

**SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2010 at 6.45p.m. in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Swaffham.

Present: Mayor Cllr D. Harman

Councillors: - Mrs C Baker, Mr P. Darby, Mr C Gunner, Mrs T Jennison, Mrs S Lister, Mrs S. Matthews, Mr F. Sharpe, Mrs J. Skinner, Mrs P. Wade.

Town Clerk: - Mr R. Bishop

Assistant Town Clerk: - Mrs M Meyrick

Police: - Inspector Porter

Public: - 6

**1612. APOLOGIES & REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

1612.1 Cllr Wickerson – work commitments.

1612.2 Keith Fuller from Breckland Council – will be present at the February meeting, he could not make the re-arranged January date.

1612.3 Cllr Sherwood – hospital appointment.

1612.4 Cllr Butters – still in hospital.

**1613. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1613.1. Cllr Jennison declared a personal interest on item 1620.5 as she is a neighbour of the allotment site in question.

1613.2. Cllr Matthews declared an interest on any item relating to the Museum.

1613.3. Cllr Gunnars declared an interest on any item relating to the Museum.

1613.4. Cllr Sharpe declared a prejudicial interest on item 1626.1.

The meeting was adjourned for the public session at 6.47p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 6.51p.m.

**1614. REPORTS: police, principal authority etc**

1614.1. A report was given from Inspector Porter on police matters for the past month. Year on year comparisons are made on the new style of policing. Response Officers are at fewer bases, Swaffham is not one of these bases but there are police here to respond if required. The comparison crime figures shown the same pattern to that of 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31 dec 2007 for Swaffham and Watton. 8% increase in crime from 2006. 1<sup>st</sup> April 08 10% reduction 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 08 reduction in crime – 1<sup>st</sup> April 09 – 31<sup>st</sup> dec 09 reduction of 14%.

Inspector Porter stated that 'The White Hart' had been re-opened but it will never be allowed to return to how it was before. In general the crime reductions are due to long term problem solving – Merryweather Road – can only improve working in partnership with the Town Council, the youth and the residents

Inspector Porter's team and 20 other officers conducted a drugs raid which led to 3 arrests. It is down to getting the right information to deal with the problem, there will be zero tolerance.

Spinners Lane Parking Issue – We have responded to that and yellow lines have been put down. Letters have been sent out in regard to the poultry market that includes people with blue badges as it is causing an obstruction. We are also working with DEFRA on other issues relating to the poultry market.

There has been an 8% reduction in anti-social behaviour. Offenders have the threat of demotion of their tenancies if they do not comply. The message is that if the police cannot get you criminally there will be another way of getting you.

**Questions from Councillors: -**

How can we police our public lavatories?

***This is difficult, we cannot put cameras in there – if you know what time of day that it is happening maybe we can do something about it - we need information to deal with it.***

There have been a couple of occasions where there has been excrement graffiti on the walls which costs a fortune to clean up. Are you prepared to criminalise it as we are not able to claim on the Council's insurance?

***We will record it as a crime so you are able to claim on your insurance.***

1614.2. COUNTY COUNCILLOR report from Cllr Ann Steward.

Cllr Ann Steward was not in attendance.

**1614.3. BRECKLAND COUNCILLOR**

There will be free first aid training courses sponsored by Breckland on the 9<sup>th</sup> February at West Norfolk Mind offices in Swaffham. This is for voluntary and community organisations and will be a 4 hour course specialising in emergencies. If anyone is interested, contact Cat Lang at Breckland to book.

Last week the leaders of several Norfolk Districts went to the House of Commons to meet the Government Minister and the Shadow Minister to explain their primary concerns before the imposition of unitary status. Their concerns were the lack of effective consultation and the failure of the Boundary Committee to adequately address the question of affordability. The Shadow spokesman gave the leaders an undertaking that should the government seek to impose a Unitary Structure, should a new government be elected, that government would rescind the implementation orders and introduce such primary legislation as required to reinstate the status quo.

In the judgement of an Appeal Judge, he agreed the Boundary Committee needed to explain the financial side of the draft proposals to the public in an understandable way; they had lost sight of that. Breckland and South Norfolk Council's have received a grant of £90,000 to commence a project to look at a local home grown alternative to the Boundary Committee's proposals. They did fleetingly meet the Government Minister concerned who was very distant in his approach.

1614.4. Clean Neighbourhood Officer Keith Fuller from Breckland Council.

Keith Fuller will be present at the February Council meeting.

**1615. MAYORS' REPORT**

1615.1. Civic Events attended by the Mayor.

19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Distributing mince pies and port to the Market Stall Holders.
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Visited residents and patients in Cottage Hospital and the Nursing & Care Homes in the town.
29 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Attended performance of 'Cinderella', hosted by the Swaffham Players.

1615.2. There were no urgent reports.

**1616. MINUTES:**

1616.1. The minutes of the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009 were agreed and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

**1617. TOWN HALL:**

1617.1. Diary Dates – list of meetings 2010.

Councillors were informed of two amendments to the following meetings:-

May 24<sup>th</sup> – Market Traders meeting is on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> not the 28<sup>th</sup>.

August – Planning meeting is on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> not the 13<sup>th</sup>.

There are also one or two changes that have been made with the staff covering the meetings.

1617.2. Town Clerk Report on-going business.

Quality Council – the Council’s Quality status runs out in March and we are currently preparing the portfolio for re-accreditation on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

Quarterly meeting – Jason Glasspoole Highway on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010. Any councillors with outstanding Highway issues please let the Town Clerk know so that they can be raised at this meeting.

Agenda Pack – Councillors were asked to note that they have a couple of items on the agenda that has the word GREEN attached to them. This month and next month the Clerk will continue to do this. The Personnel Committee raised an issue during his appraisal of whether all the copies of certain things circulated within the pack are needed. The items in GREEN will not be copied to the Council after next month, instead there will be three copies put on the table for those Councillors who might be interested in the issues concerned. This will be a saving in copying costs.

**1618. PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:**

1618.1. Notification of Decisions/Information from Breckland Council:-

<b>3PL/2009/1012/F</b> Planning permission granted for the extension of an annex & change flat roof to pitched. 3a Low Road, Lynn Road. Mr. B. Cox.	<b>3PL/2009/1029/F</b> Planning permission granted for alterations & extensions to bungalow. 1 Couhe Close. Mr. S. Lee.
<b>3PL/2009/0974/F</b> Planning permission granted for double garage & lounge extension. 48 Watton Road. Mr. P. Moulton.	<b>3PL/2009/0331/F</b> Planning permission granted for retirement village comprising care home, cottages, access & parking. Stanfield House, Lynn Road. Mr. J. Ball.
<b>3PL/2009/0901/F</b> Planning permission proposed sub division of 2 plots into 3 plots for 2 no. houses and 1 bungalow. Land off Norwich Road. Mr. Ian Jessett.	<b>3PL/2009/0929/A</b> Consent to display advertisements granted for 1 x fascia sign. Unit 6 Beacon House. NFU Mutual.

1618.2. Planning applications:-

<b>a) 3PL/2009/1198/F</b> Erection of porch & rear single storey extension. 5 Queen Street. Mr. Mick Harris. <b>NO OBJECTION</b>	
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1618.3. Late applications received at the Mayor’s discretion.  
There were no late applications to consider

1618.4. Planning correspondence, or notifications of planning enforcement & TPO’s.  
There was no correspondence, notifications or TPO’s.

**1619. FINANCE:**

1619.1. The Council were circulated a list of payments for January 2010 at the meeting. A question was raised in relation to the payment for the plastic bag survey.

*The Town Clerk explained that the payment of this has come from the match funding that has been received from Breckland Council, the Town Council and Icení under the Advance Swaffham budget.*

**The payments for January were unanimously approved.**

1619.2. A request has been received from Mr. Darren Potts for a catering van permit on the area adjacent to the Buttercross in the Market Place.

The issues for the Council to consider are as follows:-\*Establishing whether the applicant would need planning consent and/or listed building consent. As the application is for 7 days a week in a conservation area.

- The applicant should be advised of the possibility he may be charged non-domestic rates by Breckland Council.
- The possible detrimental impact a mobile trader might have on businesses within the town centre.
- The Town Council should consider charging an appropriate rent if they grant permission to Mr. Potts. This should as a minimum cover the cost of wear and tear on the cobbles, as this is Town Council owned land.
- Is the proposed location adjacent to a Grade 2 listed building appropriate?
- If not is there an alternative location in the town that may be appropriate?
- There is little or no impact on the Saturday Market.

This issue was discussed in detail, it was ascertained there was concern with the impact this would have to other traders in the town if permitted but also applaud the applicant for trying to get a business off the ground. Cllr Darby proposed and Cllr Lister seconded not to give permission.

**It was agreed with 5 votes for, 1 against and 3 abstentions not to give a permit to allow Mr Potts to have a catering van on the cobbles adjacent to the Buttercross.**

1619.3. Swaffham in Bloom – A late request was received to pay the entrance fee of £66 to enter the 'Anglia in Bloom' Competition. The Clerk reported that there is a budget for this and the Council agreed in principle to enter this competition, but no previous expenditure costs have been mentioned this is why it has been brought before the Council.

**It was agreed for the Council to pay the £66 entrance fee cost for Swaffham to be entered into the Anglia in Bloom Competition.**

It was requested for Cllr Gunner to keep the Council updated via the Open Spaces Committee on progress.

### **1620.1. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:**

1620.1.(a) A letter of thanks was received and circulated to Councillors from Watton Town Council in respect of use of Market Stalls. Watton Town Council used the Council's Farmer's Market stalls for their Christmas Market and thanked the Council for allowing them to be loaned.

1620.1.(b) Copy of Norfolk Link December 2009.

This is one of the Green items mentioned earlier in the Clerks report. Copies of the Norfolk Link in future will not be circulated to every Councillor. Three copies will be made available at the meeting.

1620.1.(c) Notification of Mr. Wye-Harris leaving the Market has been received and circulated to Councillors. Mr Wye-Harris had been in dispute for several months relating to outstanding money for the year. The outstanding money would have applied to the period January to March 2010, so affectively the account is now clear.

1620.1.(d) Notice of house to house collections conducted by the charity SCOPE has been received and circulated to Councillors. The collections will take place on the following dates: - 5<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010 and 4<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> April 2011 - Scope.

1620.1.(e) Notice of permission that has been granted for stalls outside the Methodist Rooms on 26<sup>th</sup> June and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2010 for Save the Children Fund has been circulated to Councillors.

1620.1.(f) Notice of permission that has been granted for a bric-a-brac stall outside the Methodist Church for Friends of Swaffham Junior School has been circulated to Councillors.

1620.1.(g) Late correspondence for information only.  
There was no late correspondence to be considered.

1620.2. Copies of complainants received relating to the Community Toilet Scheme have been received and circulated to Councillors. There are as follows:-

1620.2.1 Mr. P. Cooper, Suffolk

1620.2.2 Christopher Fraser MP (for two constituents)

1620.2.3 Narborough Parish Council.

1620.2.4 Sporle with Palgrave Parish Council.

1620.2.5 Dr. R.A. Rayner, North Pickenham

1520.2.6 Mr. A. Godfrey, Wellbread Bakery.

1620.2.7 Mr. M. Staines, Swaffham.

1620.2.8 Narborough with Narford PCC

1620.2.9 (Rev) Brian Eagle.

1620.2.10 Jonathan Jackson – conveyed appreciation to those councillors who, in the word of Kipling, “kept their heads when all around them were losing theirs”. He added further suggestions regarding management which may assist the Working Group.

1620.3. A complaint regarding early closing of toilets from Kings Coaches in Colchester (28<sup>th</sup> November and 12<sup>th</sup> December) was received and circulated to Councillors. The Clerk reported that, in contacting the Council's contractor Country Grounds Maintenance the Council has had the following response:-

“Thank you for the attached letter from Mr. Daynton of Kings Coaches. I have looked into the points that Mr. Daynton has raised and can now report the following:

“The toilets were locked early on the two Saturdays concerned. The reasons for this are that the member of staff attending on the days did not realize that the toilets had to remain open until 6-7pm, also we had said to our staff to lock the toilets slightly earlier to try and avoid any of the continuing vandalism that is experienced at the toilets, particularly just after they have been cleaned.”

“We will ensure that the toilets are locked at the times as per the winter closing times in future. Please do pass on our apologies to Mr. Daynton for any inconvenience caused to his company and customers.”

**It was agreed to pass on these comments to Kings Coaches and to make them aware of the outcome of the extraordinary meeting regarding public toilets last week. The latter being a small part of publicizing details of the future of the public toilets.**

1620.4. The Boundary Committee for England – Structural Reviews of Devon, Norfolk and Suffolk: Advice to the Secretary of State (deadline 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010). The Clerk responded to the latest proposals presented by the Boundary Commission prior to the deadline which was 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010. This was the agreed policy previously agreed by the Town Council as follows:-

“Swaffham Town Council strongly supports the retention of the status quo and suggests sensible collaboration where appropriate to achieve operational economies of scale throughout our diverse and very rural County. The unitary option proposed cannot achieve short term delivery benefits that are already being delivered year on year by the current two tier principal authority system. The cost saving in the short term of not having to fund the unitary change could be used at a local level to develop and enhance further joint working arrangements as

‘Best Practice’. It is therefore believed that this common sense approach would be of direct benefit to the Council Tax Payer in the longer term, making this the only viable option.”

1620.5. A request has been received and circulated to Councillors to erect an 8’ x 6’ blue shed by Mr. Craig Allen at Tumbler Hill allotments. The size is within the allotment rules and regulations, but this is referred for a decision because of the colour. The Clerk was seeking guidance on what type of blue it should be.

**It was agreed in principle to allow Mr Allen to erect a shed on his Tumbler Hill allotment subject to the Open Spaces Committee making a decision on the colour of the shed.**

1620.6. A letter was received and circulated to Councillors from the National Anti Snaring Campaign regarding Fenn Type Trap found on allotments at Shouldham Lane. It was reported that a cat was found in an illegal trap at the allotments on Shouldham Lane on 16<sup>th</sup> December. It was a FENN TYPE TRAP which it was suggested this was put there by an allotment holder but in investigating this matter it was inconclusive. In fact highly unlikely that the allotment holder concerned was aware of the trap, a possible theory was that the cat dragged the trap through from adjoining farmland. The National Anti Snaring Campaign simply wants the Council to take steps to prevent this happening in the future. Whilst it has been established that the trap is not actually illegal if used in controlled circumstances it would still be advisable to discourage use of traps in general at the allotments.

**It was agreed to circulate a letter discouraging allotment holders from using traps in the future. It was also agreed to refer this issue to the Open Spaces Committee to look into amending the allotment rules and regulations with a view to dealing specifically with this issue. The Committee should research other allotment sites to see what has been included in their rules and regulations.**

1620.7. Suggestions for improvements for Disabled Toilet facilities was received and circulated to Councillors from Mrs S. Polaine-Leonard. The receipt of this letter served as a prompt for Evergreen Builders who had not completed the installation of Hand wash and paper towel facilities which were carried out yesterday. Other issues can be considered by the Council as appropriate, dependant on cost.

**It was agreed to refer this letter to the Working Group to consider with their final deliberations prior to coming back to the Council with their preferred option.**

**1621. COMMITTEE reports: (by Chair/Lead Member or Officer)**

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>LAST meeting</b>	<b>NEXT meeting</b>	<b>Information to consider</b>
1621.1. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 09		
1621.2. OPEN SPACES & AMENITIES Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 09	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 10	
1621.3. PLANNING Committee	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug 09		
1621.4. RECREATION GROUND Committee	4 <sup>th</sup> Nov 09	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 10	

1621.5. TOWN PARTNERSHIP Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> Oct 09	16 <sup>th</sup> Dec 09	Information was circulated to the meeting in respect of proposals for new signage at various locations around the town. These were identified and approved by the Transport Group and the Town Partnership Committee. They are submitted to the Town Council for their general approval and will be discussed with Jason Glasspoole Highway Engineer on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb.  <b>It was agreed to approve the proposals for new signage at various locations around the town as put forward by the Town Partnership Committee.</b>
1621.6. PERSONNEL	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct 09		
1621.7. MARKET	21 <sup>st</sup> Sept 09	25 <sup>th</sup> Jan 10	The Italian Market will return to Swaffham on Sunday the 14 <sup>th</sup> March.
1621.8. Youth Council	23 <sup>rd</sup> Nov 09	14 <sup>th</sup> Dec 09	The Youth Council are planning another Rock Night on the 17 <sup>th</sup> July. If anyone knows of any budding musicians to contact the Deputy Clerk. They have set aside £500 from next year's budget to organise the entertainment for the Civic Twinning Event in September.
1621.9. Twinning Liaison Committee	1 <sup>st</sup> March 09		

## **1622. REPORTS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF OUTSIDE BODIES.**

### 1622.1.1. Icen Partnership (Cllrs Darby, Matthews & Lister)

At the last meeting, it was reported the bookings for the Assembly Rooms are up by a significant amount after last year's disappointing figures. The Community Centre is still in a very strong position.

### 1622.1.2. Swaffham Museum Ltd (Cllrs Matthews)

A request was received from Swaffham Museum to upgrade the lighting in the entrance hall to the Town Hall. The replacement would be with a 5 arm chandelier. The cost would be met by the Friends of the Museum. Cllr Darby proposed and Cllr Wade seconded to approve this request with conditions.

**It was agreed with 9 votes for to approve the request to upgrade the entrance hall lighting of the Town Hall with the following conditions: - All maintenance, repairs & replacement costs for the new fitting would be the responsibility of Swaffham Museum Ltd including replacement bulbs.**

The sudden resignation of the Curatorial Advisor was received by the Trustees of the Museum. The opening by Keith Skipper on February 13<sup>th</sup> of an exhibition will be taking place. Anyone whose has an interest and time available to help would be most appreciated.

### 1622.1.3. Relief in Need Charity (Cllrs Butters, Darby & Jennison + Mayor & Deputy Mayor)

No report received

### 1622.1.4. Swaffham Infant School (Cllr Skinner)

No report received

### 1622.1.5. Local Area Group LAG (Cllr Shirley Matthews)

This item will not feature on future agendas as the LAG meetings are private and the details from the meetings are not meant for general circulation. When there are issues that are of interest to the public these are publicised via a press release.

### 1622.1.5. Swaffham Town Estate (Cllrs Butters and Darby)

No report received

1622.1.6. Swaffham & District Tourism Association (Cllr Wickerson)

No report received

1622.1.7. Olive Tree Project (Cllr Skinner)

No report received

1622.1.8. Swimming Pool association (Cllr Wade) Cllr Gunner as substitute

The Directors held a meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2009 during which the draft leisure Facility Analysis by Breckland Council and Parkwood Consultancy Services was discussed (produced in May 2009). The main points of this report were summarised as follows:

*The case for a new swimming pool at Swaffham cannot be fully justified at the present time.*

*The Sport England strategy has indicated that additional pool provision in Norfolk will be required by the year 2016.*

*Active Norfolk Strategy 2008-2020 reinforces the Sport England argument and identifies Swaffham specifically as requiring additional swimming pool provision by 2016.*

*The report identifies Swaffham as a suitable venue for a pool as it sits in the centre of the area of the highest unmet demand.*

*The capital costs will be in the range of £5-7 million depending on the mix of facilities that are built.*

*It is recommended that additional revenue earning facilities are included with the swimming pool such as fitness gym, dance studio and sports halls. These additional facilities are less staff intensive and can be operated with the same management and reception staff as the swimming pool provided they are built on the same site.*

*For a number of reasons (including possible support from NCC and the Norfolk BSF programme and the fact that some additional facilities are already available there) Hamond's High School should be considered for the future location as this would be the most operationally efficient location for a future swimming pool in Swaffham.*

*The report acknowledges SPA's concern that there may be insufficient space on the Hamond's site.*

*It was noted that the analysis of the available data indicates that 3% of the users of Dereham Leisure Centre live in Swaffham.*

It was concluded at the meeting that the Directors had no viable option other than to await further progress towards the building of a public funded swimming pool. A further meeting of the Directors will be called once the report has been made public.

1622.1.9 Horticultural Society (Cllr Lister)

This is closed down and will be taken off the agenda next month.

1622.1.9. Garden Science Trust (Cllr Wade)

No report received

1622.1.10. Health Forum (Cllr Wade)

No report received

1622.1.11. Breckland CCTV Group (Town Clerk)

No report received

1622.1.12. Swaffham Community Transport (Cllr Gunner)

No report received

1622.1.13. Learning Partnership (no representative)

No report received

1622.1.14. Norfolk Association of Local Councils (Cllr Matthews)

No report received

### **1623. BRECKLAND COUNCIL.**

1623.1.a) An agenda and report for General Purposes Committee regarding Designation of Area under Police and Criminal Justice Act (Designated Public Place DPP) was circulated to Councillors. This is a copy of information held at the Town Hall for future reference in relation to the DPP. This was the report at the recent Breckland General Purposes Committee meeting

which approved the DPP concept. This is another item identified in GREEN that would not be copied for every Councillor from the March meeting onward.

1623.1.b) E-mailed correspondence with Graham Green regarding CCTV meeting in late Jan early Feb was received and circulated to Councillors. This relates to a proposed meeting between the Town Clerk, Grahame Green and the CCTV contractor.

1623.1.c) Late Breckland correspondence for information only. There was no late correspondence.

1623.2. Pride in Breckland Grant/Sponsorship – Brightening Swaffham's Gateways. This grant was applied for by former Project Officer Dave Bek towards the cost of new planters situated at the four main entrances to the Town at Brandon Road, Norwich Road, Castle Acre Road and Lynn Road. The remainder of the cost is being met out of the 'Advance Swaffham' budget. Cllr Pippa Wade will be attending a site meeting between the Town Clerk and Highway Engineer Jason Glasspoole on 3<sup>rd</sup> February as the Council have applied for the necessary site location licences.

1623.3. Notification of public notice regarding the Designated Public Place (DPP) following permission being granted on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2010. A copy of the official notice has been circulated to the Council in respect of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 – Swaffham Order to prevent the consumption of alcohol in designated public places. The Town Clerk and Inspector Ady Porter attended the General Purposes Committee meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January. The Committee approved the order subject to the statutory period which allows representations to be made which expires on 15<sup>th</sup> February. There are discussions going on at present to agree areas where signage would be appropriate.

1623.4. Street naming for Abel Homes development off Admiral Wilson Way. The street naming request comes direct from Abel Homes and for consultation from Breckland Council; a response is required by 1<sup>st</sup> February for the two names concerned: Sir Archdale Road and Sea Lord Close.

**It was agreed to approve the street naming of Sir Archdale Road and Sea Lord Close for the development on Castle Acre Road.**

1623.5. Transfer of Council owned play areas to Swaffham Town Council. This matter has been pending for some two and a half years. The intention is to conclude matters by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The Commuted Sum is £30,400 as previously agreed – non-negotiable and each party to bear their legal costs. The two areas concerned are 1. Play area and adjacent open space at Merryweather Estate; and 2. Play area and adjacent open space at The Oaklands. The Clerk recommended the Council to accept the terms offered subject to clarification of the following:-

1. The continuance of the current grass cutting contract by Serco – specific cut off date to be agreed and a copy of the contract to be supplied. Clarification of whether the contract remains with Breckland to manage on behalf of the Town Council or if direct access and management rests with the Town Council?
2. Access rights to both sites for grass cutting and in general; are these included in the transfer deeds? Are there any obligations regarding maintenance of each site access?
3. Perimeter boundaries; are these all the responsibility of the Town Council?
4. Rights of way, easements etc – are there any to be taken into account?
5. Are there any restrictive covenants placed on the land or development uplift clauses?
6. It is known that the Orford Road Play Area and Open Space are held in a 'trust' by Breckland Council. In previous discussions the intent was for Breckland to pass this land and amenity back to the town.
7. Satisfactory ROSPA inspections for the play areas.
8. The Town Clerk would have the discretion to ask any question he felt relevant in the interests of the Town Council prior to the transfer of this land and amenities. He would also

have the authority to insist on reasonable work being carried out in advance of the transfer to bring either the land or the play areas up to an adequate standard.

There followed a lengthy discussion whereby Councillors voiced their concerns relating to the play areas. Their concerns included: -

- A Rospa inspection to be carried out on all sites.
- Concerns with fencing and the boundary line of the Merryweather Road play area on the Watton Road.
- Would like a brief on the Serco Contract.
- Details of any costs involved in the maintenance of the play equipment on all sites that Breckland has had to pay.
- Cost of anti-social behaviour Breckland has incurred especially in respect of Merryweather Road.

It was noted that the Town Council do not have to take on any play area if it does not wish to. It was also noted that a meeting may be needed to with Breckland to discuss the play areas depending on the information received. £30,000 is not enough – poor deal.

**It was agreed for the Clerk to find out the information as detailed above on behalf of the Council and to set up a meeting with Breckland if the information supplied is not satisfactory.**

1623.6. Councillors were given information relating to the posters on litter bins competition.

**It was agreed to approve subject to agreeing removal of the posters within a reasonable timeframe.**

#### **1624. NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL.**

1624.1. a) E-mailed correspondences in respect of grit bins and various queries re-icy conditions was received and circulated to Councillors. The e-mails are a percentage of the various contacts made by the Town Hall staff with the responsible authority in respect of gritting.

1624.1.b) Notification of the library closing from Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> Feb to Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> Feb was received and circulated to Councillors. The library closes down for a period of 10 days to have new equipment installed and minor changes made to the internal layout. The library will also be having two self-service kiosks installed and a smaller desk to allow more room for displays.

1624.1.c) Adopted list of validation requirements for Planning Applications was received and circulated to Councillors. This list sets out the mandatory information that must be submitted with every planning application; this follows on from the mandatory Standard Application Form issued by the Government on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

1624.1.d) Details of the Customer Service Manager for the Highways Agency Area 6. The new Customer Service Manager for the Highways Agency is Janet Adkins and she is based in Bedford. The roads they are responsible for in Norfolk are the A11 and A47.

1624.1.e) Late County Council correspondence for information only.  
There was no late correspondence.

1624.2. Correspondence with Mr. D. Dixon re - removal of a barrier at Princes. The Town Clerk has responded by stating that the Town Council have not authorised any work to be carried out in relation to the barrier and are not aware of the barrier being removed or the sign which has been placed there, this is a matter for the County Council. A further letter has been received from Mr. Dixon which has been circulated for consideration. The residents require understanding whether any individual Councillor, or Swaffham Town Council as a whole, motivated the removal of the 'Private Road' indicator? The residents wish to ascertain how the removal of the barrier came about and what will be undertaken to give clear indication of the 'Private Road' status and of the restrictions applied to 'Restricted Byway', with suitable Cul-de-

sac and speed guidance. The residents refer to the recent sale of the former allotments at Shoulder of Mutton. They wish to be assured that the status of Princes Street, as a 'Private Road' is understood by all parties and there has been no assertion that Princes Street may provide access to that site as a whole. (N.B. Prior to the sale of the land a statutory declaration was signed by the Town Clerk in respect of unrestricted access enjoyed by allotment holders to and from the site from Princes Street and via Shouldham Lane. The statutory declaration simply refers to its use as allotments and not to any future use or its current status.)

**It was agreed for the Clerk to pass on the residents concerns to Jason Glasspoole from Norfolk County Council when he meets with him on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February.**

It was noted that any applications to road restrictions would have to be publicised, the residents would have an opportunity to comment if or when any applications are made.

1624.3. Proposed street lighting policy – introduction of part night lighting for 318 lights in Swaffham. The Town Council have to feedback their comments by 24<sup>th</sup> January but are still awaiting a map indicating which lights are to be switched off. The County Council generally own/manage the lighting columns on the main A roads. Following the Town Clerks meeting with the Chief Executive at Breckland Council yesterday it was established that the Scrutiny Committee are looking at street lighting at the present time.

1624.4. Notes regarding gritting of roads, road gritting programmes and grit bins (including a brief report from the Town Clerk). There are two fundamental issues relating to the County Council that the Town Council should be aware of, as these arose as the Town Hall staff tried to deal with the complaints regarding gritting.

The first is in regard to the claim being made by County that the Town Council, when asked back in April 2009, which areas of the Town they would like to have gritted they responded by saying it was just the main roads and not the outlying estates or pavements. This clearly was misinformation as no such request had been received by the Town Council, as the obvious response would be to cover the whole town including the pavements and outlying estates, but with priority given to main roads.

Secondly, is the directing of public complaints received by County Council in respect of gritting directly to the Town Clerk, suggesting that the Town Council were responsible for clearing snow and ice from a variety of locations? This included some enquiries from outlying villages, not many but another factor to mention.

The manner in which some of the complaints were made was unacceptable, but there is no doubt that both these issues weighed heavily in contributing to the confusion, frustration and anger felt by the general public. Notwithstanding this, it should also be mentioned that the majority of complainants did so in an appropriate way. It is hoped that the Town Hall staff brought a level of general understanding to a difficult situation and in many cases were able to instigate action from the County Council. The Town Clerk has raised an issue with Breckland Council in respect of gritting on car parks and in relation to our own Market and will soon be raising similar issues with the County Council. This is to establish precisely where each authority's responsibility sits with a view to trying to improve matters in the future. There could still be a bad spell of weather in what remains of this winter, but this is mainly for next year. It is recommended to refer this matter to the Open Spaces Committee for further discussion, as it should also be established from the Town Council's perspective what they can and can't do in respect of spreading grit/salt. There is some advice circulated to Councillors at the meeting which is a good start. At some point it may be sensible for the three authorities to have a discussion on how working together would achieve a better service in severe weather conditions. There may be other areas around the town where it would be possible to have grit bins installed.

**It was agreed to pass this issue to the Open Spaces Committee to look at in more detail, to create a snow clearing policy and/or emergency plan. The Clerk was instructed to contact the Council’s insurers to find any restrictions for Council staff to carry out snow clearing.**

**1625. DATES and changes of forthcoming meetings and to receive any items to include on a future AGENDA:-**

- 1625.1 Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010 **Youth Council** 6.30pm at the Town Hall.
- 1625.2 Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 **Personnel Committee** 12.30pm at the Town Hall.
- 1625.3 Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 **Relief in Need Charity** 7pm at the Town Hall.
- 1625.4 Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 – **Market Committee** – 6.30pm at the Town Hall.
- 1625.5 Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 **Open Spaces Committee** 6.30pm at the Town Hall
- 1625.6 Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 **Recreation Ground Committee** 7.30pm at the Town Hall.
- 1625.7 Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2010 - **Full Council** – 6.45pm at the Town Hall.

**1626. ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT (PUBLIC BODIES) 1960 – following the exclusion of the public and press:**

**Cllr Sharpe declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting.**

1626.1. LDF consultation feedback.  
The Clerk gave a verbal report to the Council.

**It was agreed to continue dialogue on this issue with all parties concerned.**

The meeting closed at 9.02p.m. Chairman .....

**Notes from the public session**

Princes Street restricted byway – Councillors to reply to points raised in the second letter.  
This issue was discussed later in the agenda.

Approach signs into Swaffham – in some places there are two signs, some of the lettering is eligible – replace 2 signs with 1.  
This issue was discussed later in the agenda.