

# **ATTLEBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of the above Council held in Attleborough Town Hall, Queens Square, Attleborough, Norfolk, on Monday 2 November 2009 at 7pm.**

## **PRESENT**

Cllrs V Dale (Chair), G Farrow, B Waters, A Marchant, S Schucroft, J McBride, K Pettitt, R Reynolds, S Middlebrook, G Firman, A Sturt, D Francis, S Taylor, J Taylor; H Elias (Town Clerk); District Cllrs P Francis, A Stasiak, K Martin, & S Rogers; representatives from Ptarmigan, John Thompson & Partners and Bidwells; members of the public.

## **1 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs N Keach (holiday).  
Cllrs S Taylor & J Taylor arrived at 7.05pm.

## **2 PRESENTATION FROM BIDWELLS & PTARMIGAN ABOUT THEIR PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT SOUTH OF THE RAILWAY**

Ptarmigan introduced the team and explained that they were a Planning Consultancy who helped landowners proceed through the planning process; they were neither a developer, nor a house builder. They explained how they conducted the process, starting with no preconceptions, through consultation exercises with “stakeholders” eg Highways and the public. They had appointed John Thompson & Partners to seek the views of community and were working with Bidwells who had local knowledge. Examples of previous schemes were described and a project timetable set out: November 09 - agree who they should meet; December 09 – walkabout with Council and key stakeholders, agree a date for their planning consultation weekend, set up a steering group; January 2010 - meet all the key organisations; February 2010 - hold the five-day planning consultation weekend and report back; March 2010 - refine the vision and establish focus groups with a view to drawing up a master plan to apply for planning permission. An Attleborough page would be set up on the website [www.communityplanning.co.uk](http://www.communityplanning.co.uk) for the public to make comments and suggestions.

## **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 Dale and carried by Council that the meeting be adjourned to allow the public to speak.**

**Items raised:** Questions for Ptarmigan, J Thompson and Bidwells included provision of land for cemetery; sports and recreation facilities; youth facilities; S106 agreements; local firms’ involvement; lack of existing infrastructure; level crossing causing problems in Station Road; the cost of a new relief road; employment areas; the amount of money left for other facilities once a road and 40% affordable housing had been provided; how the aspirations of the public could be managed as there would be a “given list”, a “priority list” and a “wish list”; technical problems with utilities provision; the need to avoid Attleborough becoming either a dormitory town or a car park. **The meeting was reconvened.**

## **4 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS BELOW**

Mrs Elias declared a prejudicial interest in Item 25 and left the meeting before the discussion.

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

The Mayor explained that she had been particularly busy with visits to the High School, Stuart Group and Plandescil. Breckland had held an excellent Forum at the EcoTech Centre when presentations were given on anti-social behaviour, the Pride in Breckland campaign and

Breckland's new choice-based housing scheme plus a demonstration of the new on-line planning system.

**6 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (previously circulated – factual discrepancies only)**

The minutes were agreed and signed.

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

None.

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

i) Planning x 2: The proposed residential gypsy site at Docking Wood in Leys Lane was discussed. No members of the public had attended the meeting although it had been reported in the press. Concerns had been expressed about access for large and emergency vehicles, also that the proposed site is outside the current settlement boundary. The Committee had not objected to the application *per se*, but had commented that gypsy and travellers' sites should be considered in light of the LDF provision. Committee members had asked for more information about the provision of such sites.

ii) Town Hall: Guidelines on Premises Licence Conditions and noise limiters were awaited.

iii) Finance: The committee is considering the precept requirement and how to minimise the increase in Council tax.

iv) Open Spaces: Repairs to the safety surface at the Recreation Ground play area have made it as good as new. The flintwork in the closed churchyards walls require attention; this is specialist work.

**9 TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS**

Twinning Association: Cllr McBride had replaced Cllr Pettitt as the Council's representative on the Twinning Association.

Connaught Hall: New stage and blackout curtains have been ordered, along with some padded seats, although more seats are needed for the bar which is also to be refurbished.

Rural Touring Cinema: Cllr Middlebrook had attended an information session by Creative Arts East on providing fully-funded projectionist training and subsidised equipment hire to promote entertainment in rural areas. He would like to be able to use the Town Hall for Breckland's Film Festival but would need help. It was noted that the Connaught Hall had previously held film shows. **ACTION: Cllrs Middlebrook, Marchant & Pettitt**

**10 TO RECEIVE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

District / County Cllr A Byrne had sent his apologies.

Breckland had staged a successful and informative Town & Parish Councils Forum at EcoTech.

Parking: It was noted that Breckland's Conservative Manifesto commitment stated that Breckland would not charge for parking, although it is now the only district in the county which does not charge.

LDF: District Councillors have requested legal opinion as to the minor amendments made in the Inspector's Report on the LDF Core Strategy. This has been passed as "sound" with "minor amendments".

DJ's Bar: A noise abatement order has been served on the premises.

Planning: This can be done on-line. A great deal of information is available.

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

The second instalment of the Precept had been received. The Council is within budget.

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

Queries were raised about the allocation to the Open Spaces budget of repairs to the inspection chamber at the rear of the public toilets and about gifts / cards purchase for the TIC.

**It was proposed by Cllr Waters and carried by Council that the cheques be paid.**

**ACTION: Town Clerk**

**13 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PARKING PROPOSALS MEETING**

Breckland's Parking Task & Finish Group had invited various organisations to make statements; the Police had discussed the decriminalisation of parking enforcement. The Mayor and Clerk had presented the Town Council's viewpoint, the surgery expressed concerns about spaces being taken by those who were not attending the surgery, while the Chamber of Trade representative had suggested a multi-storey car park. Other suggestions from members of the public had been a mini park & ride scheme, consideration of commuters, shift workers and a request for allocated parking in the planning application process.

The press had picked up the multi-storey car park idea without explaining the Town Council's position on free overnight and Sunday parking plus two hours free parking with a minimal charge for two to four hours parking with higher charges after four hours. It was acknowledged that provision would have to be made, possibly by permits, for commuters and long stay parking. It was agreed that the town needed more parking spaces and that the aim was to prevent those in surrounding villages from travelling elsewhere because of a lack of car parking.

**14 TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ABOUT ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE DAY**

Remembrance Sunday: 8 November: The parade forms at 10.20am in Edenside car park. Cllr Keach will carry the walking flag; the Mayor and Clerk walk with the wreath; other councillors and spouses / partners follow. The parade stops at the war memorial for a short service and the two minutes' silence, and wreaths are laid. The parade moves to the church for a service.

Armistice Day: Wednesday 11 November: A short Act of Remembrance will take place at the War Memorial at c10.55. It will include the two minutes' silence, short readings and a prayer.

**15 TO RATIFY THE PLAY STRATEGY**

The Open Spaces Committee recommended the following Play Strategy:

The Council would concentrate on the Recreation Ground to begin with.

1 Short term:

- i) Recreation Ground slide – safety surfacing is to be repaired.
- ii) Extend area to square off by the Bowls Club fence. Fencing is to be replaced with similar to that around the skatepark.

2 Longer term:

- i) Decide on extra equipment to go in. (See questionnaire responses & other consultation)
- ii) Standardise the surfaces

It was noted that the safety surfacing had already been repaired.

**It was proposed by Cllr Pettitt and carried by Council that the Play Strategy be adopted.**

**16 TO AGREE TO SUBMIT FUNDING BIDS FOR PLAY AREAS PROJECTS**

Two funding streams have been made available to town & parish councils. The timeframe is tight and consultation is essential. The questionnaire should fulfil this requirement. The LSP

Breckland Play Forum closing date is 18 December and the Norfolk ALC Participatory Budget Scheme which closes on 31 December. Cllr Pettitt offered to help with the funding bids.  
**It was proposed by Cllr Reynolds and carried by Council that all possible funding streams should be applied for. ACTION: Town Clerk & Cllr Pettitt.**

### **17 TO AGREE THE QUOTES FOR FENCING THE PLAY AREAS**

The wire fencing around the Recreation Ground has been damaged. New bow top fencing similar to that around the skate park could incorporate the proposed extended play area. Existing gates would be re-used where possible and the groundsmen would install the fencing. Quotes have been received as follows for 88m galvanised bow top fencing:

Breckland Technical	£3,343.00
Jackson Fencing	£4,927.85 + VAT

**It was proposed by Cllr Reynolds and carried by Council that fencing to be bought to a maximum of £4,927.85 + VAT. Further deals are to be sought. ACTION: Cllr Reynolds.**

### **18 TO APPROVE THE NEW CEMETERY FEES STRUCTURE** (see attached sheet)

The whole structure of the burial fees was considered and re-worked by the Open Spaces Committee. The changes it recommends are that from 1 April 2010 fees for non-parishioners should be trebled rather than doubled; an additional inscription should be free of charge and that the fees should be broken down to show the digging fee, which will be £50 for a coffin burial and £25 for interment of an ashes casket.

Cllr D Francis left the meeting at 9pm.

**It was proposed by Cllr Middlebrook and carried by Council that the new fees structure be adopted. ACTION: Town Clerk**

### **19 TO DISCUSS AND ACT UPON CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED** (refer to summary of correspondence received since last meeting below)

- i) Norfolk Constabulary – Supt Elliott: Improvements in response to non-emergency calls.
- ii) Christopher Fraser MP: Response to copy of Council’s letter about policing
- iii) St Luke’s Hospital Group: Children’s residential houses in Attleborough and maintenance to be carried out on the Old Farmhouse, Station Road
- iv) Copy of letters to County Cllr A Byrne re 20mph zones
- v) NPS Property: – NCC response to query re joint parking venture & land for sale. Breckland would be a more suitable “partner” with regard to parking and Norfolk CC have no land available for the Town Council’s cemetery or allotment use.
- vi) Attleborough Day Centre: funding frozen and different services at different premises.
- vii) Compliments re Attleborough: Town Council working hard to provide a pleasant town.
- viii) Low Carbon Community: Taking Attleborough Forward group are researching options.
- ix) LDF Minerals & Waste Consultation Document: Response required by 11 December.

Documents for reference:

- x) LDF BDC Core Strategy Inspector’s Report: available at ACE Centre & Attleborough Library
- xi) “Living Longer, Living well” – Norfolk Older People’s Strategy
- xii) BDC Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report

The following were received after the Agenda was sent out on 23/10/09. (No resolutions may be passed)

xiii) Car Parking: Two letters: A complaint re the inconvenient time of Breckland’s meeting and about a multi-storey car park. Also the lack of provision for commuters if charges are introduced and no consideration of green issues.

ix) Parish Grouping: Attleborough & Besthorpe are to be grouped together for possible S106 agreements. Funds collected from Besthorpe will be prioritised to Besthorpe.

- x) Request for funding: from Ignite youth work is to be passed to the Finance Committee.  
xi) Street Lighting & public transport: request for stronger support from council against reduction of public transport services. Rural transport subsidies and park & ride in Norwich.

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

- i) Youth Project: A request had been received from a member of the public who was interested in joining the group. Cllr Firman will contact her. **ACTION: Cllr Firman.**  
ii) Street Cleansing: A resident on the Ollands estate had contacted Breckland and been assured that street cleaning would be undertaken every two-four weeks by SERCO. Since then no cleaning has been done. A street light was not lit. These had dealt with by the Mayor.  
iii) Town Hall Refurbishment: compliments have been received from the Town Hall Crafters on the improvements following refurbishment.

**21 TO RECEIVE ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH'S AGENDA**

- i) Precept ii) Play Area

**22 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 Waters and carried by Council that the meeting be adjourned to allow the public to speak.**

Items raised were: Banham Poultry – smells and query re possible relocation to Bunns Bank. Building work and plans.

**The meeting was reconvened**

**23 THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING WAS CONFIRMED** as Monday 7 December 2009 at 7pm

**24 TO PASS A RESOLUTION EXCLUDING THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

**It was proposed by Cllr McBride and carried by Council that the public should be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.**

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**THE FOLLOWING WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CONFIDENCE / *IN CAMERA* / BELOW THE LINE**

**25 TO AGREE THE SALARIES / WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS / PACKAGES OF THE STAFF FOR 2009-2010** (see separate confidential sheet)

Mrs Elias declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting at 9.30pm before the discussion.

- i) Town Clerk ii) Admin Assistant iii) Town Hall Caretaker iv) Head Groundsman / Cemetery Keeper v) Groundsman

The proposals of the Finance Committee were discussed.

**It was proposed by Cllr Farrow and carried by Council that recommendations of the Finance Committee be accepted.**

**It was proposed by Cllr Middlebrook and carried by Council that any increase in pay and holiday after March 2011 would require the agreement of the then Finance Committee.**

**The meeting closed at 10.15pm**

**Chair:**