

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD,
ON WEDNESDAY 25TH JUNE 2008, STARTING
AT 7.00 P.M. WITH THE OPEN FORUM

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor J A Harding, Chairman

Councillors:

R F W Brame	Mrs T I Paines
Mrs M P Chapman-Allen	Mrs P P Quadling
R G Kybird	Mrs P A Spencer
D G Mortimer	S N H Wright
A Paines	

In attendance (for item 81/08):

Richard Kay, Principal Planning Officer (Growth Point), Breckland Council

Open Forum

In the Open Forum preceding the formal start of the meeting, local resident Corinne Fulford, in her capacity as lead organiser of the forthcoming Dad's Army Weekend, raised concerns about the state of the paved area to the side and rear of the Carnegie Room. She was particularly worried about tripping hazards, resulting from the uneven surface, brought about by the spread of tree roots.

The Town Clerk responded that he had been giving thought to having the entire area cordoned off, pending a discussion about how to tackle the problem. At the same time, he admitted to having been unaware of the importance to the Weekend organisers of having the area available for use.

It was agreed, by way of response to Ms Fulford, to hold a Special Meeting on the evening of 2nd July 2008, to be preceded by a site meeting, starting at 6.45 p.m.

County Councillor C W Armes asked four questions:

1. When was the River Corridor Committee going to meet?
2. When would the stream feeding into the River Thet by Nuns Bridges be cleaned out?
3. When would the self-seeded willow trees by the Gentle Bridge be removed?
4. Was the Town Council aware of fresh proposals for the mini-roundabout by the Market Place?

In response to the first question, the Mayor guaranteed Councillor Armes a response in the course of the following week, but asked him to note that there was not, in fact, a River Corridor Committee, but a River Corridor Working Party, the membership of which had yet to be finalised. It would be up to the Working Party to provide any recommendation on stream-cleaning. It was agreed that removal of the willows was a relatively routine maintenance matter that could be programmed over the coming weeks. As for the final question, it was put to Councillor Armes that this was core County Council business and perhaps not best dealt with as part of the Open Forum.

75/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S N H Wright declared a prejudicial interest in item 84/08 as a Board Member of Keystone Development Trust. In the event, he was not required to leave the Chamber, as the letter in question was simply noted.

Councillors Mrs T I Paines and Mrs P P Quadling declared prejudicial interests in item 85/08, given their involvement in or association with *Thetford's Got Talent*. They were not present for the discussion or vote and were joined by the Town Clerk who, in light of his involvement as a judge, did not deem it appropriate to remain in the Chamber (the Town Manager was asked to minute the decision arrived at).

76/08 MINUTES

Town Council Meeting: 28th May 2008

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting had been included in the agenda papers. Proposed by Councillor D G Mortimer and seconded by Councillor Mrs P A Spencer, it was:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28th May 2008 be approved and signed/initialled by the Chairman as a true record.

77/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were presented on behalf of Councillors G P Balaam, S H Chapman-Allen, T J Lamb, P J Pearson and M G Spencer.

78/08 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning Committee 4th June 2008

Proposed by Councillor R G Kybird and seconded by Councillor D G Mortimer, it was:

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Planning Committee, held on 4th June 2008, be received and adopted.

Amenities Committee 11th June 2008

Proposed by Councillor D G Mortimer and seconded by Councillor R F W Brame, it was:

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Amenities Committee, held on 11th June 2008, including the recommendations under minutes 58/08 (relating to *Transfer of Open Space* and *Football on Barnham Cross Common*) and 59/08 (relating to *Delegated Powers* - albeit subject to the word 'Community' in the unconfirmed text sent out with the agenda papers being corrected to 'Committee', *Non-Attendance at Committee Meetings*, *House Front Garden Competition 2008* and *Date of Next Meeting*), being received and adopted.

In respect of the final two recommendations, the following was noted:

House Front Garden Competition 2008

The Council would need to approve in due course any additional financial commitment arising out of the changed format.

Date of Next Meeting

Whilst recent convention had established that all Committee meetings would take place on Wednesday evenings, there was nothing under Standing Orders to prevent a change of day (in this instance, to a Tuesday).

79/08 MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor, Councillor J A Harding, referred members to the lists of Events Attended and Forthcoming Events, included in the agenda papers.

He remained very impressed with the level of local commitment to a variety of causes.

Events attended since the last meeting

May

Sunday 31st Hockwold Country Fair

June

Saturday 7th Sikh Garden Party Blo Norton

Saturday 7th Concert/Dance Festival Committee Carnegie Room

Sunday 15th Civic Service

Tuesday 17th Thetford Grammar School Art Exhibition

Wednesday 18th Disabled Sports Day Sports Centre

Friday 20th Norfolk County Council Summer Reception at UEA Norwich

Saturday 21st Thetford Grammar School Summer Fete

Saturday 21st B T O Open Day

Sunday 22nd Thetford Open Gardens 11.00am

Sunday 22nd Desert Rats at High Ash 12.30pm

Monday 23rd Thetford Task Force Breckland House

List of Forthcoming Events

JUNE Friday 27th Mayor's Civic reception

Sunday 29th Thetford Society Strawberry Tea

JULY

7.00pm	Wednesday	2 nd	Road Safety Committee
	Friday	4 th	Flower Festival St Cuthbert's
	Saturday	5 th	“ “ “ “
	Sunday	6 th	“ “ “ “
7.00pm	Wednesday	9 th	Planning Committee
7.00pm	Wednesday	16 th	Allotments Committee
	Thursday	17 th	Sikh Event Large Court
	Sunday	20 th	Band Concert King's House Gardens
7.00pm	Wednesday	23 rd	Planning Committee
	Saturday	26 th	STORM Event Melford Common
	Saturday	26 th	Dad's Army 1940's Evening Guildhall
	Sunday	27 th	Dad's Army 40 th Anniversary Celebrations
7.00pm	Wednesday	30 th	Full Council

80/08 REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

Citizens Advice Bureau

Councillor Mrs M P Chapman-Allen updated members on recent developments, including the imminent move into new accommodation in Breckland House.

Thetford Music Project

Councillor Mrs P A Spencer updated members on various funding sources, mentioning that the Project would like the Town Council to consider making a donation.

Moving Thetford Forward Board

Councillor R G Kybird reported on the previous day's Board Meeting, at which various individuals had been assigned 'championing' roles. English Partnerships had accepted an invitation to join the Board. Keystone Development Trust would be administering the pot of money earmarked for Community Infrastructure Grants.

The engagement of a paid consultant to assist with community consultation was proving a somewhat contentious matter in certain quarters

81/08 MOVING THETFORD FORWARD: DISCUSSION WITH PRINCIPAL PLANNING OFFICER (GROWTH POINT)

Mr Richard Kay was present to engage with members on what was 'launch day' of the 6-week *Thetford Area Action Plan – Issues and Options* consultation period.

He provided a brief introduction and offered to take members through the various questions in turn.

The consensus of the meeting proved to be that this was perhaps a little premature and that more time was needed by some to familiarise themselves with the scope of the consultation document.

Mr Kay's offer to attend the next meeting of the Planning Committee, scheduled for 9th July, was readily accepted. By then, members would be better placed to engage in discussion.

The Mayor thanked Mr Kay for his attendance.

RESOLVED that the Principal Planning Officer (Growth Point) be invited to attend the Planning Committee meeting, scheduled for 9th July 2008.

82/08 POSITION STATEMENT ON REPRESENTATION / REPRESENTATIVENESS

Councillor R F W Brame had asked for this discussion item to be included on the agenda.

RESOLVED that this item be discussed 'below the line' later in the meeting.
(See after item 89/08 below...).

83/08 POST OFFICE CLOSURE PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that receipt of the following be noted:

- (a) information from Postwatch under cover of a letter dated 10th June 2008;
- (b) confirmation by Post Office Ltd of receipt of the Town Council's comments.

84/08 RESUBMISSION OF FUNDING APPLICATION TO PEOPLE'S MILLIONS ON BEHALF OF KEYSTONE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

RESOLVED that the letter dated 30th May 2008, received from Keystone Development Trust's Community Arts Co-ordinator, be noted.

85/08 REQUEST FOR FREE USE OF CARNEGIE ROOM FOR THETFORD – WHO'S GOT TALENT? EVENT THIS OCTOBER

RESOLVED that, in response to the letter dated 16th April 2008, received from the Vice-Chairman of the Abbey Tenants & Residents Association, a hire charge of one-third the normal rate be levied.

86/08 CEMETERY CHARGING: PARISHIONER AND NON-PARISHIONER RATES

RESOLVED that, in response to the letter of 10th June 2008 received in respect of a 2nd June burial, the Cemetery Committee be asked to review the eligibility criteria for parishioner status. In this particular case, parishioner status would be granted, subject to the Town Clerk's being persuaded that the deceased had been in residence locally for at least a year.

87/08 ACCOUNTS

The Finance & General Purposes Committee had met earlier that evening (minutes 67/08 to 74/08 inclusive referred).

(a) 2008/9 Actual v. Budget: 2-month position as at 31st May 2008

RESOLVED that the Council accept the recommendation of its Finance & General Purposes Committee and receive the figures to be annexed under minute 72/08(a).

(b) 2008/9 Transaction Analyses to 31st May 2008

RESOLVED that the Council accept the recommendation of its Finance & General Purposes Committee and receive the information to be annexed under minute 72/08(b).

(c) Pension Policy Statement

RESOLVED that the Council accept the recommendation of its Finance & General Purposes Committee and adopt the policy statement to be annexed under minute 73/08.

(d) Cemetery Extension: Risk Assessment and Boreholing

RESOLVED that the Council accept the need to commission the work quoted for without further delay.

88/08 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for the remaining items of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

89/08 MINUTES

(a) Council Meeting: 28th May 2008

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting had been included in the agenda papers. Proposed by Councillor D G Mortimer and seconded by Councillor Mrs P A Spencer, it was:

RESOLVED that the confidential minutes of the Council Meeting held on 28th May 2008 be approved and signed/initialled by the Chairman as a true record.

(b) Personnel Committee: 18th June 2008

Proposed by Councillor D G Mortimer and seconded by Councillor R F W Brame, it was:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee, held on 18th June 2008, be received and adopted.

82/08 (Brought below the line)

POSITION STATEMENT ON REPRESENTATION / REPRESENTATIVENESS

Councillor R F W Brame expressed his concern over the engagement of a paid consultant to assist in gauging community opinion (as part of the Thetford Area Action Plan consultation exercise). In his view - one supported by the Mayor - this called into question the role of locally elected representatives, who could surely be relied upon to do this. After a brief discussion, it was:

RESOLVED to have the Town Clerk communicate to the Principal Planning Officer (Growth Point) the Town Council's hope that the engagement of said consultant would prove to be a short-term venture, particularly in light of the establishment of a Thetford Task Force.

Chairman