lynn.

Cllr Ruston said that Hunstanton Parish Council had resolved to write to the contractors, Lafarge Tarmac on their excellent team work on resurfacing the Clarence road to Old Hunstanton Road. Cllr Bird said that the road is now finished, the Puffin crossing and many things had been done; many emails had been received on the inconvenience caused but rarely positive feedback is received. A major job had been finished to a fantastic standard with some inconvenience, but it's open for the weekend and it's a job efficiently done.

Cllr D Harrington wanted the proposed Chicken farm which will be three times the size of Wembley Stadium mentioned. The smell could have a disastrous effect in an area of tourism. Cllr M Ruston said he was aware of an area south of St

Ives, Huntingdon, where an old chicken shed had been replaced by one of these state of the art sheds.

He stated the smell to be minimal and knew this from personal experience.

Cllr J. Maiden said he would like to speak for the chickens involved.

Meeting Closed at 7.20

#### \*Councillor Birds' Monthly Report

This month is a brief report, the election has now been officially called for Boro' and Town. These will run alongside the general election on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

I will report only on the Norfolk County Council (NCC) happenings to avoid upsetting the purdah rules.

I reported last month that there were things happening regarding the Tidy Tip at Heacham. In April 2015 the hours of opening were to be cut back, in April 2016 there was to be a £2 charge initiated. The total savings across all of the NCC Tips was to be just under £200K for the first phase followed by the charges phase that should have been just over £200k total savings of about £400k. Well, as indicated, national government has got involved and a complete waste management review has started, it is due in September this year. My understanding is that the consolidation of hours is to be put on hold, at least for the moment. The EDT (Environment Transport and Development) committee, of which I am a member voted unanimously for this action. We as a committee are now faced with where these savings will be found, not an easy task. The business of flooding, both coastal and inland are high on the agenda; EDTD at NCC has a special responsibility for both of these.

there are concerns about the Environment Agency's stance on the methodology of raising revenues that contribute towards defences, the understanding of the new methods of qualification to create new defences and the beneficiaries' tax benefits are not at all clear. this is something E.A has never been involved with before. As a member of the RFCC (Regional Flood Coastal Committee) Eastern Division, a Coastal Division NCC councillor and an ETD member you can perhaps understand my commitment to trying to unravel the apparent muddle.

I am joined in these efforts by the very experienced Cllr. John Dobson. First meetings are in April with RFCC; this organisation works directly with E.A and as a rule it listens to their proposals and then normally supports their actions , this could be very different with pertinent questions that demand answers being put to the E.A Officers. I suspect that the answers will not be available immediately but the 'wheels will be in motion'.

There are issues at NCC about fostering procedures and the way children in care are dealt with. This is a huge issue with no easy solutions, it involves not only the issues of love, care and proper upbringing but more down to earth issues of cost. Some would say cost should not be a consideration but in these straightened times I think it would be sensible to give you all some statistics. Firstly in Norfolk there are about 1100 plus children and young people in care, 0 to 18 years old. About 75% are fostered others are in children's homes, each person costs, on average, the ratepayers about £44,000 per year. Norfolk has twice as many youngsters in care as Suffolk and about three times as many as Cambridgeshire. All have similar levels of population.

It is estimated that there could be 500 or so children looked after by alternative relatives. This system costs ratepayers nothing with grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings taking the strain. Recently, I am told, a family of 9 children were taken into emergency care, work that out, about £400,000 per year for one tragedy. The two biggest costs for NCC ratepayers are Children's and adults Social Services. It's very hard to see how the costs will ever be reduced leaving more pressure on ETD and community spends.

Lastly the issue of reduced speed limits for the area's roads have come up again, nearly 400 people a year are killed or seriously injured on Norfolk's roads, many of which are not more than tracks suitable for Boudicca's Chariot some 2000 years ago. I can remember when last I was mayor there was a terrible spate of young people being injured or killed in this area, it was terrible and although slightly better in terms of numbers now, the call was then as now let's do something about it. Well, years later finally a suggestion has been forwarded, I can only imagine what the 'no' group arguments will be, but be assured there will be some.