

ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the above Council held in Attleborough Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk, on 6 October 2008 at 7pm.

PRESENT

Cllrs V Dale (Chair), N Keach, B Waters, G Farrow, A Marchant, S Schucroft, G Firman, A Sturt, R Reynolds, S Taylor: District Cllr A Stasiak, County Cllr A Byrne; H Elias (Town Clerk); Inspector A Hayes, members of the press and public.

1 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs S Middlebrook, K Pettitt, R Laurence (holidays), Mrs D Francis (family illness), and Mrs M Byrne (unwell)

The Mayor welcomed Councillors, District & County councillors, members of the press and public and Inspector Hayes.

Cllr Taylor arrived at 7.03pm. A member of the press arrived at 7.06pm

2 TO HOLD A QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION WITH INSPECTOR HAYES

Inspector Hayes introduced himself, and explained the reorganisation that was taking place within the Force. The Safer Neighbourhood Team will be refocused and will be expanded from April, and shifts will be altered to allow personnel to cover more hours; SNT deals with Attleborough and the 32 or so surrounding parishes. Attleborough has the lowest crime rate for any area in the Force and its target crime solving rates have increased dramatically. The Pubwatch initiative, by which anyone barred from one licensed premises is barred from all outlets selling alcohol, is working well, and the alcohol ban area is being monitored. The youth are generally well-behaved and it is a minority of individuals who cause the majority of problems.

Questions raised: Drug problems – intelligence is improving and individuals have been imprisoned; Hours spent in Attleborough; Speeding – the Community Speedwatch Programme is being rolled out, where trained teams act as the first tier of detection before more formal procedures take place; Police Officers appointed to an area – the SNT will provide greater visibility; “Boy racers” in Queens Square Car Park. Police actively take youngsters who have been involved in anti-social behaviour and under-age drinking home to their parents where their responsibilities are pointed out to them, and youngsters’ energy is diverted to more constructive projects; Loss of a Traffic Officer; Difficulties in using the 0845 456 4567 non-emergency number – this is being reviewed elsewhere in the Force.

3 TO AGREE A RESOLUTION THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED TO ALLOW A PERIOD OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (maximum 10 minutes in duration – NB: a second period of public participation will be allowed at the end of the meeting)

It was proposed by Cllr Waters and carried by Council that the meeting be adjourned to allow the public to speak.

Items raised were: the lack of feedback on anti-social behaviour; the use of Police dogs on patrol, including drug “sniffer” dogs.

The meeting was reconvened. The Mayor thanked Inspector Hayes for his time and information

4 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS BELOW

None

5 TO RECEIVE THE CHAIRMAN’S REPORT (refer to diary list)

The Mayor was delighted to report that the Town Council had been awarded Quality Status. This recognised a higher level of professionalism and was a national benchmark. The portfolio presented to the QS Accreditation Panel was a record of Council's activities and services to the public. The Clerk, Admin Assistant and Cllr Farrow were thanked for their work in achieving Quality Status, and a letter from Breckland's Chief Executive was read out acknowledging the hard work and administrative excellence involved in gaining Quality Status.

6 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (previously circulated)

The minutes were confirmed and signed

7 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING (previously circulated)

The minutes were confirmed and signed

8 TO RECEIVE A BRIEF UPDATE ON ANY ITEMS NOT LISTED BELOW (NB Information only – no resolutions may be passed)

None were raised

9 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE COMMITTEE MINUTES: (refer to enclosed documents)

i) Planning x 2: Breckland had refused planning permission for the development behind Butterfly Hall as the developer had requested that the affordable homes requirement be waived.

ii) LDF & Transport: the public meetings had been a success and generated a good response with some good ideas. If 4,000 homes are to come to Attleborough, appropriate infrastructure is needed first. The Town Council favours development to the south rather than the north of the town, with a relief road from Bunns Bank area to the White Lodge area, and a southern access road at Besthorpe junction as it would cost too much to improve to a four-way junction. Comments had been made on all the plots offered. Thanks were expressed to councillors and staff who had put leaflets through doors for their efforts and support. A working party was being set up by Gp Capt Middleton with interested residents. The Council appreciated Gp Capt Middleton's hard work and efforts to date; without these the Council would not have had the information and analysis needed.

iii) Festival: this was a very successful event. All the sponsors were thanked for their generous support, and the committee for their hard work in producing this enjoyable event. The Town Archive exhibition had been very popular. Families were grateful that the event was free. Cllr Pettitt was thanked for producing signs at no cost. The next festival will be in two years time.

iv) Others: Town Hall: Two quotes have been received for treating the damp kitchen wall. Beadle Property Care Ltd £148 + VAT and Essex & Anglia Preservation Ltd £494.60 + VAT or £661.06 + VAT if the caretaker does not remove the radiator beforehand

It was proposed by Cllr Keach and carried by Council that the quote from Essex & Anglia Preservation Ltd be accepted. ACTION: Town Clerk

Open Spaces: Cemetery gates were almost finished and should be installed by the end of the following week. Apple trees are to be planted

Finance: Committees have started discussing their budget requirements for the precept.

10 TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

Cllr Firman attended the opening of the new gym at Shropham. Special pressure beds are available for those with disabilities and there is a coffee area.

Cllr Pettitt had been pleased to attend the quarterly meeting of the Town Charities with Cllr Waters.

11 TO RECEIVE DETAILS OF SEPTEMBER'S FINANCIAL STATEMENT (refer to enclosed documents)

It was noted that the Council is still well within its budget, though there are several one-off major payments to make before the end of the financial year.

12 TO AUTHORISE PAYMENT OF BILLS AND CHEQUES (refer to list)

It was proposed by Cllr Reynolds and carried by Council that the bills and cheques listed be authorised for payment. ACTION: Town Clerk

13 TO AGREE QUOTES FOR TOWN HALL PROJECTS:

i) To agree a quote for lighting project:

Although about eight electrical contractors had been approached, only two had submitted quotes. Brass recessed down lighters are to be positioned in the Council Chamber to improve the daytime lighting and extra wall lights in the Bar Room connected to the existing wiring covered by blank plates. A more detailed proposal was submitted by Wensum Valley Services Ltd.

Wensum Valley Services Ltd	£1,025 + VAT
Marrison Electrical Ltd	£1,095 + VAT

It was proposed by Cllr Keach and carried by Council that the quote from Wensum Valley Services Ltd be accepted. ACTION: Town Clerk

ii) To agree a quote for flooring of Committee Room:

The Town Hall Committee had considered various samples from three companies. It recommended the European White Oak as the most hard-wearing option.

It was proposed by Cllr Dale that the Committee Room be refloored with European White Oak hardwood boards at a cost of £2,436 + VAT + possible extra cost of levelling the existing floor.

Council members queried the cost and asked for a breakdown of the possible levelling cost to the Committee Room. **The resolution was NOT carried.**

iii) To agree a quote for drawing up full plans for the demolition and redevelopment of the shed & garage:

Two quotes had been received for preparing a design for building at the rear of the Town Hall on the site of the existing shed, which would need to be demolished. As the site is in a conservation area and within the curtilage of the Town Hall which is a listed building, full planning consent is needed. Neither quote includes planning or building regulations fees.

Simon Westaway Associates	£1,500.00
Colin Clarke, architectural design	£1,250.00

The Town Hall Committee had recommended Simon Westaway Associates as they had dealt with the refurbishment when the building was converted to the Town Hall. A discussion ensued.

It was proposed by Cllr Reynolds and carried by Council that the quote from Colin Clarke, architectural design be accepted. ACTION: Town Clerk

It was noted that several projects for the Town Hall are in progress.

14 TO AGREE TO MOVE THE HEDGE IN THE DELL TO ENCLOSE THE PLAY PARK WITHIN THE CEMETERY

To reduce anti-social behaviour the possibility of enclosing the level play area into the cemetery and extending the dog walking area by planting a hedge along the level part of the ridge was discussed.

It was proposed by Cllr Keach and carried by Council that a hedge be planted along the level edge in the Dell to incorporate the area into the cemetery. ACTION: Town Clerk, Groundsmen

15 TO DISCUSS CHANGES TO THE FUNDING OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Council had previously agreed to cap the amount it spends on the Christmas lights at £24,000. The Christmas Lights 2007 bill to the Council was £20,247. Costs to the Council are met from the precept and rise year on year. It was acknowledged that the Christmas Lights Committee raised some £3,500 - £4,000 annually and that some businesses connected lights to their electricity supplies. Most of the costs are from setting up and dismantling equipment using a correctly qualified and certified company. A discussion ensued. The Council acknowledged that Marrisons do a good job, and stated that it wished to continue to support the lights whilst not exceeding its previously agreed cap. The Clerk was directed to write to the Christmas Lights Committee inviting them to the Finance Committee meeting on 18 November to discuss possible options. **ACTION: Town Clerk**

15 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE LDF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The two public meetings organised by the Town Council had been well-received. Breckland had also organised a public meeting with Planning Officers and District Councillors present; Mr David Spencer was commended on the way he dealt with the meeting. It was noted that some people at the meeting were not Attleborough residents, and that others had spoken individually to Town Councillors after the meeting as they had not wished to express their views at the meeting.

16 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE YOUTH FACILITY

There will be a meeting to set up a steering committee on Thursday 9 October 2008 in the Town Hall at 7.30pm. The meeting will be advertised on the High School website.

17 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Mr K Martin: gave his apologies.

Mr Byrne reported: due to the LDF public meetings the public felt more relaxed about the LDF. There was more clarity and they were able to focus on the "real" issues.

Mr Stasiak reported: over 230 people attended the Breckland LDF meeting at Connaught Hall which went well. The deadline for responses to the Site Specifics document has been extended to 10 October. The "Moving Thetford Forward" group could be used as a model for Attleborough and Snetterton. Gp Captain Middleton's group were getting involved. Mr Stasiak had attended an infrastructure workshop. He requested that the District Councillors' Reports be placed higher on the Agenda.

18 TO DISCUSS AND ACT UPON CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED (refer to attached summary of correspondence)

- i) A letter and petition requesting a BMX track had been received. This will be dealt with by the Open Spaces Committee.
- ii) Initial Training courses for Councillors have been arranged for 17 & 24 November at Mattishall, 12 & 19 November at County Hall and 9 December at Hevingham Village Hall (Repeats). Interested Councillors should contact the Clerk.
- iii) Interpublic Urban Systems: order for the toilet doors has been confirmed. The H & S consultant will visit and audit the site.
- iv) Besthorpe LDF Site Specifics Response: a copy of this is in the Clerk's Office for reference.
- v) Circus Masquerade have requested permission to use the Recreation Ground for a 48 hour period during April or May
- vi) Emergency Management Seminar on Wednesday 5 November in Poringland. Anyone interested please see the Clerk
- vii) Orbit Housing Association have four one-bedroomed flats available in Bramley Court

viii) Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) have produced posters for residents to place in their windows for Hallowe'en asking trick or treaters not to disturb them. They will be available in the Tourist Office and the Clerk's Office

ix) A consultation paper on the making and enforcement of byelaws is available in the Clerk's Office. Closing date is 20 November 2008

18 TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON TOWN AFFAIRS (NB information only – No resolutions may be passed)

i) The Church Street Kissing Gate is not opening properly. The pillars are leaning and will need rebuilding.

ii) The Town Archive in the Town Hall is currently open the first working Monday of the month 10am-1pm. From January 2009 it will open twice a month on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 9am – 12 noon.

iii) Remembrance Sunday Parade – 9 November. Cllr Waters gave her apologies for the service, but will be present at the short service at the War Memorial on 11 November. Details will be confirmed at the next full Council meeting.

iv) A pothole needs repairing outside 28 Snowdrop Drive.

v) The Lollipop person in Norwich Road does not work in tandem with the puffin crossing which is potentially dangerous to children and drivers.

vi) The Highways Agency land has been cut near Norfolk Drive, but not near the A11.

vii) Could the land adjacent to the A11 be donated to the Town Council for allotments?

19 TO RECEIVE ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH'S AGENDA

i) Toilets ii) BMX track and dog walkers iii) Remembrance Day arrangements

20 TO AGREE A RESOLUTION THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED TO ALLOW A PERIOD OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (NB: 10 minutes maximum)

It was proposed by Cllr Keach and carried by Council that the meeting be adjourned for the public to speak

Items raised were: Christmas Lights

The meeting was re-convened.

21 THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

This was confirmed as Monday 3 November 2008 at 7pm

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Chair: