

SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on the 25th May 2005 at 7.30p.m. in the Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Cllr J. Stockdale (in the chair)

Councillors:- C. Baker, D. Butters, P. Buxton, D. Cannon, P. Darby, A. Greaves,
S. Lister, I. Sherwood and L. Wise.

Clerk:- R. Bishop
Deputy Town Clerk: - M. Meyrick

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1. Cllr Matthews and Cllr Emmerson,

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – for items included on the Agenda

- 2.1. Cllr Sherwood declared an interest on item 4 as he serves on the committee.
- 2.2. Cllr Greaves declared a personal interest on item 4 as the applicant is a neighbor.
- 2.3. Cllr Cannon declared an interest on item 4 as he owns land in this area.

3. TOWN CLERK REPORT ON THE CHURCHYARD AND VARIOUS ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPECT OF MAINTENANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

3.1. Legal Advice.

The situation of boundaries and responsibilities in the churchyard has been discussed with the Town Council's solicitors. They are carrying out searches on all adjoining properties in order to establish an informed opinion in respect of boundaries and responsibility.

The Deputy Town Clerk visited the Norfolk Record's Office in Norwich to carry out research on the Churchyard. The findings were not conclusive so further investigation is required.

3.2. Maintenance implications

Below are the other maintenance issues discussed.

- Clearing rubbish - Ivy was taken off a wall of an adjoining property and left in the churchyard but since then this has been added to and has become unsightly.
- Rabbit holes – adjacent to the boundary on right hand side. For this problem to be dealt with this area would have to be cordoned off for two days and adjacent property owners consent would be needed to deal with the problem their side too!
- Vehicle access – towards Campinglands, muddy track, does this need upgrading?
- Steps leading to Mangate Street, the leaves and debris need to be cleared regularly.
- Headstones – safety programme required for both the churchyard and the Cemetery.
- Main gates, fencing along Mangate Street and Campinglands end – The church are looking at possibilities of grant assistance from various sources.
- Kissing Gates – are these DDA compliant?
- Town Clock – approximately 7 years ago a grant was available to change the mechanism of the clock but the Council did not give permission. Repairs are being carried out on the main window of the church which would require scaffolding in July at the churches expense, this would be an opportunity to re-gild the clock face while the scaffolding is in place. A quote has been received from Smiths of Derby and this quote has been passed onto the Revd John Smith.

3.3. Overall responsibility

The main maintenance of the churchyard, its boundaries, the trees, paths and street lights are all with the Town Council. The PCC via the Norwich Diocese will have responsibility for the church itself and the small area of internment for ashes.

3.4. Actions

It was established that professional advice would be needed in the future if any Ivy is to be removed from the walls in the churchyard. With regards to any immediate maintenance in the churchyard it was pointed out the Town Council staff are all busy in the summers months but future maintenance would not be a problem during the winter months subsequently an outside contractor may be needed for the immediate maintenance. It was proposed by Cllr Darby and seconded by Cllr Buxton for the Town Council to give delegated authority to the Town Clerk, to use up to £2000 of reserves for an initial clear up operation.

It was agreed with 6 votes for and 3 against to set aside a budget £2000 at the discretion of the Town Clerk to deal with the removal of rubbish in the churchyard and to also add to the budget debate in the autumn the subject of the annual maintenance cost.

There was a request made by Councillors for the Town Clerk bring to a future meeting a copy of the Norfolk County Services contract for Councillors to look at.

4. To receive and consider the following PLANNING APPLICATIONS

<p>3PL/2005/0760/F Erection of cottage style dwelling & double garage revised scheme (to inc. garden room extension). Land/building plot adj, Cherry Cottage, Whitecross Road. Mrs. M. Sampson.</p> <p>NO OBJECTION</p>	<p>3PL/2005/0758/F Proposed change of use to part existing car park to car & light commercial vehicles sales with portacabin office. Ex Little Chef, A47 Swaffham. T & S Commercials.</p> <p>OBJECTION – 8 vote to object – The Town Council objects to this application on Highway Grounds and are concerned with the safe environment for users.</p>
<p>3PL/2005/0602/H Amendment to Development of school (outline) and temporary siting of portable school building (full), Turbine Way. The Medeshamstede Education Trust.</p> <p>OBJECTION – 6 votes to object, 1 against and 2 abstentions – The Council object on the grounds of this proposed development being inappropriate use of an industrial site. The Local Plan does not encompass this type of development on an industrial site such as the Eco-Tech Business & Development Centre.</p>	

5. ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT (PUBLIC BODIES) 1960 & LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 100 – following the exclusion of the public and press

5.1. A confidential report was circulated to Councillors. All necessary forms have been completed and returned to the Norfolk Pension Service. The issue is about a former employee taking his pension early and the obligation it will place upon the Town Council to make up the shortfall. In the event that the Town Council was obligated to make up a shortfall then the cost of a one off payment could be £13,668.23 and over five years in monthly installments of £264.26 (adding interest of £2,187.37). The obligation of the Council would depend on the reason agreed for the former employee leaving. The Town Clerk recommended that the Council seek legal advice. Cllr Sherwood proposed to accept the Town Clerks recommendation.

It was agreed unanimously for legal advice to be taken before any further action is taken.

5.2. It has been reported that there has been damage at the skateboard park and that the Town Hall staff are doing the necessary checks to see if an insurance claim could be sought.

5.3. Correspondence has been received from Anthony Jackson of Mott Macdonald regarding the removable bollards on the Market Place. There will be a need for a legal agreement between the Town Council and Norfolk County Council to enable the Town Council to remove the bollards on Saturday's for the market. There are two bollards that need to be removed when the Greyhound Public House has deliveries. Norfolk County Council wish for the Town Council to enter into a sole agreement for these two bollards and for the Town Council to arrange a sub-agreement with the Greyhound for the removal and replacement of the bollards in question. There followed a discussion. Cllr Buxton proposed and Cllr Wise seconded for the Town Council to have a sub-agreement with the Greyhound Public House.

The vote for was lost with 2 votes for, 5 against and 3 abstentions for the Town Council to enter into a sub-agreement with the Greyhound Public House.

There followed a second proposal, Cllr Lister proposed and Cllr Baker seconded for Norfolk County Council to enter into an agreement with the Greyhound for the removal of two bollards to allow deliveries to their premises.

It was agreed with 5 votes for, 0 votes against and 5 abstentions to contact Norfolk County Council and inform them that the Town Council do not wish to enter into a sub-agreement with the Greyhound Public House for the removal of bollards but are happy to enter into an agreement for the removal of bollards that effect the Saturday Market.

The meeting closed at 9.12p.m.

Chairman_____