

MEETING OF SPROWSTON TOWN COUNCILLORS – 6 JULY 2022

At the meeting of the Sprowston Town Council held at the Council Chamber, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston on Wednesday 6 July 2022, the following Councillors were present: -

Mr W F Couzens – Chairman
Mr A J Barton - Mr J H Mallen
Mr M G Callam - Mrs L Leggett
Mr R J Knowles - Mr G S Tingle
Mr J M Ward

In attendance
Mr G Ranaweera - Town Clerk and Responsible
Financial Officer
Mrs E Elliot - Committee Officer
PC G Gill - Norfolk Constabulary

One members of the public was present

22/181. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests were received.

22/182. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies for absence were received and accepted by the Council from Mrs B J Lashley, Mr J F Fisher, Mr N Shaw and Mrs K Vincent and verbal apologies for absence from Ms D Coleman and Ms C T Rumsby.

22/183. TO RECEIVE THE POLICE LIAISON OFFICERS REPORT

PC Graham Gill reported on escalating anti-social behaviour at Sprowston Recreation Ground and Sprowston in general with gangs travelling from Mile Cross, Heartsease and Norwich. Extra patrols had been implemented and gangs were being dispersed.

There had been an incidence of arson in the gent's toilets at Sprowston Recreation Ground earlier in the day and criminal damage on Barkers Lane a few weeks previous. Problems appear to be starting from midday onwards.

Incidences of anti-social behaviour were expected to increase during the school holidays. Additional officers including plain clothes response officers, when not on call elsewhere, will also patrol.

There is concern that inter-gang fights will breakout.

In answer to Councillors' questions PC Gill responded:

(1) the age profile of gang members is 13 to late teens.

(2) an increase in abandoned Beryl bikes and scooters has been noticed.

22/183. TO RECEIVE THE POLICE LIAISON OFFICERS REPORT (CONTINUED)

- (3) he was not aware of any recreational parks where individuals have been banned.

22/184. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

As there were no residents' questions the Chairman moved to the next item of business.

22/185. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 15 June 2022, having previously been circulated to all Councillors were confirmed and signed by the Chairman of the Council.

22/186. ACTION FROM MINUTES

- (1) Further to Minute 22/163 Mr W F Couzens advised water machines at Sprowston Diamond Centre would be re-introduced. However, a vending machine dispensing snacks and drinks would only be considered if there was sufficient demand.
- (2) Further to Minute 22/168 (2) Mr W F Couzens commented no decision had been made regarding the application for Old Catton Deer Park to be registered as an asset of community value.
- (3) Further to Minute 22/170, the Town Clerk advised he would arrange a meeting to discuss the proposed draft plans for St. Mary and St. Margarets Church now Reverend Canon Simon Stokes had returned from annual leave.
- (4) Further to Minute 22/167, the Town Clerk read an email from Councillor Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Infrastructure advising that Norfolk County Council's Cabinet had approved all the recommendations presented to them on the priority Norwich Western Link project.

22/186. CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) Asset of Community Value - Blue Boar Public House

Council noted Blue Boar Public House had been approved by Broadland District Council as an asset of community value and would be added to the Community Asset register.

- (2) Healthwatch Newsletter - June 2022

Council noted the Healthwatch Norfolk Newsletter - 10 June 2022.

- (3) Norwich Western Link Project update - 2022-06-24

Council noted the Norwich Western Link project update sent 24 June 2022.

- (4) OTN Update Responses to the East Anglian Green (EAG) consultation

Council noted the OTN update responses to the East Anglia Green (EAG) consultation.

22/187. CORRESPONDENCE (CONTINUED)

(5) Platinum Jubilee - email from Pageantmaster and Certificate.

Council was pleased to receive a certificate for participating in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons and Associated Activities. It will be displayed in the Council offices.

22/188. NORWICH WESTERN LINK

Councillors considered the motion tabled by Mr J M Ward for Council to assert its support for the construction of the Norwich Western Link and recognise that this vital new section of dual carriageway will bring the following benefits: -

- Significantly reduce many journey times;
- Lead to a reduction in carbon emissions from vehicles;
- Boost Norfolk's economy and support businesses;
- Improve road safety;
- Take traffic off unsuitable local roads;
- Create new habitats and improve existing ones.

Most importantly, this new road will improve quality of life for people whose lives are blighted by the congestion caused by vehicles taking short cuts on unsuitable country lanes and residential streets.

A number of concerns were raised including:

- A recent survey suggesting 52% of residents were against the link road;
- Bat bridges do not work;
- Given the expense is the link road really needed;
- There is a significant budget increase however, the Government is paying 85% of the cost;
- The county is in so much debt the cost of the link road is not value for money.

Mr J M Ward proposed, seconded by Mrs J Leggett to support the motion and on being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

22/189. BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL - NEW STREET CLEANSING SERVICE

Mrs J Leggett explained:

- (1) South Norfolk District Council carried out some grounds maintenance on behalf of Broadland District Council.
- (2) Changes to the street cleansing contract would require Veolia to clean streets when needed rather than rotational.
- (3) Street cleaning by Veolia will follow verge cutting by Norfolk County Council shortly.

Council felt questions 1 and 3 were subjective and some roads were listed as both high and low intensity, which was confusing.

**22/189. BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL - NEW STREET CLEANSING SERVICE
(CONTINUED)**

Mrs J Leggett advised there were definitions of standards which she would bring to a future meeting of the Council she would also clarify the duplicate intensity listings of some roadways.

Responding to a question from Mr W F Couzens, Mr J M Ward said he had queried weed spraying with Norfolk County Council's Highway Engineer. Spraying had commenced across Norfolk and will be carried out again later in the year however, they do not clear dead weeds. These are cleared by the District Council when they sweep the roads.

It was noted drains would need cleaning before winter.

Mr A J Barton asked if the parish champions groups were in place to which the Town Clerk advised he had not received any information. Mr J M Ward suggested nominating Mr A J Barton as the Town Council's champion.

22/190. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ON SPROWSTON RECREATION GROUND

Council considered the Town Clerk's report with regard to anti-social behaviour on Sprowston Recreation Ground and possible measures to tackle it.

(1) Provision of body cams to caretaking contractors

It was noted that anti-social behaviour intensified during school holidays.

The Town Clerk had discussed provision of body cams with Heritage, Council's caretaking contractors. Their staff were undecided.

Incidents on the Recreation Ground included large groups of youths, graffiti, harassment and arson. Caretakers do not interpose between rival groups or approach them and in these cases a body cam would be pointless. However, it could be useful in circumstances such as harassment and graffiti involving lower numbers of people.

Additional CCTV was discussed and whilst there is no electricity supply at the Edwards Road car park it was thought this could be overcome by technology.

Council questioned what was driving the wearing of body cams. The police have the facility to issue anti-social behaviour orders and parental contracts and the onus should not be placed on the Town Council or their contractors.

(2) Use of bylaw allowing banning of individuals from the recreation ground

The practicalities of banning visitors from the park was questioned. It would be difficult for contractor caretakers to remove a visitor and prevent their return.

It was noted point 11 of the Byelaws applying to Sprowston Recreation Ground gives the police authority to remove persons from the recreation ground. They are empowered, have the training and backup.

22/190. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ON SPROWSTON RECREATION GROUND (CONTINUED)

- (3) Between 23 May 2022 and 24 July 2022 Sprowston Recreation Ground closes at 9.30pm. Consider bringing forward the closing time to 9.00pm

RESOLVED:

- (1) Town Clerk to obtain more details and costings on bodycams and CCTV.
- (2) Work with the Police to issue anti-social behaviour orders and parental orders.
- (3) To close the park at 9.00pm between 23 May 2022 and 24 July 2022.

22/191. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A written report was received from Mr J M Ward.

Mr Ward also verbally reported

- (1) I received a complaint about cars parking on the triangle of land by Fatso's at the junction of Falcon Road East and Salhouse Road as they are obstructing the view of drivers at this junction. I spoke to our Beat Officer PC Graham Gill who will put some letters, re obstruction on their windscreens. I have also emailed our Highways Engineer to consider a longer-term solution, possibly planting shrubs or putting in posts.

Richard replied to say he already has this on his list as the cars are damaging the tree roots. He hopes to get bollards installed shortly.

- (2) Some of the results of the Census carried out on 21 March 2021 have now been published. The population of Norfolk on that day was 916,200, an increase of 58,300 on 2011.
- (3) Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme returns for the six-weeks summer school holidays. Children of 5 - 16 can sign up for many activities. Details at www.norfolk.gov.uk/bignorfolkholidayfun.
- (4) There are currently 3 Governor Vacancies at Cecil Gowing Infant School. Two for parent Governors and one for a co-opted Governor.

Mr W F Couzens verbally reported he had recently attended training for Chairing meetings and First Aid.

22/192. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ALLOTMENTS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

1.1 Viking Centre

Council noted that a redesign of the storage and kitchen area off the rear hall might be necessary if the width for vehicle access to the telecoms tower was insufficient.

22/192. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)

Further to his written report the Town Clerk drew Council's attention to an incident which occurred in the men's public toilet at Sprowston Recreation Ground. The toilet roll holder had been removed from the wall, placed on the floor and the toilet roll set alight in the holder. He would review the damage in the morning when the smoke and smell had cleared. Two bins had also been set alight on two separate occasions.

He had asked staff to be extra vigilant.

CEMETERY

2.1 No matters were reported

STREET LIGHTING

3.1 No matters were reported

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

4.1 Audit

It was noted that Auditing Solutions could no longer provide its services to Council, due to retirement of staff.

Responding to a question from Mr J H Mallen the Town Clerk confirmed he was looking for a replacement company offering the best package.

4.2 Finance and Administration Officer Vacancy

Council noted temporary personnel was covering the now vacant post of Finance and Administration Officer.

4.1 Groundsperson Vacancy

The Town Clerk confirmed no applications had been received for the position of fixed term groundsperson. He had arranged to cover the post during the summer months with temporary staff.

Mr J H Mallen suggested sixth form colleague students looking for experience.

Mrs J Leggett asked if he had considered an apprenticeship.

Having discussed the post with the Head Groundsman it was felt the team was too small to cope with additional training.

In response to a question from Mr W F Couzens, Mr G T Tingle, as the Council's Armed Forces Champion, agreed to ascertain if there was a channel to advertise the posts of Groundsman and Finance officer in the armed forces community.

22/192. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

5.1 No matters were reported

22/193. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mr W F Couzens, seconded by Mrs J Leggett it was **RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting for a short break.

The meeting was reconvened.

22/194. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Notes of the Recreational Facilities meeting held on 21 June 2022 were previously circulated.

Mrs J Leggett reported the main focus of the Recreational Facilities Working Group (RFGW) was the summer fete.

She also advised the Town Clerk was trying to get developers of White House farm to attend the council meeting to be held 3 August 2022.

The next meeting of the RFGW would be held on 12 July 2022.

22/195. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

No written or verbal reports were received.

22/196. PLANNING

The Town Clerk reported that observations had been requested by the District Council's Head of Planning on applications received since the last meeting.

Having considered each application and the accompanying plans the Council

RESOLVED

(a) to raise no objection to the following applications:

20220935 - single storey side and rear extension at 74, Cannerby Lane, Sprowston.

20220937 - single storey rear extension at 125, Wroxham Road, Sprowston.

20220995 - proposed single storey rear extension at 39, Creance Road, Sprowston.

22/197. PLANNING DECISIONS

Council noted planning decisions for week ending 10 June 2022, 17 June 2022 and 24 June 2022.

22/198. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS 6 JULY 2022

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule and supplementary schedule of accounts to 6 July 2022 totalling £18,444.56 and £3,584.54.

In response to Councillors' questions the Town Clerk explained:

Invoice No. 5389 - Altus Safety was an annual test of the safety wire systems to enable contractors to work securely on Sprowston Diamond Centre roof.

Invoice J86018 - travel to site, inspect and repair deck height hydraulic lift was to release and adjust the height of a jammed cutting deck.

Invoice 415240 - Ben Burgess Grounds Care Equipment was the purchase and fitting of a new tyre for the verge cutter.

Pest Express Ltd - call out on 05.05.22 was rodent control following reports of rats seen in the playground of Chestnut Nursery. There have been no further reports of rodents in the area.

On the motion of Mr M G Callam, seconded by Mr Robin Knowles it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the accounts and supplementary accounts to 6 July 2022 totalling £18,444.56 and £3,584.54 be approved and the schedule authorising payment signed by Mrs J Leggett and Mr J W Couzens.

22/199. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Mr W F Couzens proposed, seconded by Mr M G Callam to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the remaining business because otherwise information prejudicial to the public interests which is exempt by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act) 1960 Section 1 (2) would be disclosed to them.

22/200. STAFFING

The Town Clerk updated Council on the situation with regard to the now vacant post of Finance and Administration Officer, currently covered by temporary personnel.

There being no other necessary business the Chairman of the Council thanked Councillors for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 9.07pm.

3 August 2022

Chairman