



## Nantwich Town Council

### TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

#### Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2007.

**Present** - Councillor McGinnis (Chairman) Councillor Cafferty (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors, Healey, Hope, Lewis, Martin, Moran, Simpson, Stockton and Williams together with the Town Clerk.

#### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Mr Alfred Palin of 13 London Road, Nantwich, attended with his wife. He was concerned about flooding which was affecting his property. He felt the cause was inadequate highway drainage and new building. He was concerned about additional proposed development which he anticipated would make the flooding problem worse. In July 2002 and August 2007 his home had been flooded. Properties nearby had also been affected but not to the same degree. The Chairman explained that the Town Council was not able to intervene directly in these matters but Councillor Moran made it clear that he was aware of the problem and had raised it with the officers of the Highway Authority. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to United Utilities and the Highway Authority to ascertain any action being taken.

#### **45. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Councillor Farrall who was on holiday.

#### **46. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF COUNCIL OF 9<sup>th</sup> JULY 2007**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2007, incorporating the Minutes of Policy and Resources meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2007 and previously circulated, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **47. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY TO 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007**

Councillor McGinnis said that he had attended the following:-

- 10<sup>th</sup> July Prize Giving for Girl Guides, Congleton.
- 12<sup>th</sup> July Accompanied judges in town centre for Nantwich in Bloom.
- 14<sup>th</sup> July Family Fun Day.
- 17<sup>th</sup> July Cricket club – celebration of opening of new nets.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> July Performance of the Choral Society at St Mary's Church
- 1<sup>st</sup> Aug Centenary of Scouts and renewal of promise on the Town Square (7.45am.)
- 1<sup>st</sup> Aug Opening of refurbished Heart Foundation shop.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Aug Nantwich in Bloom prize giving (Civic Hall).
- 8<sup>th</sup> Aug Official opening of footbridge at Nantwich Lake.
- 18<sup>th</sup> Aug Museum Exhibition on driving safety.
- 26<sup>th</sup> Aug Judging window display "Big Battle".
- 27<sup>th</sup> Aug Attended "Big Battle".
- 31<sup>st</sup> Aug U3A Open Day (St Thomas More School).
- 9<sup>th</sup> Sept Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council Mayor's Civic Service.

#### **48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Hope declared a personal interest in one of the planning applications since Mrs Pemberton (P07/1185) was an acquaintance. Councillor Stockton declared a personal interest, as a member of the Development Control Committee of the Borough Council, in all planning applications.

#### **49. POLICE FAREWELL**

The Chairman agreed to vary the order of the Agenda because Inspector Brierley had a further engagement to attend.

Inspector Brierley said that it was April 2005 when he first attended a Town Council meeting. During the period he had been in Nantwich there had been an estimated reduction in crime of between 30 and 40%. The neighbourhood policing unit which he headed, had been consistently shown as one of the best achieving in the Cheshire area. Inspector Brierley made it clear that he put these successes down to the co-operation and partnership with a number of organisations in the town, not least the Town Council. He mentioned the work which had been undertaken in connection with licensing applications, the parking initiative, the employment of a front desk officer at the police station and the co-operation shown at Family Fun Day. He felt he had been able to lay foundations which his successor, Inspector Bob Hassall, would build on. He thanked the Council for its co-operation and support. Inspector Hassall introduced himself and explained that he had spent some time in Macclesfield as Detective Sergeant. He looked forward to his time in Nantwich and the opportunity of working closely with the Town Council.

Tributes were paid by Councillor Hope and the Chairman to Inspector Brierley. Inspector Hassall was welcomed to the town.

#### **50. INFORMATION REPORT – DAVID MARREN**

David Marren, Executive Director of Direct Services at Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council, explained the responsibilities of his department and touched on a few topics before answering questions.

He spoke about parking and said that efforts were being made to reach agreements on Borough Council Management of car parks at Nantwich Football Club and Malbank School so that additional car parking spaces would be available.

He mentioned decriminalisation of parking, which meant that Police powers were handed to the Highway Authority, who in turn would turn them over to the Borough Council. It was anticipated that this would begin on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

With regard to the caravan park, David said that the Borough Council had made a budget decision to close it. The caravan park had been non-operational for about two years before this decision was made and, during that time, very few enquiries or complaints were received.

The Borough Council felt that there was limited demand for a caravan and camping park in Nantwich. The intention for further use of the site was to respond to the shortage of allotments in Nantwich and to establish "family gardens". David introduced Charlie Griffies, the Borough Council's tree expert, who he anticipated would speak in more detail, later, about the trees on the land concerned.

David also mentioned lamp standards which had been erected by the footpath close to Shrewbridge Road and part funded by the Town Council. They were not yet illuminated, but he was hopeful that the necessary connections would be made before the end of the month.

Councillors then put a number of questions and comments:-

- Councillor Mrs Williams asked about a replacement or re-opening of the caravan site. David repeated that closure was political decision made by the Council and he was not able to reverse the decision even if it was in his power.
- Councillor Cafferty expressed great concern at the failure of consultation about matters which concern the town. He reminded David that the Town Councillors were elected to represent residents and felt that the felling of the trees at Brookfield without notice was particular example of a failure of information or even notification.
- Councillor Lewis expressed his support for Councillor Cafferty's view and pointed out that if a single unitary was to be established then this was an argument for more, rather than less, consultation. It was important that local people were kept informed of proposals such as the felling of trees close to their houses.
- Councillor Hope put forward the opinion that little was spent on tourism in Nantwich; that a caravan site was needed to attract tourists and more car parking was also needed. He felt that generally speaking, facilities for tourism in Nantwich were poor. He also asked about feedback on the fortnightly bin collection because he was aware that in some areas this had not been particularly well received.
- Councillor Healey expressed his thanks to David for venturing into what he light-heartedly called "the lions den". He asked for some clarification as to who was responsible for mowing grass verges.
- Councillor Moran raised two issues. First, when it was likely that All Saints Cemetery on Middlewich Road would be taken over by the Borough Council. Second, the need to review pedestrianisation in Nantwich.

David said that he would attempt to answer the questions but asked Charlie Griffies to first say something about the situation of the trees on Brookfield Caravan park. In brief, Charlie explained that some of the trees had been diseased and had to be taken out as a matter of safety. Others, while not immediately dangerous, were potentially unstable. Hybrid poplars grow very tall but have a shallow root system and could fracture without notice, particularly in extremes of weather.

He also explained that the trees were not compatible with the intended use of the site. These particular trees use a massive amount of water. They throw up suckers if their root system is damaged and have the potential to shed branches with little warning. He did not feel that hybrid poplars were suitable to be maintained on a site which was open to the public and likely to be used for gardens or allotments.

David Marren accepted, in regard to the caravan site, that there should have been more consultation. With regard to the trees, he felt there were good reasons for felling and reminded the Council that ultimately, he, or the Borough Council, would be responsible in the event that an accident arose. He had to take account of expert advice which was offered to him.

However, he did accept that it was appropriate to offer a better explanation and provide better communication to residents and, to that end, offered to attend with other officers at a public meeting to discuss the intended use of the site.

He dealt with other questions as follows:- Alternative weekly collection had been very successful, with very little difficulty in introducing it in this Borough. He explained that financial constraints made doorstep collection of glass extremely unlikely. Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council, were leaders in Cheshire in reclamation and recycling.

Grass verges – he said that generally speaking they tended to be County Council owned but that there was no reason why individual householders shouldn't cut the grass near or in front of their houses.

All Saints closed churchyard – David Marren was going to speak to Reverend Chantry and he expected the churchyard would be taken over by the Borough Council fairly soon.

Pedestrianisation – was a matter for the Highway Authority, but David would raise it with them.

Finally, David said that he did not feel, as had at one stage been suggested, that relations between the Town Council and the Borough Council were poor. On the contrary, he considered that, at least in the last few years, relations had improved significantly and there were several instances of co-operation between the two Authorities.

The Chairman thanked Mr Marren for his attendance and helpful responses to the issues raised.

## **51. ACCOUNTS FOR JULY 2007**

**RESOLVED** that the payments for July 2007 be approved and that the Comparison with Budget sheet for July 2007, be noted.

**52. CODE OF CONDUCT 2007**

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (a) The Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils set out in the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 no. 1159 be forthwith adopted as the Town Council's Code of Conduct under section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- (b) Paragraph 12 (2) of the Code and the 10 principles of public life contained in the annex to the Code supplied be specifically agreed and adopted.

**53. CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE.**

The Clerk reported as shown on the attached Appendix A.

**54. PLANNING CONTROL**

**RESOLVED** that the observations on the planning applications set out in Appendix B attached be transmitted to the Borough Council as planning authority.

**55. TOWN INSPECTION**

A note of the priorities arising from the Town Inspection of 17<sup>th</sup> July was attached to the Agenda. The Councillors / Clerk reported as shown on Appendix C.

**56. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

There were no reports from representatives.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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