

Present: Councillors;
Peter Dutton (Chair), Rosemary Lewis, Keith Greenberg, Sandra Leverett, David Thomas,
Maureen Took, David Wollweber (Vice Chair).

In Attendance: Nick Rees (Clerk), 7 members of the public.

MINUTES

- Apologies:** Cllrs: A Fleming, K Forster, P Widdowson, District & County Cllr T Goldson. The Council considered the long term absence of Cllr Forster. It was noted that Cllr Forster had attended a Finance meeting in September and technically the 6 month approval of absence would not be necessary until March 2018. However, Cllr Forster had written to the Clerk to inform him that he intended to return to full time Council attendance by the end of March. It was then RESOLVED to support the extended absence of Cllr Forster until he was able attend a Council meeting in March 2018.
- Declarations of interest:** Non-pecuniary interests; Cllr S Leverett for item 4, 14c & 18, Cllr D Thomas for 14c, 15, 17 & 18, Cllr R Lewis for 14c & 18, Cllr K Greenberg for 18, Cllr M Took for 14c, 15 & 18, Cllr D Wollweber for 14c, Cllr P Dutton for 10. Clerk confirmed all Cllrs resident in Halesworth had dispensation for item 14c.
- Councillor Vacancies:** The Clerk confirmed that the date of the By-Election for the first vacant Councillor position would be held on the 1st March 2018 (assuming it was contested). There had been no indication from WDC that an election had been called for the second vacancy and if this was not received by January 16th the Council could co-opt. Cllr Thomas asked what was the cost of the By-Election, the Clerk confirmed that the cost to Halesworth Town Council would be just over £6,000.
- Minutes:** Cllr Thomas, referring to item 9a where Cllr Greenberg had stated 'He also thought that having five nominations on the existing HPFA board has already had an unwanted and undesirable impact, blurring the boundaries between the HPFA and the Council and even creating conflicts of interest' was incorrect and offensive and Cllr Thomas demanded evidence of this statement or it should be withdrawn. Cllr Greenberg would consider this but he did not agree with Cllr Thomas' view of the statement. The minutes of the monthly meeting of the Council held on the 4th December, 2017 was then accepted as a true record.
- Matters Arising:** Matters arising from the minutes.

Cllr Took asked for an update on when and where the teen shelter would be relocated. Cllr Wollweber reported that another meeting with the youth, Police and interested parties was being held next Thursday. A group of young people had conducted a survey and would bring their suggestions for alternative sites for the Teen shelter. The Chair reminded the Council that any suggested site would need to have the approval of the Police, the Town Council, the youths and residents, particularly any residents that might be affected.

Cllr Leverett reported on the recent meeting between the HPFA and the Town Council which was designed to clarify the formation of the new CIO. Cllr Leverett then proposed 'to nominate the current named HPFA trustees already appointed by Halesworth Town Council

on block to the new CIO, Halesworth Community Sport and Leisure to ensure continuity within the framework of the Charity Commission'. This was seconded by Cllr Thomas. Cllr Wollweber accepted the reason for the proposal in terms of demonstrating continuity but felt that there was a wider issue with regard to the number of trustees and representatives that the Council appoints to organisations in the town. Cllr Leverett's understanding was that it was the organisations who determined the number of trustees/representatives and not the Council and some may be determined by their constitutions. Cllr Greenberg, who attended the meeting, said that Mr Ballantine had explained that the CIO wouldn't come into operation until the transfer of ownership of the land was completed. So, he couldn't see the need to appoint trustees prior to a review of all the Council appointed trustees and representatives had taken place. Cllr Thomas answered this by stating that the new CIO was up and running, registered with the Charities Commission and was in operation, he had also written to the Clerk outlining the position quite clearly and found it difficult that anyone could fail to understand it. Cllr Thomas provided a further historical account of the relationship between the former Halesworth Urban District Council and the HPFA. Up to this point Cllr Thomas had used some provocative statements to underline his argument and the Chair requested that he refrained from using any further gratuitous insults during this debate. Cllr Lewis asked whether the proposal meant that the trustees remained on the new CIO for five years, as stated in the new CIO's constitution. Cllr Leverett stated that this was not part of her proposal. Cllr Thomas moved that the vote be taken without further discussion. The Council then considered Cllr's Proposal, with two in favour, 3 against and 2 abstentions, the motion was not carried.

6. **Chair's Report:** The Chair attended the Bungay High School prize giving evening on the 14th December and along with Cllr Lewis attended (as observers) the first Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting on the 20th December.
7. **Police Report:** Mr Macfarlane gave a monthly report on Police related matters which included updates on the Teen Shelter and news and advice on events, forged notes, antisocial behaviour and theft.
8. **Public Session:** [15 minutes on agenda items]: A member of the public asked for clarification on the format for members of the public to ask questions. The Chair explained that he had tried a different approach at the last meeting but this had not proven to be successful and the Council would revert to the normal 15 minute session. The same member of the public asked how WDC justified the cost of the free parking. The Clerk explained that WDC based the cost on the loss of revenue and that WDC provided the supporting data. A member of the public was perturbed that Cllr Forster had not attended many Council meetings since being co-opted and was the Council aware that he would be abroad for such a long period. The Chair explained that Cllr Forster received a sudden offer abroad after being co-opted but he intended to retire upon his return and would then be attending Council meetings full time from March onwards.
9. **Reports on meetings and events attended by Council representatives:** To receive any reports on meetings or events attended by Councillors. Cllr Took reported on the Community Christmas Day event at the Rifle Hall which provided 88 people with a free Christmas Lunch, a gift and entertainment. Cllr Took wished to thank all those who had organised the event and Cllr Goldson for providing the facilities. Cllr Greenberg was impressed but also surprised that this event had not been mentioned at a previous meeting. It was noted that the Council had not received any notice of the event but it was pleased that it had been successful.
10. **Council appointed Trustees and reps on outside bodies:** To consider a review of all the current Council appointed trustees and reps on outside bodies. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Lewis and Wollweber conduct a review of the Council's relationship with the outside bodies with which it currently has members nominated and the criteria to help decide those organisations with which the Council should develop a relationship and the criteria to decide the level of this involvement.

11. **District & County Reports:** Cllr Goldson was not present but had provided a written report for the Council. Cllr Thomas asked the Clerk to thank Cllr Goldson for his report but requested that it was made more relevant to Halesworth. The Chair asked the Clerk to request that Cllr Goldson provides the Council with prior notice when any planning applications relevant to Halesworth are to be considered by WDC's Planning Committee, of which Cllr Goldson is a member.
12. **Communications Committee:**
- a) The Council received the report on the Communications Committee meeting held on the 11th December, 2017
 - b) To consider the proposals for a HTC Facebook account. Cllr Wollweber said that the Communication Committee had appreciated the importance of Facebook as another means of communicating with residents. Cllr Wollweber and the Assistant Clerk had conducted a lengthy investigation in to the best means of providing an appropriate way of administering a Facebook Page. Taking into consideration that the Council did not have the necessary resources to make it a fully interactive page, Cllr Wollweber proposed and it was RESOLVED, that HTC creates a Facebook page on a three monthly trial basis for information only, which would not be interactive, with comments turned off and with signposting about how to contact the Council. Posts would be made by the Clerks or through the Communications Committee. The Communications Committee would produce a Facebook Policy at the next meeting. The Chair thanked Cllr Wollweber and the assistant Clerk Phillippa Welby for their work in progressing this project.
13. **Town Development Committee:** The Council received and noted the report on the Town Development Committee meeting held on the 11th December, 2017. Cllr Thomas informed the Council that he and up to three other volunteers were due to meet with Ben Carter of SCC for a training session on the flood prevention project on the 16th January at 9.30am at the Council offices, Cllr Thomas extended an invitation to anyone else who might be interested.
14. **Financial Matters:**
- a) The Council received and noted the report on the meeting held on the 18th December, 2017
 - b) The Council received and noted the budget recommendation of the Finance Committee.
 - c) To agree and set the Precept for 2018-2019: Cllr Lewis (Chair of the Finance Committee) explained that the initial recommendation from the Finance Committee was for a Precept of £103,000, this was a 3% increase in line with inflation. However since then an election had been called by ten Halesworth residents and the estimated cost of the election was just over £6,000. Although the Council had election reserves of £8,774 the reserves would need to be replaced as this event may re-occur at any time. The Council was also facing increased costs for the free parking and maintenance associated with the future transfer of assets from WDC. With this mind Cllr Lewis proposed that the Precept be raised to £110,000. The Clerk confirmed that for a band D house this would represent a £5.46 annual increase in the Council Tax. It was then RESOLVED that the precept be raised to £110,000 for the year April 2018 – March 2019.
15. **Free Parking:** To consider the Council's contribution to the free parking. The Clerk reported that pledges for the parking were still coming in, currently it was just over £5,000, but there had not been any progress on HTC's ideas put forward to WDC about reducing the overall bill for the free parking and it was still currently £23,000. The Chair expressed disappointment that there had not been any progress so far as there had been a very positive meeting with WDC officers in November and the impression was that WDC would be willing to reduce the bill in some way. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Goldson to see if he could exert some influence.

16. **Forum Meeting:** It was confirmed that originally the Forum meeting was scheduled for the 25th January, 2018 however this now clashed with the Urban Improvement Working Groups' presentation at the Library. It was noted that there was not a specific subject for the Forum meeting at this time and so it was agreed to defer the date until February or until the Communications Committee could meet and review a suitable date to hold the meeting.
17. **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:** The Council received and noted the minutes of the first meeting held on the 20th December 2017. Cllr Greenberg reported on a successful first meeting. Jo McCallum, Communities Officer for WDC also attended the meeting and stated that she had been very impressed with the number of volunteers and the range of skills on offer. The next meeting would be held on the 17th January and it was hoped that the key positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary would be resolved.
18. **London Rd Building:** To receive any update on HTC's proposals for the transfer of the building and to consider the proposal made at the Town Development Committee meeting on the 11th December, 2017. Cllr Leverett made a new proposal and it was RESOLVED that the following proposals would be sent to WDC.
1. WDC to transfer the London Road building including the park & toilets to HTC
 2. WDC will pay for legal costs involved with a transfer up to £1,200
 3. Subject to Toilets being inspected and report submitted to HTC
 4. WDC to agree to a 3 years maintenance programme (from the date of completion of the transfer) on each facility involved with the transfer.
 5. The overage clause to permit HTC to sell the building provided the proceeds are to facilitate projects of community benefit. All subject to legal advice.
19. **Correspondence:** The Clerk reported that a member of Halesworth in Bloom had reported that the lighting in the Memorial Garden was not working properly and suggested that the lighting needed improvement. It was RESOLVED that Council authorised the Clerk to take the necessary action to repair and improve the lighting in the Memorial Garden.
20. **Accounts for Payment:** The following accounts were approved for payment.

4056.	Waveney Norse –Quarterly Market Clean (Food Act 1984 s 50)	174.99 + vat
4057.	The Little Copy Shop – Maps Localism Act 2011, sch.9	24.00
4058.	Viking – Stationary supplies (LGA1972 s111)	33.00
4059.	Asset Education (Edgar Sewter School) replacement for cheque (103995) for hire of Hall. Approved at the Finance meeting on 18 th December 2017	156.00

DD/Standing Orders:

4060.	EDF Energy – Market Place No 1 Electricity (Food Act 1984 s 50)	18.00
4061.	Salaries - (LGA1972 s112)	2216.24
4062.	Barclays Bank – Bank Charges (LGA1972 s111)	16.44

Bank & Cash Balances at 3rd January, 2018

Current 728	£115,896.03
Community A/c	£5,271.00
Business Reserves 017	£92,258.78
Petty Cash	£77.91

The meeting was closed at 8.40pm

