

Present: Councillors;

Anne Fleming (Chair), Ann Baldwin, Peter Dutton, Rosemary Lewis, Sandra Leverett, Andrew Payne, David Thomas (Vice Chair), Maureen Took, Jackie Wagner, Paul Widdowson, Iona Winton, David Wollweber

In Attendance: Nick Rees (Clerk), Polly Grice (Beccles & Bungay), District Councillor Letitia Smith, PC Richard Warne, 24 members of the public

Minutes

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited everyone to a festive drink and nibbles at the Angel after the meeting.

1. **Apologies:** None
2. **Declarations of interest:** Non-pecuniary interests; Cllr D Thomas for 10 Cllr P Widdowson for 11 & 12, Cllr M Took for 10, Cllr A Payne for 11, Cllr P Dutton for 11, Cllr S Leverett for 10 & 11, Cllr A Baldwin for 11, Cllr A Fleming for 11, Cllr I Winton for 11.
3. **Minutes:** RESOLVED that the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Council held on 2nd November, 2015 were accepted as a true record with the amendment that the date of the ESTA meeting (item 4) needed correcting. The Clerk would amend the minutes for signing later. RESOLVED on a proposition from Cllr Dutton it was agreed that in future all agendas would have the additional item 'Matters Arising from the minutes'.
4. **Chair's Report:** The Chair thanked Mrs Karen Prime for organising the very successful Scarecrow event. The Chair reported that six Councillors and the Clerk attended the Remembrance Sunday service and wreath laying at the Arboretum. The Chair also attended, with many residents, the Remembrance event in the Thoroughfare on the 11th November where the children from Edgar Sewter sang. On the 12th November the Chair and Cllr Lewis attended the WDC budget review, this presentation concentrated on proposed cut backs and the power point presentation would be available on request. The Chair reported on the 50th ESTA Anniversary event on the 13th November. At this event the Chair met with Peter Aldous MP who advised speaking with WDC on the proposed removal of the 1hr free parking in Halesworth. Subsequently the Chair, Cllr Dutton and Lewis met with Andrew Jarvis (Strategic Director for WDC & SCDC) and Cllr Tony Goldson. An annual contribution from Halesworth Town Council was discussed and the figure initially tabled was £10,000 however since this meeting Mr Jarvis has confirmed that WDC would be looking to recover £34,000. The Chair also reported that, with the help of some Councillors and volunteers, 1800 signatures were collected against the proposed removal of the 1 hr free parking. This petition had then been sent to WDC as evidence of how important it was to Halesworth to retain the free parking.
The Chair reported that the Civic Dinner had raised £1,560 and there had been two presentations this month, with the two charities Nsafe and Halesworth Dementia Carers each receiving a cheque for £780. The Chair reported on the successful Festive Lights Switch on the 28th November and the Halesworth in Bloom awards ceremony at the Cut on the 1st December.
5. **Police:**
 - a) To receive a monthly report. PC Richard Warne attended the meeting for the first time and introduced himself as Halesworth's new Police Constable and then read out the report (attached)

- b) Cold Calling, The Chair reported on the letter received from Mrs J Kalaher on a spate of Cold Calling in the town which involved various attempts at extracting money from unsuspecting residents. PC Warne was aware of the problem but advised that anyone can request that the trader shows their 'Pedlars Licence' which permits the sales of goods door to door, without this licence they are operating illegally. It was agreed that this information was very useful and would be posted on the website.
6. **Public Session:** [15 minutes on agenda items] Sue Allenby requested that a plan and engineering details she had been given by an engineer be displayed at the Bus Hub Consultation on the 9th December. It was RESOLVED that the documents would be displayed at the consultation. Mr Doug Gray drew attention to the Suffolk On Board notices which had incorrectly posted survey information relating to the Halesworth Area Community Transport which should have referred to the on demand survey 'Pathfinder' service. Mr Gray wished to point out that the names involved with this misinformation were unfortunately the same people involved with the Bus Hub consultation. Concerns were also expressed over how the charging for Green bins would be policed. Mr Imison reported that Beccles had appeared to have retained some free parking. It was noted that this was probably a set number of free spaces in the Blythburgate car park. Cllr Took raised the question of whether the few ½ hour free spaces in Halesworth's Thoroughfare car park would be retained in Halesworth. Mr Gray expressed disappointment that nobody as yet had responded to requests for WDC to correct the errors on their Parking Order which limited certain vehicles in the car park. The Chair read out some recent newspaper articles that catalogued the extraordinary profits that Local Authorities were making from car park fees. The Council together with Halesworth Business Connections were attempting to come up with solutions to minimise any damage to the Thoroughfare businesses from the removal of the free 1hr parking. There were various ideas from a payback scheme to raising the Precept to cover the cost and all would be considered.
7. **Planning Committee:** The Chair of the Committee, Cllr Peter Dutton reported on the two applications reviewed at the last meeting, Focus Organic and 8 Oak Green, the former was approved and the latter deferred as the committee were awaiting revised plans.
8. **Town Development Committee:** To receive a report from the meeting held on the 9th November, 2015. The Chair of the Committee, Cllr David Thomas read extracts from the minutes (available on the website) which gave an update on Gappa, the Library, the London Rd Building, Neighbourhood Planning, Fair trade town and SCC's variation Pilot scheme.
9. **Halesworth in Bloom:** To receive a request from Tamsyn Imison for the Council to consider HIB 2016 targets, Green flag award and composting schemes. Tamsyn Imison reported that as Halesworth had won the Best Small Town and had been awarded a Gold for the second year running, it was time to build on this achievement by going for a 'Green Flag' award for the town park. The costs, paperwork and preparation for the Green Flag award (similar to the original 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign) would be undertaken by HIB. It had been noted by the judges in the Anglia in Bloom competition that the town needed to look at graffiti, litter and the condition of some kerbs and pavements. Tamsyn understood, in the light of the announcement from WDC about the charge for emptying Green Bins, that there might be someone leading a community composting scheme. It was noted that although this would be very useful for gardeners and also for HIB it was difficult to imagine how this would work and no information was known at this time.
10. **GAPPA:** It was reported that the group had achieved the target already which was very impressive. It was unanimously agreed and RESOLVED that the Council write to the group to offer their congratulations.
11. **Reports on meetings and events attended by Council representatives:** To receive any reports on meetings or events attended by Councillors. 1) **Health** (no report this month), 2) **HPFA**, Cllr A Payne gave an update on the latest position and on various meetings in December (attached) 3) **Halesworth Tourism Group**; Cllr A Payne reported on the meeting held on the 2nd December (attached), in particular Cllr Payne wished to inform the Council that another attempt had been made to try and solve the problems with the Old Bistro. The restaurant was still not open and it appeared to be used for accommodation only. The

valuable external ornate timber work was deteriorating and neither the owner nor the tenant seemed to be doing anything about it. A solicitor had offered to help and had written to the Conservation officer. 4) **Halesworth Events Management**, Cllr A Payne reported on various meetings in November and December (attached). Cllr Payne then reported on the **SALC** meeting on the 26th November. It was highlighted that the Council needed to make a decision on the External Audit options by the end of January. Cllr Winton reported on the **Day Centre** meeting on the 30th November, Cllr Lewis reported on the **Campus** meeting where she stood in for Cllr Baldwin. Cllr Dutton reported that he had meet with Mr Ian Johns of WDC and they had discussed the ‘call for Sites’, this would be discussed further at the next Town Development Committee Meeting on the 21st December, 2015. Cllr Widdowson presented two sets of minutes from the **Rifle Hall** Trustees meetings, one amended from September and the latest held in October.

12. **District & County Reports:** To receive any reports from the District & County Councillors and to receive information on the following items:- Cllr Letitia Smith reported on the possible divestment of some Public Conveniences in the Waveney District but did not have any specific information for Halesworth. Cllr Smith confirmed that the Customer Services & Waveney Local Office in London Rd was closing in March. Cllr Smith informed the Council about the Mobile Homes Act 2013 and the Landlord Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015. Cllr Smith also advised the Council that WDC were looking for new possible sites for housing and commercial use that may be available in the area. There were many questions raised on the threatened closure of the London Rd Building which affected not only the WDC cash desk but the Halesworth Town Council’s offices, The Day Centre, The Volunteer Centre and many other groups that use the building. Cllr Wollweber asked whether they had conducted an impact assessment. Cllr Leverett was concerned that HTC had been given very little notice and had been asked to find solutions without any funding. There were also vulnerable people, reliant on the services of the Volunteer Centre and the Day Centre. Cllr Leverett asked Cllr Smith to take this back to the Cabinet to find out if WDC had a duty of care and what provisions could be made. Cllr Widdowson asked Cllr Smith about the charging for the Green Bins and whether this had been thought through as the Lorries will still have to operate and collect bins, street by street, whether some residents opted out or not. There was also many questions about the potential closure of public toilets and accusations that the decisions to close certain toilets may have already been made.

13. **Financial Matters:** Cllr Lewis reported on the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on the 16th November, 2015 (Minutes attached).

14. **Correspondence:**

a) WDC letter re: Contribution to parking fees dated 17th November, 2015. This letter was noted but had already been discussed earlier and at previous meetings.

15. **Accounts for Payment:** RESOLVED that the following accounts were approved for payment.

Community News	90.00 + vat
Salaries	1626.15
Society for Local Council Clerks membership	165.00
BT Telephone and Broad Band quarterly (DD)	52.38 + vat
Bungay High School – Prize for Product Design	20.00

16. **Staff matters:** To consider the recommendations from the Finance Committee for the Council and staff pension contributions on basic salary.

‘This item was held ‘in camera’

The meeting was closed at 9.05pm