

Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Town Meeting of Epworth held in the small room of the Imperial Hall on Tuesday April 16th 2019 at 7pm.

Residents were welcomed to the meeting by the Town Council Chairman, Cllr Tim Mitchell and the fire precautions were explained. The clerk signed the forms.

1. To record the names of those present: Cllr Mitchell presiding; Mrs J. Turner, Mrs E. Wilson, Mrs R. Whittaker, Mr J. Whittaker, Mr N. Garner and Mr G. Baker.

The clerk C Maguire was also in attendance.

2. Apologies were received from Mr G Johnson.

3. To receive minutes of the Annual Assembly held on Tuesday April 17th 2018: proposed by Mr Baker, seconded by Mrs Whittaker, **RESOLVED** a true record and signed and dated by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising: there were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

5. The Annual Report, 2018 planning report and attendance figures were presented; the Chairman read through the report highlighting various items: notably the death of Peter Davies, the minimal rise in the precept of 0.42%; the council support of the Armistice Centenary; the number of public participation items raised; the three formal community engagement events; that the parking issues were the responsibility of North Lincolnshire Council and that Epworth Town Council had opposed the reduction in councillor numbers from 15 to 9.

6. To take questions from residents addressed to the Chairman of the Council:

Q: 15 non salaried councillors whereas clerk and assistant salaried staff; where did idea come from?

An: A review by North Lincolnshire Council.

Q: Did anyone go to talk to North Lincolnshire Council?

An: (from another resident) a formal complaint was made to the ombudsman and to North Lincolnshire Council, other Town Councils also made representations. Epworth Town Council unanimously voted against it.

Q: Would items discussed and proposed by the Heritage Committee still be going forward?

An: An Estate Agent had been employed to obtain a valuation and to obtain a contamination report before the council can take a decision on the site purchase. When and if the council decides to purchase there will be full consultation. There has been a huge archaeological project limited by the Diocese ownership. Significant archaeological value, test digs on Vinegarth and Kings Head Croft.

Q: Will Epworth Town Council consider a road-crossing on Belton Road?

An: Will forward to North Lincolnshire Council from a full council meeting.

Q: Statement: Permitted Development finishes in May 2019, a change in regulations, in future planning permission will be required.

Q: Is Epworth Town Council satisfied with the support from North Lincolnshire Council in the follow-up to questions raised?

An: The Council has raised issues re service levels on a number of occasions.

Q: There are 13 examples showing lack of support, reduced ward councillor support and things not acted upon, with permission from the Assembly the items were presented:

1. Allotments – unauthorised storage units and materials alongside; enforcement order not acted upon (conditions relating to the open countryside).
2. Bollards – Wroot Road/Carside; issue raised some years ago, acknowledged as a problem, works order issued, still present. (Bollards non –standard subject to an enforcement order).
3. About November 2018, attempts to re-seed grass area on corner of Fieldside/Studcross. Barriers put around have been knocked down and earlier this year, stacked together and left, North Lincolnshire Council aware.
4. Path from Studcross to Primary School (North Lincolnshire Council had agreed to do, confirmed by ward councillors). Monies allocated for resurface and lighting – still not done.
5. Alternative path to Children’s Centre from Fieldside constructed and in use January 2019 but soil still left in situ.
6. Coronation Crescent – after years of complaining about the state of the footpaths they have been done well, but, edge of verges left in poor state along with soil left on corner of Stanfield Road.
7. North Lincolnshire Council statement last year welcomed, that they would enforce “no parking” on grass areas and verges. The situation on Fieldside now, tracks on the verges and bollards removed. Not enforced.
8. Kings Head Croft lighting, nearly a year ago recognised the need for an upgrade, long delay.
9. Paint on High Street. Despite an officer saying that it was removable and that there was a team to remove it (a matter of days after spill) about 2 years ago, still not done.
10. Last year, state of grass length on grass verges and other areas (outside Library) poor and not maintained.
11. As item 9 re footpaths especially by “Wood yard”.
12. “Gulley’s” frequently blocked and damaged.
13. Potholes, some filled some not, reported ones filled but potholes within a meter of report not filled. We pay council tax and expect the Unitary Authority to do the work.

Proposal that the Town Council liaise with North Lincolnshire Council, a process of communication, matters to be acted upon and a regular update requested.

Q – Comment: Frustrating to try and get anything done, portal/officers unavailable. Footpath signs vandalised on Belton Road. One officer insufficient time to respond to complaints. Grass verges cut when grass is long, grass rots on site, Best Kept Village competition, basic things not done. Weed killing not done. Not responding to clerk or residents.

An: Problems with the portal are recognised by North Lincolnshire Council, summarised as “communication with North Lincolnshire Council and their responses”. The need to improve responsiveness. Valid and important issues to the town. Single point of contact required.

Proposal that the council writes a letter cc Highways and John Briggs (The Mayor)

An: Complain to the Chief Executive pointing out the failures.

7. To discuss the date of the Annual Assembly 2010; **RESOLVED** the 3rd Tuesday in April 2020.

8. To record the closure of the meeting at 7.41pm

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