

Thorpe St Andrew Town Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2016

38. **Present:** Mr I Mackie (Town Mayor) Mr J Ward
Mr J Fisher Mr P Berry
Mr L Reeves Miss S Lawn
Mr N Shaw Mr R Robson
Mr D Sears Mrs J Fisher
Mr M Pickess Mr J Emsell
Mr N Hancock Mr F Bowe

Apologies: Mrs T Mancini Boyle, Mr R Wooden

In attendance: Mr T. Foreman (Town Clerk), Mr L Powell (Archant)

39. **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda.**
Mr I Mackie, Mr J Ward and Mr N Shaw stated an interest in the St Williams Way Refuge as members of the County Council.
40. **To confirm the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6th June 2016**
The minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2016 were agreed and signed as a true record.
41. **Announcements (For information only)**
To receive announcements from
(i) The Town Mayor- Mr I Mackie wished his to minute his welcome to the new Rector at Thorpe St Andrew Church. Furthermore, Mr I Mackie provided an update on his activities as Town Mayor, including the 150th Anniversary of the St Andrews Church, launch of the new Skate park proposals and working with the Pavilion Nursery on addressing the issue of littering on the public parks.

(ii) The Clerk- the Town Clerk provided an update on his activities and brought to the attention of members training opportunities at Broadland District Council with Scrutiny and the Local Development Plan for Broadland. Furthermore, the Town Clerk explained that the anti-social behaviour at the Pinebanks site had increased and partner agencies were working to resolve these problems.
42. **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 I Mackie, seconded by Mr J Ward.
(i) Norfolk Constabulary- the Town Council received the apologies from Norfolk Constabulary, but considered the crime figures. The Town Council noted this report.

(ii) County and District Councillors – Mr J Ward provided an overview of his written report and also outlined the devolution plans for the area explaining the whole County will be consulted on its future. Mr I Mackie stated that there were key budgetary constrains still being experienced by the County Council, particularly in the Adult Social Care department. Mr N Shaw provided an update on the drainage work planned for Thorpe St Andrew. Mr J Fisher explained that the new Broadland District Council houses had been placed on the market with 8 out of 14 already sold.

(iii) Members of the public
None

43. Finance

- (i) Payments List: Voucher numbers 186 to 271 totalling £30,509.30 were noted
- (ii) Bank Reconciliation Statement was agreed and signed as a true record.

44. Draft Minutes of Committee Meetings

- (i) Plans Meeting held 13th June 2016 were noted
- (ii) Finance & Staff held 20th June 2016 were noted

45. Pedestrian Refuge, St Williams Way

Mr T Foreman provided an overview of the report relating to a proposed pedestrian refuge on St Williams Way. It was explained that the refuge, originally planned as part of the green pedalway for cyclists, would cost £35,000 to £40,000 half of which could be funded through the Parish Partnership Scheme. However, the Town Council would need to provide all the funding for a refuge design which was costed at £12,000 and a survey costed at £3,000. In total the Town Council would be required to pay £32,500 to £35,000 for the refuge, and this had not been budgeted for the current financial year. It was explained that Norwich City Council had proposed this site for a refuge, but had postponed the pedalway due to a lack of funds.

The Town Council considered the report which gave reference to comments made by the County Council that there were no safety concerns on St Williams Way and that two traffic light controlled refuges were available in relatively close proximity. Mr N Shaw explained that he felt there were safety issues present on St Williams Way. Mr I Mackie explained that there was a need to address the issue of crossing for pedestrians at that location, but the Town Council budget could not currently fund the refuge. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Mr J Fisher and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** that

- The Town Council make representations to Norwich City Council to continue the green pedalway project, which included a refuge on the site.
- Discuss options with Broadland District Council regarding the funding of a pedestrian refuge.
- Consider whether to fund part of the survey element in the 2017/18 budget

46. Fixed Penalty Notices

Mr T Foreman introduced a report which provided a draft policy for Fixed Penalty Notices in Thorpe St Andrew. It was explained that this policy had been developed in conjunction following discussions with Broadland District Council and with reference to standard policies developed within local councils nationwide to ensure a consistent approach is maintained. The Town Council discussed options for enforcement and how often fixed penalty notices would be issued. Mr T Foreman explained that education was key, however the ability to issue a fixed penalty notice ensures that users of parks and open spaces are reassured that the Town Council has the ability to take sufficient action to tackle low level anti-social behaviour such as littering. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Mr J Fisher and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to approve the policy for Fixed Penalty Notices and approve the use of Fixed Penalty Notices on all Town Council sites within Thorpe St Andrew.

47. Proposed Administrative and Committee Officer

Mr T Foreman provided an introduction to the report proposing appointing two additional staff. It was explained that at the June 2016 Finance and Staff Committee meeting, a greater need for administrative support was been identified for the office, as currently the office has one full-time member of staff and two part-time members of staff. The Finance and Staff Committee recognised that there are large scale and significant developments within Thorpe St Andrew in the coming months and this unlikely to change in the coming years as the town grows in size and responsibility. Mr T Foreman explained that currently four committees are administered by the office, with all other functions and operations of the Town Council also being met. The Finance and Staff Committee therefore have proposed two additional staff to be employed. The first to be a part-time Administrative Officer who will undertake office based duties for 30 hours per week. The second officer would be an hourly paid Committee Officer with indicative hours of 5 per week whose duties would be to minute each of the committee and Town Council meetings.

Mr I Mackie explained that the Committee had considered a range of staffing options, but the employment of two additional part time staff provided flexibility and good coverage of the hours that the office was open. Mr N Hancock queried the employment costs and whether these could be met in year. Mr T Foreman explained that two vacant posts had led to a salary underspend so far this year, therefore there was funding available, but that next year's budget would need to take account of this.

Mrs J Fisher explained that the staff in the office were currently working beyond capacity and that greater support was required.

It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Mr J Ward and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to create two additional posts in the staffing structure for an Administrative Officer and Committee Officer. Terms and conditions of employment and salary to be agreed by the Finance and Staff Committee, but not to exceed the current salary underspend.

48. Update on Vane Close School Parking

Mr T Foreman provided an oral update on the Vane Close School Parking. It was explained that a new head teacher was due to start at the school and it was hoped that there would be opportunities early in the year to work to address the parking issue. Mr I Mackie reiterated the importance of working with the school and the County Council to resolve this ongoing problem. The Town Council **NOTED** this report.

49. Grounds Machinery

Mr T Foreman provided an overview of the report relating to the current grounds machinery owned and operated by the Town Council. It was explained that the Parks and Estates team undertake a multitude of separate grounds tasks including hedge cutting, grass cutting, heavy lifting and towing. In addition, the Town Council engages contractors to undertake large scale hedge cutting and hires tractors and other items such as access platforms to undertake specific tasks on an annual basis.

Furthermore, an asset review was undertaken in 2015, with the cost and replacement of machinery being documented. Within the 2016/17 budget part funding for a new zero-turn mower was included. The total for this is estimated to be £8,500 to £9,000. During this review it was also found that the current Zetor tractor was underused due to its size and agricultural style which can damage surfaces. An additional consideration was the hire cost for the digger to begin the work on the track at Laundry Lane planned as part of the parks improvement project.

Mr T Foreman explained that much of the machinery will require replacement in the short to medium term, and the tractor is no longer fit for purpose. Therefore, it was suggested to purchase a single front loading piece of machinery which could undertake a number of

tasks required for the parks improvement and maintenance. This machinery is estimated to cost £37,000 and could be funded through s.106 money. If approved, Mr T Foreman explained that the tractor and other machinery would be sold and the money for this would be held and earmarked for the parks improvement work.

Mr J Ward queried the minimum cost of digger hire for the running track. Mr T Foreman explained that the lowest of the quotes for the minimum time projected was £2,500 (plus VAT) and this cost would be ongoing for other parks work including tree planting and land forming. Mr L Reeves asked what types of tasks the machine would undertake and how well these would be achieved. Mr T Foreman explained that a testing process would be undertaken, but Councils currently using the machine had been very satisfied. The types of activities planned would be digging, levelling, hedge cutting and mowing initially, with an option to expand the tasks through additional attachments as required.

Mr I Mackie expressed support for the proposal explaining that ongoing hire costs on an annual basis provided little value for money, particularly when a number of machinery assets were going to be replaced in the coming months. The Town council queried the cost of purchase compared to the hire cost. Mr T Foreman explained that the hire cost could be in excess of £1000 per month, and would be needed throughout the year. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Mr J Ward and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to purchase an Avant 640 machine with attachments at an estimated cost of £37,000 (exc VAT) to be funded through s.106. Any costs of attachments beyond the £37,000 to be funded through the asset replacement budget. Monies raised through machinery sold in to be earmarked for parks improvement.

50. **Newsletter Delivery**

The item regrading newsletter delivery was considered by the Town Council. Miss S Lawn explained that previously the cost for the printing and design of the newsletter was £3,600 per year, however following a review of the number of editions and the design element being done entirely in-house, the cost was now estimated to be £1,500. Mr T Foreman explained that during the last newsletter delivery period, there was considerable issue with voluntary deliverers being unavailable, but also some newsletters not being delivered in some areas of the town. Furthermore, the newsletters required counting, sorting and delivering to volunteers creating a significant time burden on both staff and Councillors. Mr T Foreman recommended appointing a delivery firm to ensure complete coverage of the town, who would also collect and count these newsletters. The Town Council discussed this proposal at length, with particular interest in the ability to check that the newsletters were being delivered. Mr T Foreman explained that the companies had 'checkers' who lived in the area, each of whom would ring other residents throughout the town, reporting any missed areas. These would then be delivered by the firm. It was proposed by Miss S Lawn, seconded by Mr I Mackie and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to appoint a newsletter delivery company, with the cost and logistics to be confirmed by the Events and Media Committee.

51. **Proposal to establish Allotment Working Group**

Mr T Foreman provided a verbal report to the Town Council regarding a proposal to create an allotment working group, consisting of three members from each allotment site and chaired by the Town Clerk. Mrs J Fisher stated support for the proposal, stating that good communication is key to positive relationships with allotment holders. Mr T Foreman explained that the group would make recommendations for improvements or projects which

will be considered at Town Council meetings. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, seconded by Miss S Lawn and on a show of hands with all in favour **AGREED** to establish an allotment working group.

Future Agenda Items. (Not for discussion)

None

With no other business the meeting closed at 21.15

Signed _____ (Chairman) Date _____