



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AYLSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN AYLSHAM TOWN HALL, ON WEDNESDAY 5th MARCH 2025 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Kay Montandon (Chair) Cheryl Bould (Vice Chair)
Trevor Bennett Mary Evans
David Anderson Joan Bennett
Gordon Clarke Kevin Cunnane
Catherine Fletcher Patrick Prekopp

Phil Chapman – Locum Town Clerk

District Councillor Sue Catchpole

8 Members of the public

1. TRIBUTE TO ANNETTE OVERTON.

The Town Council acknowledges with sadness the passing of Councillor Annette Overton. A few words were shared in recognition of her dedication and service to Aylsham.

Trevor Bennett:

“I first met Annette at my first Town Council meeting nearly ten years ago. Even then she seemed a very experienced and capable councillor. When I became chairman over four years ago I found I relied on Annette for two significant aspects of Council work. She always sat to my right and would frequently check that I was keeping to the appropriate legal framework of any aspect of Town Council work. Secondly, perhaps the most important role of a Councillor is the care of the public funds that we operate with. Annette would always be totally reliable to make sure the use of our precept was used sensibly to improve the service that we could provide for the Aylsham residents. I would always ask Annette have you found any issues with the set of accounts that the Town Clerk would provide every month before turning to the rest of the Councillors. The fact that our reserves are in a very stable position and our expenditure is used for the benefit of the people of our town, is in many respects down to Annette.

Annette was a member of different Council committees and her experience was invaluable with her deep knowledge of the history of the Town and the feelings and opinions of many of the residents. She was always prepared to have conflicting views to the Chairman, which

was at times challenging but would help the Council to come to the best solutions to be found through compromise.

The people of Aylsham have been well served by Annette for many years and not just the Council, but all the residents of Aylsham will miss her understanding of the needs of our community.”

Mary Evans:

“Annette was a big part of the town council, knew the history going back many years, she really was a person of Aylsham, and very kind towards other councillors.”

Kevin Cunnane:

“Annette was a great help when I started as a councillor, and was always very encouraging.”

2. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES.

Apologies were noted from David Curtis.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS.

None.

4. MINUTES.

It was **resolved** to accept the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 5th February 2025.

5. MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS.

None.

6. REPORTS.

Cllr Sue Catchpole from Broadland District Council (BDC) reported that the BDC element of the council tax has been frozen and won't be going up this year. There may still be increases from other parts of the bill. Broadland District Council is working hard to deal with homelessness and is proud of its record.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

None.

8. NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

a. Norwich Road site:

Some members of the council had a productive meeting with the developer. The new managing agent for the homes would be Watsons.

b. Burgh Road site:

No fresh news. Although approved at committee the official written approval from the planning department had not yet been issued. A member of the public had sent a letter to the Town Council raising some technical questions. It was resolved that the clerk should raise these with Anglia Water and with the Developer on behalf of the member of the public.

9. TO DISCUSS CIL PROJECTS.

It was **resolved** to add to the projects a *Disability Access Audit* for the council.

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW.

A meeting had been held in late February to start to look at the way forward with the review. This would start by members of the steering group reviewing the plan and to report back. This should ideally be done by the end of March. It was **resolved** to seek expressions of interest from 3 consultants recommended by Broadland District Council. Trevor Bennett expressed concern at the fact that the last consultant had not yet returned documents which the council and Trevor had produced and which he felt might be useful for the review. Sue Catchpole volunteered to contact the consultant involved.

11. DEVOLUTION.

It was **agreed** that there would be a response submitted on behalf of the town council. The deadline is 16/3/25, so councillors were asked to email points to the clerk to be collated into a single unified response.

12. WASTE MANAGEMENT.

The Clerk raised the subject of upcoming new legislation (*The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2025*), commonly known as the Simpler Recycling reforms. Having assessed compliance he had identified that the council does not have to comply until 2027, but he hoped that the council would lead by example and would choose to comply sooner. There were two elements to compliance – within the town hall/drill hall and around the town in general. The first would need only modest changes. The biggest issue was the 22-23 waste bins around the town that are emptied by the council staff, and which are not currently recycled. It was **resolved** to undertake a 2 stage process which started with an officer led project plan being produced and submitted to the town council for consideration. This should include but not be limited to problems and costs of both elements. The second stage should look at funding and Cllr Sue Catchpole from BDC volunteered to investigate and get back to the council. It will also be added to the CIL project list.

13. HIGHWAYS MATTERS.

None

14. TRANSPORT.

- a. Transport Hub. This would need a power supply and therefore would need a design to establish requirements at an early stage. It was **resolved** to seek expressions of interest for a design but would first need a scope to be created. Gordon Clarke volunteered to create this.
- b. Gordon Clarke presented options for improvements to safety and access for the junction of Penfold Street/Cawston Road/Holman Road. It was **resolved** to pursue Gordon's *Scheme 2* which does not require moving the pump. Gordon would consult with both Highways and the Fire Service as this is adjacent to the Fire Station.

- c. Traffic lights at the town end of Burgh Road. In previous discussions, highways had been very positive about the proposal to install traffic light at the single file narrow zone on Burgh Road. It was **resolved** to support this proposal. It should be discussed in more detail with Highways; to scope out the plans and this should also be added to the ongoing CIL list.
- d. Gordon Clarke and Andy Bell presented a proposal for improvements to the Mileham Drive, Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) which is a massive facility with very little parking. It is in need of resurfacing in any event and as part of consideration for improvements Andy and Gordon have created a concept which will increase usability and hopefully encourage walking. Andy suggested the clearance would be mitigated by replanting in more appropriate areas, and therefore it was likely there would be a net habitat gain. The council **resolved** to support this project and Gordon and Andy would refine and develop it further.
- e. Station Yard at Weavers' Way was discussed to see if there could be an increase car parking for the use of Weavers Way. There is a current ACE project underway at this location, and although Station Yard is the responsibility of the Town Council Norfolk Trails would have to be contacted. The chair would discuss with ACE and Norfolk trails and report back.

15. TRAFFIC SPEED MONITORING MEASURES.

- a. SAM2. The Council has one device which is moved regularly. The budget has allocated funds for staff training on how to interpret the data collected by this unit. There are currently 7 approved locations for the position of the sign: *Norwich Road* – either side of Tesco, *Blickling Road* – near St Michael's, *Hungate Street* – outside Bure Valley, *Millgate* – at the bottom of Gas House Hill, *Cromer Road* – near the church steps, *Burgh Road* – between the Recreation Ground and Oakfield Road, and *Henry Page Road* – near Mileham Drive entrance. New locations will be added to the list. Data collected from one session is attached below and shows on Burgh Road (leaving town - 30mph) the top recorded speed was 55mph, and 6048 of the 23,560 vehicle counts were **over** the speed limit.
- b. Aylsham Community Speed Watch. The initial meeting had been held and the required 6 people had volunteered. This is a community group and not a town council group, but the town council is very supportive of the project.
- c. It was **resolved** to provide support to the Aylsham CSW group in the form of: the storage of equipment, a dedicated space on the website for information and data, the free of charge supply of meeting rooms when needed, and the destruction of sensitive data using the councils sensitive waste bin.

16. FINANCE.

- a. It was **resolved to approve** and accept the financial summary from the previous meeting on 5/2/25. The variance previously noted was explained by the RFO as a matching but unbudgeted receipt and payment relating to withdrawal of funds from a savings account.

- b. The Council **resolved to approve** and accept the reconciliation up to 27/2/25. It was **resolved** to approve the financial summary to 27/2/25.

17. TOWN CLERKS REPORT.

- a. The council noted the new health and safety policy which had recently been implemented and which applied to both officers and members alike, and which should also be followed by volunteers.
- b. Gavin had been in contact with a training supplier, and was discussing a multi-course training arrangement to be delivered primarily to officers, but with some training be available and recommended for members too.
- c. The Clerk delivered a short verbal report:
 - i. TSB had just made contact about potential bookings to provide so called pop-up banking services.
 - ii. The annual asbestos survey had recently been updated, and fed into the updated health and safety policy. All contractors and tenants are required to obtain approval for all work in council properties and to sign the asbestos register.
 - iii. The new temporary RFO had taken over and would visit the office next week.
 - iv. Sue Lake had left post that day. The council wished to record their gratitude for Sue having returned several times to assist despite having retired last summer, and wished her well in her retirement.
 - v. The clerk noted that he had become aware that Steven Newstead had been with the council for a remarkable 40 years, and everyone noted what a wonderful job he does. The council wishes to thanks him for his service.

18. TREES

The Tree Policy had been updated by groundsman Andy Bell. Councillors were happy and **resolved** to adopt the policy subject to minor amendments.

19. STAFFING COMMITTEE.

- a. It was **resolved** to accept the minutes of the staffing committee meeting of 24/2/25.
- b. It was confirmed that the council required the status of committee to deal with staffing matters.
- c. It was confirmed that the current members of the committee are: Cheryl Bould, Kay Montandon, Trevor Bennett, David Anderson, David Curtis, and Mary Evans.
- d. It was **resolved** to accept the Terms of Reference.
- e. Draft job descriptions for 2 new positions deemed necessary by the staffing committee on recommendation from the Locum Clerk had been distributed in advance. It was decided to leave the finalising and advertising of these positions to the incoming permanent clerk. Catherine Fletcher raised the question of budget and the chair confirmed that the positions are not currently in the budget. Since the locum RFO had just left, and the new short-

term locum RFO would not be expected to deal with this, it was also left to the new incoming Clerk/RFO to resolve the budgeting issue, to finalise the job descriptions and recruit the new staff members.

20. CHURCHYARD.

- a. Planning application [2024/0791](#). Cllr Gordon Clerk mentioned some new techniques which might be applied to the wall. It was agreed that he would research further and get back to the council.
- b. Planning application [2024/0461](#). The Clerk had clarified with the Council regarding the “clearance” of the deposited materials. This is now with the planning department awaiting an update.
- c. No meeting was scheduled.

21. RECREATION GROUND.

- a. The minutes of the recreation ground committee were **approved**.
- b. Cheryl Bould updated the council on the potential change of status of the Rec Committee. It was **resolved** to obtain quotes from specialist lawyers on the implications for the Town Council given that the land was left to the town in the original conveyance. It was accepted that the advice needed is specialist barrister level and the clerk would look into this.
- c. It was **resolved** to obtain expressions of interest in designing a new accessible wheeled park for the rec.
- d. Cheryl Bould spoke about the Junior Smile Project and the closedown report regarding the funding which had been obtained. The report had been distributed previously in the papers. There had been lots of positive feedback about the project. The council thanked Cheryl for all the hard work on quite a large project.
- e. The boiler at the Rec has failed is unserviceable and needs replacing. Quotes had been obtained with the highest being £3222. It was **resolved** to allow up to £3222 from the reserves held by the town Council for use on the Rec to be used to purchase the new boiler. The Rec committee would decide which contractor and organise the work.
- f. The locum RFO Sue Lake had previously distributed a breakdown of payments made from accounts in relation to the Junior Smile Project. This statement was **accepted** by the council.

22. ACE.

- a. The minutes of the meeting of 3/2/25 were accepted by the council.

23. CITTASLOW.

The minute of the meeting of 29/1/25 were accepted.

24. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

This committee has not met for some time, and membership is unclear. Membership rules were believed to exclude bank signatories and current scrutiny member reducing the potential councillors who could sit on this committee

significantly. The purpose of the committee is an additional governance check. This will be left for the incoming permanent Clerk, and it will need additional councillors to volunteer and be appointed.

25. EVENTS COMMITTEE.

The minutes of the events committee of 19/2/25 were accepted. Events are published on the website and booking fast.

26. COUNCILLOR SURGERY.

The dates for the Councillors surgery where members of the public can consult or raise issues directly with a councillor are listed on the website, Friday 14 March 9am-10am, Wednesday 2 April 6:30pm-7pm, Friday 18 April 9am-10am, and Wednesday 5 May 6:30pm-7pm.

27. FUTURE AGENDAS.

- a. Patrick Prekopp asked if councillors would consider holding the Town council meeting in the drill hall in the future. Trevor Bennett was not in favour, citing space limitations, and Joan Bennett was also not in favour stating that in the past the noise from the main Hall users had been quite loud and very distracting. This would be considered further.
- b. Climate Strategy to be added to the next agenda.
- c. VE Day to be added to next agenda.

28. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the date of the next Meeting is *Wednesday 2nd April 2025*.

Joan Bennett announced that after 5 years on the council she would sadly have to stand down, although she would remain on the events committee. The Town Council thanked Joan for her work and passed a formal vote of thanks.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:56.

Minutes Agreed.....