

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES, LAND AND PROPERTIES
COMMITTEE, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th APRIL 2018 AT THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, KINGS HOUSE, THETFORD STARTING AT 2.00 P.M

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor D M Crawford

Councillors

M P Brindle

Mrs B J Canham (Chairman)

C Harvey

T J Jermy

F Robinson

C R P Burnett

D M Crawford

Mrs J Hollis

Newton(Vice Chairman)

Officers in attendance:

Roz Barnett

Chris Crimmen

Amenities Land and Property Officer

Committee Secretary

Minutes

891/17

DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None.

892/17

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors S J Armes and R G Kybird.

893/17

MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on the 7th March 2018, received by Council on 27th of March 2018, be confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.

894/17

ACTION POINTS & UPDATES

- Cage Lane Toilets were closed due to major electrical failure and UK Power networks closed Cage Lane in order to restore supply.
- The shambles repainting and removal of globe and festoon lights was completed the week beginning 12th of March. The officer asked the painters to do the bollards in front of the Shambles as a small addition to the original job. The gold accents will be done when the mural artist starts which will begin on the 12th of April weather permitting.
- The Bluebell bulbs that were supplied had to be sent back as were not fit for purpose. The council will now have to wait until the autumn to instigate the planting programme.
- Nick Warns the architect at St Peter's had been appointed and started the survey works and preparation of the 5 year management plan. Historic England have agreed that their grant funding can be used flexibly for an access and conservation management plan, They have also confirmed that the repairs to St Peter's Arch can also be funded from the grant as well as other emergency works. Nick has warned the council that some major works will be required on the church and it is likely that it will be out of action from Spring 2019 for up to 9 months. Nick will present his maintenance report at the end of April so St Peter's restoration will be a substantive item on the June agenda.

Works Schedule – Thetford Play Areas Equipment Maintenance
Phase 1
18/19/20 April 2018 - 25/26/27 April 2018

- Bergamot Close – Install self-close mechanism, Repair wetpour, Replace two flat swings
- Castle Park – Sand down noticeboard, Top up bark levels, Repair surface matting and replace seal on. Supernova, Repair slide frame damage, Replace bolt and handrail on train, Replace skate pad on rigid skate, Reset basket swing to correct height, Replace infant cradle seats and chains, Repair play panel on climbing frame
- Edinburgh Way – Replace missing cradle swing seat
- Fairfields – Repair joint lifting on surface near rocking car, Replace swing bushes, Loosen swing shackles on toddler swings, Replace burnt out parts, Replace spinning triangle play panel
- Harriet Martineau Close – Replace swing bushes and set seats at correct height
- Pine Close – Replace swing bushes and rehang swings seats and chains, Loosen shackles on infant swings
- Richard Easten Way – Surface patch next to carousel, Replace swing bushes

Phase 2
W/C 30th April 2018

- Bergamot Close – Install safety cover under see-saw
- Castle Park – Remove the structure and ground anchor from carousel climber
- Guildford Way – Removal of residue of equipment
- Harriet Martineau Close – Replacement of fencing, Repair of kickwall, Removal of graffiti and repainting of kickwall

This schedule is produced as a guide only and is dependent on factors such as weather and availability of certain spare parts etc. Playscape Playgrounds will endeavour to adhere to this schedule to the best of their ability.

895/17

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Committee considered the initial designs for improved Guildhall access from Nicholas Warnes our Architect. It was agreed to consult with the British Legion regarding any access issues and pass the plans on to the Working Party dealing with the Guildhall complex.

896/17

ALP PRIORITIES AND END OF YEAR REPORT

The ALP Officer had prepared a report on what was achieved by the Committee (see and appendix A) and the Chair and Committee thanked the ALP Officer and the Council staff for all the hard work during the past year.

897/17

MONITORING OF COUNCIL LEASES

The ALP Officer had prepared a chart on the leases that are the committee's responsibility.

Property	Agent	Officer Responsible
British Legion	None	ALP
Charles Burrell Centre	None	ALP

Red Lion	None	ALP
Shambles 1	None	ALP
Shambles 2	Shires	ALP
Shambles 3	None	ALP
Shambles 4	Shires	ALP

Set out below is the minimum requirement by the Council:

- Annual health & safety visit by council representatives and health & safety consultant or managing agent.
- Annual lease compliance visit by council representatives and/or managing agent.
- Tenants reminded annually of systems for reporting external maintenance issues
- Tenants reminded annually of systems for requesting changes to building.
- Records of Annual Compliance checks held at the Carnegie rooms and saved into hard drive

This was agreed by the Committee.

898/17

SMALL GRANTS REQUESTS

The ALP Officer reported no grants requests had been received.

899/17

APPROVE DRAFT TENDER FOR XMAS LIGHTS

The ALP Officer had tabled the tender for testing, installation and removal of Christmas Lights and this was agreed by the Committee. The closing date will be 5 p.m. Friday 25th May 2018.

900/17

CAR PARKING IN THETFORD

The ALP Officer had approached Breckland Council regarding the need for additional parking in Thetford. They had replied:

- Why is additional car parking deemed necessary in this area and what evidence is there?
- The Town Council has the power/duty and experience of operating car parks. Why aren't the Town Council making the provision directly if it is deemed necessary?

There followed a discussion when Councillors reminded the Committee that both Breckland Council and NCC had carried out a full survey on parking in Thetford and it was decided that the ALP Officer should request a copy of these documents. In the meantime the Mayor had proposed he would lead a small group of volunteers who will carry out a survey of the use of the car parks in Thetford.

901/17

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

None.

902/17

CORRESPONDENCE

The ALP asked the committee to note correspondence received.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE COUNCIL – TO BE NOTED AND CONSIDERED			
RESIDENTS/COMMUNITY GROUPS			
1.	8.3.2018	Resident asked if they could cut back overhanging branches at Fredericks wood	ALP Officer agreed
2.	8.1.2018	Norfolk Youth advisory board asked to meet the Youth Council	ALP Officer asked the youth council..
3.	8.3.2018	Norfolk Wildlife Trust congratulated the council on the mowing of the ramparts and mound.	Noted in correspondence
4.	8.3.2018	Tenants complained about the poor repair work done to the paving slabs.	ALP Officer called out professional landscaping company to rectify the pavement.
5.	8.3.2018	Gritter volunteers requested a second bin at the Fairfield bridge.	ALP officer explained permission for this bin has already been refused.
6.	9.3.2018	Quote for cleaning the front 3 elevations of the Guildhall of £5800 +VAT	Noted in correspondence
7.	9.3.2018	Report of fire damage at Fairfield Play Park.	ALP Officer added repair to contract. Cost £250
8.	9.3.2018	Report from Barnham Cross Action Group on their small grant and a photo of the new information board	Noted in correspondence
9.	12.3.2018	Listed Building Officer advised against having the Guildhall cleaned unless it was part of a larger restoration project.	Noted in correspondence
10.	15.3.2018	BTO asked the council whether they could update the boards across from ST Cuthbert's Church	ALP Officer has arranged a meeting on the 13 th of April
11.	15.3.2018	Request for a grit bin on the top of the hill at Comfrey Way and the Hill at Valerian Rise	Noted in correspondence
12.	16.3.2018	Vandalism reported Bus station toilets	ALP Officer organised repair.
13.	16.3.2018	Resident reported tree fall into river at Ford Meadow was causing bank damage.	ALP Officer arranged emergency tree works
14.	19.3.2018	Cloverfields resident group asked for second sign to be put up at the play area.	ALP Officer arranged for 2 nd sign to be put up.
15.	19.3.2018	Fly tipping at Maine Street play area has been reported	ALP Officer reported this to Keir.
16.	19.3.2018	Request for guided walk on the common on the 12 th of April from RSPB	ALP Officer approved.

17.	20.3.2018	BTO notified the council that Chris Gregory would be retiring at the end of March and would be replaced by Ian Henderson.	Noted in correspondence
18.	28.3.2018	Bulldogs provided report on medium grant and asked for councillors to come for a photo of the Town Council sponsored kit.	Noted in correspondence
19.	28.3.2018	Resident complained that minutes said that Thetford Singers had received a grant when Thetford Voices were the recipient	ALP Officer explained that Thetford voices were a sub group of Thetford singers.
20.	29.3.2018	Tenant complained about the fat build up in the drains in the market place.	ALP Officer arranged to have the drains cleared and will try and recoup cost from tenant.

ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER COUNCILS

21.	9.3.2018	Rob Walker posed some questions about the car parking question	Agenda item
22.	19.3.2018	Listed Building officer advised on the British Legion inscription.	Noted in correspondence

903/17

ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

904/17

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider resolving that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for any 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.

905/17

UPDATE ON TENDERS

906/17

UPDATE ON SHAMBLES

Chairman.

ACTION POINT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
The ALP Officer will investigate with the Works Foreman the repainting of the Town Sign near Newtown.	ALP Officer	ASAP

ALP PRIORITIES AND END OF YEAR REPORT

Amenities Land & Properties Committee Report on Objective 2017 – 2018

The members of the Amenities Land and Property Committee worked incredible hard over the last 12 months to complete their ambitious programme of planned objectives. Cllr Canham chaired the committee and was supported in these duties by Cllr Newton (Vice-chair) and Cllr Armes who took up the role as lead for health and safety for the Committee. All the committee members were actively engaged in working parties and have contributed to the significant improvements that have been completed over the last 12 months.

The first priority for the committee was the improvement and development of the open spaces in the town. The most complex and difficult objective the committee undertook under this heading was the development of management and maintenance plans for wooded and key open spaces within the Town. Councillors visited all the sites and recorded their recommendations for annual maintenance and management. The councillors' observations were written up into costed maintenance plans. The sheer scale of the work identified from this process has led to further maintenance contracts being set up and members of the works team being more effectively deployed. In 2018/19 when these plans are fully implemented the maintenance of the Town Council's sites will be significantly improved.

A major achievement for the Committee was the establishment of grazing on Barnham Cross Common. After advertising the opportunity, a grazier was appointed in May and for the first time in many years Dexter's cattle and Beulah sheep are now grazing the common. Breckland Flora group are monitoring the common to see whether the rare species return to the site. This summer we saw and increase in the Breckland pansy, which is pictured below.



As the maintenance of the many sites owned by the council is expensive the Council set an objective to maximise external funding for open spaces by working in partnerships with other agencies. This year the Town Council agreed to make Ford Meadow and Castle Park County Wildlife sites. This means that we now can access free advice on how we manage these sites from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. As previously mentioned the Council are now actively grazing Barnham Cross Common and this meant that the council are now entitled to rural payments. This will increase income generated by the common by approximately £12,784 and this will pay for additional annual maintenance on the site. The management committee funds for Barnham Cross Common have been transferred across to the Town Council this year which will give the Town Council an additional £14957 which will be used for improvements to the carparks in 2018/19.

This year the Town Council has worked with the Croxton Rd Community Association on a project to develop an under 8's play area at Harriet Martineau Close. Public consultations were

held with local school children and local people and the HAGS design on the left was chosen. The Council and residents are now working on fundraising the funding to complete the park.

The Council has been recruiting local residents and involving them in maintenance of some of our open spaces. This year we have recruited 4 tree wardens, 2 play park monitors, 4 open space monitors for our commons and 3 additional volunteer gritters. Having this extra help in the community has made a real difference across the town. We are always looking for people to help so please contact the council if you would like to volunteer.

The Committee set themselves the priority of improving the maintenance and management of council owned properties. The Town Council has completed the refurbishment of Cage Lane and Castle Park toilets. The Shambles was decorated in March and the British Legion's major refurbishment will start in June. A condition report and maintenance plans have been commissioned for the Guildhall and some emergency roof repairs have been commissioned to be completed in the spring. A condition report and maintenance plan has also been commissioned for St Peters and the Town Council is now actively fundraising for the works. A grant from Historic England of £38,400 has already been secured for the initial emergency works.

Thetford Town Council recognise the important contribution that voluntary organisations make to improving services/facilities in the town. In recognition of this Councillors agreed an objective to support these groups by providing a grant funding programme. Over the last year the council have given 10 small grants of up to £300 and a further 10 medium grants of up to £2000. The table below shows the projects that were funded:-

Medium Grants Awarded			
Citizens Bureau	Advice	Recruitment training and travel expenses of new advisors. Training for existing advisors.	£2,000.00
Thetford & District Dementia Group	District Support	New project offering one to one befriending to those suffering with dementia and their carers	£2,000.00
Thetford Dolphins		A new sound system at Water world	£2,000.00
United Church	Reform	installation of a platform lift	£2,000.00
The Garage		3 x 10 week programmes of music making workshops for 15-30 year olds	£2,000.00
Involve Razem CIC		To extend their group with another classroom and purchase tables, office accessories, computer, TV, carpet, paint and shelves for books	£2,000.00
Bulldogs Club	Football	3 New coaches, training courses new kit and equipment,	£2,000.00
Thetford Bowls Club	Short Mat	Purchase mats and bowling equipment for the new club.	£1,992.00

St Nicholas Hospice	Weekly drop in service in Thetford Methodists Church	£2,000.00
Access Community Trust	Promote adult literacy through adult reading sessions.	£2,000.00
Small Grants Awarded		
Inspire focus	Software career programme to help young people gain employment.	£300
Barnham Cross Action Group	Information board replacement	£300
Church of the Nazarene	Outdoor Seating	£300
Cloverfield residents association	Start up costs	£300
The Thetford society	Sculpture trail	£300
Charles Burrell Museum	Equipment repairs	£300
Croxton Rd Community Association	To help with fund raising campaign for the play area	£300
Charles Burrell Centre	Emergency Lighting	£264
Thetford Singers	Towards costs of summer workshops	£300
Redcastle Action Group	Towards the costs of a community event	£300

After a consultation in the market place where many brilliant ideas were gathered from the public, the council agreed an objective to revitalise the area. The street furniture was restored and repositioned so people could appreciate the beautiful Guildhall building and the redundant unsightly lighting was removed from the front of the buildings. A mural to commemorate the end of the First World War was commissioned and will be completed in April on the end wall of the Shambles.



In recognition that residents are concerned about community safety, the Town Council has worked closely with Breckland District Council and the police to address anti-social behaviour issues. The Councils consulted widely on the issue over the autumn of 2017 and the overwhelming response was that something should be done to address antisocial behaviour in the town. As a result of this work a Public Space Protection Order zone has been created in the town and this will give the police additional powers to deal with any particular nuisances or problems in the town centre.

The Xmas Lights and floral displays were also areas where councils worked on enhancements. Three redundant hanging basket stands were replaced and new planters were installed to brighten up the market place. The Xmas lights were extended along the riverside area.

The Town Council also introduced a Youth Council to involve young people and build their knowledge around local democracy and decision making. The youth council ran a successful Toys and Treats appeal at Xmas where the collected donations for underprivileged families. They are now working on a survey to gather young people views about what they think about Thetford.

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