

MINUTES OF THE CEREMONIAL MEETING OF THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD,  
ON WEDNESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2008,  
STARTING AT 7.00 P.M. WITH THE OPEN FORUM

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor J A Harding, Chairman

Councillors:

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

Open Forum

A resident wished to discuss the location she was assuming had been proposed for the Thetford Forum (*note: 'Forum' as in proposed new learning centre – see item 274/08 below - not as in 'Open Forum'*). The Mayor pointed out that the Council was scheduled to discuss the Forum project 'below the line' later in the evening and that it was perhaps premature to be drawn into a public discussion at this point.

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It being a Ceremonial Meeting, the Mayor's Chaplain, David Freeman, led the Council in prayers.

257/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S N H Wright declared a personal interest in item 268/08(a) below, given his involvement in the Dad's Army Museum. He had requested its inclusion on the agenda.

Councillor P J Pearson declared a precautionary personal interest in the Burrell Museum as both a Friend and Trustee, being uncertain as to whether the Museum would be discussed under item 273/08 below.

Five councillors declared prejudicial interests in respect of the Royal British Legion agenda item: details were received following the exclusion of press and public under item 279/08 below.

258/08 MINUTES

Town Council Meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008 up to and including minute 236/08 be approved and signed/initialled by the Chairman as a true record.

## 259/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor T J Lamb.

## 260/08 COMMITTEE REPORTS

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 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008, be received and adopted.

## 261/08 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.

### **Events attended since the last meeting**

#### **NOVEMBER**

Wednesday	5 <sup>th</sup> November	East Wretham: Wreath Laying at the Polish & Czech war graves
Friday	7 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Concert
Saturday	8 <sup>th</sup> November	Carnegie Dance for EACH ( Mayor's free event)
Sunday	9 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Parade
Tuesday	11 <sup>th</sup> November	Admirals Junior School Remembrance Assembly
Tuesday	11 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Day Wreath Laying (War Memorial)
Wednesday	12 <sup>th</sup> November	Attended funeral of Past Mayor Leslie Broadhurst
Wednesday	12 <sup>th</sup> November	Thetford Library & Ancient House Museum: People's War Revisited
Friday	14 <sup>th</sup> November	60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of USAF at Lakenheath
Saturday	15 <sup>th</sup> November	Sports Centre: Lions Disabled Swimming Gala

#### **DEPUTY MAYOR: NOVEMBER**

Sunday	23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Wymondham Abbey: Norfolk Scouts' Centenary Service
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He drew particular attention to the Remembrance Day event at Admirals School, when he had been very struck by the children's understanding and engagement. He also referred to Mr Broadhurst's funeral and it was agreed to send a letter of sympathy to the family.

## 262/08 REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Councillor Mrs M P Chapman-Allen reported on the imminent relocation of the Bureau to Breckland House and some related matters.

### Moving Thetford Forward Learning Group

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor R G Kybird, provided a brief summary of what had been covered at the inaugural Group meeting, when agreement had been reached on its remit. The key theme that emerged was 'a vision for lifelong learning'.

## 263/08 COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

County Councillor Mrs T I Paines referred to the interest that the Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust continued to have in the future of the Abbey Barns.

## 264/08 YOUTH ISSUES

In the event, no guest speaker was in attendance and no discussion ensued.

## 265/08 PERSPEX VASE LOCATION

A photograph of the container had been included in the agenda papers. Members were being asked to suggest a suitable town centre location, were it decided to include it in next year's Breckland Council-inspired Spring Clean event as a temporary 'educational' feature.

There was no majority support expressed for this idea.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk report the Town Council's decision.

## 266/08 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION 2008

After a brief background briefing by Councillor Mrs T I Paines, it was:

RESOLVED to organise a competition again along established lines.

## 267/08 PUBLIC EVENTS IN 2009: PROPOSED BONFIRE AND FIREWORKS EVENT

Councillor T J Jermy had asked for this item to be included on the agenda in light of enthusiasm expressed by the fire and police services; furthermore, it appeared that the fire service might be in a position to secure some funding in support of a major community event of this type.

The Town Clerk pointed out that the draft Town Council budget for 2009/10 being considered later in the meeting made no provision for such an event. The Council was presently only committed to supporting *Tom Paine 200* in 2009 and not any other events of significance. At this point, the Chairman asked the Town Manager to comment, given that she had researched the feasibility of a fireworks event a couple of years before.

She cited the example of Bury St Edmunds, where the costs were considerable (in excess of £10k). Any well-organised event would need to be very well stewarded, regardless of whether admission was charged. After a brief discussion, it was:

RESOLVED that the Town Manager convene a meeting of relevant agencies - including the Environment Agency - to examine options and report back to a future meeting. No provision would be made in the 2009/10 budget at this time.

#### 268/08 CARNEGIE ROOM: REQUESTS FOR CONCESSIONARY HIRE RATES

To consider the following:

##### Sunday '1940s Dance Classes' in the Carnegie Room

This agenda item had been requested by Councillor S N H Wright following a successful first attempt at putting on such an event on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008. As well as providing an enjoyable experience for participants, it would be in part a means of fund-raising for the Dad's Army Museum.

Owing to the additional staff costs incurred on Sundays, the question of waiving the requirement to have a caretaker present had been posed. If agreed to, there would be a considerable saving to the organisers.

In discussion, the insurance position was addressed: what would be the consequences for the Council of not having a member of staff present?

In order to expedite matters, the following resolution was eventually agreed:

RESOLVED that a single-issue meeting of the Guildhall Committee be convened the following week, when – provided there were no insurance 'complications' – the Committee would have delegated authority to reach agreement with the dance class organisers on a workable arrangement. Ahead of the meeting, Council officers would contact the Council's insurers with a view to producing some form of document, indemnifying the Council in circumstances where a hirer required no member of the Council's staff to be present.

##### Tom Paine 200 Rehearsal Time: Additional Requirements

The Town Clerk reminded members of the Council's agreement in principle to make the Guildhall Complex (including the Carnegie Room) freely available 'within reason' in the build-up to *Tom Paine 200* as well as offer it free-of-charge for key commemorative events. A list of dates had been submitted by the Coordinator back in July.

Council staff had recently received a request from the Coordinator to reserve Complex rooms on some additional dates to those already requested. Given the likelihood of what could be perceived as significant lost income over the period (one wedding party had recently been unable to book) and the staff costs incurred in providing a caretaker 'in attendance', the Town Clerk was asking the Council to consider setting a limit on free usage of the Guildhall Complex by the *Tom Paine 200* organisers.

In discussion, it was accepted that one way of reducing the staffing cost - certainly as far as some rehearsal sessions were concerned – might be to agree a similar approach to that being contemplated under the previous item (see above).

RESOLVED that the Coordinator of *Tom Paine 200* be invited to review with the Town Clerk his overall requirements in light of emerging cost implications for the Council. That said, insurers' requirements would always be a key factor.

#### 269/08 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, Councillor R G Kybird, reported on the meeting of the Committee, held earlier in the evening and was pleased to recommend acceptance of the report referred to in the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Monthly Financial Report for the Seven Months Ending 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008 (as annexed to minute 254/08 from the Finance & General Purposes Committee) be received and adopted.

#### 270/08 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.

#### 271/08 MINUTES

##### (a) Finance & General Purposes Committee: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008

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

RESOLVED that the report of the meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008, be received and adopted.

##### (b) Council Meeting: 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008

The unconfirmed minutes of those items dealt with following the exclusion of press and public 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 from the Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2008 of those items dealt with following the exclusion of press and public be approved and signed/initialled by the Chairman as a true record.

##### (c) Joint Meeting of Finance & General Purposes and Personnel Committees: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Proposed by Councillor R G Kybird and seconded by Councillor P J Pearson, it was:

RESOLVED that the report of the joint meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Personnel Committee, held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008, be received and adopted.

272/08 PRECEPT REQUIREMENT 2009/10

The Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, Councillor R G Kybird, reported that the Committee had, at its meeting held earlier in the evening, agreed, under agenda item 255/08, to recommend acceptance of the budget document included in the agenda papers, allowing for only one relatively minor change thereto, namely, a £400 increase in the CAB Funding figure, changing that to £3,600. At the same time, it wanted the Council to agree to an extra £1K being paid to the CAB this financial year – making a total of £4,200 – to assist with the CAB's relocation costs.

The Council accepted these recommendations and, under the next agenda item (see below) went on to consider possible financial support for other organisations. That said, there was agreed to be no need to hold up approval of the budget before them - subject to the minor change referred to above – and to accept the proposed precept requirement. Only one further commitment was made, as referred to in the following resolution:

RESOLVED that, in line with the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, as set out in Committee minute 255/08, the precept requirement for 2009/10 be fixed at £528,900 and the budget referred to - setting an operating surplus for the year of £344 - be approved.

273/08 DONATIONS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS IN 2009/10

274/08 THETFORD FORUM

275/08 CODES OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES:  
A CONSULTATION

276/08 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT: NEW MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

277/08 COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE DETAILS

278/08 ST PETER'S CHURCH

279/08 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION TENANCY