

SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Town Council meeting held on Wednesday 13th April 2005 at 6.45p.m. in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Mayor Cllr P. Buxton

Councillors: - Mrs C. Baker, Mr D. Butters, Mr D. Cannon, Mr P. Darby,
Mrs A. Greaves, Mrs S. Lister, Mrs F. Mann,
Mrs S. Matthews, Mr I. Sherwood, Mr L. Wise.

Clerk: - Mr R. Bishop
Deputy Clerk: - Mrs M. Meyrick
Norfolk Constabulary: - PC Andy Partridge

Public: - 9

794. APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

794.1. Cllr Emmerson who is unwell and Cllr Stockdale had given his apologies.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 6.46p.m.

THE MEETING RESUMED AT 6.59.m. (see Appendix 1)

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

795.1. Cllr Greaves declared an interest on 11.6 and 11.9 as she knows correspondent personally.

795.2. Cllr Butters declared an interest on 11.6. and 11.9.

795.3. Cllr Sherwood declared an interest on item 13.2.-polling station.

796. MAYOR'S REPORT.

796.1. The Mayor reported on the Civic Events she had attended in the past month.

Drew the winning ticket for the prize draw from all the questionnaires returned at the Icenima at Ecotech.
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Attended the St Winnold's Fair Parade and Breakfast at Downham Market

Attended the Breckland Reception at Elizabeth House.
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Hosted the Town Council's Reception at the George Hotel and thanked all the representatives of services, clubs and societies who contribute so much to the life of Swaffham.
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Wrote to Gillian Shephard on behalf of the Town Council wishing her a very happy retirement and thanking her for her interest and work in Swaffham which has been much appreciated.

Attended a performance by the Swaffham Players of 'Annie Get Your Gun'. It was Brian Hubbard's 100 th production and was a very entertaining evening. We are very lucky to have such an enthusiastic and committed group of people of all ages who work so hard to bring us live entertainment.
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797. POLICE MATTERS

797.1. PC Partridge reported the crime total from the 16 March to today as 58. There was a variety of crimes including theft from motor vehicle, burglary dwelling, burglary other, criminal damage, criminal damage to vehicle, theft of peddle cycle, theft from person, common assault, aggravated vehicle taking and sexual assault.

797.2. PC Partridge would like to draw the Council's attention to the dramatic increase in burglary dwellings and burglary other. This needs to be considered by everyone in the town.

797.3. A Council member asked a question relating to attacks made on windows at Holly House, London Street but PC Partridge informed the Council that he is unable to discuss individual crimes but someone has been reprimanded for the crimes in question.

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797.4. A member of the Council had witnessed a pursuit and arrest of an individual and wanted to congratulate the police on a job well done.

798. MINUTES:

798.1. The minutes of the Full Council meeting of Wednesday 9th March 2005 were agreed and signed as a true record by the Mayor.

799. TOWN CLERK REPORT:-

799.1. Swimming Pool Land Purchase Negotiations following meeting on 12th April 2005

A meeting took place yesterday afternoon in the Council Chamber, with the Mayor, Cllr Dave Cannon, Chairman of SPA Marion Clements and the Town Clerk. The meeting was with Mr. Raikes of R.H. & R.W. Clutton and two members representing the Company owning the piece of land in question. The discussions were very friendly and constructive; negotiations are still at very early stages and further information is required from both the Town Council and from the Land Owners. The land owners are sympathetic and supportive of what the Town Council and SPA are trying to achieve. The Council will be kept informed of further developments as they arise.

799.2. Tree Pollarding in the Churchyard.

The tree pollarding has taken place recently, carried out by tree surgeon David Machin. There will be further work carried out later in the year, as reported in the local press; this involves the removal of a diseased tree and the grinding out of two tree stumps. This is essential maintenance work that will protect the other trees in that area.

Further to trees on the Recreation Ground, the Town Clerk is also in contact with Mr Ward a resident of Greenhoe Place in respect of trees bordering the Haspalls Road Recreation Ground. He is seeking clarification of the condition of two trees. A report was given some seven years ago by a Breckland Council tree officer, but the current tree officer has referred the Town Council to a private contractor stating that he no longer carries out this type of work. The Town Clerk will speak with David Machin as he regularly reports back to the Council; Mr. Ward is requesting a written report.

799.3. Church Clock.

The Church Clock is now working again and is at the correct time. The situation with keys is still not satisfactory though. The Council are researching how the Town Council became responsible for the maintenance of the Clock and various parts of the Churchyard. The lack of trust is very disappointing.

799.4. Garden Trust

A meeting with David Lefever and two other trustees of the Garden Science Trust on 31st March took place, coincidentally the Town Clerk heard from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Government Office East on the same day. It seems that things are moving forward, with both this application and that of Mrs. Rosemary Nash; and providing there is no objection from the National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners the Council should hear in a matter of days now. Cllr Darby reported that he has still not received information from the Garden Science Trust as he is the Council's representative; the Clerk had spoken to David Lefever at the meeting.

799.5. Audit Commission.

The audit details will be completed by the end of next week, thus achieving the certificate for completion shortly afterwards. There is approximately three hours work before everything is finished.

799.6. Charity Commission.

As the Charity Commission was mentioned at the last Town Council meeting it was felt necessary to update Councillors who are trustees of the charity. The Chairman Cllr Dave Cannon and the Clerk have met recently to complete the necessary formalities for the past three years; everything has gone off to the Charity Commission. The annual report and accounts will be assessed

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independently by Mr. Brian Clements who discussed matters with the Clerk last Friday. This information will be presented to the Trustees with the current years accounts; at the trustees meeting on 25th May, thus getting all paperwork completely up to date as promised.

799.7. Museum.

The Museum Directors will be meeting a week tomorrow on Thursday 21st April. A temporary staffing appointment to cover for long term sick leave is in the progress of being arranged. This is fully funded by the grant money available to the Museum.

799.8. Newsletter & Annual Report.

This has been written, printed and delivered to most parts of the town, there might be a few volunteers who have not picked up their allocation to deliver just yet. The vast majority have already gone out now. The Clerk reported that the standard of printing and particularly the photographs, was not up to the usual standard and hopes to improve the quality of the printing for the next newsletter.

799.9. Bus Shelters (including correspondence from Swaffham Sports Shop)

The situation on the bus shelters is that all of the shelters are on order. The letter from Swaffham Sports Shop came as a result of Mr. Cooper meeting the Clerk and Mr. Peter Cudby from Norfolk County Council on site. The agreement on the final positioning for the shelter close to the Sports Shop was agreed. The Town Clerk had previously met with Mr. Paul Green to overcome an objection for the siting of the shelter close to the Tourist Information Centre. Mr. Green's objection has now been withdrawn, as a position two and a half metres from both his property and the TIC has been agreed. Mr. Cooper's objection was the bulk of the original design, this was the only drawing that was on site, a better drawing giving the more accurate look of the new shelter will be forthcoming very soon. This overcomes Mr. Cooper's objection as it is more transparent, equally it takes on board the Town Council's views which were along the same lines. The Clerk will continue to liaise with Mr. Cooper to ensure that he is kept informed.

799.10. Dumping of vehicles, caravans and rubbish on Castle Acre Road:

The area on the right hand side of the approach to the town in Castle Acre Road has long been known as a favourite dumping ground for all sorts of rubbish, but particularly vehicles. The latest spate has been for caravans, the second is currently awaiting removal. All of these are reported as soon as we are made aware of them at the Town Hall. It is not the Town Council's responsibility to remove them, but have a duty to report them.

799.11. Ducks at Northwell Pool.

A discussion on the options to consider on the Ducks situation at Northwell Pool took place. The oiling of the eggs is too late for this year but this could be a long-term solution. Cllr Darby proposed to set £500 as a budget for the removal of the ducks.

<p>It was agreed with 1 abstention to set a budget of £500 for the removal of the ducks on Northwell Pool.</p>

799.12. Various other on-going matters not elsewhere on the Agenda.

A meeting took place recently from our insurance company Cornhill who were looking at the Council's health & safety procedures, risk assessments and the new building in particular. They have made some suggestions for improvements to the record keeping in respect of health & safety and risk assessments, these will be implemented in the coming months. Preparations are going ahead for the Town Assembly on 27th April. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk will be working on the Quality Council application over the next couple of months, there is probably about two or three days work for both to complete the necessary work. The new Receptionist Jane Devlin is settling in very well and this will help enormously in the coming months, as we gradually adjust the duties within the office. There is some maintenance to deal with on the Skateboard Park, in a recent inspection it has been noted that there is some imaginative graffiti and damage to the two grind rails. This work will be attended to within the budgets allowed.

800. JUSTICES LICENCE - applications

Transfer of licence for Unwins Ltd, 34 Market Place to Jonathan Dunn and Lesley Hutt (Off licence Manager and Area Manager)	
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801. PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:

801.1. Planning Applications:-

3PL/2005/0421/F Conversion of integral garage to residential & erection of new double garage. Mr. E. Byrne, 35 Whitsands Rd. NO OBJECTION	3PL/2005/0438/F Alterations & extension. Mr. A. & Mrs. L.C. Bouilouta, 14 Tumbler Hill. NO OBJECTION
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802. FINANCE:

802.1. Accounts for Payments for April 2005 (see Appendix 2).

The list of Accounts was circulated to Councillors.

It was unanimously agreed to accept the accounts as listed.

803. JUBILEE HERITAGE PLAN.

803.1. Copies of minutes/reports from Icen Partnership have been circulated to Councillors.

803.2. The Town Centre Working Group met on Monday 11th April, the minutes will be available for the next Council meeting. The main issues discussed were progress of works and the twice weekly meetings which is to help avoid problems with managing the Market. The site manager Jason Glasspoole is doing an excellent job communicating to all parties. With better weather, longer periods of daylight and lack of problems found it should help to catch up some of the time lost due to bad weather. Other issues discussed were trees, CCTV, removable bollards/liability requirements, phases two and three, and other town centre issues.

In general there is no doubting that the Market is suffering as a result of the disruption, but it was generally agreed at the recent finance meeting that it would be unwise to promote the market until the work for phase one is completed. Cllr Darby reported following a meeting that Norfolk County Council will be responsible for the maintenance of the trees for the future.

803.3. The Council Chamber is now fully ventilated; the Museum Office work will be completed very soon. The shutters for the office reception have been installed. There is still some snagging to do within the building as a result of some issues identified by Town Council staff and within the Access Report. The response to the Access Report from Architect Gerry Burns has been fully accepted by the Council subject to receiving the completion certificate from the Building Inspector. This is expected either late April or early May. The workshop at the side of the Town Hall should be erected in the next two weeks. This just leaves the gates at the Cley Road entrance and the sound system for the Council Chamber to resolve.

804. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:

804.1. A circular letter re-Quality Parishes and Parish Planning has been received and circulated for information only. As reported the Clerk and Deputy Clerk will be diarising some quality time to complete the application for Quality Status, they are both qualified to complete one tick box for Swaffham, but the application does need the time put in and to then qualify.

804.2. Details of the Stopping Up of Highway at the Assembly Rooms, Market Place from Go East has been received and circulated to Councillors. There has been no objections from Transco and Anglian Water so the Council should be informed at the end of April or early May. The Clerk will talk to Anthony Wright regarding the re-painting of bays in front of the Assembly Rooms so no one will be blocked in.

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804.3. A copy of Norfolk Link from the NCAPTC has been received for information only.

804.4. Details of the training calendar from Norfolk Parish Training Partnership has been received for information only. If councillors are interested in attending any of these events, please inform the Town Hall.

804.5. Details of a visit to Norfolk Records Office on May 18th or June 17th details have been received. If any Councillors are interested in either of these visits, please inform the Town Hall as soon as possible.

804.6. A request has been received for use of allotment site by Mr. Horwell at Four Acres Field (*report by Town Clerk*). The Clerk produced a draft letter for the Council to consider. A meeting took place with Mr Horwell on Monday 11th April. In general the Clerk was unable to recommend a change or variance of use for these allotment sites and has concerns about viability, access, planning and capital finance. The Clerk recommended acceptance of the draft letter in response to the request for the area to remain as allotment sites.

Cllr Darby proposed and Cllr Mann seconded to accept the Clerk's recommendation.

It was unanimously agreed to accept the Clerk's draft letter and to keep the sites in question as allotment sites.

806.7. Correspondence from D.S. & A.J. Skeat has been received and circulated in respect of a recent planning application, also a reply by the Town Clerk has been circulated. It was reported that the application was dealt with by the Planning committee at Breckland Council on Monday.

806.8. Details of the NALC Conference at Eastbourne 23 – 25 September 2005 has been received and circulated to Councillors.

806.9. A letter has been received and circulated to Councillors from Lee Fuller regarding Access to the Graves in the Cemetery.

It was agreed to instruct the Clerk to look at this and report back at a future meeting.

806.10. A letter has been received from the Rt. Hon. Lord Prior with a request for a litter receptacle in the lay-by on Norwich Road. Cllr Cannon proposed for a letter to go to McDonalds requesting a rubbish bin in the laybay as well as regular clean up by their members of staff.

It was agreed to send a letter to McDonalds requesting a rubbish bin in the laybay as well as regular clean up by their members of staff.

807. REPORTS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF OUTSIDE BODIES.

807.1. SWAFFHAM HEALTH FORUM - The main speaker was Hilary Sinclair from the West Norfolk Mental Health Advocacy which covers the Swaffham area. They train volunteers to work with people with mental health problems who need support whether it be something like attending tribunals and appeals or helping with medication and treatment. Men's Health week is June 13th - 19th.

807.2. YOUNG CARERS GROUP – this is being set up in Swaffham and courses in first aid, fire safety and food hygiene are being organised.

807.3. CCTV GROUP – There is a possibility for Councillors to take a look around the control room. Graeme Green of Breckland Council would be willing to come and give a talk of how it operates.

807.4. SWAFFHAM AND DISTRICT TOURISM ASSOCIATION - There has been a very positive response to the new Swaffham leaflet from both the advertisers and the outlets. Over 25,000 have been distributed so far with more to follow once Spring arrives. The website is becoming increasingly important as more and more use the internet to decide holidays and venues.

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807.5. SWIMMING POOL ASSOCIATION – The recent Swimming pool meeting was very encouraging and is well worth being patient for.

808. BRECKLAND COUNCIL.

808.1. Details of the free training for councillors on Standards Issues on Monday May 16th Norfolk Training Partnership in conjunction with Breckland Council's Standards Committee has been received.

808.2. The notice of election on 5th May 2005 (*and notification Polling Station will not be the Town Hall*) has been received. The polling Station will be at the Pedlars Suite, George Hotel.

808.3. Notification of street naming and numbering Brandon Road has been received for information only.

808.4. A circular letter re-Breckland 4 Business has been received for information only.

808.5. The new environmental street scene from Serco has been received.

808.6. It was reported that Cllr Sherwood has been appointed on the committee for the new licencing regulations. It was also reported that there is concern as the uptake of applications has been incredibly light. It is really imperative people start to apply as the August deadline is looming.

808.7. Since the move to the new building an income of £156,000 per year has been received from the Guildhall. Swaffham has had two ASBO orders placed both for racist and threatening behaviour. The new leader from May will be William Nunn.

809. NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL.

809.1. A consultation on Priorities for Norfolk's Second Local Transport Plan (LTP) has been received and circulated to Councillors. Cllr Darby stated that this is a good opportunity to press for the north/south bypass.

It was agreed for councillors to respond individually.

809.2. A circular letter re-'Norfolk on the Move' (*full document at Town Hall for Councillors to read*) has been received for information only.

809.3. More detail of bus stops in various places in the town has been received from Mott Macdonald.

809.4. The zebra crossing and the toucan crossing in Brandon road is scheduled for the summer and the footpath will include a cycle path. The Watton Road speed limit has been reduced from 50 to 40. A lollipop lady is needed for London Street. A petition is in hand for a crossing. It was reported that the junction to Norwich from Castleacre Road is very bad, this was noted, Cllr Matthews has it in hand.

810. To notify of the DATES of forthcoming meetings & receive any items to include on the AGENDA OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:-

810.1. Wed 27th April 2005 at 7pm Annual Town Assembly at the Town Hall (*in the new Council Chamber*). If any councillors would like anything on this agenda, please let the Town Clerk know asap.

810.2. Mon 9th May 2005 at 7pm Councillors Training Evening (*in the new Council Chamber*).

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810.3. Wed 11th May 2005 at 6.45pm Full Council (Annual Meeting) at the Town Hall (*in the new Council Chamber*).

810.4. Wed 25th May 2005 at 7.30pm Extraordinary Meeting/Full Council at the Town Hall (*in the new Council Chamber*).

The meeting closed at 8.15p.m.

Chairman_____

Appendix 1

Tony Dickens, Access Group Chairman – Mr Dickens read out a statement which is appendix 3.

Town Clerk - The council do not have to ratify decisions from the finance committee as all the councillors are on the finance committee subject to the certificate from the building inspector.

Tony Dickens – I understood the council had to adopt any decisions from the finance committee meeting.

Town Clerk – certain matters of finance have delegated authority from full council to get on with things. The full council would get involved if larger amounts were in question.

Margerat Miles – how dirty it is down there, houses themselves are very dirty – from here to the King's Lynn road it is very tidy the other end is very neglected.

Cllr Sherwood – This is an individuals comments, as a town council it is not in their remit to direct people how to live their lives and to clean their own homes.

Margerat Miles – other areas have groups to clean up the town can't we have that here?

Cllr Darby – The Council is not legally allowed to touch peoples properties, if it was a public building we can do our best to do it.

Derek Horwell – When will the assembly rooms be finished. Who is responsible for litter. When will the north south slip road be discussed.

Mayor – this was discussed recently and a letter sent to norfolk county council.

Reg Dowden – to encourage more people to come to the town council meetings can we have questions later in the evening?