

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 01 JUNE 2021 IN THE LINCOLN HALL

Present

Cllr Eldridge – Chairman

Cllr Christien, Cllr Foord, Cllr Gott, Cllr Overton, Cllr Roberts

Clerk- Alison Doe

There were 3 members of the public present including District Cllr Bendle and County Cllr Dewsbury

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Amey, Cllr Dunnett and Cllr Thompson.

2. Public participation session - (15 minutes) (Members of the public may make a statement or ask a question of not more than three minutes duration)

No points were raised by members of the public.

3. Declarations of interests with regard to items on the agenda and to consider requests for dispensations

Cllr Overton raised that he lives in the Market Place which is affected by parking issues.

Cllr Foord declared an interest in agenda item 28.3.

4. To agree a Chairman to preside over any agenda items of this meeting, if both the Chairman and Vice Chair are unable to preside due to (agenda item 1) Apologies for absence and /or (agenda item 3) Declarations of interests

Cllr Eldridge advised that he was able to Chair all agenda items.

5. To consider any applications for co-option on to the Town Council

One resident, Louise Sta Ana, had applied to be co-opted on to the Town Council. Mrs Sta Ana had forwarded a written application to the Clerk prior to the meeting (which had been forwarded to all Cllrs), and being present at the meeting was invited to introduce herself to the Council. Mrs Sta Ana advised that she had lived in Hingham for about a year and was interested in becoming a Town Cllr in order to help the community.

It was proposed and seconded to co-opt Mrs Sta Ana onto the Council and a vote was taken. It was unanimously agreed to co-opt Mrs Sta Ana onto the Town Council and it was advised that she would take office at the next meeting. Mrs Sta Ana was thanked for coming forward to act as Cllr.

6. To agree the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 04 May 2021

The minutes were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes of 04 May 2021 (and other updates contained in a written Clerks report circulated prior to the meeting, see Appendix A)

The Chairman stated that a future Council meeting should include a proposal to investigate prices and suitable locations for some new notice boards.

8. Working Party Reports

The Clerk reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party had an informal Zoom meeting to come up with a list of questions for the Neighbourhood Planning Officers.

The meeting with the Neighbourhood Planning Officers was held on 19th May, and was very informative and the NP Officers were very helpful.

The next steps for the NP Working Party are:

- for the working party to speak to a/some consultants to ascertain the tasks that a consultant would need to undertake and what the Council/ a Steering Group could undertake
- ascertain an estimated cost
- as it seems that Neighbourhood Planning is being steered to include design codes, investigate this topic
- start to identify potential membership to a future steering group

- make a recommendation to the Town Council as to whether a Neighbourhood plan is feasible/worthwhile.

9. Reports from representatives on external bodies/ attendees of external meetings/training

9.1 Lincoln Hall

Cllr Christien circulated a written report from the Lincoln Hall prior to the meeting, it was reported that:

- Wi-fi now very much operational
- New website coming soon - www.lincolnhallhingham.co.uk
- New stage curtains and stage refurbishment look great, all other interior curtains being replaced soon and were on order
- New flooring in hallway and toilets expected in August
- More diverse bookings, including Tai Quondo on a Monday
- Community get together live music event planned for Saturday 9th October (there will be a bar)
- Income with minimal long-term bookings and expenditure are solvent and stable
- Next Hingham Comedy Night 'Carry On Hingham' Sat 6th Nov will include thanks/awards for local people's efforts in lockdown - suggestion/nominations welcome

9.2 Hingham Emergency Packages

Cllr Christien reported that the Hingham Emergency Packages scheme is in its final week. The families have showed sincere gratitude for the help that the scheme has given some advising that they would have struggled without the assistance. Community Connector Barbara Howard has also thanked the scheme for helping Hingham residents and thanks was offered to Barbara in referring families for more long-term assistance and advice if needed.

9.3 Hingham Playing Field Association

Minutes of the HPFA meeting of 11th May 2021, were circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. The HPFA reported:

- The sports and social club had re-opened within Covid restrictions
- The Kitchen requires refurbishment
- A new website is being worked on
- New benches had arrived and funding was being sought from the Football Foundation to help with refurbishment of the changing rooms/ showers, a grant was also being sought for replacement doors and windows
- The sports clubs reported on their activities

The Clerk advised that the HPFA were looking into replacing the basketball hoop, and she had enquired with South Norfolk Council to ask if the small amount of \$106 money (left over from the installation of the gym equipment) could be used towards this (the amount held by SNC is a little over £200, but it is designated for the provision of outdoor gym equipment) advice is awaited from SNC.

It was also reported that there was a possibility of the antiques fair re starting at the sports centre.

9.4 Chairs Networking meeting 19th May 2021

The Chairman made the following report, (written report forwarded to all Cllrs) after his attendance at the Chairs Network Meeting:

"This was the first networking meeting that I have attended and I'm glad to say that it was really useful.

There were Chairs or their representatives from across the County, and even into Suffolk.

All of them apart from me had had experience of neighbourhood plans and the consensus was that they were frustrating, time consuming bureaucratic BUT ultimately useful.

They had all used consultants for some or all of the work, but the majority view was that they really helped move things along, especially if we wanted to include design statements in the plan, I believe that we will want to do this as to pavements, footpaths and cycle routes in and around developments.

On balance I would say that meetings of this kind are useful and would hope to attend more networking meetings in the future”.

10. General Correspondence (information/circulars etc)

10.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England - Final recommendations for Norfolk County Council published

10.2 TTSR Ltd (grass cutting contractor) – Dog Fouling in the Churchyard

The Clerk advised that she had forwarded this information to South Norfolk Council and requested SNC officer presence in the town, and also asked if there were any anti dog fouling initiatives planned by SNC. SNC had advised that they would attend Hingham to do a walk about but advised that action would only be taken against offenders if there was indisputable evidence. There are currently no anti dog fouling initiatives planned by SNC.

Cllrs discussed ways of raising awareness and trying to engage with those who don't clean up after their dogs. It was suggested that a campaign could be undertaken providing free dog poop bags with perhaps some local sponsorship for other “freebies”, it was also suggested that the school could be asked to make posters. The Clerk will investigate initiatives for a anti dog fouling campaign.

10.3 Norfolk Local Access Forum - Volunteer Vacancies on the Norfolk Local Access Forum

10.4 Letter from the Chairman of the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance

10.5 The Retirement of Rev. Colin Reed

10.6 Resignation of the Parish Archivist

The archivist had advised that he was entrusting the documents he had collected to the Clerk, who confirmed that she had secured some temporary storage room. Arrangements need to be made for the collection of the documents.

It was agreed to write a letter of thanks to the archivist for his dedication to preserving the documents he had collected.

10.7 South Norfolk Council - Parish Councils webinar: South Norfolk Village Clusters Housing Allocations Plan consultation

District Cllr Bendle advised that the housing allocations would be between 12 and 24 homes to ensure that there was some obligation to provide affordable housing.

10.8 New Broadland and South Norfolk Website

11. Correspondence (not for public inspection) as addressed directly to Hingham Town Council (from residents etc.)

11.1 Resident - Parking on the Fairland greens

(discussed within agenda item 24)

11.2 Resident – Trees, Woodland Trust Scheme

The resident had requested that the Council apply to the scheme for free trees, as these could be made available to the community . It was agreed that this is something that the Council should do and look to identify areas where trees need to be planted.

12. To discuss and agree any required responses/actions in relation to any item(s) of correspondence

12.1 (10.6) – the Clerk to write a letter of thanks to the town Archivist

12.2 (11.2) – contact the Woodland Trust regarding taking part in the free tree scheme.

13. District Councillor's report

District Cllr Bendle reported that South Norfolk Council had returned to face to face meetings and were continuing to live stream meetings for the public to view. Work to advance the 2 Council's 1 Team joint working with Broadland Council was continuing with a new joint website and new email addresses.

Cllr Bendle reported that she had chaired her first Licensing Committee.

14. County Councillor's report

County Cllr Dewsbury reported that following the County Council elections, the Cabinet remained the same. Council and Cabinet meetings were being held at the Norfolk Showground to enable compliance with social distancing.

Forms will be sent to parishes regarding the aim to plant 1 million trees, with planting being undertaken in November.

It was reported that Hingham had a new Highways Engineer, and that there was further work being undertaken on the feasibility study, including traffic surveys, now that Covid restrictions had been lifted, it will give a more realistic set of data.

The Clerk advised Cllr Dewsbury that approximately 400 new homes were being built in Great Ellingham, which is resulting in a new roundabout at Great Ellingham Hingham Road (B1077 junction), but years of trying to secure junction improvements for Hingham (Fairland crossroads) the town seems to be ignored, despite having had development incrementally over the years and it being plausible to assume that many of the new residents of Great Ellingham will travel to Hingham to access shops and services.

Cllr Dewsbury was advised that Hingham is left out of SNC and NCC initiatives which benefit larger towns, with inadequate measures for reducing speeding, including no police enforcement of the 20mph limit, and no formal car park, the Town is becoming dangerous for pedestrians and road users and on road parking areas are becoming congested with double parking being commonplace. The Clerk advised that there needed to be a multi-agency approach to resolving these issues, with a dedicated car park, on road parking restrictions and enforcement.

15. Planning Decisions

- 15.1 2021/0915 - New agricultural building for machinery storage
Agricultural Building West Of Watton Road Hingham Norfolk
Withdrawn
- 15.2 2021/0850 - Details for condition 3 of 2018/2229 - joinery details
18 Bond Street Hingham Norfolk NR9 4HA - Approved
- 15.3 2021/0787 - Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed change of use and associated building works of an agricultural building to a 5 no dwellinghouses (QA and QB)
Agricultural Building At Lyngwhite Farm Hingham Road Hingham Norfolk - Approval of details - Approved
- 15.4 2021/0698 & 2021/0697- Erection of a detached single storey timber outbuilding
Southernwood House 9 Market Place Hingham NR9 4AF - Approval with Conditions

16. Planning Applications (as notified by SNC for consultation)

- 16.1 **2021/1110 - Lean to barn for storage of agricultural machinery**
College Farm Southburgh Lane Hingham NR9 4PP
The Council considered the details of the application and agreed to recommend that the application be approved.
- 16.2 **2021/0941 - Replacement of windows to rear (north) elevation of The Miller's House section**
The Watermill Deopham Road Hingham NR9 4NL

The Council considered the details of the application and agreed to recommend that the application be approved.

17. (other planning applications where the Town Council is not a consultee – for information only)
(none)

(ITEMS 18-20 FINANCE)

18. To note the date of the next Finance Committee meeting, proposed date 20 July 2021

The Clerk advised that the Finance Committee would need to agree accounts for payment as there is no Council meeting in August.

It was agreed to arrange the meeting for 20 July 2021.

19. To review the arrangements for the undertaking of financial scrutiny/internal control

The Clerk advised of the arrangements for financial scrutiny and internal control as follows:
(under normal circumstances)

Finance Committee

- Meet 3 times a year (usually March , July and November). The Committee undertake the financial check at each meeting, cross referencing the financial records
- Undertake budget monitoring/review at each meeting
- Undertake preliminary budget setting in November (for the following financial year)
- Council receive a copy of the Finance Committee meeting draft minutes at the following Council meeting – the draft FC minutes are published as an appendix to the Council meeting

General

- NEW (since covid), copy of all invoices go to all Cllrs prior to approval of accounts for payment at the Council meeting (this will continue)
- Internal Auditor sought well in advance of being required
- Internal Audit undertaken annually

20. To approve Accounts for Payment (as below)

The Accounts for payment were agreed and the cheques were signed.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT 01 JUNE 2021				VAT
	TOTAL	PAYEE	DETAILS	
104174	£885.49	staff	WAGES (871.53)	
			CLEANING PRODUCTS (4.00)	
			BINBAGS (9.96)	£1.66
104175	£1,083.05	staff	WAGES (963.06)	
			OFFICE SOFTWARE (119.99)	£20.00
D DEBIT	£64.66	NEST	PENSION	
104176	£240.00	COZENS (UK) LTD	STREET LIGHT MAINTENANCE	£40.00
104177	£664.55	E-ON	STREET LIGHT ENERGY	£110.76
104178	£51.36	EUROFFICE	PAPER	£8.56
104179	£65.12	NORFOLK COPIERS	METERED PRINTING	£10.85
104180	£168.00	NORFOLK PARISH TRAINING AND SUPPORT	INTERNAL AUDIT	
	£3,222.23	TOTAL	TOTAL VAT	£170.17

21. To receive the Internal Auditors report for 2020/21

A copy of the Internal Auditors report was forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting.

With regard to the recommendations:

VAT reclaim - VAT reclaims have been undertaken a year in arrears. Suggest that the 20-21 reclaim (which is ready) is submitted during the first half of this year.

The Clerk advised that she intends to reclaim the VAT after the audit work is submitted.

Insurance - It is not clear from the July 2020 minutes whether multiple quotations for the renewal of the 3-year insurance policy were considered to ensure value for money. Ensure that multiple quotations are considered.

The Finance Committee will normally consider the Councils insurance needs when requesting quotations, unfortunately this did not take place due to covid, and the Finance Committee not meeting. Quotations will be sought when the current agreement is due to expire.

Assets - Suggest the Council considers the disposal of an unused 2010 laptop valued at £340

The Clerk advised that this was the previous Clerks laptop was not used, it was agreed to dispose of this item.

With regard to the suggested efficiencies:

The Clerk advised that she had contacted the bank regarding electronic banking and had been sent a pin machine which stated it was to be used with the debit card for the account, the Council accounts do not have debit cards and no other chip and PIN card was sent to operate the PIN machine, the Clerk had not telephoned the bank to try to resolve this as hold times were approximately an hour. A signatory on the account would also have to telephone to arrange a PIN machine and internet access to the accounts. The Council acknowledged that the cheque system currently works.

With regard to direct debit payments, The Clerk suggested that these could be set up if the Council entered into new long-term contracts with a service provider, such as for grass cutting and street light maintenance, the Council considered this a sensible option. Direct debit payments are already made for the lease payments for the printer and the pension payments.

The Clerk will try to resolve the dormant account, which holds £186.80.

22. To approve the Annual Governance Statement for the annual return 2020/21

Questions 1-9 on section 1 of the annual return form, the Annual Governance Statement, were read out and it was agreed and answered as follows: questions 1 – 8 YES, question 9 Not Applicable. Section 1 of the annual return form was signed by the Chairman.

23. To approve the Accounting Statement for the annual return 2020/21

The Accounting Statement (section 2) on the annual return had been completed by the Clerk, it was agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman. A copy of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return form was forwarded to all councillors prior to the meeting and will be published on the Town Council website. The Clerk advised that the auditor requires a detailed explanation of variances to be sent with the AGAR form, and these had also been provided to all Cllrs prior to the meeting.

24. Parking issues within the town – to receive an update and discuss matters relating to parking issues within Hingham and to make suggestions/agree action point relating to this issue

Residents had raised concerns regarding inconsiderate and dangerous parking within town, in particular on The Fairland, when double parking is commonplace, the Keep Clear road markings are not observed, and residents' access to their properties are being blocked. Concerns were also raised regarding vehicles being parked upon the Fairland greens. Parking in the Market Place was also becoming an issue with the parking areas becoming congested especially on the side road between the old post office and the care services offices, the road to the north of the north green is also becoming obstructed by parked cars.

The Clerk had forwarded a brief report prior to the meeting and had advised that:

- The Town Council do not have the power to restrict parking on the highway
- Residents who experience obstruction of the highway should report this to the police at the time it occurs, and also to keep reporting these issues to Norfolk County Council
- The Police had advised that they would only attend if parking is dangerous

- South Norfolk Council's planned review of car parks has not taken place, and it is not clear if Hingham would be included in a review
- If SNC were to provide a car park, it would be pay and display, and for any formal car park to be effective, on road parking restrictions would be needed to be put in place by Norfolk County Council (who have previously advised that they will not do so).
- The Fairland Safety feasibility study is still awaited from NCC, it is not know if that will make any recommendations with regards to the parking issues

With regards to parking on the Fairland greens, the Town Council had previously agreed to purchase "please do not park on the grass signs", the clerk advised that she was concerned that any sign placed should not be a trip hazard or have sharp edges, and suggested a semi-permanent corrugated plastic design, which could be purchased at a reasonable price.

The Council had previously agreed to purchase lockable bollards for the south Fairland green entrance. The Clerk advised that the greens had protection under legislation which means that they should not be used as a parking area (parking on the greens should not be authorised), and by having a bollard that was removable and removing it to allow parking for events (such as weddings at the church) was in effect authorising parking to take place. It was agreed to purchase some corrugated plastic type "Please do not park on the grass" for use on the small Fairland greens and by the entrance of the south Fairland green and not to purchase lockable bollards for the entrance to the south green.

It was suggested that an infrastructure review was needed for Hingham, to see if facilities were in the right place and if it would be possible to move facilities to new premises (Bowls Club/Lincoln Hall) to free up town centre space for a parking area. A suggestion was made that residents with spare driveway space could rent the space out to staff of local businesses for all day parking. It was also suggested that Ladies Meadow could provide a suitable location for land for relocating facilities and/or provision of car parking and an extension to the cemetery, however this would rely on the land being made available and suitable road access. It was noted that these ideas could be brought forward within a neighbourhood plan and may be achievable with future development of the town, however this did not solve the immediate issue of gridlocked parking. The Chairman will contact the Diocesan Office regarding Ladies Meadow.

25. Proposal to organise a training session for the Council

It was agreed to arrange a training session for the whole Council (approximate cost £325).

26. To consider employing the services of a consultant to represent the Town Council at the Greater Norwich Local Plan Public Enquiry

The Clerk advised that she had sought advice from Norfolk ALC regarding this, who had suggested contacting the Campaign for Rural England. The Council agreed that it would be beneficial to employ the services of a relevant professional to represent the Council, as developers and the GNLP team would have legal representation. It was suggested that advice should also be sought from Swainsthorpe regarding their challenge against the planning permission for a new Ben Burgess industrial premises.

The Council agreed to discuss this further at a future meeting when further advice has been obtained.

27. 'Exclusion of the Press and Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to discuss the following matters:'

The following agenda items contain reference to resident's personal information, the following agenda item is therefore confidential

It was agreed to ask the public to leave the meeting.

28. To consider matters relating to the cemetery

28.1 To consider a resident's request to be allocated a specified plot in Hingham Cemetery (section B)

The Clerk stated that the family had been advised that due to the uncertainty of the status of the plot in question it could not be released for use. This had been resolved, as the family has agreed to an alternative plot, in section G of the cemetery.

28.2 To discuss and agree actions regarding plots within the cemetery (sections B and D)

The Clerk advised that there are (approx.) 10 plots across sections B and D where there is an element of doubt as to their status due to previous errors/omissions in record keeping. It is not known if they are subject to an Exclusive Right of Burial or reservation which was not recorded in the Council records. (The Council previously permitted plots to be "purchased" and reserved at any time. Plots are now only allocated at the time of arrangements being made for an (imminent) interment)

To protect these plots (where there is some doubt) from being allocated, the Clerk requested that these plots should not be listed as "spare" on the cemetery plan but should be blanked out as not to be used (unless by proof of existing ERB reservation), to prevent the possibility of distress to families and legal challenges to the Council regarding "plot ownership".

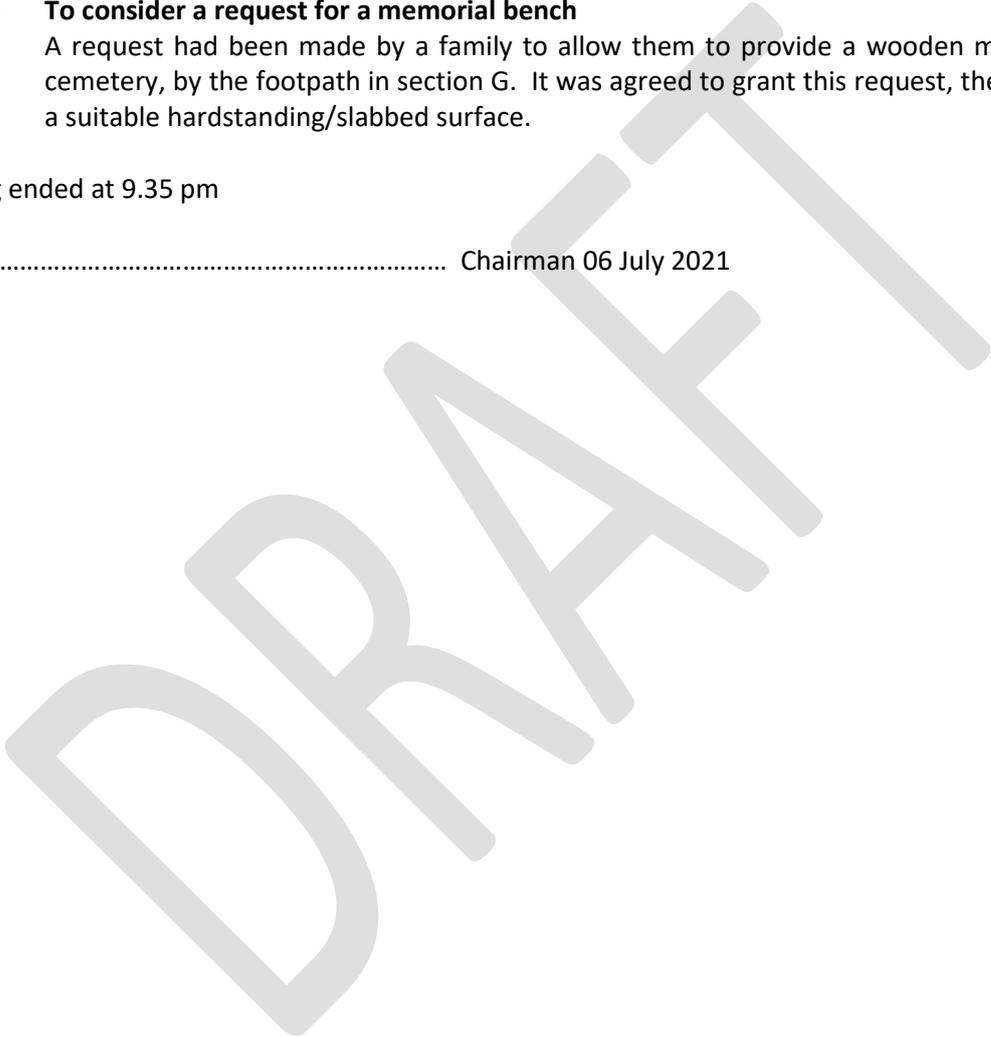
It was agreed that this course of action should be taken, and that the plots only be released from 2115 (being that the current Clerk took over the cemetery records in beginning of 2015 and as an ERB lasts 100 years, the plots could therefore become available in 2115).

28.3 To consider a request for a memorial bench

A request had been made by a family to allow them to provide a wooden memorial bench in the cemetery, by the footpath in section G. It was agreed to grant this request, the bench to be sited on a suitable hardstanding/slabbed surface.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

Signed Chairman 06 July 2021



MIN Update

- 2 Vice-Chair acceptance of Office form has been signed
- 24 Cllr Roberts has completed the Declaration of Pecuniary Interest form and this has been forwarded to South Norfolk Council
- 25 LGA revised Model Code of Conduct – endorsement by NALC awaited
- 33 Quotations for electrical checks and cleaning/redecoration of the toilets are being sought
Police update “All reasonable lines of enquiry were looked into but no suspects were identified” (case filed)

Other Updates/Outstanding Issues

- The Clerk will arrange a suitable date for the skate park maintenance visit to take place (the RoSPA inspection is due in June)
- Skatepark repairs – Joins in the tarmac to be filled
- Tree Survey – quotations for relevant work to be obtained
- Creation of a wildflower/bee friendly area in the cemetery – plan to be drawn up on how to achieve this
- Trees for planting (Fairland and Market Place permanent Christmas Trees) will be sourced in Jan 2022
- Notice boards for the toilets to be purchased
- Notice Boards - both wooden notice boards are now becoming difficult to open and lock – they become damp and condensated. The clerk advises considering the purchase of a new purpose built free standing notice board if there is a suitable location in the Market Place - a new notice board for the Fairland is also recommended
- Market Place Payphone – A payphone has been installed the kiosk door has been repaired. BT have been asked to refurbish the kiosk – however there has been no response to this
- Church Clock –Site visits will be looked into post lockdown
- Installation of cycle racks to be arranged
- Street Lighting – the contractor has been asked to undertake the renumbering of the footway lights – this is due to be undertaken soon.
- A condition report is awaited on all of the Council’s footway lighting – (priority can then be assessed depending on the condition/safety of the light columns, for obtaining quotations for changing lights to LED)
- With regards to possible solutions to replacing the Tally Alley light, the contractor suggested the use of illuminated bollards, ownership of the alleyway needs to be established.
- Communications Policy (including social media - this is being worked upon)– Cllrs are reminded not to comment on public social media pages making reference to themselves as Councillors, in a way that could give inaccurate information or be misleading or misconstrued as the Council having discussed and agreed something, when this is not the case
- Staff/Cllr communication/relationship protocol to be drafted
- Cemetery fees discretion policy – The Clerk has been working on this as an overall Cemetery Fees Policy all points relevant to the fee structure including frequency and method of fees reviews This is to be finalised and bought back to a future Town Council meeting with a review of the cemetery fees
- Extension of Cemetery Driveway and turning circle – The Clerk has spent some time in the cemetery looking at the area that would be required to extend the driveway – the area is very extensive – and the clerk is concerned about the application of such a large area of tarmac – (environmental and cost) . There may be other more appropriate solutions including a shorter tarmac extension followed by “matting” under the grass surface (and possibly a tarmac path for better pedestrian/disability access), and leaving the existing grass as a driveway over the old cemetery area - advice is needed from a funeral director with regard to vehicles used. The use of the driveway (as in frequency) for funerals is minimal – therefore the grass should not become too worn from being driven on - this requires a lot of further thought to ensure the Council have a cost effective but long term solution for the future use of the cemetery .

- 2 steel liners for the Market Place bins to be ordered – need to re measure the inside of the bin – (liners available at a reasonable price are a slightly different size to the existing ones (by mm's) - Have not yet found liners of the same size
- Commemorative Plaque for the Fairland Bus shelter – To be ordered

Report prepared 30 May 2021 does not include Matters Arising when the item is on the forthcoming meeting's agenda

Crime Figures – latest update April 2021

<https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/norfolk-constabulary/wymondham/?tab=CrimeMap>

on or near:

Lincoln Avenue - Public Order 4, anti social behaviour 4, violence and sexual offences 7, other crimes 1

Admirals Walk - criminal damage and arson 1, violence and sexual offences 2

Ringers Lane - violence and sexual offences 1

Norwich Rd - violence and sexual offences 1, Shoplifting 1

Bears Lane - criminal damage and arson 1

Stone Lane - criminal damage and arson 1

Copper Lane – criminal damage and arson 1

Baxter Rd - violence and sexual offences 3

Rectory Rd - violence and sexual offences 1, other theft 1, public order 1

The Dell - violence and sexual offences 2, anti social behaviour 1

Attleborough Rd – other theft 1