

Present: Councillors;

P Dutton, S Leverett, R Lewis, D Thomas (Chair), M Took, D Wollweber

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk), County Councillor Tony Goldson and two members of the public

Minutes

- To elect the Chair & Vice Chair:** Cllr David Thomas was unanimously re-elected as Chair. Cllr Dutton was unanimously re-elected as Vice Chair.
- Apologies:** Cllrs; A Fleming, A Payne, I Winton
- Declarations of interest:** To receive declarations for pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. Cllr Thomas for 8, 10, 11, 12 & 13, Cllr Took for 7, 11, 12 & 15, Cllr Wollweber for 7, 9 & 12, Cllr Dutton for 7, 8, 9, 1, 11, 12 & 13, Cllr Leverett for 7, 8, 9, 1, 11, 12 & 13, Cllr Lewis for 7, 8, 9, 1, 11, 12 & 13.
- Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on the 11th April, 2016 were accepted as a true record.
- Matters arising from the minutes;** Cllr Dutton asked whether there was any news on the tree planting proposed by Mr Perkins. The Clerk had informed Mr Perkins and he was waiting to hear back on the estimated costs. It was agreed that efforts should be made to get the house holders of Bedingfield Crescent and Durban Close to take ownership of the trees once they were planted.
- Communication:** To consider any updates. Cllr Wollweber reported that the new website was almost finished and the first email newsletter was being prepared to send out shortly. Cllr Took asked why the page showing the Councillors had been changed to only show an email contact. It was noted that this had been agreed previously in the wake of the Chair receiving some abusive phone calls. It was suggested the webpage could also show the membership of each committee and working party. It was agreed that the Clerk should write and chase up what was happening about the Media Screen although it was noted by Cllr Thomas that the Friends of Halesworth County Library had not discussed the matter at the last two meetings.
- Parking:** To consider any updates. It was reported that there were serious concerns regarding the drop in footfall to the town since WDC's reintroduction of the first hour parking charges. It was also noted that there were misleading rumours circulating in the town that the Town Council were offered £10,000 to retain the parking which was simply untrue. It was also reported that some traders felt that the Council were not listening to them over these issues. RESOLVED Cllr Leverett proposed and it was then agreed that the Clerk should write to Mr Stephen Baker, Chief Executive of WDC, to invite him to a public meeting as a matter of urgency, as the Council and Thoroughfare traders had serious concerns over the affect that the removal of the free one hour parking was having on the town and the threat to livelihoods and businesses. It was also noted that there was an obvious need to try and get the Thoroughfare and Market Place Traders to work together. Whilst it was agreed this should not be a Council committee or working group it was RESOLVED that the Clerk should draft a letter inviting all the Thoroughfare & Market Place Businesses to attend a

meeting with the Council to clarify the Council position on the removal of the free parking and to try and facilitate a way of getting them to all work together.

8. **WDC local plan consultation:** The Chair explained that this consultation highlighted many potential sites for development in Halesworth. However it was important to note that it was very early in the process and the sites were only intended as suggestions at this stage. It was clear there was some misunderstanding as several residents of Walpole Rd/Dukes Drive had raised concerns over the quantity of the houses in the Plan. Past experience would suggest that the number of houses likely to be built would be a small fraction of the quantities suggested in the plan document. The Chair emphasised that it was important that the Council maintains a close eye on the proposed Local Plan and it was then RESOLVED that a Local Plan Working Group be set up and the agreed members would be Cllr Thomas, Cllr Dutton, Cllr Wollweber, Cllr Took, and Cllr Leverett. It was also agreed to write and invite Mr E Leverett. The Working Group would take into account the Town Plan, Cllr Dutton's submission for WDC's 'Call for Sites' and HTC/Millennium Green's open spaces consultation document.
9. **Neighbourhood Plan:** To consider future plans in the light of WDC's local plan consultation. The Chair explained that after discussions with WDC it was made clear that unless there was an existing Neighbourhood Plan in place then the WDC's new proposed Local Plan would take precedence over all the important matters of development in the town. Since it was impossible that the Council could implement a Neighbourhood Plan before the Local Plan was adopted, it was agreed to abandon the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan for the time being.
10. **Town Plan:** The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Payne's brief version of the Town Plan was now complete but it was agreed to formally approve the document before it was put on the website.
11. **London Road Building:** To consider any updates. It was noted that the next meeting on the business plan with Hannah Reid of Community Action Suffolk would be on the 31st May, 2016.
12. **Pedestrian crossing at the Railway Station:** There were no further updates to consider.
13. **Divestment of WDC services:** The Chair proposed that an expression of interest should be lodged with WDC for the public toilets and the Town Park. It was noted by Cllrs Took and Wollweber that perhaps this should include the car parks as there would be a need to have another source of revenue to maintain these assets. The Chair explained that the expression of interest was only intended as a marker in case WDC wished to sell them in the future and by sending the expression of interest now, this would mean that WDC would have to consult the Town Council first. The Chair advised that the car parks should be dealt with separately at a later date. After some debate it was then RESOLVED that the Clerk should write to the Chief Executive of WDC, Mr Stephen Baker, to express an interest in acquiring the public toilets and the Town Park.
14. **Maintenance:** To receive a report on any maintenance issues. The Clerk reported that he had not got anywhere so far with repairing the flint wall in the Memorial garden but would chase it up. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Pearce and Kemp to get an explanation as to what the technical problems were with the runway lights in the park as it was generally accepted that these lights were preferable to lamp posts and the Council would like to retain them if possible.
15. **Queen's birthday Celebration:** To consider any updates. It was noted that the bunting had been erected in the town by Pearce and Kemp but some spare bunting had been held back for putting up in the park for the Queen's birthday.
16. **Correspondence:** AW Davey, ref: Take-away shops & vehicles in the Thoroughfare (deferred from HTC Annual meeting). The Chair explained that was about vehicles parking by the various take away businesses in the Thoroughfare. The Police had been consulted but it was a difficult problem for the Police to manage due to the peculiar designation of the

Thoroughfare. The Clerk confirmed that he had received the official designation of the Thoroughfare contained in Suffolk County Council's Traffic Order. The Chair asked for a copy of the order but in the meantime it was agreed to ask County Cllr Tony Goldson to speak to the shop owner.

The meeting was closed at 7.55pm