

Minutes

Present: Councillors;
A Fleming, S Leverett, R Lewis, M Took, I Winton, D Wollweber

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), no members of the public

1) **Apologies:** Cllrs; D Thomas, A Payne and P Dutton

The meeting was chaired by Cllr A Fleming as both the Chair (Cllr D Thomas) and Vice Chair (Cllr P Dutton) were unable to attend.

2) **Declarations of Interest:** To receive declarations for pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. Cllrs, A Fleming, S Leverett, M Took, I Winton and D Wollweber for items 6 & 7

1. **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th January 2016 were accepted as a true record.

2. **Matters arising from the minutes:**

Item 12, Maintenance, Waveney Norse had continued to cut back hedges along Saxon Way and Roman Way and the whole area was a great improvement.

Item 14, Skateboard Park, the Chair reported that Waveney Norse had cleared the area and it was looking much better, the maintenance and repair work had not been undertaken as yet.

3. **Communication:** The Clerk reported that he had not obtained a price for wiring the media screen in the library as yet but would try and get a price for the next Finance meeting.

4. **Parking:** The Chair reported that a letter had been sent to the Chief Executive, Mr Stephen Baker explaining the sequence of events surrounding the plan offered to WDC to retain the free 1 hour parking and its subsequent rejection. In this letter, Mr Baker was asked why the questions raised by HTC over the procedures of this decision had still not been answered by the Monitoring Officer. The Chair was also in the process of writing to various newspapers and magazines to highlight this issue. The Chair was also intending to raise the problem of the town's representation with the Boundaries Commission as Halesworth's MP Therese Coffey, resides in a different district (Suffolk Coastal) and therefore cannot represent Halesworth effectively. Cllr David Wollweber had recently visited Lowestoft and took pictures of the empty car parks, by contrast, on the same day he also took pictures of the Thoroughfare car park which was full. Cllr Wollweber would distribute the pictures in due course.

5. **Future of the London Road Building:** The Chair reported that there will be a meeting with Hannah Reid and Claire Taylor-Crisp of Community Action Suffolk and members of the London Rd Building Working Party on the 9th February. It was hoped to gain some advice and assistance with the business plan.

6. **Byelaws:** It was noted that Cllr Thomas had filled out the necessary forms and these would be sent to WDC.

7. **Consultation on WDC's Cycle Strategy:** To consider an official response from the Council/Town Dev Committee. The Committee members had all seen the documents but had not studied them in detail. Cllr Wollweber, a regular cyclist himself, agreed to review the document and would report back.
8. **Maintenance:** To receive a report on any maintenance issues
 - a) **Town Park Lighting:** The Committee noted the email from Simon Walker who had reported that Pearce and Kemp and Waveney Norse had been having problems with the runway lights and they had proved unreliable. Mr Walker had asked for feedback on the suggestion to remove the lights and replace them with two overhead street lamps to match the existing overhead lights in the park. However the Committee believed that many residents were fond of the runway lights and the Committee wished to explore all avenues to retain the lights before agreeing to replace them. It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Pearce and Kemp and Waveney Norse to provide more options for upgrading the lights or ways of protecting them to try and solve the issue.
 - b) **Rats:** It was reported that there was an ongoing problem with rats in the town. The problem was felt to be exacerbated by residents feeding the ducks from the bridges in the town, particularly in Bridge Street. It was also noted that the duck population was in decline, possibly as a result of the increase in rats. The Committee considered some notice could be displayed warning residents that feeding the ducks was in fact encouraging the rat problem. It was not known if Environment Health would respond to requests for any help with a general rat problem in the town or whether it needed to be for a specific business or address. It was thought that WDC no longer provided pest control and the Town Council may need to consider private contractors for public spaces but individuals and business had the responsibility to get rid of rats from their own properties. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Environmental Health and Cllr Lewis also had a contact for a private contractor.
9. **Correspondence:**
 - a) **Notification of Consultation on the proposed closure of the pedestrian crossing at the Station.** It was reported that many residents had already written to Network Rail and to Therese Coffey MP expressing their concerns over this ill-conceived idea. The Clerk had received copies of several of the letters and there was currently a petition against this proposal being organised by a resident of Bramblewood Way. The Chair also read out a letter from ESTA (East Suffolk Travellers Association) which suggested a set of warning sound and lights would be a much better option. The consultation had been arranged by Network Rail on Wednesday February 17th at the Library from 6.30pm
 - b) An invitation had been received from Community Action Suffolk for an all-day seminar focusing on social media on March 4th at Kesgrave. Cllr Wollweber would see if he was able to attend. The invitation would be sent to all Councillors.

The meeting was closed at 7.25pm