

Thorpe St Andrew Town Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3 August 2015

74. Present:

Mr J Ward (Town Mayor)	Mr I Mackie
Mr J Fisher	Mr P Berry
Mr L Reeves	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 R Robson	

Apologies: Mr F Bowe

In attendance: Mr T. Foreman (Town Clerk), Mrs F Bass (Assistant Clerk) Richard Kiddell (Groundsman) Mr G Bailey (Thorpe Recreational Bowling Club) and 1 member of the public.

75. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda. Mr N Hancock declared an interest in item 92 as a resident of Western Avenue. Mr J Ward and Mr I Mackie declared an interest in item 89 the update on the refurbishment of the Roxley Village Hall.

76. To confirm the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6 July 2015. The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.
The confidential minutes were also agreed and signed as a true record.

77. Announcements (For information only)

To receive announcements from

(i) The Town Mayor- the Town Mayor reported that he, along with other members of the Town Council, inspected the allotments at Dussindale and Hillside. In addition, the Mayor had attended at the Youth Café based at the Morse Pavilion and at the Farmers Market on Thunder Lane. The Mayor also represented the Town at the Norfolk County Council's Chairman's reception.

(ii) The Clerk- Mr T Foreman gave an oral report on the various meeting he has attended this month. Included was the contractors regarding the village hall, the organisers from Titanium Fireworks who agreed that the Dussindale Park was a good choice of venue for the fireworks display, meeting with the grants officer at Broadland district Council and a meeting with the chairpersons from each committee to discuss the way forward for the council. Mr Foreman also reported that the Teddies picnic in June had raised £37.00 for EACH children's hospice.

78. Public participation –To consider a motion to suspend the meeting to allow members of the public the opportunity to address the meeting limited to 5mins each. The Meeting was suspended following a proposal from Mr J Ward, seconded by Mr I Mackie.

(i) Norfolk Constabulary- PCSO Michael Seaman reported on the police crime figures reported for July.

(ii) County and District Councillors – Mr I Mackie gave a report of the County Council where the topic of unitary authorities is being actively discussed. Recently appointed Councillors were told that Thorpe St Andrew had become a Town some 9 years ago to prevent its incorporation in any future greater Norwich area. Mr N Shaw echoed the comments of Mr I Mackie and stated he had been appointed Vice Chairman of the Local Government Association Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group. It was highlighted that future changes to the larger UK airports would greatly benefit business and residents in the Norfolk area.

The report from Councillor John Ward was received by the Town Council. Mr Ward provided an overview of activity at Broadland District Council including the restriction of the Community Grant Scheme to one per organisation and the support for textile recycling across the area. For the County Council, Mr Ward explained that the Castle Keep Development is progressing with the appointment of architects and structural engineers. A new Director of Public Health has been appointed and will take up the role from the 1st October 2015.

(iii) Members of the public –

Mr G Bailey from Thorpe Recreation Bowls Club addressed the committee. As this was not itemised as an agenda item, the full council could not discuss the issues with him.

Mr Bailey asked why the council wanted a new lease. He also stated that he felt that the council were “over reacting” by considering the legal action required by the lease. Mr Bailey continued to explain that for the club to continue, financial support was required.

Mr Bailey requested that it was recorded that the club has “no money what so ever”, and was surviving on s.106 money at present.

Mr T Foreman explained that the Town council was required to have a lease which it could enforce when breached. If the current lease would close the club when breached, it was clear a new lease is required. Mr T Foreman continued to explain that the Bowls Club had admitted the breach and that the new terms were more favourable than many other Bowls clubs had locally and nationally. Mr T Foreman explained that Bowls England informs its members that Councils may fix market value rent, but the Town was not seeking to do so which demonstrates its commitment to the Club.

Mr I Mackie explained that the council needed to bring the lease in line with a local authority standard for peppercorn rentals. Mr I Mackie explained that in return for the peppercorn rent, the bowls club would assume full maintenance of the building and grounds.

79. Finance

(i) Payments List: Voucher numbers 349-419

The payments list was checked, agreed and signed.

(ii) Bank Reconciliation Statement

The Bank Reconciliation Statement was agreed and signed as a true record.

80. Town Amenities Officer’s Report

The Town Council received the report of the Town Amenities Officer and took a particular interest in the increase in numbers for women’s football on a recent course in Thorpe St Andrew. It was agreed future courses for female footballers should be supported. The Town Amenities Officer’s report was noted.

81. Draft Minutes of Committee Meetings.

(i) Plans Meeting 13 July 2015

The draft minutes were noted

(ii) Finance & Staff 20 July 2015

The draft minutes were noted

(iii) Events 15 July 2015

The draft minutes were noted

82. Report to update Standing Orders

Mr T Foreman explained the changes that had been made to the Standing orders. The Town Council considered the standing orders and it was explained by Mr T Foreman that the update had included the move to destroy all anonymous letters when received. This was on the advice of the internal auditor and had been an issue for the office. It was **AGREED** to adopt the new Standing Orders and these were signed by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk in the presence of the Council.

83 Creation of Freeman of the Town award

The report for Freeman of the Town was discussed at length by the Town Council. It was proposed by Mr J Ward, seconded by Mr I Mackie and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** that the town council accept nominations for Freeman of the Town award, this would be presented alongside the civic awards at the Town Mayors reception. Nominations would be suggested by the public with details to be confirmed by the Town Clerk.

84. Relocation of Town Council Office and Dussindale Park

Mr T Foreman gave a report to the Town Council regarding the proposal to move the Town Council Office to the Fitzmaurice Pavilion. It was explained that additional work to the building may be required as part of the project and quotes for this would be reported to the Council with the quotes for the creation of office space.

Mrs J Fisher stated support for the project, but was concerned that residents would not identify the Town Council office as being within the Fitzmaurice Pavilion. Mr T Foreman agreed that a meeting had been held with a representative of the Fitzmaurice family (relation of the late Councillor Brian Fitzmaurice to whom the Fitzmaurice Pavilion was dedicated) who supported the suggestion of changing the name of the Dussindale Park Amenity Ground name to the Fitzmaurice Park. The Fitzmaurice Pavilion would then be renamed, to the Town Hall. Mr J Fisher requested that in any instance the notice board at Dussindale Centre remained in use even if the council office changed location.

It was proposed by Mr J Ward, seconded by Mr I Mackie and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to

- Rename the 'Fitzmaurice Pavilion' to 'the Town Hall'
- Rename the 'Dussindale Park Amenity Ground' to the 'Fitzmaurice Park'
- Make the aforementioned changes subject to the Town Office move costs being confirmed and the project being completed.

It was **AGREED** that Mr T Foreman requests quotes for additional works such as CCTV upgrade, painting/cladding of fascia boards and beams, painting exterior, improving access through Commonwealth Way entrance and new security roller shutters.

85. Update on Staffing-Oral Report

Mr T Foreman gave an oral report updating the Council on the current staff vacancies. The new post of Facilities Assistant was created through merging the cleaning and gatekeeper post. The Gatekeeper was given a redundancy notice, but offered the Facilities Assistant post as a suitable alternative. After some thought the member of staff who was offered the revised contract and duties declined the post, preferring to be made redundant. Mr Foreman advised interviews would be held in August. Mr Foreman stated that there were several applicants for the recent posts advertised.

86. Activities of the Highways Rangers

Mr T Foreman confirmed the Rangers activities as listed and this was noted by the Town Council. Mr I Mackie requested that an article be placed in the next newsletter explaining the Rangers duties, and requesting areas that may need attention to be reported to the office.

87. SAM 2 Speed Reports-Report

The Town Council were presented with the speed data from the Sam2 signs. The results were discussed and felt it was of benefit to the town to have them at various locations throughout the town. Mr T Foreman confirmed that Plumstead Road East was the next intended position as requested by local residents.

88. CiLCA

The Town Council considered the report relating to the CiLCA qualification. The Council discussed the amount of time required for the completion of the qualification and the

current workload of the Town Council staff. It was **AGREED** that the CiLCA training would be completed at a time when Mr T Foreman felt appropriate.

89. Roxley Village Hall Construction and Refurbishment

Mr T Foreman confirmed that the project is going well. The electricity is soon to be reconnected and the energy provider has confirmed that the electricity meter will be moved to the exterior wall. Mr T Foreman explained that there are slight delays on the works taking the expected completion date to mid-November. These delays are due to the additional works agreed by the Town Council to be included in the project after the original timescale was agreed. The Town Council noted this report.

90. Town Council Newsletter Delivery

Miss S Lawn gave an oral report from the Events and Media Committee proposing that all 16 councillors be allocated a section of Thorpe St Andrew to manage the delivery of the Thorpe St Andrew News newsletter. The streets of Thorpe St Andrew would be divided equally and each Councillor would take responsibility for organising the volunteers delivering in the specific area. Miss S Lawn confirmed that Councillors would collect their newsletters from the office and deliver to their selected volunteers. It was **AGREED** that the Events and Media Committee would propose allocation areas and report to a future Town Council meeting when this had been completed.

91. River Green By-Laws

Mr T Foreman provided an update on the River Green By-Laws. Due to staff changes at NP Law, the queries relating to the costs for fining and designated areas remain outstanding. Mr T Foreman explained that he had spoken to a solicitor regarding this and it was hoped that progress would be resumed in the coming days. A revised version of the By-Laws would be presented at the next Town Council meeting. The committee noted this report.

92. Western Avenue Street Light

Mr T Foreman provided an overview of the written report explaining that residents had complained about a concrete column sodium light on Western Avenue. The light was unfocused resulting in light shining into surrounding residences. Mr J Ward asked if there was money available within the budget to cover the cost of the replacement, Mr T Foreman confirmed there was. It was **AGREED** to replace the existing streetlight with a new LED head at a cost of £698.00 plus vat, and £537.00 connection charges.

93. Car Parking Enforcement in Thorpe St Andrew

Miss S Lawn gave an oral statement to the Town Council outlining concerns with car parking in Thorpe St Andrew, specifically outside schools. Miss S Lawn explained that Broadland District Council could explore the idea of the Town Council having delegated powers to provide car parking enforcement throughout the Town, but there would be a number of legal and financial considerations prior to progressing this idea. The Town Council discussed the issue of car parking and highlighted areas of specific concern. It was delegated to Miss S Lawn and Mr T Foreman to explore the matter further and contact surrounding Council's to seek their views.

94. River Green Planning Application.

Mr T Foreman provided an overview of the report relating to planning permission for bicycle hoops on River Green. As planning permission was being sought, the Town Council considered other potential planning requirements in the coming years. It was **AGREED** that planning permission would to be sought for three bike hoops and also three new benches for the River Green. The placement of the benches to be delegated to Mr T Foreman.

95. Proposal to move to Online Payments

The Town Council considered the written report relating to moving from the current cheque payment system to a predominantly online payment system. Mr J Ward asked whether the existing signatory safeguards would remain. Mr T Foreman explained that the Legislative Reform Order 2013 changed the requirements to allow one officer and one Councillor to agree payments, however if possible the current two Councillor system would be maintained subject to bank approval. The Town Council considered whether the move to online payments would decrease the transparency of Town Council payments and whether the new system would have additional benefits. Referring to the report, Mr T Foreman explained that an identical level of information would be presented to Members. In addition, all signatories would be able to log onto the online payment system and check the accounts at any time.

Mr T Foreman explained that the main benefits of online payments included a reduction in costs to the Council of levying cheques, the ability for members to authorise payments from any internet computer instead of attending the office and quicker payments to suppliers who are becoming reluctant in accepting cheque payments. It was proposed by Miss S Lawn, seconded by Mr I Mackie and on a show of hands with all in favour **RESOLVED** to:

- Delegate power to the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to implement an online payments system
- Make the required changes to the Financial Regulations and present these to the Finance and Staff Committee prior to the changes taking place
- Report all changes to the Finance and Staff Committee prior to implementation

96. Update on River Green memorial Trees

Mr T Foreman provided an update on the memorial tree planting on River Green. The existing trees by the public conveniences will be removed and replaced by an arc of five oaks, each dedicated to the fallen in each year of the First World War. Mr T Foreman also explained that a bed of poppies would also be planted. The Town council noted this report.

97. Review of Hiring & Leasing Asset Charges

Mr T Foreman read a written statement from Ms J Jones regarding the proposal to create an equal booking charge for all users of the Town Council facilities. The statement requested that the Thorpe Players pay an hourly rate for performances, rehearsals and meetings, but a standard one off charge for all other hours of use.

Mr T Foreman provided an overview of user costs for the Village Hall and Fitzmaurice Pavilion, identifying some groups paying less than half the standard hiring cost per hour. Mr T Foreman explained that in one instance a community group paying the standard set fee had paid over three hundred pounds more than another group while using less hours. Mr T Foreman stated that with the re-opening of the Village Hall and potential Town Council office move to the Fitzmaurice Pavilion, it was timely to introduce parity across all user groups. The Town Council discussed the need for parity and noted the need to provide value for money to the ratepayers for use of its assets. It was proposed by Mr I Mackie, Seconded by Miss S Lawn and on a show of hands with all in favour and one abstention it was **RESOLVED** that all users of Town Council facilities will pay the applicable hourly rate to the facility as set by the Town Council each year. User agreements and storage will be considered at the next Town Council meeting.

Future Agenda Items. (Not for discussion)

Town Council meeting 7 September 2015

Date of next Plans meeting Monday 10 August 2015

Date of next Finance & Staff meeting Monday 17 August 2015

With no other business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed _____

Town Mayor

Date _____