

Minutes of a meeting of Beccles Town Council held on Tuesday 6 November 2018 in the Council Chamber of Beccles Town Hall at 7.00pm

PRESENT E Brambley-Crawshaw, Mayor, In the chair
R Stubbings, Deputy Mayor

A Downes	A Lever
J D Harris	Mrs C A Topping
J Janney	J B Walmsley

IN ATTENDANCE Penny Simmons, Beccles Quakers
Claire Boyne, Town Clerk
Joseph Young, Local Area Coordinator

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC 1

107. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Birrell, Brooks, Bubb, Catchpole, G Elliott, N Elliott, Haynes and Kathuria.

108. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR ANY REQUESTS FOR THE GRANTING OF DISPENSATIONS IN RELATION TO ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

109. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 2 OCTOBER 2018

RESOLVED To accept for accuracy and adoption the minutes of the town council meeting held on Tuesday 2 October 2018

110. REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The chair of the Beccles Community Bus Committee reported that the bus had made a loss of £1,100 over the past 12 months, but this was mitigated by a bank account balance of £1,300 at the end of October. Usage had been reasonable over the past 12 months, with the bus carrying 1200 people, the lift being used 506 times and the bus had covered 9,362 km. Expenses included the repair of accidental damage to the tail lift and a breakdown.

Q If the bus is almost 15 years old, what would be the cost to replace?
A Around £55k to £60k.

It was clarified that the town council had purchased the bus and then donated it to the Beccles Community Bus Committee to operate it.

111. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AND RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING, AND TO ALLOW COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:-

Reports Attached.

112. TO RECONVENE THE MEETING AND RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING:-

Council's Representatives on Outside Bodies

Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB)

Councillor Harris circulated the latest statistics and reported that in the last 5 month period the CAB had assisted 619 clients, with the largest age group being 60 to 64 year olds. Council tax arrears were the second largest problem dealt with in relation to debts.

Beccles Business and Tourism Association (BBTA)

Councillor Janney reported that she and Councillor Birrell had attended the last meeting of the BBTA. A presentation had been given regarding Clinks Care Farm, and matters discussed included the 2019 Food Festival, Waveney Valley Tourism, the Christmas Light Switch On (further volunteers are needed), the Christmas Tree Trail, Charter Weekend and the lack of a police presence in the town. The BBTA also considered the council's suggestion to replace the loading bay opposite Twyford's with a coach stop.

Beccles Town Football Club

Councillor Lever reported that work had begun on the 3G Football Pitch on 16 October. 90% of the soil had already been moved off site and Common Lane South had been swept. The project was due to be completed in February 2019.

Working Party Reports

There were none.

113. MINUTES AND DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2018 AND WEDNESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2018

RESOLVED To receive the minutes and draft minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on Wednesday 3 October 2018 and Wednesday 17 October 2018

114. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ASSETS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2018

RESOLVED To receive the draft minutes of the Assets & Environment Committee held on Monday 8 October 2018

115. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2018

PROPOSAL

To receive the draft minutes of the above meeting and consider the following recommendation:-

To review the draft Budget for 2019/20 to 2021/22

RESOLVED To receive the draft minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on Wednesday 10 October 2018

Councillor Stubbings, chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, reported that the draft budget had also been reviewed by the Assets & Environment Committee and that amendments from both committees had been incorporated into the budget. The clerk clarified that the budget would now be put back to the Finance Committee for it to make a recommendation regarding the precept level.

RESOLVED To agree the draft Budget for 2019/20 to 2021/22

116. REQUEST FROM COUNCILLOR HARRIS TO CONSIDER THE REDUCED POLICE PRESENCE IN BECCLES

Councillor Harris explained that the population had increased by 4.25 million since 2010 but the number of police officers had reduced by 20,000. There were 47 forces in the UK, and a number had merged in order to make savings. Norfolk and Suffolk Police, although not formally merged, had already merged a number of services. The total combined cost of the Norfolk and Suffolk Police Commissioner's Office was £1.9 million. If these two offices were merged, the savings could be used to fund more police officers on the streets.

Councillor Harris therefore suggested that the council considers these issues further and approaches the Home Office with its findings.

It was generally agreed that a separate working party should be set up to consider this matter further, as it was an important issue that would require significant investigation. Councillor Harris agreed to chair the working party and the clerk would invite councillors to join the working party.

Councillor Harris therefore proposed that a working party is set up to investigate the lack of police presence in the town and put forward proposals in respect of savings that could be made through the merging of services between Norfolk and Suffolk Police. This was seconded by Councillor Topping, a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED That a working party is set up to investigate the lack of police presence in the towns and put forward proposals in respect of savings that could be made through the merging of services between Norfolk and Suffolk Police

117. REQUEST FROM THE BECCLES COMMUNITY BUS COMMITTEE TO RELEASE FUNDING FOR REPAIRS TO THE BUS

It was suggested in the correspondence received that the clerk could be given delegated power to pay invoices up to a value of £5,000 in relation to repairs to the bus.

The council agreed to suspend standing orders to allow the chair of the Beccles Community Bus Committee to speak. He explained that for ease of accountancy it would be preferable for the funds to be released directly to the committee's bank account. He clarified that each cheque needed to be signed by two members of the committee. He confirmed that the two signatories were not related.

Standing Orders were then reinstated.

It was reported that a number of years ago the council carried out an investigation of the usage of the bus and the cost of replacement. It had been making contributions into a replacement reserve, but when the cost of a replacement had been established and given that the usage at that time had been low, the council had agreed to not make any further contributions into the reserve.

There was further discussion and Councillor Walmsley proposed that £5,000 is transferred to the Beccles Community Bus bank account from the Community Bus reserve, subject to a report being submitted after 3 months had elapsed detailing how the funds had been spent. This was seconded by Councillor Harris, a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED That £5,000 is transferred to the Beccles Community Bus bank account from the council's Community Bus reserve, subject to a report being submitted after 3 months had elapsed detailing how the funds had been spent

118. SAVE OUR RECORD OFFICE (SORO) PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The consultation was discussed and it was agreed that the format did not make it suitable for the council to complete as a body, as the questions were aimed at individuals. Councillor Walmsley proposed that councillors could respond individually and the council could respond to support the questions in the consultation and explain that councillors would be responding individually. This was seconded by Councillor Topping, a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED That councillors respond individually to the Save Our Record Office (SORO) Consultation and that the council responds in support of the questions in the consultation

119. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS AND REPRESENTATIONS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Lever was happy to replace Councillor Kenward on the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Grants Committee. He also requested to act as a representative on various outside bodies.

The mayor reported that the Planning Committee had been struggling for a quorum of councillors at meetings over the past couple of months. Councillor Downes said she was often unable to attend these meetings due to work commitments and so would stand down from the committee. Councillor

Walmsley agreed to take her place.

RESOLVED To agree the revised Committee Memberships and Representations on Outside Bodies

120. CHANGES TO TABLES AND CHAIRS LICENSING POLICY

The mayor reported that she had recently corresponded with Suffolk County Council (SCC) as to whether Wetherspoons had the power to ban dogs from its seating area situated on the public highway. In its response, SCC notified her that it would no longer be issuing licences for tables and chairs on the highway. It would only be investigating if an obstruction was reported. In the past the council had been consulted on any requests for tables and chairs, number, type etc.

It was suggested that the town council should investigate whether it has the authority to take over this role from Suffolk County Council.

Councillor Stubbings therefore proposed that the council investigates whether it had the power to take over the Licensing of Tables and Chairs on the highway. This was seconded by Councillor Janney, a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED That the council investigates whether it has the power to take over the Licensing of Tables and Chairs on the highway

121. EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL RETURN AND CERTIFICATE FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2018

The chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, Councillor Stubbings, reported that the council had received a clean audit report with no issues raised.

The clerk was thanked for her work on the accounts.

RESOLVED To accept and approve the External Auditor's Annual Return and Certificate for year ending 31 March 2018

122. QUOTATIONS FOR FENCING AT FRONT OF BLYBURGATE HALL COTTAGE

It was reported that the rear of the shops on Blyburgate opened directly out onto the garden of Blyburgate Cottage and the tenants in the cottage were concerned regarding their dogs escaping. It also affected the privacy of their garden. The erection of a fence would give privacy to both the tenant and the shops.

The clerk clarified that despite requesting two quotations, only one had been received. The works totalled £805 plus VAT. There was discussion regarding seeking a second quotation, but it was generally agreed that the work needed to be carried out swiftly in order to appease the tenant. It was pointed out that initially two quotations had been received for the fencing of the front and rear of

the cottage and that these had been very similar.

Councillor Stubbings therefore proposed that council accepts the quotation from Waveney Fencing for erection of a fence at the front of the Blyburgate Cottage Garden. This was seconded by Councillor Walmsley, a vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED That council accepts the quotation from Waveney Fencing for the erection of a fence at the front of the Blyburgate Cottage Garden

123. DEED OF GUARANTEE – LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

The clerk reported that the Deed of Guarantee was required in order to guarantee the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust's joining of the Local Government Pension Scheme. It indemnified the county council against the trust not meeting its obligations in respect of its membership of the scheme.

RESOLVED To agree the Deed of Guarantee in respect of the Beccles Fenland Charity Trust being admitted into the Local Government Pension Scheme

124. CLERK'S REPORT NO.128 REGARDING CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

RESOLVED To agree the Clerk's Report No.128 regarding the Town Council's Christmas closure dates

125. PETTY CASH RECONCILIATION

RESOLVED To approve the quarterly Petty Cash Reconciliation

126. SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO DATE AND QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

RESOLVED To approve the Summary of Receipts and Payments to date and the Quarterly Monitoring Report

127. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2018

It was reported that compliments had been received on social media regarding the repairs to The Pound.

RESOLVED To approve the Schedule of Payments for November 2018

128. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The mayor reported that Remembrance Sunday was taking place this coming Sunday. Tea and cakes were being served at the rear of the church after the service and any help with cake baking and serving would be appreciated.

The council's Christmas Supper was being held on Friday 14 December at the

Station Café at 5pm.

The council's Awards Evening was being held on Tuesday 18 December.

129. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AS TUESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2018

The date of the next town council meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 4 December 2018.

Reports to Council 6 November 2018

Suffolk Police

No report had been received. The mayor reported that former PCSO Deborah Osborne had taken up a new role in the Domestic Violence team. She would be very much missed. PCSO Gary Wallace would be taking redundancy early next year. This would mean there would be no officers based in the town.

There was concern expressed that the new combined Police and Fire Station had been built but that the facilities for the police, which included showers, a rest room and kitchen, could not be shared with the Fire Officers. The mayor agreed to investigate this further.

Suffolk County Council

Councillor Brambley-Crawshaw gave her report and would circulate after the meeting (*attached*)

Waveney District Council

Councillor Topping had circulated her report (*attached*)

Members of the Public

Joseph Young, the Local Area Co-Ordinator for the Beccles Area, spoke about his role coming to an end on 30 November. His role had been to work with individuals and connect them to their community. He had worked with over 150 people over his 2 years in the role. He had initially been concerned about treading on the toes of other organisations, but had experienced no issues. People tend to know what they want from their lives, and Joseph's role was to facilitate this. He was taking up a new position in Adult Community Services but felt like he was abandoning the community.

The Mayor thanked Joseph for all of his hard work and Councillor Downes reported that she was currently working with Joseph to secure funding to bring Joseph's experience back into the community.

Parish Report November 2018

Councillor

Elfrede Brambley-Crawshaw (Beccles)

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Highways Improvement and Innovation Board – new approach to pothole repairs, coordinating road closures and working with parish councils

A Highways Improvement and Innovations Board was established in June and has met three times. The Board recently announced that Suffolk Highways will be piloting a new approach to prioritising pothole repairs over the winter, specifically for services coming out of the Ipswich Phoenix House depot. If successful, the new approach will be rolled out to other depots.

The new approach will mean more potholes in a single area will be repaired together, and potholes of 200mm width will also be included.

The pilot aims to tackle more potholes at once, rather than later returning to the same area to repair nearby potholes. It will also aim to reduce the number of temporary repairs, which also have to be returned to at a later date. This should reduce the travelling time of maintenance crews, and result in more potholes being filled.

The Board has also been looking into improving the coordination of road closures, reducing the number of roadworks which overrun, and exploring ways for Suffolk Highways to work closer with town and parish councils. A progress report from the Board is expected at Scrutiny later in the year.

Second Suffolk children’s home judged “inadequate”

A children’s home run by Suffolk County Council has been judged “inadequate” by Ofsted, following an inspection on 3 October 2018. This is the second council-run children’s home to receive an inadequate rating in the past 2 months.

Ofsted expressed particular concern over unsafe behaviour management techniques used by staff in the home, and noted a significant increase in the number of physical interventions.

Council signs up to 100% nuclear energy deal

At the Council meeting on 18 October, members of my political group put forward a motion calling on the Council to recognise the benefits of renewable energy, commission a report into smart grids, and commit to ensuring at least 50% of the Council’s energy comes from renewable sources by 2025. Unfortunately, the Conservative administration amended the motion to remove any clear actions or targets.

It was also revealed that the Council have recently signed off on a 100% nuclear energy deal for the next three years, to commence in March 2019. This represents a major step backwards for Suffolk County Council, whose current energy contract includes 18.7% renewables.

No funding to help end period poverty

The Labour Group proposed a motion to Council on 18 October, asking for a commitment of £15,000 in the budget to help tackle “period poverty”. Many girls suffer and frequently miss school because they are unable to afford sanitary products. The motion therefore asked the Council to fund free sanitary products in all local authority maintained schools in Suffolk, and to encourage academies to implement similar measures.

Unfortunately, the Conservative administration once again amended the motion, removing all funding commitments. It was claimed that this was because the level of funding in the original motion was too small and unfairly favoured girls at maintained schools. However, a later amendment from my political group, which proposed increasing the funding commitment in the motion to include all schools in Suffolk, was rejected.

New Home Care operating model

At Cabinet on 9 October a new Home Care operating model was agreed. It was acknowledged that the previous model had not been a success and had caused unnecessary stress to both care providers and residents receiving home care. We were assured that “lessons had been learned” from this previous experience, and that greater care had been taken to develop the operating model in partnership with stakeholders.

A call-in of the decision was received and so the model received further scrutiny from the Council’s Scrutiny Committee. However, the majority of the Scrutiny Committee voted to proceed with the new model rather than asked Cabinet to reconsider their decision.

Budget consultation and reduction in overspend

Suffolk County Council is currently consulting on the 2019/20 budget and is asking the public to share their ideas for potential savings. The consultation runs until 5pm on Friday 16 November, and can be found at: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/a-tough-call-to-make-budget-20192020/>. We will get our first look at the 2019/20 budget proposals on Thursday 22 November, when they are presented to the Scrutiny Committee.

At the end of Quarter 1 the council was predicting an overspend on the 2018/19 net budget of £8.6m. This prediction has now reduced, at the end of Quarter 2, to a £7.5m overspend. Although an improvement, it is unlikely that the overspend will be reduced completely by the end of the financial year, and the council will still need to make use of reserves to cover the funding gap.

School admissions consultation

Suffolk County Council is consulting on its school admissions policy for 2020/21, available at: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-places/consultation-on-admissions-to-schools-in-suffolk-for-the-20202021-school-year/>. The consultation is open until 12 November 2018.

No significant changes are proposed for 2020/21. However, the council are also seeking views on potential future changes to the oversubscription criteria, in terms of the removal of catchment area priority. If they decide to progress with this change, there would be another consultation October 2019 and any changes would then apply from 2021/22.

**BECCLES TOWN COUNCIL
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY - DECEMBER 2018**

Payments	Chq No.	Total (exc VAT)		Total (inc VAT)		Unrecoverable VAT
		£	£	£	£	
Retrospective						
Beccles Town Council	baacs	£ 6,977.12	£ 6,977.12	£ 6,977.12	£ 6,977.12	
Google	dd	£ 11.00	£ 11.00	£ 11.00	£ 11.00	
Waveney District Council	dd	£ 65.00	£ 65.00	£ 65.00	£ 65.00	
	dd	£ 53.00	£ 53.00	£ 53.00	£ 53.00	
	dd	£ 223.00	£ 223.00	£ 223.00	£ 223.00	
	dd	£ 196.00	£ 196.00	£ 196.00	£ 196.00	
	dd	£ 145.00	£ 145.00	£ 145.00	£ 145.00	
Anglia Farmers	dd	£ 63.45	£ 63.45	£ 63.45	£ 63.45	
	dd	£ 71.29	£ 71.29	£ 71.29	£ 71.29	
	dd	£ 144.00	£ 144.00	£ 144.00	£ 144.00	
Your Property Solutions	baacs	£ 45.00	£ 45.00	£ 45.00	£ 45.00	
Post Office	103829	£ 249.40	£ 249.40	£ 249.40	£ 249.40	
Beccles Community Bus	baacs	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	
Crisp Contractors		£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	
Current						
IRS Recruitment	103830	£ 1,802.57	£ 1,802.57	£ 1,802.57	£ 1,802.57	
Coopers	103831	£ 21.31	£ 21.31	£ 21.31	£ 21.31	
	103831	£ 34.55	£ 34.55	£ 34.55	£ 34.55	
Goose Green Nurseries	103832	£ 552.00	£ 552.00	£ 552.00	£ 552.00	
Michelle Golding	103833	£ 15.38	£ 15.38	£ 15.38	£ 15.38	
Broadland Security Alarms	103834	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 110.00	
NP Security	103835	£ 120.50	£ 120.50	£ 120.50	£ 120.50	
Crisp Contractors	103836	£ 64.00	£ 64.00	£ 64.00	£ 64.00	
C Boyne	103837	£ 4.67	£ 4.67	£ 4.67	£ 4.67	
Stephen Goodwin	103838	£ 38.00	£ 38.00	£ 38.00	£ 38.00	
Just Perfect Cleaning	103841	£ 651.00	£ 651.00	£ 651.00	£ 651.00	
Waveney Norse	103842	£ 450.00	£ 450.00	£ 450.00	£ 450.00	
Force Fresh	103843	£ 22.20	£ 22.20	£ 22.20	£ 22.20	
East Anglian Computer Supplies	103844	£ 43.74	£ 43.74	£ 43.74	£ 43.74	
H L Perfitt	103845	£ 1,950.00	£ 1,950.00	£ 1,950.00	£ 1,950.00	
		£ 27,123.18	£ 27,123.18	£ 27,123.18	£ 27,123.18	
Receipts						
Rents		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Rents		£ 2,393.96	£ 2,393.96	£ 2,393.96	£ 2,393.96	

E.B.

Rents	Property rents	£ 900.00
Hall Hire	Blyburgate Hall	£ 1,847.66
Friday Market	Market rents	£ 1,201.98
St John Ambulance	Contribution to Window Repairs at Blyburgate Hall	£ 625.00
H M Revenue	VAT Refund	£ 5,110.74
Your Property Solutions	Rent for Blyburgate Cottage	£ 363.00
CCLA Deposit Fund	Interest	£ 47.45
	Total income	£ 12,489.79
Bank balances at 4 December 2018		
Barclays Current account		£ 44,031.57
Barclays Imprest account		£ 2,662.71
Barclays Active Saver		£ -
CCLA Deposit Fund		£ 75,000.00
Nationwide Business Bond		£ 77,537.79
LLoyds Bank 12 Month Bond		£ 77,368.00
Co-Op Current Account		£ 5,729.93

Signed:

E. Brambley Crawshaw
Chair of meeting

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Responsible Financial Officer

**** Items in bold and italics have been added or amended since the draft version**

04-Nov-18