

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL,
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD,
ON WEDNESDAY, 27TH JANUARY 2010,
STARTING AT 7 P.M. WITH THE OPEN FORUM

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor Mrs P A Spencer, Chairman

Councillors:

G P Balaam	R G Kybird
R F W Brame	T J Lamb
M Brindle	D G Mortimer
Mrs M P Chapman-Allen	Mrs P P Quadling
J A Harding	B J Skull
T J Jermy	S N H Wright

Open Forum

No matters raised.

379/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor T J Jermy declared a personal interest in item 391/09, given his membership of the Steering Committee advising Peddars Way Housing Association on the Flagship Group scheme. He chose not to participate in the vote on this item.

Councillor S N H Wright declared a personal interest in items 392//09(iii) and (iv), given his involvement in preparing the respective papers.

Councillor Mrs P P Quadling declared a prejudicial interest in item 396/09 owing to her personal circumstances. She was not present for the discussion or vote.

Afternote

Following the meeting, Councillor R F W Brame asked the Town Clerk to make reference in these minutes to his personal interest in agenda item 392/09(iii) as a Masonic Lodge member.

380/09 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 25th November 2009, excepting those items dealt with following the exclusion of press and public (addressed under item 393/09a below), be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Mayor as Chairman.

381/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors S H Chapman-Allen (work-related absence), A Paines and M G Spencer (work-related absence).

382/09 COMMITTEE REPORTS

RESOLVED that the following reports be duly received and adopted:

(a) Planning Committee: 9th December 2009

(b) Planning Committee: 6th January 2010

Under item 340/09 – *Declarations of Interest* – the Town Clerk had mistakenly referred to Councillor Wright's having a, quote, "personal business contact" with the applicant. The word 'business' did not, in fact, apply: the Town Clerk would make an appropriate correction in the minute book.

(c) Planning Committee: 20th January 2010

Under item 364/09 – *Street Lighting Policy: Introduction of Part Night Lighting* – the Town Clerk had failed to make reference to a point raised by Councillor T J Jermy at the meeting, namely, that the Safer Thetford Action Group had a previously produced analysis of which streets in Thetford had high crime statistics and which could be considered crime routes. The suggestion had been that these should be taken into consideration when deciding which street lights should be switched off.

The Town Clerk would add these to the comments being forwarded to Norfolk County Council by the end of the week.

383/09 MAYOR'S REPORT

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

Events attended since the last meeting

November

27th Ladies Civic Lunch at Norfolk County Council on behalf of The Chairman, Cllr Shelagh Gurney

27th Thetford Mayor's Carol Service St Cuthbert's Church

December

1st Presentation of a cheque for FEPOWA by the Freemasons to mark the Lodge's Centenary

1st Dinner with Commander Nick Bray at RAF Honington

- 3rd Opening of Priory Education Services Special Needs Residential School at Northwold
- 3rd Almshouse tea party in the Council Chamber
- 3rd Mayor of King's Lynn & West Norfolk reception
- 4th Afternoon tea with the High Sheriff & Christmas Light switch on
- 5th Dad's Army Dance in the Carnegie
- 9th Attend rededication service of the Altar picture at St Mary's RC Church by Bishop Michael Evans
- 11th Global Community event at The Bishops C of E Primary School
- 13th Civic Carol Service for the Mayor of St Edmundsbury
- 14th Civic Service for the Mayor of Yarmouth & the High Sheriff
- 15th Attended Little Pirates play at Raleigh Day Nursery
- 17th Princes Trust presentation of Achievements at Bell Hotel
- 22nd Raffle Draw for British Heart Foundation
- 24th Christmas drinks with the staff in the Council Chamber
- 25th Christmas visits to Care Homes, Police, Fire, Ambulance Services
- 29th Attended afternoon tea with Silverthreads at Cloverfields Church

January

- 7th Opening of Dementia care services at Redgate House
- 8th Colonel Jay B Silveria's Wing Winter Reception at RAF Lakenheath
- 15th Attended the opening of Saxon Bank new houses by Cllr John Rogers, Chairman of Breckland Council
- 15th Opened the Moving Stories Exhibition at the Ancient House Museum
- 15th Laburnham Grove fundraising: Kidnapping of the Mayor event for Help for Heroes
- 26th Tour of St Nicholas Hospice Bury St Edmunds

27th

The Lord Mayor of Norwich, Councillor Evelyn Collishaw:
Holocaust Memorial Service

Market Place Car Park Space Re-Marking

The Mayor invited the Town Manager to brief members on progress being made with this.

RESOLVED that the Amenities Committee be granted delegated authority to resolve matters, accepting that a net loss of spaces would result owing to the need to increase space width.

384/09 TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

Tom Paine 200 Committee

Councillor R G Kybird was pleased to report that an unspent sum of £7k was to be placed in a Legacy Fund. Responding to the Town Clerk's request, he confirmed that a set of accounts would be forthcoming in due course.

385/09 COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

County Councillor M Brindle commented as follows:

Provision of Grit Bins

He lamented the seeming lack of preparedness at all levels of local government.

RESOLVED that this be referred to the Amenities Committee for comment.

Proposed Renewable Energy Plant

He reported that the County Council's planning hearing would take place on 26th February 2010.

Road Surfacing

He confirmed that parts of Rosecroft Way were in need of further attention.

County Councillor Mrs M P Chapman-Allen commented as follows:

Re-location of Adult Education Centre

She confirmed the move from Tanner House to the Library owing to the former building being no longer 'fit for purpose'.

Rosecroft Way

She endorsed Councillor Brindle's comments

386/09 INTERNATIONAL CIVIC LINKS

Opportunity To Visit Spijkenisse for International Weekend, planned for July 2010

RESOLVED that receipt of the formal invitation be awaited prior to commenting further.

Mayor of Hürth's Interest in Attending Mayor-Making 2010

RESOLVED that an invitation be extended.

387/09 TOM PAINE 200 CELEBRATIONS

RESOLVED that the contents of the further letter from the Coordinator, received on 4th January 2010 and including a further expression of appreciation of the Town Council's financial support, be noted.

388/09 HELP FOR HEROES

RESOLVED that the contents of the letter of acknowledgement, dated 18th December 2009, be noted.

389/09 CONCERT TO MARK 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF BATTLE OF BRITAIN

RESOLVED that the letter received from the Royal Air Forces Association, dated 23rd November 2009 and addressed to the Town Manager, be referred to the Guildhall Committee for consideration and comment.

390/09 TRANSFER OF BRECKLAND COUNCIL-OWNED PLAY AREAS TO THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLVED that the financial offer set out in the letter received from Breckland Council, dated 17th December 2009, be accepted, with the Town Clerk authorised to have any points of detail clarified prior to the signing of any transfer agreement. The Town Clerk confirmed that he would liaise with the Chairman of the Amenities Committee over any such matters.

Councillor T J Lamb asked for his vote against this resolution to be recorded in these minutes.

391/09 LAND AT SWEYN CLOSE

Separate but related letters received from Flagship Housing Group and both dated 3rd December 2009 had been included in the agenda papers.

RESOLVED that the financial offer of £170k set out in one of these letters be accepted, subject to the following proviso:

Redundant Garage Site off Fulmerston Road

In accepting the offer for the sale of land, the Town Council would ask Flagship to commit to covering the cost of creating, as described in the other letter, quote, "a more formalised parking area for the cemetery". The Town Council looked forward to entering into any specific discussions regarding layout and signage that might prove necessary in due course.

Councillor T J Jermy did not participate in the vote, asking for his abstention to be recorded in these minutes.

As regards the planning application, which the Council's Planning Committee had already commented on (minute 360/09f referred), the Town Clerk would make the following additional points clear to Flagship:

Allotment Access

Regarding the proposed changed access to the Town Council's London Road allotment site, any discussions about this from now on should be held solely with the Town Council in the first instance. Whilst some Thetford Garden & Allotment Club members would clearly have an interest in achieving a workable outcome, they could be consulted by the Town Council, whose Allotments Committee could convene in due course any liaison meetings that might prove necessary.

Play Equipment, Open Space and Footpath Issues

The Town Council looked forward to a meeting being convened by Flagship in due course to address these.

392/09 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Acting on the recommendations made by Councillor R G Kybird in his role as Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, it was:

Financial Report

RESOLVED that the 2010/11 Financial Report for the 9 Months ended 31st December 2009 (as annexed to the minutes of the Committee's meeting held earlier that evening) be received.

Precept Setting and Budget Approval 2010/11

RESOLVED that the Precept Requirement for 2010/11 be agreed as £452,175. This would constitute a 2.51% increase in the 2009/10 figure and translate into a 0.96% per cent increase in the Town Council's share of council tax, with the Band 'D' figure thereby set to rise from £80.67 to £81.45.

Afternote by the Town Clerk: *The above figure of £452,175 should have read £542,175 in line with minute 355/09 from the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Acknowledgement of this transposition will be recorded in the minutes from the Council's meeting on 26th May 2010 and the minute book duly corrected.*

RESOLVED that the Budget for 2010/11, as annexed hereto, be agreed.

Thetford Arts Centre Guildhall Usage

RESOLVED that this be referred to the Guildhall Committee for further consideration in light of interest being expressed by another organisation for regular use of the Courts.

Thetford Pantomime January 2011

Whilst there was general support for having such an event become once more an annual fixture in the calendar, it was recognised that the production team would need to adopt a flexible approach to rehearsal time and rehearsal room availability.

RESOLVED that the Guildhall Committee recommend any concessionary arrangements to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, which would have delegated authority to approve same.

Guildhall Complex Concessions

RESOLVED that the figures agreed on Concessions Forms 25 to 34 inclusive (covering the period from November 2009 to January 2010) be approved; at the same time, it was agreed to refer the existing criteria to the Guildhall Committee for periodic review, given what at least one member considered to be a lack of clarity and transparency.

393/09 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.

394/09 MINUTES

- (a) Council Meeting: 25th November 2009 – items addressed following the exclusion of press and public

RESOLVED that minutes of these items be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Mayor as Chairman.

- (b) Special Council: 6th January 2010

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Special Meeting held on 6th January 2010 be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Mayor as Chairman.

395/09 COMMITTEE REPORTS

To receive the following:

(a) Cemetery Committee: 25th November 2009

RESOLVED the report of the above meeting be received and adopted.

(b) Finance & General Purposes Committee: 25th November 2009

RESOLVED that the report of the above meeting, including the Recommendations at minutes 311/09 and 312/09, be received and adopted.

(c) Finance & General Purposes Committee: 13th January 2010

RESOLVED that the report of the above meeting, including the Recommendations at minutes 355/09 and 357/09, be received and adopted.

396/09 PERSONNEL MATTERS

The Personnel Committee had met earlier that evening.

RESOLVED that the two recommendations to be set out in the Committee's minute 372/09 be accepted.

Chairman