

**SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Open Spaces & Amenities Committee meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006 at 7.00p.m. in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: - Cllr S. Matthews (in the Chair)

Cllr C. Baker, Cllr A. Greaves, Cllr T. Jennison, Cllr S. Lister,  
Cllr D Butters, Cllr J. Stockdale

Town Clerk: Mr R. Bishop  
Assistant Town Clerk: Mrs R. Noble

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

1.1. There were no apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1. Cllr J Stockdale declared an interest on item 4g as he is an allotment holder.

**3. MINUTES**

3.1. Amendment – page 275, item 2.1. should read - as she lives opposite.

3.2. Amendment – page 276, item 4.5. first line should read – to take away from the meeting to read.

3.3. Subject to these amendments the minutes of the Open Spaces meeting for the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2006 were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

**4. OPEN SPACES**

**4.1. Recreation Ground Committee**

It was reported the Recreation Ground Committee meeting due to take place this evening was postponed as there was not enough information to discuss. The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk met with Anthony Wright from Breckland recently regarding the existing toilet block. Mr Wright was able to inform that an asbestos check had been carried out recently on the building, concerns were raised in respect of clearing the interior of the building, preparing an improved design for future renovation of the building and other works related to the existing structure. He will present this information to the necessary committee and inform the Council of the outcome early in the new-year. The Deputy Town Clerk will schedule a Recreation Ground Committee meeting in January or February when she has further issues to discuss with the committee.

It was reported that the Skate Park passed a ROSPA inspection at the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt, the Council still have the balance of the money received from Sport England.

**4.2. Market Committee**

It was reported the Market Committee next meet on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The committee have been working on advertising for new traders in the Market Trade News. To date this has not produced any enquiries, there is one more month to go to see if anything comes back. The other thing the committee has been working on is entertainment for the Market, particularly free entertainment. The Town Council has lined up a group of Marquettes (Majorettes) who will be performing Christmas routines on 16<sup>th</sup> December. Then there is the Churches together group with their nativity play accompanied by the Salvation Army Band on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Groups are encouraged to come on more than one occasion each year, so that a regular

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entertainment programme can be built up. This will take time to achieve, but at least this has been started.

### 4.3. Cemetery

The Deputy Town Clerk has prepared two coloured documents for the committee to consider. The first is a comparison of other Burial authority charges. The second document shows how the charges could be increased to pay for the soil removal and charging for exclusive right of burial across the board. Without the exclusive rights of burial being charged then the Council have control over what happens to the grave, but if the charge is made then all responsibility transfers to the family dependants. The figures at the bottom of the page are recommended to the committee from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. The committee needs to agree to take this proposal to Full Council.

**It was agreed to take the recommendation as present to full Council for approval**

### 4.3. Churchyard

It was stated there has been a different cutting regime in the Churchyard this year and in general the Town Clerk reported there has been an improvement. He stated he had one recent compliment from a resident who walks through the churchyard everyday regarding the area previously left rough, saying how much this has been improved. A further year of looking after this area in a similar way will show further improvements next year.

### 4.4. Northwell Pool

It was reported with the preparation of the budget, a member of staff leaving and the recruitment process the Northwell Pool project has had to take a back seat. The Clerk stated he would arrange a meeting in the new-year with all the authorities to discuss the issues report. The aim is to have an action plan in place before the end of this financial year.

It was stated that the amount of ducks on the pond are increasing again. Cllr. S Lister proposed for the Clerk to investigate the cost of Pest Control for the ducks on the pond.

**With 4 votes for and 2 against it was agreed for the Clerk to investigate the cost of Pest Control for the Ducks on the pond.**

### 4.5. The Campingland

The Campingland has been tidied up in front of the Community Centre. This area was used as the builders' compound. It has been paid for by Iceni and will take most of next year to fully recover. The tree planted in memory of a former Swaffham resident is now well established. The hedging is one area the Clerk would like the Council to tackle when funds become available.

**The Clerk was instructed to obtain quotes for cutting the hedge on the Campingland.**

### 4.6. Allotments

The Town Clerk reported he has a winter programme for work to take place at the allotment sites around the town. The surplus allotments will be the subject of the budget debate on 6<sup>th</sup> December, the Clerk has a meeting arranged with the District Valuer coming next Tuesday with a view to carrying out the necessary valuations for all available options. The Clerk has the deeds of most of the allotments, other information is contained within the Enclosures Act in the mid 1800's. This refers to charitable uses of the land for the benefit of the poor. The Clerk will outline all of these options to allow a full debate on 6<sup>th</sup> December and a recommendation to go to full Council on 13<sup>th</sup> December. There is no doubt that the most valuable allotments

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sites with greater potential for obtaining planning permission are those that are fully occupied at Days Field, Shoulder of Mutton, Four Acres Field and Magazine Field. The other sites at Shouldham Lane and Tumbler Hill could have clauses attached that might mean that any capital receipts would have to be returned to either the Relief in Need Charity or to set up a Relief in Need 2. So careful thought needs to be made on which sites need to be re-organised, which allotment holders need to be re-located, and then to apply to the Secretary of State for the necessary permissions to dispose of the land. The Clerk has also had representations made by Mrs. Rosemary Nash who has her paddock for the Council to consider selling this land to her instead of leasing it. At present she pays an annual fee amounting to the equivalent of each allotment site she takes up. It was reported the Garden Science Trust development seems to have gone particularly quiet. There has been no contact for nearly a year now for this development at Tumbler Hill.

### **4.7. Town Centre**

The Deputy Town Clerk and Mike our Town Gardener have walked around the town centre and identified all existing flower tubs that need replacing. Seats such as those that surround the Buttercross and one or two others are in need of replacement. They have also identified areas where new street furniture could be situated. One idea is to replace the railings around the War Memorial. This exercise has been carried out to assist the town centre group working with Iceni. It is understood from Dennis Tallon that ideas need to be submitted very quickly. It is hoped to circulate the ideas to the town centre group in the next couple of days.

### **4.8. The Shambles**

The consultation day for the Shamble took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. The Clerk has a meeting with Alastair Rusholme and Keith Fuller from Breckland Council Street Scene department on Monday next week. This is to discuss possible ways forward. The issues report is not ready yet, this will be produced fairly soon, as time allows. A further meeting with the relevant authorities and possibly property owners that border the Shambles will be necessary. Whilst the detail is still to be agreed, there needs to be an action plan that the majority sign up to.

## **5.CIVIC AMENITIES**

### **5.1. Mayoral Duties.**

There was nothing to report on the Mayoral duties.

### **5.2. Honorary Citizens.**

There were no Honorary Citizen nominations to report.

### **5.3. Town Pound**

There was nothing to report on the Town Pound.

### **5.4. Town Clock**

The Town Estate has agreed to give £10,000 towards the Town Clock. This is £5,000 towards the Clock itself and £5,000 towards the structural repairs to the church fabric i.e. the Mullions. The clock is still not back in position, it has been delayed by a couple of days. It was reported there are no additional expenses to report. The overall cost is close to £22,000 less the £10,000 from the Town Estate. The Town Clerk will be meeting John Smith later this week or early next week at the latest.

### **5.5. Pedlars Sign**

There was nothing to report on the Pedlar Sign.

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5.6. The Buttercross

It was reported the main issue with the Buttercross is reconnecting the electricity supply. This is being carried out by EDF on 28<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk stated he has met with Terry Drake in order to discuss the electrical points, the meter and possible siting of this equipment. We have agreed a location behind one of the columns, it will be an improvement to the old box and the lighting will be on a light sensor, not a timing switch. Icen Partnership are paying for the installation, the Town Council will have to pay for the on going electric supply. Terry Drake would like to know about the lights situated in the trees adjacent to the Buttercross, as these apparently have been paid for by the Council previously.

5.7. War Memorial.

It was reported the new seat near the War Memorial is due to be erected this week by Peter Garner.

**6. Date of next meeting.**

6.1. The date of the next meeting is to be arranged.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm      Chairman .....