

DEREHAM TOWN COUNCIL

12th February 2013

At a meeting of the **Full Council** held on **Tuesday 12th February 2013** in the Assembly Rooms at **7.30pm**.

Present: Councillors L Monument (Chair), T Birt, A Bowyer, P Duigan, L Goreham, R Goreham, S Green, R Hambidge, K Millbank, T Monument and H Rogers.

Also in attendance: Town Clerk Tony Needham, Deputy Town Clerk Jillian Barron, District Councillor W Richmond, Mr R Richmond and Mr G Bambridge.

125. **To consider apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Fanthorpe.

126. **Declaration of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

The meeting was adjourned for public speaking.

Councillor Duigan advised Councillors that the Norfolk Trail would now run from Gresenhall to Lenwade and hoping for a little sput out to Dereham. Councillor Duigan also said that the recycling centre in Dereham was working very well and that there may be amendments to the signage.

District Councillor William Richmond told Councillors that he had attended the last Community Action Group meeting on the 30th January and that the priority area for the police would be Toftwood due to a number of burgularys that had taken place recently. The next Community Action Group meeting will be held on the 27th March.

Councillor Birt said that he had noted that Breckland Councillors new homes bonus was showing as revenue rather than capital and wondered why?

The meeting resumed.

127. **To receive announcements.**

Councillor L Monument advised Councillors that a Finance Meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 5th March 2013 and that the planning application for the Marston's/MacDonald's development at Yaxham Road was received today and will be discussed at the planning meeting on Tuesday 26th February. It is a large application and if Councillors wished to view it prior to the meeting then they should visit the council office.

128. **To receive, confirm as correct and sign the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 12th January.**

Proposed by Councillor L Monument, seconded by Councillor T Birt, the minutes were agreed and signed subject to the following amendments in the recommendations in minute 120 <i>'That £10,000 from the buildings repair budget, the following would be priority for this year'</i>

129. **Finance**

(a) To receive, confirm as correct and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15th January 2013

Proposed by Councillor T Birt, seconded by Councillor R Hambidge the minutes were agreed and signed subject to the following amendments in minute 5 paragraph 1 the word 'took' to be replaced by 'taken', minute 6 paragraph 1 the word 'looking' to be replaced by 'looked', minute 8 the last paragraph the word 'budget' be added after 2013/14 and in the recommendations on page 5 '£27,608' to be replaced by '£47,608'.

(b) To receive a report from the Chairman, discuss any matters arising therefrom and vote on recommendations.

Councillor R Goreham raised his concerns regarding the 66% increase of the council tax as many people were facing difficult times and asked if the finance committee had looked into increasing the rent for the allotments.

Councillor P Duigan said that Councillor R Goreham was correct and that the council must look at the charges they pay and felt that the council were being over cautious with some of the risks being considered.

Councillor T Birt explained that the relevant committees would be looking at charges over the next year and that even if there were to be a large increase in charges it wouldn't make a significant difference to the shortfall being created by the government's policy

The following recommendations were put to the vote, agreed and approved by the Council without amendments:

- i. That Allotment fees, tennis court fees and market tolls be reviewed in the next 12 months to ensure that they are fair to both users and council tax payers in general and any fees should include an element of admin costs in the same way as was carried out with burial fees.
- ii. That, through the appropriate committees, the Council looks at reducing expenditure on new Street Furniture and Civic Expenses.
- iii. £50,000 over 10 years not be allocated towards the maintenance of the market place because there was no indication from the County Council that they were intending to pass on the maintenance costs to the Town Council it would therefore be unreasonable to include this cost.
- iv. The cost allocated for highways improvements be reduced to £10,000 over 10 years as £50,000 over 10 years was an inappropriate level of front loading considering the extent of risk.
- v. That the grants budget not be increased, but establish a clearer set of policies around grant giving so as to better target the resources.
- vi. That additional funding for youth projects be put on hold but ensure

that youth projects are properly catered for when setting grant giving policies.

vii. **Increasing building/capital maintenance budget from £10,000/year to £47,608 per year.**

- *The reason for the recommendation was that the committee had reviewed likely building repairs in future years and concluded that with a value of £11 million it was reasonable to maintain an annual maintenance budget of £47,608.*

viii. **Allocating £25,000 per year towards obtaining additional open space in the Toftwood area.**

- *The reason for the recommendation was that the deficit in open space in Toftwood has been well recognised for some time. It was felt that the Town Council had worked hard to increase the provision of open space in the north of Dereham around the Neatherd and needed to make provision for more open space in Toftwood. The Council may not be in a position to increase council tax in future years to deliver this aspiration.*

ix. **Allocating £40,000 per year towards the annual running costs of the play areas.**

- *The reason for this recommendation is that the council must have the necessary resources in place to manage these areas safely, if the council is prevented from increasing council tax in future years it could put public safety at risk.*

x. **Allocating £45,000 per year towards the cost of other services passed down from other authorities, including the possible cost of an additional member of staff.**

- *The reason for this recommendation is that if responsibilities are passed onto the Council, the council must have the necessary resources in place to manage these safely, if the council is prevented from increasing council tax in future years it could put public safety at risk.*

xi. **Increase the budget for legal fees to £17,500**

- *The reason for this recommendation is that the council must have the necessary resources in place to manage its affairs in the proper way, if the council is prevented from increasing council tax in future years it could put the council at risk.*

xii. **Establish a contingency for legal fees of £5,000 per year.**

- *The reason for this recommendation is that the council must have the necessary resources in place to manage its affairs in the proper way, if the council is prevented from increasing council tax in future years it could put the council at risk for larger claims.*

xiii. **To use the interim grant which will offset the changes in council tax support in 2013/14 to increase contingency reserves by £63,313 to £343,313.**

- *The reason for this recommendation is that the council must have sufficient reserves in place deal with any unforeseen costs. This increase will bring the reserves up to just over half the precept and is reasonable because of the additional risks facing the council.*

130. **Markets & Buildings**

(a) To receive, confirm as correct and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22nd January 2013

Proposed by Councillor L Monument, seconded by Councillor T Birt, the minutes were agreed and signed subject to the following amendment 'Roger' being amended to 'Rogers'.

(b) To receive a report from the Chairman, discuss any matters arising therefrom and vote on recommendations.

The following recommendations were approved by the Council without amendments:

- i. That the running of the coffee shop/bar be formally advertised, and all persons showing an interest to be given a briefing on what the Town Council would require from them. Interviews would take place and a recommendation would be put forward to the March Full Council meeting.
- ii. That the following essential items be purchased:
 - Additional signage – fire evacuation £950.00
 - Additional locks and door closures - £200.00
 - Power mop - £650.00
 - Changes to the alarm system to separate shop and hall - £100.00
 - Connecting inverters to generate electricity - £2500.00
- iii. That the following non-essential items be purchased:
 - Dado rail in main hall
 - Cupboards for kitchen and shelf for serving hatch
 - Speakers for meeting room

131. **Social & Welfare**

(a) To receive, confirm as correct and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22nd January 2013

Proposed by Councillor L Monument, seconded by Councillor T Birt, the minutes were agreed and signed subject to the following amendment 'Roger' being amended to 'Rogers'.

(b) To receive a report from the Chairman, discuss any matters arising therefrom and vote on recommendations.

The following recommendations were approved by the Council without amendments:

- i. That the Council only decorate the Christmas tree in the market place and light the Assembly Rooms.
- ii. That the Town Council write to businesses advising them that if they would like lights on their buildings in the market place then they would have to contribute the actual cost. The Christmas lights switch on event would still take place but be renamed as the 'Tree Lighting Ceremony'.

132. **Personnel**

(a) To receive, confirm as correct and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 29th January 2013

Proposed by Councillor R Goreham, seconded by Councillor T Birt, the minutes were agreed and signed.

(b) To receive a report from the Chairman, discuss any matters arising therefrom and vote on recommendations.

The following recommendations were approved by the Council without amendments:

- i. That the current structure continues with the aim of continuing to reduce input from the Clerk on day to day matters and review it again later in the year.
- ii. That a permanent member of outside staff be recruited to start as soon as possible.
- iii. That the following amendments be made to the previous job description and contract to include:
 - Annualised hours 40 hours per week summer and 34 hours per week winter.
 - To be available to work at least two weekends per month (to help cover Memorial Hall).
 - Operating an occasional split shift
- vi. That a full-time temporary person be recruited to work until September to cover the summer grounds maintenance work.

133. **To receive and adopt the minutes of the Planning Meetings Tuesday 8th January and 22nd January 2013.**

Proposed by Councillor L Monument, seconded by Councillor A Bowyer, the minutes of the plans meetings of the 8th January and 22nd January were agreed and signed subject to 'Councillor L Goreham' being added to the apologies for absence for the 8th January meeting.

134. **To receive and adopt the list of accounts paid, the Financial Statement and list of accounts to be paid.**

Proposed by Councillor L Monument, seconded by Councillor T Birt, the list of accounts paid, the Financial Statement and list of accounts to be paid were agreed and signed.

135. **To agree wording for Surface Water Drainage Scheme ('The Scheme') at Etling View.**

This item was deferred the March Full Council meeting as the relevant information had not arrived.

136. **To consider delegating authority to sign and seal Deeds of Covenant relating to the sale of properties at Etling View.**

This item was deferred the March Full Council meeting as the relevant information had not arrived.

137. **Update on transfer of play areas and open spaces from Breckland Council.**

The Town Clerk advised Councillors that this was still under negotiation as Breckland Council had made changes their original offer.

138. **Update on repair of track at Neatherd Moor.**

The Clerk advised Councillors that he was waiting to hear from Breckland Councils legal department.

139. **To appoint a Town Council representative for Meeting Point.**

Councillor Bowyer explain that explained to the Council that while she was happy to continue as a representative for meeting point she was finding it extremely difficult to attend their all of meetings. Councillors asked Councillor Bowyer to continue as representative until May when a new representative could be elected to which she agreed.

140. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

Proposed by Councillor L Monument, seconded by Councillor R Hambidge, it was agreed to pass a resolution to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting on the grounds that the Business to be transacted is confidential and publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

141. **Update on 'Planning Blight' claim.**

The Town Clerk updated Councillors on the current position regarding the 'Planning Blight' and Councillors confirmed that they wished the Town Clerk to continue pursuing the recovery of costs.

Chairman