

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF HINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE LINCOLN HALL ON TUESDAY 16 MAY 2023. THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.30pm.

Present

Cllr Eldridge (opened the meeting to Chair agenda item 1)

Cllr Amey – Vicechair

Cllr Dunnett

Cllr Foord

Cllr Roberts

Cllr Thompson

Clerk – Ali Doe

There were 6 members of the public present including District Cllr Woolliscroft.

Cllr Eldridge opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. Cllr Eldridge advised that this is the first meeting of the new Town Council following the Local Council Elections held on 04 May 2023, when the 6 candidates who stood for Hingham Town Council were elected unopposed, leaving 5 vacancies to be filled by co-option.

1. To elect the Chairman.

Cllr Thompson was proposed as Chairman by Cllr Eldridge, this proposal was seconded by Cllr Amey. There were no other proposals for Chairman.

Cllr Thompson was unanimously elected as Chair

Cllr Thompson Chaired the meeting from this point.

2. To elect the Vice- Chairman.

Cllr Amey was proposed as Vice-Chair by Cllr Eldridge, this proposal was seconded by Cllr Dunnett. There were no other proposals for Vice-Chair.

Cllr Amey was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair.

3. Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms:

3.1 All Councillors to sign and deliver their Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms

3.2 The newly elected Chairman to sign the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office form

3.3 The newly elected Vice - Chairman to sign the Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

3.4 To agree Councillors not present may sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office form outside of the meeting in the presence of the Clerk (Proper Officer).

All Cllrs signed their Acceptance of Office forms at the meeting, the additional Acceptance of Office form for Chairman was signed by Cllr Thompson and the additional Acceptance of Office form for Vice-Chair was signed by Cllr Amey. The Clerk counter signed all forms.

4. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr Margaret Dewsbury.

5. Public participation session, (members of the public may make a statement or ask a question of not more than three minutes duration)

The public are invited to give their views and questions to the Town Council on items on the agenda or raise issues including those for the consideration of inclusion at future meetings.

No Items were raised.
6. Declarations of interests with regard to items on the agenda and to consider requests for dispensations

There were no declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda.
7. 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 4) Apologies for absence and /or (agenda item 6) Declarations of interests

Cllr Thompson confirmed he would preside over all agenda items.
8. To consider any applications for Co-option onto the Town Council (5 vacancies)

(Individuals Co-opted will take office at the next Town Council meeting)

Five residents were present at the meeting who were applying to be co-opted onto the Town Council. Each resident spoke in turn to confirm they were eligible to be a Cllr and to outline why they wanted to be co-opted to serve on the Town Council.

Louise Sta Ana had previously served as a Town Councillor, and assists the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group by setting up and administering the Hingham Neighbourhood Plan website.

Co-option was proposed by Cllr Eldridge and seconded by Cllr Roberts

Debbie Hardy is keen to help the community and is involved in the Hingham Community Cupboard project.

Co-option was proposed by Cllr Amey and seconded by Cllr Eldridge

Charlie Overton had previously been a Town Councillor and is keen to help to try to do something to resolve issues affecting the community.

Co-option was proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Amey.

Dawny Christien had previously been a Town Councillor and is keen to try to help the community, and challenge the higher authorities to try to bring benefit to Hingham, Dawny was previously involved in the Youth Café and has a keen interest in the provision of services for young people.

Co-option was proposed by Cllr Amey and seconded by Cllr Roberts.

Andy Barnard is passionate about helping the community and is Pastor at Hingham Christian Fellowship Church.

Co-option proposed by Cllr Amey and seconded by Cllr Roberts.

All applications for co-option were voted on in turn and all 5 residents were unanimously voted on to the Town Council.

The Chairman and the Clerk thanked all for coming forward to be co-opted, the Clerk advised that those co-opted would take office at the next Town Council meeting and would be receiving an agenda to summon them to attend that meeting.
9. To agree the accuracy of the Minutes of the Town Council meeting of 02 May 2023

A copy of the minutes were forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting, they were agreed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

10. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Town Council meeting 02 May 2023 (and other updates contained in a written Clerks report circulated prior to the meeting – See Appendix A)

A written report was forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting. No additional points were raised.

11. General Correspondence (information/circulars etc)

11.1 Norfolk County Council - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (STRO9089) affecting the B1108 Norwich Road from its junction with U78073 Seamere Road for 1700m westwards in the TOWN OF HINGHAM to facilitate Norfolk County Council stud removal and prep works.

The road will be temporarily closed (except for access) between: 19:00 and 06:00 from 25th to 27th May 2023; 09:00 and 16:00 from 31st May to 6th June 2023 and 19:00 and 23:00 on 15th June 2023 for the duration of the works.

Concern was raised that there was also a road closure in Wicklewood and it was unclear as to if the road closures would affect the bus routes.

12. Correspondence (not for public inspection) as addressed directly to Hingham Town Council (from residents etc. and may contain personal information)

12.1 Thanks from the Hingham Community Cupboard for the Kings Coronation grant

12.2 Resident - Substance Misuse, query regarding information available

It was noted that the resident had been in contact with Attleborough High School and that the schools would be giving appropriate advise to students and information to parents. It was also noted that information on drug dealing within Hingham should be reported directly to the police.

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

The Clerk to send a suitable response the resident/author of correspondence of item 12.2

14. District Councillor's report

District Cllr Wooliscroft introduced himself as the new District Cllr elected on 04 May 2023, and advised that he was looking forward to working with the Town Council. Cllr Wooliscroft advised that his available time during the daytime was limited due to other (work/family) commitments.

Cllr Wooliscroft advised that he would like to be brought up to date on the current issues in Hingham such as Moon Court and suggested a meeting to chat through the issues.

15. County Councillor's report

County Cllr Dewsbury was not present at the meeting.

16. Planning Decisions

16.1 2023/0427 - Proposed drop kerb to front to make access for new driveway
17 Norwich Road Hingham Norfolk NR9 4LS - Approval with conditions

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

None.

18. Information regarding other planning applications where the Town Council is not a consultee, (for information only)

None.

19. To confirm receipt of the “Registration of Pecuniary and Other Interests” forms - which must be completed, signed and returned to South Norfolk Council by 01 June 2023

All Cllrs confirmed that they had received the Registration of Pecuniary and Other Interests form, The Clerk confirmed that most had been completed and returned to her.

20. To consider the need for any Working Parties (and agree membership)

The Clerk advised that the environmental and climate change working party expired with the end of the last Town Council term.

The Clerk advised that the working party had never met, and working parties should only exist if they are being utilised. The Clerk made a recommendation that the requirement for this working party could be re considered at a later date following the conclusion of the Neighbourhood Plan project, when there was more time available.

This was agreed. It was also agreed that no further working parties were required at this time.

21. To review the requirement for a Finance Committee (and agree membership)

It was agreed that the Finance Committee works well and should be retained. Membership to the committee was agreed as Cllr Amey, Cllr Dunnett, Cllr Eldridge, Cllr Roberts, Cllr Thompson.

22. To review Town Council membership to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

It was confirmed that the current Cllr membership to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is Cllr Amey, Cllr Roberts and Cllr Thompson, who all confirmed that they were happy to continue on the steering group. This was agreed.

23. To review Standing Orders for Working Parties

It was noted that there were no working parties, however the Standing Orders for working parties were reviewed to ensure they were current and in place should the Council require any working parties over the next year. It was agreed that no changes were needed to the Standing Orders for working parties.

24. To review Terms of Reference for Working Parties/Committees

The Terms of Reference for the Environmental and Climate change working party were reviewed (in case of being required over the next year), it was agreed that no changes were required.

25. To review Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee

The Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee were reviewed and it was agreed that no amendments were required.

26. To review the system of internal control

The Clerk advised that the current system of internal control consists of:

- Finance Committee undertake a financial check at every meeting (meet 3 times a year) – this is minuted and minutes are circulated to the whole council
- Invoices are forwarded to all Cllrs prior to each Town Council meeting, all payments are listed and referenced on minutes

- 2 signatories to enable payments – no one person can make a payment, access the bank accounts or make changes to the accounts.
- Financial regulations reviewed annually
- Membership of NALC to ensure updates on legislation changes
- Internal audit undertaken annually
- Clerk reports on receipt of precept
- Clerk undertakes monthly reconciliation of current account

It was agreed that these measures are sufficient and work well and no further measures are required for internal controls.

27. To review the scheme of delegation and to review the matters of delegation to the Finance Committee (delegation as below)

It was agreed that the scheme of delegation should remain in place as written below, and that the matters delegated to the Finance Committee should remain as those matters as referred to in the Finance Committee Terms of Reference and as referred to in Financial Regulations

The delegations were printed on the published agenda (as below).

“In the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the Town Council within a reasonable time in order to be able to discuss and agree Council business deemed to be essential or of an emergency nature, the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council where such decisions cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory /given deadlines, or to ensure public safety. This will be carried out where possible in consultation with all Council Members by electronic means or telephone. The Clerk will further consult with the Chairman for guidance where necessary. This delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved for decision only by the Council, as defined in legislation.

If business is conducted under this scheme of delegation, a written record will be kept of the consultation with Councillors.

All business concluded under this scheme of delegation will be ratified by the Council at their next convened meeting, and such ratification will be detailed in the minutes of that meeting.

This delegated authority will be reviewed annually and may be ceased by a decision of the Council at a convened meeting when the scheme of delegation is considered no longer necessary”.

“Delegation to Finance Committee – matters as referred to in the Finance Committee Terms of Reference and as referred to in Financial Regulations”.

28. Review of Town Council representation on external bodies and arrangements for reporting back

The following representatives on external bodies were agreed.

Hingham Playing Field Association – Cllr Roberts

HPFA/Sports and social club events committee (if still in existence) – Cllr Roberts (Cllr Roberts advised that there was an intention to have a wider community group to co-ordinate events within the community, and it was likely that would take over from the existing group).

Hingham Charity – Cllr Dunnett

Hingham Education Trust – Cllr Dunnett and Cllr Eldridge

Lincoln Social Centre - Deb Hardy

Others - It was suggested that a representative of the Town Council should sit on the History Centre Committee, the Clerk suggested that the Town Archivist (Penny Overton) was already on this committee and would be best placed to be able to report back to the Town Council. The Clerk will discuss this with Penny.

It was agreed to keep attendance at the Police forum meetings and the South Norfolk Town and Parish forum meetings ad-hoc as to who was able to attend each individual meeting.

29. To review the appointment of a tree warden

Cllr Thompson confirmed he was happy to continue to be the tree warden, this was agreed.

30. To note the time and place of meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council (to include the date of the next Annual Town Meeting)

The Clerk had prepared a list of meeting dates, based on the scheduled Town Council meetings being held on the first Tuesday of the month (with no meeting in August), Finance Committee meetings being held on the third Tuesday of March, July and November, the Annual Town Meeting on the third Tuesday of April. It was noted that when ever possible the meetings will take place in the Lincoln Hall and will commence at 7.30pm.

It was noted that an additional meeting was required (as previously agreed) to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan prior to it going out for public consultations). It was now anticipated that this meeting would have to be held on 13 June 2023, the Lincoln Hall is not available on this date therefore the Copper Lane Church would be approached as a venue.

The dates for meetings were agreed as below:

Scheduled Town Council meetings:

06 June 2023

13 June 2023 (to consider the Draft Neighbourhood Plan) date may be subject to change - Lincoln Hall not available

04 July 2023

(August no scheduled meeting)

05 September 2023

03 October 2023

07 November 2023

05 December 2023

02 January 2024

06 February 2024

05 March 2024

02 April 2024

07 May 2024 (Annual Town Council meeting)

Finance Committee proposed dates (these may be subject to change depending on member availability) – 18 July 2023, 21 November 2023, 19 March 2024

Annual Town Meeting, proposed date 16 April 2024 (may be subject to change)

31. To note the proposed date for the next meeting of the Finance Committee (suggested date, 18 July 2023)

Noted.

32. To consider grant application (if received in time), from Hingham Guides

The Clerk confirmed that a grant application had not been received

33. To agree and approve the accounts for payment (as below and any other invoices received)

The Accounts for payment were approved as below and the cheques were signed.

REF	PAYEE	DETAILS		AMOUNT		VAT
426	EUROFFICE	OFFICE SUNDRIES/TOILET ROLL		£174.90	VAT	£29.14
427	ANGLIAN WATER	FAIRLAND STANDPIPE		£16.46		
428	N POWER	STREET LIGHTING (FINAL BILL)		£23.90	VAT	£3.98
			TOTAL FOR ALL PAYMENTS (TO DATE)	£215.26		
			TOTAL VAT	£33.12		

Appendix A - Clerks report for 16 May 2023

Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Council Meeting of 02 May 2023

- MIN 18: Norfolk ALC to be contacted regarding suitable wording for the Accessibility Statement, with regard to how the template works.
- MIN 19: An officer from NCC has contacted the Clerk to request the correspondence regarding the raised bank to be sent to him. However, a standard NCC response has been received advising no further action and the issue will be monitored. The Clerk advised that this response is not acceptable.
- MIN 20: The Lighting contractor has been advised to undertake the replacement of lighting columns (3 columns in churchyard and 1 on Lincoln Avenue
- MIN 21: Street Light maintenance contract request to be sent
- MIN 23: Archives to be catalogued (ongoing) and enquires made regarding digitisation
- MIN 29: South Norfolk Council advised that the Precept has been paid (to be formally noted at next Town Council meeting)

Other Updates/Outstanding Issues

- Bus shelter renovations, letter of thanks to be sent to the contractor, Cllr Eldridge has contacted the son of the bus shelter's architect, he is happy to be involved in a "re-dedication" of the bus shelter.
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission have been invited to install signage at the cemetery
- Internal audit completed (will be on agenda for June)
- The Clerk has asked Norfolk County Council if a grit bin for The Hops will be supported, no response.
- Paperwork for the new bank account is complete, certified copy of Standing Orders and Financial Regs required.
- A suitable place for a new Town Council notice board to be established.
- Tree works almost complete, work to trees in the churchyard overhanging Church Street still to be undertaken, traffic management required.
- Skatepark resurfacing and repairs start date awaited when the field is drier.
- Laptop to be purchased.
- The resident who has proposed to plant an Oak tree on the Market Place green has agreed to source an alternative species and will be in touch in due course.
- SNC and lifeways are now in correspondence regarding the Moon Court facility, following the November Town Council meeting, the Clerk has contacted both parties who advise conversations are ongoing, but no agreement has been reached. No further update.
- Letter to the Chief Constable and the Police Crime Commissioner regarding parking drafted photographs need to be added prior to sending.
- Quotations seeking letter being for improving/upgrading the footway lighting on Norwich Road and Watton Road sent. The Clerk has spoken with one contractor regarding the project.
- Market Place Bus Shelter renovations, work is now complete. Invoices has been paid and Parish Partnership funding to be claimed back from Norfolk County Council.
- Fairland Oak Tree stumps, advice has been sought regarding hollowing the stumps out, a suggestion has been made that a stump grinder will be required (cost approximately £500-600 per stump).
- Feasibility study for Fairland Cross roads and various parking, road and pedestrian safety issues in the Market Place and Fairland, NCC stated that "hopefully" there will be a draft issued in the new year. No further updates from the team undertaking the work.
- Applications for Assets of Community Value to be finalised, plans and ownership details are required.
- Notice boards for the toilets to be purchased.

- Street Lighting, the contractor has been asked to undertake the renumbering of the footway lights which has been started. 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 policy 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.
- The Clerk has been working on an overall Cemetery Fees Policy containing all points relevant to the fee structure including frequency and method of fees reviews. This is to be finalised and brought back to a future Town Council meeting with a review of the cemetery fees and cemetery terms and conditions.
- 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 (liners available at a reasonable price are a slightly different size to the existing ones (by mm's) liners of the same size have not yet been found.
- Commemorative Plaque for the Fairland Bus shelter, to be ordered

Report prepared 15 May 2023 does not include Matters Arising when the item is on the forthcoming meeting's agenda

Crime Figures – no further updates since last report

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