MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CROMER TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER, 2013 AT 7.00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, NORTH LODGE, CROMER.

Present:-

Mayor – Cllr. D. Pritchard, Deputy Mayor – Cllr. D. Airs, Cllr. T. Adams, Cllr. T. Bartlett, Cllr. J. Bond, Cllr. H. Cox, Cllr. J. Frosdick, Cllr. J. Hamilton-Emery, Cllr. T. Nash, Cllr. Y. Nolan, Cllr. C. Plewman, Cllr. M. Saunders, Cllr. G. Smith and Cllr. A. Yasimi.

Denys Ngu & Lara Williamson – Healthy Communities & Ageing Well.

PCSO - Elaine Roberts.

Steve Downes - EDP

Julie Chance - Town Clerk.

Five member of the public also attended the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 29TH JULY AND 16TH AUGUST 2013

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29th July and 16th August 2013, having been circulated, were taken as read, **AGREED** and signed by the Mayor.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Declarations of interest were received as follows:-

Cllr. T. Bartlett – Cromer Preservation Society.

Cllr. H. Cox – Cromer and Sheringham Crab and Lobster Festival.

Cllr. J. Hamilton-Emery – Cromer Christmas Festival.

Cllr. C. Plewman - Cromer Skate Park.

Application forms for Dispensation were completed by Cllr. Y. Nolan and Cllr. A. Yasimi in respect of the annual budget.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. G. Hayman and Cllr. P. Harris.

4. **POLICE MATTERS**

4.1 Police Report:- attached. PCSO Roberts also reported on the new SNAP priorities. These will be included in the SNAP meeting minutes which the Clerk will circulate to all Members. The Mayor requested that the proposals for the pedestrian areas in Cromer be added as a future priority once they are in place.

5. YOUTH

- **5.1 Student Council:** No report received.
- **5.2 Skate Park:-** Cllr. Plewman reported that the next meeting will be held on Monday 16th September when a new Chair will be elected.

6. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES & AGEING WELL

6.1 The Mayor introduced Denys Ngu and Lara Williamson. Presentation attached.

7. COMMITTEE CHOICES

7.1 It was AGREED that Cllr. Y. Nolan would serve on the Works and General Purposes Committee and Cllr. A. Yasimi would serve on Promotions & Development, Works and General Purposes and Planning, Transportation and Environment Committees.

8. <u>DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCIL</u>

8.1 The Mayor reported that he had received a reply from District Councillor Lee concerning lighting in Cadogan Road car park. The Clerk read the email to Members. Noted.

The Mayor congratulated County Councillor Cox on the excellent event held in Cromer for the Battle of Britain. County Councillor Cox said she was very proud to have held the event in Cromer and so pleased that so many people attended to support the event.

The Clerk reported that District Councillor Tom Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Shelia Oxtoby and Coastal Engineer Andrew McCloud will be attending the meeting to be held on 14th April 2014.

The Clerk reported that the Local Audit and Accountability Bill is being pursued and it is therefore not necessary for Cromer Town Council to put this forward as a Resolution for debate at the Norfolk ALC AGM on Saturday 5th October.

It was **AGREED** to suspend the meeting for public participation.

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public read a report concerning cycling on the promenade and requested feedback. Cllr. Bartlett requested clarification concerning the by-law which exists in connection with cycling on the promenade. District Councillor Yasimi will investigate this matter and liaise with the member of public directly.

A member of the public said that the yellow backings requested for the 40 mph signs on the Holt Road are still not in place. A road narrowing sign has been placed in front of the flashing sign which is affecting the trigger of the flashing sign and the drains on the new footway over the bridge have been installed incorrectly and are not allowing the water to run away. The bars on the drains are too wide and dogs are getting their feet caught in them. These matters have been addressed by the Pan Parish meetings and the Clerk has emailed the County Councillor responsible for these issues.

A member of the public requested an update on the bus station. The Clerk updated all present on the matter. Designs are awaited for the second phase of the bus station and the Clerk will keep the Members updated.

The meeting was reconvened.

10. NORTH LODGE PARK

10.1 Cllr. D. Airs reported that a meeting had been held to start the process of preparing a business plan and the Members will be kept up to date on progress.

11. PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

11.1 Minutes of the meetings held on 1st August and 5th September, 2013:-AGREED.

12. PROMOTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

12.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September, 2013:- AGREED.

Cllr. Saunders expressed concern that the charge included in the Flag Policy offering members of public the opportunity to have a flag flown on birthdays, anniversaries etc. was insufficient to cover the cost of the office time for this

service. The Mayor said this cost was based on information from another parish who deliver this service. This matter may have to be revisited.

13. STRATEGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 13.1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th August, 2013:- AGREED.
- Parish Plan:- Cllr. Bartlett reported that just under 1,000 responses have been received. Work has started on collating the information and the cost of the exercise is under budget to date. Cllr. Saunders said that they had underestimated how many responses would be received and this was mainly due to the form being attractive and easy to complete. A computerised system has been set up on Survey Monkey in order to input the information from the questionnaires. It was AGREED that the Clerk would make enquiries into engaging someone to input the data at a cost of £300/350.

14. WORKS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

14.1 The Mayor reported that a meeting has been arranged with Westerleigh in order to discuss the consultation process for the Crematoria.

15. REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

It was AGREED to suspend the meeting for public participation

The Mayor reminded Members that he is running a blog which can be accessed by all Members. The Clerk will print off hard copies for the Members who do not have access to the internet. The Mayor thanked the Carnival Committee for all their hard work towards a very successful Carnival.

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A member of the public thanked the Town Council for their help with the Carniva
event.

The meeting was reconvened.

There was no report received from the Deputy Mayor at this time.

16. REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 16.1 Community Transport Scheme:- Cllr. Plewman reported that the public meeting held was very well attended and successful. Four voluntary drivers were secured through the meeting and one voluntary driver through the articles in the press. Cllr. Plewman asked that if anyone is able to volunteer to let her know.
- **16.2** Norfolk Fire & Rescue Youth Development:- Cllr. Smith reported that the presentation event had been very successful. The organisation does a lot for the youth.

16.3 Norwich City Community Foundation:- Cllr. Bond reported that he spent two weeks with 16 to 17 year olds looking at ideas for North Lodge Park. This was run by Norwich City Community Sports who donated £100 in order to purchase plants. A new garden has been installed near the boating pond by the youngsters and the railings between the boating pond and the garden will be removed shortly which will allow for a picnicking area.

17. CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

- 17.1 Norfolk County Council Advance Notice for Consultation Budget 2014/17:- Circulated. NOTED.
- 17.2 North Norfolk District Council Coastal Forum Field Trip:- Circulated. NOTED.
- 17.3 North Norfolk District Council New Standards Regime:- It was AGREED that the Clerk would reply stating that the Members would be interested in attending an event concerning this matter.
- 17.4 North Norfolk District Council Press Release Crab & Lobster Processing Factory:- Circulated. NOTED.
- 17.5 Rural Services Network Rural Fair Share Petition:- Circulated. NOTED.
- 17.6 Norfolk ALC Weekly Update: Circulated. NOTED.
- 17.7 Norfolk ALC:- Various:- NOTED.
- 17.8 Norfolk Constabulary Weekly Update:- Circulated. NOTED.
- 17.9 Norfolk RCC Signpost:- NOTED.
- 17.10 The Clerk reported that a piece of correspondence has been received which is inappropriate to be read out. It was AGREED that this piece of correspondence would be destroyed.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted as 28th October, 2013. Please note this will be the Budget meeting.

The Clerk left the meeting.

19. RESOLUTION UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS ACT 1960) TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

AGREED

20.	PERSONNEL MATTERS
	Minutes attached.
	There being no other business the Mayor closed the meeting.

Date

Chairman

At 8.20pm the Town Clerk left the meeting.

20. Personnel Matters

The Mayor read a statement concerning the behaviour of Councillors with regard to conduct in and out of the Chamber, in particular to the conduct towards the staff.

He explained that what was acceptable behaviour to some may not be acceptable to others and that all councillors should be aware of their responsibilities towards others.

A full transcript is attached herewith.

Cllrs Nash & Cox responded by saying that this statement reinforced the necessity of full council training on standards in public life, which had earlier been proposed and accepted by members.

The meeting closed at 8.26pm

<u>Cromer Town Council</u> Standards of Elected Members

<u>Mayor – Cllr.David Pritchard</u> Full Council – 09-Sepember-2013

I wish to address you on expectations of behaviour in your role as a Councillor.

Whilst I'm sure we all believe that we are aware of such matters, as your Chairman and Mayor, I believe that it is appropriate time to speak to you on this matter as we are now half way through our term of office and also at a time where in the last nine months we have four new members.

As an elected member of a public authority we have a position of trust. That trust is placed upon us whether or not we are elected via the ballot box, co-option or by any other means.

Councillors, although often criticised and in the case of Parish and Town councillors are unpaid or non-salaried. Even though, we have to make responsible and informed decisions that affect our entire town and community and the residents of these towns. Therefore, there is an expectation that our decisions are not impaired and at all times, proper.

What must also be the case is that our behaviour is also proper and appropriate.

My concern is that behaviour can sometimes be perceived as bullying or harassing.

Behaviour that is considered bullying by one person may not be considered such by another. Most people will agree on extreme cases of bullying and harassment but it is sometimes the "grey" areas that cause most problems.

Examples of what is unacceptable behaviour include:

- "inappropriate behaviour"
- excessive criticism
- autocratic / dictatorial behaviour
- shouting
- browbeating
- swearing
- ridiculing
- expressions of intolerance
- general discourtesy

Bullying and harassment are not necessarily face to face; they may be by written communications, which includes e-mail and telephone.

Elected members must note that whilst the aforementioned descriptors are open to interpretation we also have a legal obligation placed upon us which states that we must not do anything to breach equality laws.

Neither must we

- Intimidate any person who is or is likely to be a complainant, a witness or involved in an investigation relating to an allegation or complaint.
- Compromise or attempt to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the authority.

Turning in particular to staff, Cromer Town Council is an employer and as such we have a legal obligation to protect our employees, contractors or staff from any bullying or harassment.

It is in every employer's interest to promote a safe, healthy and fair environment in which people can work.

I will be writing to our staff, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to remind them that they have an Incident Book and MUST record the details of any incident where they feel threatened, bullied, harassed or intimidated by a colleague, councillor of this authority or member of the public. This action should be completed preferably immediately or at the latest, within 24 hours of the incident. This record may then form part of any evidence in the event of a complaint.

Staff will also be made aware that they should be able to record such an incident without fear of victimisation or further harassment.

There is an implied term of mutual trust and confidence in every contract of employment. Where the Town Council is aware of a situation of bullying or harassment of an employee by one of its Councillors, but fails to act to stop it, it will be in breach of that implied term of employment contract and may be held liable for the constructive dismissal of that employee.

A Town Council's duty of care to an employee relates to all forms of personal injury, which will include mental as well as physical health. If a risk to health was foreseeable but no action was taken then the Town Council could be at fault and compensation could be sought.

Although the National Association of Local Councils has a policy that there is no place on Town Council's for party politics we would be naive to believe that it doesn't play a part in some of our thinking or discussions. However, our first and foremost thought in our decision making must be what is best for the town and people of Cromer.

The only way to achieve this is by working closely with each other and working alongside our Clerk and Deputy-Clerk.

This Council since May 2011 has come so far so quickly and achieved so much that other councils can only dream of. We must not let a lack of internal discipline detract from the job we have in hand as we all agree we still have a long way to go in the coming months and years to give the town and people of Cromer the status it deserves.

Cllr.David Pritchard 09-September-2013