

## WELLS TOWN COUNCIL

THE SACKHOUSE, JICKLINGS YARD, WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA NR23 1AU

# MINUTES

2010/27

## Town Council Meeting held on 6 September 2010 at 1909 at The Methodist Room

<u>Those Present:</u> Allen Frary (Chairman), Steve Clark, Rodney Crafer, Lindsay Dew, Joe Ellison, Andy Gates, Mike Gates, Ray Hewitt, Campbell MacCallum, Joyce Trett, and Maggie Ward,

Keith Leesmith (Clerk), Marie Strong (NCC), Police Sergeant Andy Smith, I member of the press (*The Quay*), and 8 members of the public.

### 1) Public Forum

Sara Phillips said that The Buttlands is looking "very sad" after the dry summer, and believed that some attention, possibly in the form of top dressing is needed. RC and CM expressed agreement.

A complaint was received that the Council had supported the planning application for the new Freeman Street car park, which would eventually mean that clubs and charities that currently benefit from the temporary summer parking on the recreation field would no longer be able to do so. The planning permission for the use of the recreation field for parking is temporary and has to be applied for each year. KL said that the planners had said that this permission was unlikely to be granted when the new car park is operational. The Council had supported the car park because there is plainly not enough off-street parking in the town, which is a nuisance to residents, and does not benefit local traders. It was stated that even if/when the new car park materialises, the recreation field would still be available for fund raising activities such as the motor cycle rally that the scouts had promoted over the past two years.

## 2) Apologies

Gary Anthony, Jonathan Savory (NNDC)

#### 3) <u>Declarations of Interest</u>

Prejudicial Interest in item 19 by LD and AG as board members of Homes for Wells.

## 4) Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2010

Agreed and signed

## 5) Reports

#### <u>5a – Norfolk County Council</u>

With regard to agenda item II, some of the grass cutting currently done in the town by NNDC is paid for by NCC. It is not yet known whether the County Council will be prepared to continue paying for grass cutting, and if so whether it would be at the same level as present -5 cuts per annum.



## 5b) Wells Safer Neighbourhood Team

A full report was supplied by AS, which is appended. There had been 26 crimes reported since the last meeting two months ago, and although sounding a lot, this represents a 26% drop since the same period last year. In the same period there had been 18 incidents of rowdy behaviour in the town, mainly centred on the Quay. At the recent priorities setting meeting two local main concerns are Anti Social Behaviour around the Quay Car Park and alcohol related Anti Social Behaviour associated with licensed premises in the town. A discussion would take place on this latter item at the next meeting in October.

## 5c) North Norfolk District Council

Jonathan Savory had sent a report, which mentioned the *Greenbuild* event taking place at Felbrigg on 11 and 12 September, and also the fact that he had asked the planning committee to visit the site of *Partners* before the current planning permission is discussed. This visit would take place on 9 September.

JT reported that the overgrown house in Bases Lane had now been sold. MW said that there was a lot of glass around the bottle banks, and RH said that there were many weeds growing on the forecourt of the Beach Road toilets. JT would attempt to deal with these issues.

#### 5d) <u>Town Clerk</u>

Mott Macdonald had written to say that they intended to consolidate all the town's traffic regulations and street parking orders and asking for confirmation that it was alright to consult with the District rather than the Town Council in this matter. KL had replied saying that the Town Council wanted to be consulted as usual. Confirmation had been received of the new Marine Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. Local fishermen were being kept informed. NNDC intended to issue a dog control order requiring dogs to be kept on leads on The Quay. Two of the new litter bins provided for the children's playground had been set on fire around the time of carnival. These had now been replaced by self-extinguishing bins. The cottages behind Hampden House will be known as Fisherman's Cottages 15, 17, and 19 Jolly Sailor Yard. The property being built behind Tusker House will be known as Guillemot Barn. NNDC have acknowledged the petition received in respect of the overgrown house in Bases Lane. The person who smashed the Council's noticeboard in Staithe Street has been found by police, and the cost of the repair has been reimbursed by him. Newgates Lane toilets had started to be refurbished on the day of the meeting. Beach Road toilets would follow two weeks later, and Stearman's Yard two weeks after that. The final stage of the LDF plans is now in progress. The government inspector is expected to produce a report by "late autumn". NCC will in future be using the e-planning system to save money on printing and postage. KL believed that the District will eventually do the same. A large document has arrived showing temporary road closures throughout the County during the *Tour of Britain* cycle race. Several roads in and around Wells are likely to be affected between 1030 and 1230 on Thursday 16 September. The contract for the supply of dog bins is about to expire. We could now purchase our own bins, but KL thought it prudent to renew the contract for a further three years. Following press reports of this Council's possible involvement in a skateboard park, we had received a letter from a firm of quantity surveyors who would like to be involved. Recruitment is now starting for people interested in being involved in the 2011 census. KL or NNDC could provide details for anyone interested. On the day of the meeting a very complimentary e-mail had been received, praising the children's playground and particularly the "pirate ship". KL drew Members attention to an incident that had taken place on the recreation field on the previous Saturday, when an elderly lady had been hit with a football and had her glasses broken. A full incident report had been sent by e-mail.

#### 5f) Portfolio Holders

Cemetery: LD believes that the paths need to be swept better, particularly around the entrance.

Children's Playground: RH is delighted with the amount of use that the playground and particularly the *Bounty* has had during the summer. He still believes that there is a water leakage under the north-east corner, but so far Anglian Water has not appeared very concerned.

Allotments: We have a growing number of people on the waiting list, many of whom have been waiting some time. MW asked the working party to meet, so that recommendations could be made for notice to be given to those allotment holders who do not currently appear to be using the allotments.

The working party on youth projects would also meet to discuss the skateboard park before the next meeting.

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- 6) To record a vote of thanks to the Carnival Committee for their excellent work during 2010 It was unanimously agreed that the Carnival Committee had done an excellent job as usual
- To discuss a quotation of £500 to clear Allotments of a concrete base, an old shed, and miscellaneous rubbish. The concrete base had been under an asbestos shed previously cleared and now needed lifting before the plot could be used as an allotment. The old shed was in a dangerous state and had been left behind by a previous allotment holder. The present user was not responsible for it. The pile of rubbish had been left behind by an allotment holder who had now left the area, and needed to be cleared quickly because the pile was attracting more rubbish. Resolved to accept the quotation.
- 8) To discuss a quotation of £12,374.10 to encircle The Buttlands with conservation kerbs.
  RH expressed concerns that tree roots might be damaged if this work went ahead. Resolved to accept the quotation subject to a tree conservation officer approving the proposed work. KL would arrange for the contractor (Norfolk Highways) to meet with the tree conservation officer.
- 9) <u>To discuss appeals for funds from:</u>
  - a) Poetry-next-the-Sea

Resolved to donate £200.

b) Wells United Charities

Resolved to delay a decision on this appeal until the scheme for dividing the budgeted £2000 had been decided. (To be discussed next month)

c) Norfolk Accident Rescue

Resolved to donate £100

d) Vitalise

Resolved not to donate to this appeal as it is not a local charity.

- 10) To discuss the Youth Shelter that Hethersett PC wish to dispose of (offers invited)
  - Members thought that because of the small size of this unit, plus the difficulty in collecting it and transporting it to Wells, we should not offer to purchase it.
- To discuss the decision of NNDC to cease cutting grass verges etc and decide on any action required by WTC KL had tried to ascertain which grass NNDC currently cut, but had not yet succeeded. There was also doubt over how much the County paid-for cutting would continue. It was resolved to carry out further investigations, but to add a contingency sum to next year's budget.
- To discuss the government's consultation on local referendums to veto excessive council tax increases. The Society of Local Council Clerks and the National Association of Local Councils had issued a joint statement, requesting that Town and Parish Councils receive special consideration because a small cash increase on some Parishes' precepts could amount to a large percentage increase. In this case the cost of a referendum might be more than the proposed increase. KL had written a proposed letter endorsing the stance of *SLCC and NALC* but also showing concern that some (higher) Councils could pass down functions and their cost to Parishes. The grass cutting discussed above is an example. Resolved to send the letter.
- 13) To discuss the New Housing Strategy for North Norfolk consultation document.
  - This was a seventy-page document which KL thought it unreasonable to expect Members to have read. MG had studied it, and explained some of the concepts to Council. It seemed impossible to be able to supply the number of homes needed each year. KL had drafted a reply letter asking for greater efforts to be made in combating housing stocks disappearing as second homes, and dealing with empty properties. It also pointed out that the Town Council were prime originators of *Homes for Wells* (contrary to the document), and offered to continue supporting them, and also offered to use the Town Council office as a contact point for *Your Choice, Your Home.* It was resolved that this letter be sent.

## 15) Financial Report and Accounts for Settlement

A report had been circulated at the beginning of the meeting. The following had been paid during the month:		
NNDC	Sackhouse Rates	57.00
NNDC	Cemetery Rates	56.00
Brightview Internet	Broadband	17.61
Keith Leesmith	Clerk's Salary Deposit	1000.00
The following were agreed for payment:		
Platten & Anthony	Paint for benches on Tug Boat Yard	18.25
SLCC Enterprises Ltd	Regional Conference 22 September	129.25
Keith Leesmith	Salary (net of deposit) and expenses	431.74
Norfolk Pension Fund	Monthly contribution	483.97
MHB Services Ltd	Street Lighting Maintenance	285.97
E-on Energy	Street Lighting electricity	451.72
Jimmy Tottle	Bollards	220.00
Norse Commercial Services Ltd	Grounds Maintenance	1248.44
Norfolk Central Printers	Car Park Tickets	103.40
North Norfolk District Council	planning fee Rec. Field 2011 £85	
North Norfolk District Council	Public Entertainment Licence £180	265.00
M L Walsingham & Son	key cutting	29.70
Veolia Environmental Services	Cemetery waste bin	35.41
Mazars	External Audit	470.00
Terry Corbishley	Litter Picking	315.70
Michael Chestney	Litter Picking and painting benches	1047.61

## 16) To confirm the date of the next Council Meeting

Agreed as Monday 4 October

To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960, as amended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude members of the public and press during consideration of items of a confidential nature.

Resolved

### 20) To discuss a matter regarding the operation of the temporary summer car park by charity groups

It had been reported that one of the groups had closed the car park in the middle of the afternoon. It did not seem fair that they should receive the same share as the other groups. It was resolved that the group concerned should be asked what they had done and if they admitted that they had closed early they would be allowed an equal share this year, but would not be allowed to operate next year (one year ban).

### 18) To discuss succession planning for the Town Clerk

KL left the room during this discussion

Resolved to accept in principle a plan that KL continue beyond the age of 65 for an additional year at 15 hours per week (plus an assistant for an additional 15 hours) and then an additional year at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hours with the other person working  $22\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

### 19) To discuss an appeal for assistance from *Homes for Wells*

LD & AG left the room during this discussion.

Resolved in principle to offer a small part of Two Furlong Hill (north-west corner) for a small housing development capable of being used under a local lettings agreement. Subject to the agreement of the Holkham Estate to lift the restrictive covenant. RH and MW wished to have their opposition to this recorded.

#### The meeting closed at 2235