

Thorpe St Andrew Town Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1st December 2008

Present:

Mr R. S. R James (Town Mayor)	Mr J. F. Fisher
Mr J. M. Ward (Deputy Town Mayor)	Mr S. Freeman-Pannett
Mr G. Allison	Miss S. P. Lawn
Mr A. J. Barber	Mrs E. C. Laming
Mr J. Emsell	Mr G. Rowe

Apologies: - Mr D. E. Eley, Mr I. J. Mackie, Mr E. A. Newberry,
Mr N. Shaw, Mr D. R. C. Spooner

In Attendance: Mr S. J. Ford (Town Clerk)

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held 3rd November 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2008, previously circulated to members were approved and signed.

4. Announcements

The Town Mayor Mr R. S. James announced that he had attended a meeting with members of the SNAP team at Thorpe St Andrew School to discuss measures that would be taken to address criminal activities at the school site. He had also attended the SNAP public meeting at the end of November where members of the public drew attention to anti social behaviour in Vane Close, Sainsbury's and Primrose Crescent.

There had also been abuse and damage to fencing on the Dussindale allotment site. Priorities set at the meeting were increased police presence at Vane Close and Primrose Crescent and Thorpe St Andrew School.

The Speedwatch volunteers were now fully trained and operational and a combined one day Speedwatch campaign would be held with volunteer groups in Sprowston, Salhouse, Rackheath and Thorpe St Andrew in the spring.

The Town Mayor concluded by saying the Christmas Light event held the previous evening has proved an unqualified success with a large turn out of local residents. Mr James paid tribute to the organisers of the event who had carried out an enormous amount of work behind the scenes to put on the event.

The Clerk said that in future the agenda and papers for Town Council meetings would be sent out a full week before the meeting date.

5. Public Participation

The Town Mayor then suspended the meeting to enable members of the public to speak. Residents of Laundry Lane asked for information on the lime tree that had been felled recently as part of the tree works that had been programmed for Laundry Lane recreation ground. The Town Mayor, Mr R. S. James responded by proposing that the Recreation and Amenities committee be asked to provide a report on the events that led to the felling of a number of lime trees that had at one time formed the boundary of the Recreation Ground and to draw up a five year replanting scheme. Comments on the proposed replanting scheme would then be welcome.

Mr P. Rope voiced his concerns regarding the proposals and had offered assistance with the planting of the new hedge. Mr Rope said he would like to see the remaining lime trees pollarded to see if they would regenerate.

District Councillors

Mr J. M. Ward said that the District Council was being put under financial pressure as result of the downturn in the economy. Mortgage repossessions were up by 131% on last year in Norwich and landlord repossessions were up by 28%. Norwich C.A.B. had seen a 51% increase in mortgage arrears problems. National unemployment had risen to 1.72 million in August. There were 1000 new applicants every day for the jobseekers allowance. Age Concern had reported that half of elderly people were cutting back on food and fuel due to rising prices.

Broadland District Council income was being reduced as planning fees were down due to the reduced number of planning applications being made. Returns from waste collection had collapsed and investment income was down. Bus pass costs continued to rise from £407,000 in 2005/06 to £1,600,000 in 2008/09 following the introduction of free national bus travel.

6. Payment of Accounts

Cheque numbers 003209 – 003255 totalling £71,633.84p, on the 2008/09 payments list were approved and signed.

7. Tree Wardens' Report

The tree warden, Mr P. Rope was seeking grant assistance from the District Council for the new hedge that would be planted in the spring at Laundry Lane Recreation Ground.

Mr Rope had been given two small oak trees by the Women's Institute and he hoped that they might be planted as part of the planting scheme at Laundry Lane. He had visited the resident whose contractors had removed a section of hedge at the Recreation Ground and he would be assisting them with the replanting that would be carried out.

Mr Rope drew attention to the age of the trees that were planted when the town was initially developed in the north. Many of these trees were reaching the end of their life.

8. Draft Minutes of Committee Meetings

Events Committee

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 11th November 2008 were noted.

Finance and Staffing Committee

The draft minutes the meeting held on 24th November 2008 were noted. Mr A. J. Barber drew attention to the need for long term policies on Capital Budgets. It was noted that the office hours would be 10am to 1pm from 21-31 December; staff would be using some of their holiday entitlement during that time.

Beacon Committee

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2008 were noted. Mr J. F. Fisher proposed, seconded by Mr J. M. Ward, that the Committee should be re-formed as the Publications and Media Committee to establish regular and accessible communications with residents and promote the image of the town over a wider area. It was **RESOLVED** that the proposal and Terms of Reference put forward be adopted for the next municipal year.

Plans Committee

The draft minutes of the meetings held on the 10th and 17th November 2008 were noted.

9. Broadland District Council – dog fouling

The District Council had requested information on areas where dog fouling was problem and how this should be dealt with. The Clerk would submit a response. The long footpath by the railway line at Dussindale was particularly badly affected.

10. Annual return – response from External Auditor

The External Auditor's certificate and opinion was noted. The Deputy Clerk, Mrs J. B. Fenn was complimented for keeping the accounts in such good order.

11. Proposed Budget 2008/2009

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt a budget of £293,117.00p that represented an increase of 4.3% in the precept for the 2009/10 financial year.

12. Planning for long term capital expenditure

Mrs E. C. Laming had prepared a report that set out the need for a long term capital expenditure programme to be prepared. Mrs E. C. Laming proposed and was seconded by Mr G. Rowe that the Town Council should implement a long term capital expenditure plan with recommendations that would cover the four year life of the present council. The Recreation and Amenities committee would be asked to submit their proposals and the policy would be overseen by the Finance and Staffing committee until the proposed Finance and General Purposes committee was formed. It was **RESOLVED** that the proposal be implemented forthwith.

13. Town plan questionnaire results

Mrs E. C. Laming had prepared a report setting out the results of the questionnaire that had been circulated to residents in The Beacon. It was **RESOLVED** that a Town Plan would be produced in the New Year based on the results that had been received to date. Mrs Laming was thanked for all the work that she had put into the project to date.

14. Society of Local Council Clerks

It was **AGREED** to renew membership of the Society for a further twelve months.

15. Appointment of internal auditor

It was **AGREED** to defer the decision on appointing the internal auditor until the next financial year.

16. Freedom of Information – new Model Scheme

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the new model publication scheme that had been developed and approved by the Information Commissioner.

17. Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to bring forward discussion on the new committee which had been listed as item 28 on the agenda. Town Mayor, Mr R. S. James had submitted proposals for the objectives and terms of reference for the new committee. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the proposals put forward for the committee that would have seven members. Three named substitutes would be appointed and called upon if any of the seven members said that they would not be able to attend a committee meeting.

18. Town Council office opening hours December 22 – 31.

The opening hours would be 10am to 1pm for the period.

19. Bus shelter for The Denes

Information on the order that had been placed was noted.

20. Bus shelters – Broadland Business Park

The Town Council had agreed to be responsible for the two bus shelters that were being erected at Broadland Business Park and would receive a commuted sum of £15,000 from the developers to cover the projected maintenance costs.

21. Regional Empowerment Partnership

A request for nominations for membership of the Steering Group of the Partnership was noted.

22. Bittern Line Community Rail Partnership

Information on the next meeting on 11 December 2008 was noted.

23. Eco-towns planning policy statement consultation

Information on the consultation would be considered at the next Plans Committee meeting.

24. East of England Region Empowerment Partnership

Information on a secondment opportunity that existed at the Partnership was noted.

25. Community Speedwatch

A copy of a press release announcing the formation of a Thorpe St Andrew Community Speedwatch team was noted.

26. Thorpe St Andrew School Partnership Problem Solving Meeting

Action points arising from a SNAP meeting that had been held at the school were noted.'

27. Policing Green Paper

A summary of comments received following publication of the Policing Green Paper "From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together" was noted.

28. Thorpe St Andrew School Prize Award Evening

A letter of thanks for the donation of £50.00 towards the purchase of book tokens for the prize evening was noted.

Date of next meeting 5th January 2009 at the Dussindale Centre 7.30pm.