

Thorpe St Andrew Town Council
Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting
held on 5 June 2017 at 7.30pm

26 Present:

Mr I Mackie	(Town Mayor)	Mr J Fisher	(Deputy Mayor)
Mr P Berry	Mr F Bowe	Mr J Emsell	Mrs J Fisher
Miss S Lawn	Mrs T Mancini-Boyle	Mr L Reeves	Mr R Robson
Mr J Ward			

Apologies:

Mr N Hancock	Mr D Sears	Mr N Shaw	Mr S Snelling
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In attendance:

Mr T Foreman (Town Clerk) Mrs D Matthews (Committee Officer)
Mrs J Fenn (Deputy Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer)
4 Members of the Friends of Thorpe St Andrew Parks

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None

28 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record.

29 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) The Town Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for attending the Armed Services flag raising ceremony earlier that day. He reported that works to the dementia café were progressing well and were on target for the opening on 1 July 2017 and he thanked all the staff concerned for their hard work in delivering the project. He commented that he would be attending the Brownies and Guides 20th anniversary celebrations the following evening. He also reported that the planning application in respect of the land at Thorpe Woodland had now been considered by the District Council and the application had been refused.
- (ii) The Town Clerk reported that staff had recently relocated their office within Roxley Hall to make way for the dementia café and that he hoped in the next 4-5 weeks that the move to the refurbished building would be complete. The Parks and Estates Manager was hopefully due back at work the next week. He added that he had recently been appointed to a Norfolk and Suffolk Justices Committee which was responsible for overseeing the appointment of magistrates. The Town Mayor added that the Clerk had recently submitted his thesis for his doctoral degree and on behalf of the Town Council wished him well with this.

30 PUBLIC SESSION (limited to 3 minutes per speaker)

It was proposed and duly seconded that the meeting be suspended to allow members of the public to address the meeting.

Mr J Ward - the Town Council noted the report from Mr Ward.

31 FINANCE

Section 1 and Section 2 of the Annual Return and Internal Audit Update.

The Deputy Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer reported that the Annual Statement needed to be referred for External Audit and, in accordance with the requirements, she invited the Town Council to approve Sections 1 and 2 of the annual return for 2016/17, copies of which were handed to Members.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2016/17

Members considered each of the 9 statements included within Section 1 and

RESOLVED that the requirements contained within each of the 9 statements had been met by the Town Council and that the Section 1 Statement be approved and signed.

Section 2 – Accounting Statements for 2016/17

The accounting statement had been audited by the Internal Auditor and no issues raised.

RESOLVED that the Section 2 accounting statement be approved and signed.

32 DRAFT MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Plans Committee – 12 June 2017 – noted.

Mr Fisher drew attention to the application at 27 Yarmouth Road, relating to the conversion of office accommodation to flats and the Committee's concern about the lack of parking provision. He understood the highways department had no objection to the proposal and that it accorded with national planning guidance regarding parking. There was however concern about the impact of the lack of parking spaces on the highway and on adjoining businesses and he urged Members to continue to raise these concerns.

33 PARKS PROJECT PROPOSAL – PRESENTATION

The Town Council received a presentation from 4 members of the Friends of Thorpe St Andrew Parks on their parks proposals. The issue of fencing at the parks had been considered at a recent meeting of the Town Council when reservations had been expressed by Members about the removal of the fencing because of the history of misuse and vandalism at the parks some years ago.

The Friends commented that they hoped that by detailing their proposals and the history behind them they could alleviate some of the concerns of members. The Friends reminded members that their proposals had been formulated following surveys of local residents and school children and in consultation with Play England and landscape architects etc. A grant of £8,000 had been secured from Tesco to help towards the cost of the project and would fund the initial phase which involved fencing, relocation of some equipment and the wild flower borders. The work needed to be completed within 12 months to secure the grant. A detailed plan of the proposals was viewed and the Friends explained that current guidelines for the design of play areas

encouraged children of all ages to play together and to not segregate age groups. The existing fencing was unsightly and unwelcoming and cut through the centre of the play areas and the proposal was to replace this with grass mounds and a winding pathway to the play area.

In response to a comment that this matter had only recently been considered, the Town Clerk commented that, having regard to concerns about historical misuse of the parks and health and safety of children using the area, Members had expressed a preference for some form of fencing to be retained to secure the area and separate the two different age group play areas, but that they were open to further discussions about an appropriate form of fencing.

Members welcomed the information presented to them and whilst there was still some reservations about the previous issues on the site with vandalism and misuse, they felt they had a better understanding of the proposals which appeared to meet current guidelines and would allow parents with children of different ages to all play together. They acknowledged that in recent years there had not been the same levels of concern about misuse of the area and hoped that the proposals would continue to encourage sympathetic use of the play area. It was noted that the proposed fencing would consist of natural hedging which would be wide and high to create a barrier and was less likely to be climbed than the existing black rail fencing.

Some material was already available on site to help create the mounds and it was likely that much of the work proposed could be carried out in-house. The Friends were happy to liaise with the Parks and Estates Manager regarding the most appropriate surfaces for the mound/paths having regard to ongoing maintenance. It was hoped to progress the planting/ground works as soon as practicable to enable them to get established before next spring. The proposals would still include perimeter fencing for the site and fencing around the pavilion would be retained. Reuse of the small building on the site as a café would form part of longer term plans for the site. The grant from Tesco would fund the first phase of the improvements but further funding would be needed for the remainder of the project. The estimated cost of the whole project was in the region of £200,000. It was possible that there might be capacity within the Tesco grant to fund a new piece of equipment. Reference was made to the possibility of using Section 106 monies for the project and how this could be done to help get the project going and see the completion of at least one area of the park. Whilst some Section 106 monies were allocated for specific projects as part of planning permissions granted, other monies could be redirected from longer term projects to help fund more imminent proposals. It was noted that following its removal the black rail fencing would be retained for use in the future if the need arose.

It was proposed that support be given to the proposals put forward by the Friends of Thorpe St Andrew Parks and with all members expressing their support, it was

RESOLVED that support be given to the proposals put forward by the Friends of Thorpe St Andrew Parks and that the Finance and Staff Committee be asked to consider options for funding the works to complete one area of the parks project.

Future meeting date.

It was noted that there would be no meeting of the Town Council in July.

The meeting closed at 8:35pm

Signed:

Dated:

DRAFT