

Thorpe St Andrew Town Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2015

152	Present:	Mr J Ward (Town Mayor)	Mr I Mackie
		Mr J Fisher	Mr P Berry
		Mr R Robson	Miss S Lawn
		Mrs T Mancini Boyle	Mr N Shaw
		Mr D Sears	Mrs J Fisher
		Mr M Pickess	Mr J Emsell
		Mr N Hancock	Mr R Wooden
			Mr F Bowe

Apologies: Mr L Reeves

In attendance: Mr T. Foreman (Town Clerk) and 5 members of the public were in attendance.

153 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda.

Miss S Lawn declared an interest in item 159 (ii) as the Chair of the Broadland Appeals Panel and left the meeting for the duration of this item.

154 To confirm the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 2nd November 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record.

155 Announcements (For information only)

To receive announcements from

(i) The Town Mayor- the Town Mayor have an overview of his activities on behalf of the Town during the past month. This including the opening of the Firework night event on the 5th November 2015 and opening the Christmas Light event on 6th December at River Green. The Town Mayor gave special thanks to Miss S Lawn for her role in the organisation of the events in 2015.

(ii) The Clerk- the Clerk provided a brief update on staffing and the activities during the previous month. This included site meeting with the Broads Authority and meeting local residents. In addition the Clerk extended his gratitude to the safer Neighbourhood Team for their tireless work during the month. Additionally special thanks was given to the Yare Ferry Co. and Whitlingham Charitable Trust who ensured that the Christmas event was very memorable.

156 Public participation –To consider a motion to suspend the meeting to allow members of the public the opportunity to address the meeting limited to 3 mins each

The Meeting was suspended following a proposal from Mr J Ward, seconded by Mr I Mackie with all in favour.

(i) Norfolk Constabulary- a PCSO of the Thorpe St Andrew Safer Neighbourhood Team was present to update the Town Council on the crime statistics for November 2015. The Town Council noted the number of common assaults and criminal damage crimes. The sexual offences were queried, the types of social media and telephonic activities which were classes as sexual offences were noted.

(ii) County and District Councillors –For the County Council Mr I Mackie explained that the budget consultation was ongoing and that residents were actively encouraged to take part. Mr Mackie also confirmed that Hillside Primary School was having a much needed £1.6million investment in its kitchen and dining facilities.

For the County Mr J Ward gave an overview of the projects currently underway including the 'Warm and Well' campaign, Northern Distributor Road, Bridewell Museums First World War exhibition and the County Council intensive enablement service. Also Mr J Ward had attended the Thorpe St Andrew Sixth Form 'Celebrating Success' evening.

For the District Council Mr J Ward outlined his report into the activities of Broadland District Council including the Top Dog Scheme, devolution and broadband and mobile speeds across the area.

(iii) Members of the public

Three members of the public spoke on agenda item 159 (ii) and outlined their support for the Tree Preservation order due to its importance in terms of the environment, history and streetscape. In addition there was some concern that they had not been formally told about the appeal of the Tree Preservation Order from the District Council.

Mr M Martins wishes the Town Council seasonal greetings and spoke on Agenda item 160. Mr Martins circulated a photo of a historic hire boat service and voiced his support for the proposal to establish a similar business on River Green due to the economic and social benefits for the area.

157 Finance

- (i) Payments List: Voucher numbers 699 to 815 totalling £154,487.69 were noted
- (ii) Bank Reconciliation Statement was agreed and signed as a true record.

158 Draft Minutes of Committee Meetings.

- (i) Plans Meeting 9th November 2015 were noted
- (ii) Finance & Staff 16th November 2015. Miss S Lawn gave an overview of the Finance and Staff Meeting where the Committee agreed to fund the theatrical electrical works of the Village Hall at a cost of £4,356.72 plus VAT, due to delays in getting agreement in funding from users. Any user wishing to use the theatrical electrics will pay £5 +VAT per hour. This was noted by the Town Council.
- (iii) Events and Media 18th November 2015 were noted.

159 (i) Town Amenities Officer's Report-None

(ii) Tree Wardens Report- Miss S Lawn left the meeting for the duration of this item. The Town Council discussed at length the report from the tree Warden. The report outlined that there was a Tree Preservation Order appeal on the 7th January 2016 as a resident wanted to fell the tree. The oak tree is estimated to be over 200 years old and is a key feature of the Thunder Lane streetscape. On a show of hands with all in favour it was **AGREED** that a letter in support of the Tree Preservation Order be written to Broadland District Council.

160 Yare Ferry Co. Hire Services from River Green

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the report submitted by Yare Ferry Co. which described the ferry activities for the 2015 season. Operating over 87 days, the ferry had some strong passenger numbers particularly in August, but poor weather hampered some of the services. It is possible that during the next season timetabling may change to better adapt to passenger numbers. The report also proposed operating a hire boat business from the quayheading at River Green. The Town Clerk explained that this activity would be good for tourism to the Town and attract visitors to the surrounding businesses. The Town Council explored the issue of car parking in the area, with the use of the Frostbites Sailing Club Carpark and land next to the Rushcutters being potential locations. Mr T Foreman further stated that as the quayheading was under lease to the Broads Authority until Spring 2017, the Authority would need to give permission for the business to use the mooring in 2016. It was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk would make representations to the Broads Authority to strongly support the proposal of the Yare Ferry Co. operating a hire boat business from River Green.

161 Budget 2016/16

The report into the budget was considered by the Town Council and a presentation was given by the Town Clerk. It was explained that a 15% budget was first considered and that this was revised to 9.5% with considerable restraint. An estimated increase of 9.5% equated to £74.33, an increase of 12p per week for a Band D property. The increase would cover asset replacement, an additional member of staff and cover the village hall loan repayments. It was further explained that the Town would remain significantly lower than the £101.77 to £129.06 per year charged by neighbouring comparator authorities. The reduction in the Broadland District Council grant was also considered, the Town Clerk explained that this would be calculated by Broadland but would not change the total precept required by the Town. The Town Council reviewed a number of budget lines and a Councillor explained that the budget reflected the ongoing needs of the Town to remain a safe and desirable place to both live and work. It was proposed by Mrs T Mancini-Boyle, seconded by Miss S Lawn and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to set the precept at £373,760.00, an estimated increase of 9.5%. Miss S Lawn requested her appreciation for Mrs J Fenn who produced the budget to be reflected in the minutes.

162 Website Refresh

A presentation was given to the Town Council with images of the current website. It was explained that the site had become difficult to maintain due to formatting difficulties and a company would need to be engaged to undertake the work to rectify this. Best practice websites including Kent County Council and Gov.uk were considered which benefited from a simple and easy to navigate format. The presentation provided screenshots of a proposed website based on this best practice. The Town Council discussed this at length and asked about the cost implications of the website. The Town Clerk explained that he done the redesign in-house and therefore the cost was negligible. It was **AGREED** that the existing website be replaced with the new version presented, with reviews to be undertaken by the Events and Media Committee.

163 Proposed Donation for Christmas Services

Miss S Lawn gave a brief overview of the work of a local resident in designing and making baubles and bows for the Town Christmas Tree. The Town Clerk explained that the fireworks for the Christmas Light event were launched from the Whitlingham Country Park and the firework team were accompanied by Broads Authority Rangers on behalf of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust. Miss S Lawn stated her gratitude to the Trust and that the time, staff and consideration they had given. It was proposed by Miss S Lawn and seconded by Mr J Ward and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to:

- Donate £25 to a charity of the residents' choice in appreciation of the baubles and bows.
- Donate £50 to the Whitlingham Charitable Trust for the time and consideration in allowing access to the Country Park on a Sunday for the Christmas Lights event.

164 Community Rangers Voluntary Scheme

The Town Clerk provided an introduction into a report proposing the creation of a Community Ranger Voluntary Scheme. The proposal came through a number of requests to assist in the added value duties of the Town Council and the need to make the most from Council resources and engage with local residents. The typical duties would include updating noticeboards, assisting with the grounds team and monitoring areas for dog fouling. These duties would not detract from any paid employees tasks and could potentially be expanded as further opportunities were identified. Mr I Mackie stated his support for a scheme of this nature for engaging residents, but would like to have the name reconsidered as it may become confused with Highway Rangers. Mr J Fisher expressed his support for the scheme. It was proposed by Mr J Fisher, seconded by Mr I Mackie and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to implement a voluntary scheme with a

uniform polo-shirt and any applications to be considered by the Finance and Staff Committee.

166 Town Parking

(i) Outside Schools

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the problem of car parking outside Dussindale Primary School. Residents were often getting Civil Enforcement notices as they were parking outside the permitted areas due to parents parking outside the school. In addition, the school had serious concerns about emergency service access during these periods as well as the safety of children as they leave the school. The legislative rules on parking on double yellow lines requires a car to be observed on the line for at least 5 minutes, with the County Council agreement giving additional time on lines for parents to walk children to the gates. This results in few tickets being issued to parents as the drop off period is normally less than 5 minutes and as such no enforcement takes place. The school and Norfolk Constabulary have sent numerous letters to parents regarding this to no avail. The Town Clerk concluded that this was a wicked issue and advised that as other commonly tried methods had failed the Town Council should consider applying for the road to be closed during school opening and closing times. The Town Council considered this advice, with discussions regarding the need for an ongoing resolution as well as short term impact measures. Mr T Foreman suggested that a timed 'No Entry' system could be considered, or a no waiting restriction on the road outside the school. Mr J Emsell explained that his children had attended the school and was aware of the great lengths the school had gone to in trying to solve this issue. Furthermore both Sainsbury's and the Fitzmaurice Pavilion carpark were designed for parents to park and walk their children to school and these locations should be promoted during any road closure period. It was proposed by Mr Emsell, seconded by Mrs Mancini-Boyle and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** for the Town Clerk to apply for Vane Close to be closed between 8.25am-9.00am and 2.30pm to 3.15pm for a period of one week. All arrangements and publicity for the road closure to be arranged by the Town Clerk.

(ii) Parking on Verges

Miss S Lawn circulated photographs to the Town Council evidencing the issue of cars parking on verges in the Yarmouth Road area. It was explained that as a result of this car parking the verges were exposed with little grass remaining and the view for traffic pulling out of side roads had become increasingly obstructed. Miss S Lawn stated that trees such as Mountain Ash could be planted on the verges to prevent this from continuing. Mr I Mackie agreed that the verges were unsightly with cars parking on them, but felt that local businesses needed parking for staff and patrons, also many residents used these spaces. Mrs J Fisher provided examples of where wooden posts on the verges had been used effectively within the Town and this option could be explored with Norfolk County Council Highways. Mr J Ward explained that it was an issue in a number of countries he had visited and there were clearly no simple answers to the issue. Mr N Shaw concurred and questioned whether paving the verges and lining out car parking spaces could be an option. It was **AGREED** that Miss S Lawn, Mr I Mackie and the Town Clerk should meet with the Norfolk County Council Highways Engineer for the area and discuss possible solutions to the problem.

167 Youth Café 2016

The Town Council received a letter of thanks from the Youth Café for their use of buildings in 2015. Further dates for 2016 were given to the Town Council. The letter was noted and it was **AGREED** that the agreement with the Youth Café would continue throughout 2016.

168 Appointment of Facilities Assistant

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on the recruitment process. The Town Council were told that to date insufficient skilled individuals had applied for the Facilities Assistant

post. Therefore due to the need for the correct skillset, the post remained vacant. The recruitment would be on an ongoing basis until a suitable candidate had been found. The Town Council noted this report.

169 Correspondence from Norfolk County Council

An email from the Norfolk County Council Highways was presented to the Town Council. Mr N Shaw gave an overview of the email as he had been dealing with the issue of pedestrian refuges within Thorpe St Andrew on a regular basis. Mr N Shaw explained that the pedestrian refuge had originally been planned as part of the Norwich City Council 'Push the Pedal ways' scheme, however it was cancelled due to financial pressures. The Town Council discussed the cost of the refuge, which was estimated at £25,000 to £35,000. It was accepted that there were insufficient funds for the Town Council to fund the project, however it was suggested that the Pinebanks developers be approached to fund the works. It was **AGREED** that the Town Council would make representations to the Pinebanks developer with regard to funding the St Williams Way pedestrian refuge.

170 Civic Awards

This item is contained within the confidential minutes under The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960)

With no further business the meeting concluded at 9.45pm

Future Agenda Items. (Not for discussion)

Town Council meeting 4th January 2016

Date of next Plans meeting 14th December 2015

Date of next Finance & Staff meeting 18th January 2016

Chairman_____

Date _____