

**Present:** Councillors;

A Fleming, A Baldwin, T Gardner, K Greenberg, P Dutton, R Lewis, A Payne, D Thomas (Chair), M Took, D Wollweber.

**In Attendance:** N Rees (Town Clerk), District Cllr T Goldson, Representatives for the traders, 5 members of the public.

## Minutes

1. **Apologies:** Cllr S Leverett
2. **Declarations of interest:** Non-pecuniary interests; Cllr Fleming for 6, 10 & 11, Cllr Baldwin for 5, 6, & 10, Cllr Payne for 6, 9, 10, & 11 Cllr Took for 6, 10 & 11, Cllr Lewis for 6, 10 & 11 Cllr Greenberg for 6, 9, 10 & 11, Cllr Dutton for 5, 6, 9, 10, 11 & 12, Cllr D Wollweber for 5, 6, 9, 10 & 11, Cllr Thomas for 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11.
3. **Minutes:** The minutes of the last meeting held on the 20th June, 2016 were accepted as a true record with the amendment to record Cllr Dutton's apologies.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes.** There were on matters arising
5. **Communication:** It was noted that the next meeting would be on the 18<sup>th</sup> July at 5.30pm.
6. **Parking:** The Chair read out the letter received from Andrew Jarvis which presented a 4 year offer to retain the free parking. The first year at a pro rata figure of £6,666, 2<sup>nd</sup> year £17k, 3<sup>rd</sup> year 23k and 4<sup>th</sup> year £34k. The Chair noted that this offer had very little resemblance to the original deal which Cllr Law had offered to HTC and the Traders. The details of this offer was agreed at the last meeting (see minutes 13/06/16) and confirmed in writing. The most important point was the agreement was specifically for one year only with subsequent years to be negotiated later.

The Committee considered that it was not reasonable for the Council to commit to a long term agreement which would culminate in an ongoing liability of £34,000 year on year without consulting the residents and council tax payers.

After considerable discussion, which included input from representatives of the Traders it was proposed and agreed that 'HTC pays £6,666 for the first year free parking as previously agreed with WDC. Any negotiation for future year's contributions be conducted from the 1st of September 2016 between WDC, representatives of HTC, Cllr Goldson and the Traders of the town and other interested parties. The September negotiations have no relevance for the 2016/2017 settlement'.

In the meantime it was agreed to cancel the planned photoshoot which would have been in celebration of the return of the free parking until the matter was resolved.

7. **Town Tourist information:** To consider refurbishment of the tourist information boards and maps and to consider involving the Traders and the Tourism Group. It was noted that there were 5 locations for the tourist information boards. Halesworth in Bloom had recently refurbished the one nearest the Angel Hotel but there were four others which also needed refurbishing. It was agreed that a Working Group be formed and the members would be Cllr Lewis, Cllr Wollweber, Cllr Thomas, the Traders Reps, a representative from HIB & the

Tourism Group. The Clerk would contact the outside groups to establish a meeting in due course.

Mr Doug Gray suggested that a Tourist map could be displayed on the HACT bus, the Chair said that this may be a good idea but it would be dependent on costs and HACT would need to be consulted first.

8. **Council Action Plan:** To consider agreeing an action plan to comply with the Local Council Awards Scheme (deferred from the monthly meeting). It was agreed that the committee would review the 'Action plan' and bring back comments by the next meeting. The Action plan would need to be considered in conjunction with Town Plan. It was agreed that Cllr Thomas, Cllr Dutton, Cllr Greenberg and Cllr Wollweber would review the document.
9. **Town Plan:** The Clerk confirmed that the quotation from Micropress for the cost of printing 200 Town Plan booklets was £239.20. The Committee asked the Clerk to obtain an alternative price from The Little Copy Shop. It was agreed that Town Plan would be reviewed every 6 months.
10. **London Road Building:** It was reported that the Clerk had produced a list of possible alternative venues for the Town Council, taken photos and written a brief report showing the good points and bad points for each location. There were still two other locations to review, Chinnys and the Miles Ward Court. This was needed for the business plan meeting with Hannah Reid on the 5<sup>th</sup> August. Cllrs were asked to visit these locations and/or provide any further comments to the Clerk. It was noted that WDC were offering a Lease agreement with the same terms as the previous Licence agreement in return for payment of the rates. The Chair did not see why the Town Council needed to enter into a lease agreement and referred to a document dating back to when the Town Council first occupied the building. This document was from the Chief Executive of WDC, and it laid out the terms under which the Town Council could operate from the London Rd Building which did not require a lease or licence agreement. The Chair would provide a copy for the Clerk.
11. **Pedestrian crossing at the Railway Station:** It was noted that Network Rail's public meeting would be on the 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2016 at 6.30pm at the Cut.
12. **Divestment of WDC services:** To consider any updates. It was noted that the Clerk had received from WDC the rateable values of the toilets. The Market Place toilets were £1,100 and the Thoroughfare toilets were £2,900. There was no information available on the Town Park toilets. The Chair read out the maintenance costs for the toilets (which had been discussed previously) and it was agreed that the Clerk should chase WDC to find out if there was any news on HTC's register of interest in acquiring the toilets.
13. **Maintenance:** To receive a report on any maintenance issues.

The Clerk read out a letter from a resident who had offered to refurbish the bench in Rectory Lane with the assistance of the Men's Sheds. It was noted that the bench had originally been donated by the Rotary Club but as this organisation was no longer in the town it was now the Council's responsibility. It was agreed that as there were no costs involved the Committee agreed to accept the offer but the Clerk should inspect the bench once it was refurbished.

14. **Correspondence:**
  - a) Information from Jayne Cole (Local Government Public Advisory Service) on the possible retention of 100% of business rates for local government bodies was noted. This however was not directly relevant to Halesworth as it referred to District Councils
  - b) It was noted that the consultation for the plans for devolution of Norfolk and Suffolk was under way, this would represent a fourth tier of Government with an elected Mayor. SALC were running presentations during August and several Cllrs would be attending to find out more information.

The meeting was closed at 8.13pm