



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF REEPHAM TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14th APRIL 2021 AT 8.00pm.

The meeting was held under The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 via Zoom.

Present: Cllr P. Mitchell (Chair), R. Comer (Vice Chair), M. Lester, M. Steel, S. Fisher, A. Hazelwood, B. Douglas, and J. Harding

**Town Clerk - Jo Boxall
County Councillor G. Peck
6 members of the public**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None received.

3. MINUTES

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 10th March 2021 had previously been circulated. The minutes were confirmed as proposed by Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Comer and will be signed by the chairman as soon as possible following the meeting.

4. INFORMATION ON MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was confirmed that action regarding the grit bin and benches in the Market Place was outstanding.

5. REPORTS FROM POLICE, DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Police – The monthly report was circulated electronically.

County Councillor - County Cllr G. Peck – Details of Norfolk County Council Community tree nursery project was given. It was agreed to consider the planting of trees as a future agenda item. Cllr Mitchell confirmed that the Council still wish to pursue the installation of the handrail in Bircham Road.

District Councillor – District Cllr Beadle sent his apologies

6. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

A resident of Whitwell Road raised objections to planning application 20200847, acknowledging that whilst the new document addresses some of the concerns, there are outstanding matters including inaccuracies in the traffic assessment document. The plans are contrary to Broadland District Council DPD Site allocations document and do not meet the requirements for affordable housing. These views were shared by another resident who also raised concern over Broadland's management of this application as there had been limited opportunity for residents to view plans.

Residents were encouraged to write to Broadland and express their views. The council confirmed that it has previously recorded its concern for the consultation process.

The Chairman of the Town Hall Management Committee gave a brief update on the Committee, its responsibilities and past achievements. He acknowledged that circumstances have changed since the Town Council moved into the Town Hall and therefore the responsibilities of the Committee have changed. It was confirmed that committee members have been lost from user groups no longer using the hall. Due to Covid, the committee has been inquorate for the last meetings so were unable to conduct business. As there were plans for improvements, He requested support from the Town Council as there were currently no Councillor representatives on the Committee.

7. TO APPROVE OBTAINING A VALUATION FOR TOWN HALL AND OLLANDS ROAD WALL FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES

Stimpson's Piece was revalued as part of the building survey and was found to be grossly underinsured. In light of this, it was unanimously agreed to obtain a valuation for both the Town Hall and Ollands Road Wall for insurance purposes as proposed by Cllr Douglas and seconded by Cllr Lester. RFO to obtain quotes as appropriate, seeking advice from current insurer.

8. TO CONSIDER JOINING THE RURAL /MARKET TOWNS GROUPING

It was agreed that Cllr Comer would make further enquiries with regards to the invitation to join the Rural / Market Town Grouping and report to Council.

9. TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE ACTION TO SUPPORT AND PROMOTE TOURISM IN REEPHAM

Cllr Harding expressed an interest in promoting tourism in Reepham. Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Harding would work on this with Cllr Comer and present ideas for consideration.

10. TO SUPPORT PROPOSALS FOR A WAR MEMORIAL IN FRONT OF BIRCHAM CENTRE & SIGNED ARMED FORCES COVENANT

The Town Council previously agreed to offer their support for a war memorial. An email was received from the Bircham Centre seeking the Town Council's views on the proposals as it would be installed in front of the Bircham Centre. Whilst the Town Council had no objection to the proposed location of the memorial outside the Bircham Centre, there was some concern about the suitability of the proposed location given that it may restrict the size of memorial.

Cllr Mitchell agreed to draft a letter, confirming the Town Council's support for a war memorial in the town but expressing concern over the proposed location and offering The Pound as an alternative location. It was acknowledged the Tommy Statue could be moved as appropriate.

Broadland had circulated an email encouraging local councils to sign up to an armed forces covenant. Cllr Mitchell proposed that the Town Council adopt a covenant which was tailored to Reepham. Cllr Harding agreed to look at this and prepare a draft for consideration at the May meeting.

11. TO APPROVE CREATION OF SCHEDULE OF DELEGATION AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY & ACTION PLAN

It was unanimously agreed to create a Scheme of Delegation policy (to form part of the standing orders / financial regulations), a communications policy and an action plan, (linked to the budget) as proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Lester. It was agreed that drafts would be circulated for comment and approval at a future meeting.

12. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – TO RECEIVE UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY POINTS FOR FUTURE ACTION.

Cllr Lester reported that the Clerk had resigned and confirmed her last working day as 18th July. The Clerk was thanked for her work over the past 10 years. It was acknowledged that the Personnel Committee would need to hold a meeting in accordance with standing orders to discuss the way forward and report back to council.

Cllr Lester proposed that the Personnel Committee should review the disciplinary and grievance policies in conjunction with the complaints policy, seconded by Cllr Fisher and agreed unanimously.

It was reported that the Town Hall cleaner returned to work on 1st April. Cllr Lester proposed that the Council ratify the decision regarding her return and approve the associated risk assessment which was agreed unanimously.

It was unanimously agreed, as proposed by Cllr Lester and seconded by Cllr Steel to use the NJC for Local Authorities annual pay award as a guide for future staff salary reviews.

It was agreed to draft a risk assessment in respect of the Clerk and RFO's return to work when Government guidance allows as proposed by Cllr Lester and seconded by Cllr Mitchell.

Thanks were extended to the Personnel Committee for all their work.

13. TO RECEIVE CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk's report was circulated.

14. FINANCE –

To receive the income & expenditure report to 31st March 2021 and approve list of payments

The Income & Expenditure report was received. The list of payments was unanimously approved, as proposed by Cllr Lester and seconded by Cllr Hazelwood.

To approve purchase of benches/ picnic tables using CIL money and TC general reserves

An overview was given of situation regarding CIL money. It was unanimously agreed to use some of the CIL money to purchase the benches as proposed by Cllr Comer and seconded by Cllr Harding. It was agreed that benches for the Market Place would need further discussion with Broadland and as Officers at Broadland have been looking at a Market Place Initiative, there may need to be discussion with them.

15. ALLOTMENTS

TO APPROVE AMENDED ALLOTMENT AGREEMENT

Following concern raised by an allotment holder that the new allotment agreement wasn't clear in some aspects; the agreement was amended and circulated. It was unanimously agreed to approve the amended agreement subject to the addition under part 7C of wording clarifying the number of chickens allowed on a plot and the conditions they should be kept in, as proposed by Cllr Fisher and seconded by Cllr Mitchell.

It was agreed that as the amendments were clarification of the existing agreement, the amended agreement would apply with immediate effect and be issued to new tenants or those who express a wish to sign the new agreement instead. It was agreed that email addresses should be requested from plot holders at the point of the next rent review/ request to make communication with plot holders easier and more cost effective.

TO APPROVE FURTHER ACTION REGARDING CLEARING PLOT 17 AND PLOT 28 FF

Where items have been left on a plot it was unanimously agreed to write to the tenant and give them one month's written notice to clear the plot following which it will be cleared by the Council, as proposed by Cllr Hazelwood and seconded by Cllr Comer. Where the plot has already been reallocated there will need to be further discussion with the new tenant.

16. TOWN HALL - TO DECIDE FURTHER ACTION IN RESPECT OF THE TOWN HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE,

As there was uncertainty regarding the role of the Town Hall Management Committee and no Councillors were willing to come forward as representatives, it was previously agreed that Cllr Lester would look into this matter further. A briefing paper was circulated. Cllr Lester sought legal advice on the Management Deed which confirmed that the Committee was a Council Committee. As the Council now has the day to day responsibility for the Town Hall, particularly financially, it was agreed that it was important to look at options moving forward. There was concern that the Town Hall Management Committee's function was now very limited, as they were no longer responsible for the finances or booking. Thanks to their previous efforts the building is in good condition. If Councillors were recruited then it was acknowledged that there needed to be due diligence regarding election of members, public notice of meetings and minutes published on the Town Council website. It was confirmed that any members not properly elected should not attend meetings but there was nothing to prevent re-election.

Cllr Lester confirmed that as no Councillors were willing to represent the Council on the Town Hall Management Committee, the only alternative, in accordance with advice received from NPLAW, was that, due to attendance issues and its limited responsibilities, the committee be dissolved under section 15e of Standing Orders. It was considered a layer of management no longer required. It was suggested that user groups come forward and speak to the Clerk or that a Councillor be designated a point of contact to assist the clerk. It was unanimously agreed to dissolve the Town Hall Management Committee as proposed by Cllr Comer and seconded by Cllr Hazelwood. Thanks were extended to the Chair of the Town Hall Management Committee and all the volunteers for their hard work. It was agreed to write to past and present Committee members thanking them.

TO APPROVE RISK ASSESMENT & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION (Covid)

It was unanimously agreed to approve the revised risk assessment in respect of the Town Hall as proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Steel.

17. MARKET PLACE

No comments were received

18. CEMETERIES

It was reported that a burial had taken place and due to the Covid restrictions, a statutory declaration confirming ownership of the grave was witnessed by the funeral Director. The cemetery driveway is in need of attention following concerns raised by a member of the public. A grant of £10000 was received which could be utilised for this work. It was agreed to seek quotes for driveway improvement.

19. STIMPSON’S PIECE – TO RECEIVE REPORT AND REQUESTS FROM TRUSTEE AND APPROVE FURTHER ACTION FOLLOWING CONCERNS OVER FIR TREE LEANING OVER STONY LANE.

No requests were received from trustees. A resident raised concern over a fir tree that overhangs the road. A survey confirmed that there was ‘no imminent risk of failure’ It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote to ‘reduce the crown weight and biased load thus reducing any risk of failure and conflict’ as proposed by Cllr Lester and seconded by Cllr Douglas.

20. CHURCHYARD WALL – To receive update

No update was received

21. PLANNING

a) APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

20210550 - Ground floor rear extension with first floor extension above existing structure

40 Wood Dalling Road, Reepham, NR10 4RZ

The Council agreed that they had no comment or objection to this application

20210522 - Variation of condition 2 of 20191560 to allow design changes including window sizes and positions, and cladding. Removal/Variation of a condition (S73)

Field View, Park Lane, Reepham, NR10 4JZ

The Council agreed that they had no comment or objection to this application

20200847 Proposed residential development for 141 dwellings with associated open space, highway and

landscaping works. Extension to existing Reepham cemetery

Land West of Broomhill Lane, Reepham

It was acknowledged that residents have raised concerns including the volume of traffic, non-compliance with REP 1 and the location of sports hall, the increase in the number of houses and reduction in social housing level and it was agreed that the Council should continue to object to the application on this basis. The Council agreed to continue to raise concern that due to restrictions there hasn’t been a proper public consultation as proposed by Cllr Mitchell and seconded by Cllr Steel

b) APPLICATIONS DETERMINED

Decisions regarding applications, as detailed in the minutes, were noted.

c) TO CONSIDER LATE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No late planning applications were received.

22. TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE, ITEMS OF INFORMATION & REFER TO FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

LETTER OF COMPLAINT RECEIVED, GRASS VERGE CUTTING

An email was received from a resident asking the Council to consider allowing grassed areas with wild flowers to grow to encourage insects etc. without mowing. It was acknowledged that not all grassed areas are managed by the Town Council. It was agreed to contact the Grounds Maintenance Contractor and request that where possible grass be left if there were wild flowers present.

23. TO CONFIRM THE DATE AND TIME OF THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING & ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – 5TH MAY 2021

It was agreed that the Annual Town Meeting would be held at 7.30pm on 5th May 2021 publicised as an invitation for residents to talk to the council and raise any issues and to receive the Chair’s report. The Annual Town Council meeting would follow at 8pm with the election of the Chair and Vice Chair. It was agreed that the Stimpsons Piece Trustee meeting would be held on the 12th May.

24. TO CLOSE THE MEETING

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.32pm.

Minutes Agreed..... 12th May 2021