

EPWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Council held on Tuesday, 6th February 2024, at 7.00 pm, in the Small Hall of the Imperial Hall, Chapel Street, Epworth

No member of the public expressed an interest in addressing the Council.

01/02/24 **Record of Members Present**

The following councillors were present: Councillors Finch (Chairwoman), Baker, Holt, J Whittaker, R Whittaker & Wilson.

02/02/24 **Apologies and Reasons for Absence**

There were apologies from Councillor Grantham - away.

03/02/24 **Declarations of Interest & Dispensations**

- (i) No declarations of interest were made.
- (ii) No dispensations had been granted.

04/02/24 **Youth Council**

No representatives were present. Proposed by Councillor Finch and by Councillor Holt - **It was resolved that the item be deferred until the next meeting of the Full Council.**

05/02/24 **Chairwoman's Report**

(i) **Men in Sheds** - The Chairwoman had visited them and they had agreed to put two soldiers up at The Thurlow for the D Day Celebrations. (ii) **Rotary Club** - The Chairwoman was helping them with transport for the elderly and tea at The Thurlow. (iii) **CCTV** - The Chairwoman, Vice-Chairman and the Clerk had visited the CCTV Control Centre in Scunthorpe and this would be an item for next month's agenda. (iv) **Civic Dinner** - The Chairwoman will be attending the Mayor of North Lincolnshire Council's Civic Dinner on Friday, 8th March 2024. (v) **D Day Celebrations** - South Axholme Academy had agreed to provide artwork for an exhibition to do with D Day. Proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor J Whittaker - **It was resolved the report be noted.**

06/02/24 **Ward Councillors' Report** - Ward Councillor Mitchell was in attendance and gave the following report:- (i) **Electrical Charging Points** - In the process of looking where to install electrical charging points, and it was suggested that it be put on the next planning agenda. (ii) **Fines** - Information about the level of fines issued for graffiti, fly tipping and littering. (iii) **Grants** - Aware of issues with timescales for submitting grant applications and these were extended. (iv) **Maintenance of Bus Shelters** - Possibility it could be devolved in the future to parish and town councils. (v) **Footpaths** - Poor repair work following the installation of fibre broadband and lobbying for extensive resurfacing round Epworth. (vi) **Council Services** - Adult Care Service rated Good by CQC and Children's Services rated Outstanding by Ofsted. (vii) **Bus Service** - Revised timetable up and running. After his report the ward councillor answered several questions from councillors including brown bins and hedging. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the report be noted with pleasure.**

07/02/24

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of a meeting of the Full Council held on Tuesday, 9th January 2024, had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was lots of discussion about Minute 04/01/24 Chairwoman's Report part (iv) Facebook Post.

It was proposed by Councillor Holt and seconded by Councillor Baker that the reference to 'A point of order was raised but not taken' should be changed to 'Several points of order were raised but not taken', however there was then an amendment proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor R Whittaker that it should be changed to 'The Chair commented on another Epworth Town Council Councillor's personal Facebook post. There were multiple calls for a point of order. The points of order were refused to be heard'.

A recorded vote was requested on the amendment and was as follows:-

For: Councillors J Whittaker and R Whittaker
Against: Councillors Baker, Finch and Wilson
Abstained: Councillor Holt

As the amendment failed a vote was then taken on the original motion, and a recorded vote was requested on it and was as follows:-

For: Councillors Baker, Finch, Holt and Wilson
Against: Councillors J Whittaker and R Whittaker

In addition, Minute 19/01/24 Items Raised by Councillors (ii) Review of Standing Orders - It was agreed that Councillor R Whittaker's name should be added as a member of the Working Group.

It was resolved that the minutes be approved as a correct record subject to these changes.

08/02/24

Clerk's Report

Minute 08/01/24 Correspondence (ii) a) Public Technology - Digital Transformation Survey. The Clerk had filled in the Digital Transformation Survey on behalf of the Council.

Minute 08/01/24 Correspondence (ii) b) ERNLLCA - Essentials of Being a Good Employer. The Clerk had booked a place for him to attend the 'Essentials of Being A Good Employer' training course on Tuesday, 12th March 2024, at a cost of £30 + VAT.

Minute 08/01/24 Correspondence (ii) e) North Lincs Council - Sustainable Planting Scheme. The Clerk had contacted North Lincolnshire Council (and also copied in the ward councillors) to inform them that whilst the Council liked what opportunities could be taken with the grant due to the short time frame it was not practical for the Council to do so, however it would still like to go ahead with it but needed more time.

Minute 08/01/24 Correspondence (ii) i) North Lincs Council - D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemoration Grant. The Clerk had applied for a grant of £250 from North Lincolnshire Council to help towards the cost of hiring a singer and room to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day.

Minute 14/01/24 Storage Cupboard & Scanner (i) Storage Cupboard

- The Clerk had purchased a Storage Cupboard from Viking Direct at a cost of £209 + VAT.

Minute 15/01/24 Lawnmower - The Clerk had asked Torne Valley Ltd to service the lawnmower at a cost of £75 + VAT plus parts.

Minute 16/01/24 Parish Precept for 2024 / 2025 - The Clerk had informed North Lincolnshire Council that the Council had set a precept of £81,859 for the financial year 2024 / 2025, and also agreed to accept the grant of £1,476 from North Lincolnshire Council.

Minute 20/01/24 Administrative Assistant - The Personnel Committee had carried out interviews and were due to meet to confirm the appointment of an Administrative Assistant.

Minute 21/01/24 Facebook - The Clerk had posted most of the items suggested for Facebook.

Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Baker
- **It was resolved that the report be noted.**

09/02/24

Correspondence

- (i) a) Mr R Frost - CCTV Cameras on High Street
- b) Councillor T Mitchell - Meet Nick Fletcher MP
- c) Worknest - 10 Upcoming Employment Law Changes
- d) Mrs A Tinsley - Epworth Open Gardens
- e) Mr M Heywood - Unsafe Path between Vinegarth & Hollingsworth Lane
- f) Community Vision - How Can We Help You in 2024?
- g) ERNLLCA - D-Day 80
- h) Barton Upon Humber Town Council - Mayoral Civic Dinner
- i) ERNLLCA - Funding to Churches
- j) Kirton in Lindsey Town Council - Civic Dinner
- k) Peninsula Business Services - Weather & Travel Disruption Policy
- l) Worknest - Tackling Toxic Behaviours Recording
- m) Northern Powergrid - Storm Isha / Jocelyn
- n) Kirton in Lindsey Town Council - Councillor Numbers
- o) ERNLLCA - Procurement Threshold Changes
- p) ERNLLCA - Free Templated Documents Training
- q) ICCM - Learning Conference 2024
- r) Councillor D Robinson - Beacon
- s) North Lincolnshire Council - Civic Dinner
- t) Bright HR - Sick Pay
- u) Epworth Old Rectory - Notice Board
- v) ERNLLCA - Conference Questionnaire
- w) Ms E Roberts - Complaint about Epworth Swimming Pool
- x) North Lincs Council - Service 97 Timetable
- y) Talk Talk - Pricing Update

Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor J Whittaker
- **It was resolved that the information be noted.**

(ii) a) Government Events - Improving National Workplace Health & Wellbeing. Details of an online event due to be held on Wednesday, 20th March 2024. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Baker - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**

- b) **ERNLLCA** - Finance Training. Details of a Year End & Audit training course due to be held on 30th January, 29th February, 14th & 26th March 2024. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Baker - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**
- c) **Worknest** - Disciplinary & Investigations Webinar. Details of a free webinar due to be held on Thursday, 8th February 2024, at 2.00 pm. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Baker - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**
- d) **NALC** - Events. Information about several events, including Emerging Trends in Local Government Finance on 24th April 2024, Unleashing the Power of Local Councils to Tackle the Climate Emergency on 26th June, 2024, Decoding the Future of Artificial Intelligence in Local Governance on 24th July 2024, and The Future of Neighbourhood Plans on 25th September 2024. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor R Whittaker - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**
- e) **Worknest** - Employment Law Update. Details of an in-person seminar due to be held on Thursday, 29th February 2024, from 9.00 am to 12.00 pm, in the Eddie Gray Suite, Elland Road, Leeds. Proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**
- f) **ERNLLCA / Breakthrough Communications** - Training Courses. Information about various training courses being held in February and March 2024. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Holt - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**
- g) **ERNLLCA** - Royal Garden Party Nominations. Invitation for the Chairwoman to be nominated to attend a Royal Garden Party on 8th May 2024. Candidates will be picked at random from a list. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Baker - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**
- h) **City of Doncaster Council** - Supplementary Planning Documents. The consultation period for the Draft Supplementary Planning Documents lasts for 4 weeks and ends at 5 pm on Thursday, 29th February 2024. Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**

10/02/24

Publications

The following publications had been received:-

ERNLLCA - Newsletter	January 2024
Public Sector Network - Newsletter	January 2024
Rural Services Network - Rural Funding Digest	January 2024
North Lincolnshire Council - Forthcoming Meetings	February 2024
ERVAS - Community Vision	
ICCM - Member Newsletter	
NALC - Chief Executive's Bulletin	
NALC - Events	
NALC - Newsletter	
North Lincs Council - Business Focus	
Public Sector Executive - Online Newsletter	

Rural Services Network - Rural Bulletin
SLCC - News Bulletin

Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch
- **It was resolved that the information be noted.**

11/02/24

Committee / Working Group Reports

i) **Planning Committee** - The minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Monday, 15th January 2024, were circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Holt - **It was resolved that they be approved as a correct record.**

ii) **Personnel Committee** - The minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held on Monday, 15th January 2024, were circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Baker - **It was resolved that they be approved as a correct record.**

iii) **Combined Cemetery & Environment Committee** - The minutes of a meeting of the Combined Cemetery & Environment Committee held on Tuesday, 16th January 2024, were circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor Wilson - **It was resolved that they be approved as a correct record.**

iv) **Finance Committee** - The minutes of a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Tuesday, 23rd January 2024, were circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Holt - **It was resolved that they be approved as a correct record.**

12/02/24

Finance

(i) **Financial Report & Bank Reconciliation Statement for October, November & December 2023** - The Clerk had provided each member of the Council with detailed monthly accounts for October, November and December 2023 for them to scrutinise. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor J Whittaker - **It was resolved that the Financial Report & Bank Reconciliation Statements for October, November & December 2023 be approved.**

(ii) **Budget Report** - Councillors had been provided with a copy of the budget report for April 2023 to December 2023. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the Budget Report for April 2023 to December 2023 should be approved.**

(iii) **Accounts for Payment**

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT - FEBRUARY 2024

Payments made before or since last meeting:-

10.01.24	Equals	SLCC	Training - ILCA to CILCA Course	144.00
22.01.24	DD	EDF Energy	Electricity	19.00
	DD	EDF Energy	Electricity	32.00
	DD	EDF Energy	Electricity	126.00
	Equals	Londis	Fuel for Mower	13.68

23.01.24	DD	EDF Energy	Electricity	34.00
25.01.24	DD	Vodafone	Mobile Phone Charges	17.16
26.01.24	DD	Everflow	Water Rates	22.88
	DD	Talk Talk	Telephone & Broadband Charges	26.34
31.01.24	BP	Wages / Tax & NI / Pension	Month 10	3,320.91
01.02.24	DD	Scottish Power	Electricity	35.83
		Unity Trust Bank	Transfer to Instant Access Saving	30,000.00

Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch
- It was resolved that the action taken be approved.

Payments submitted at this meeting:-

06.02.24	BP	Torne Valley Ltd	Cleaning Mats / Refuse Sacks / Gloves	27.10
	BP	MWQA Ltd	Monthly H&S Competent Person Fee	72.00
	BP	Torne Valley Ltd	Lawnmower Service	150.72
	BP	J R Cockin Electrical Ltd	Annual PAT Testing	144.00
	BP	Mr S Quantrill	Mileage	8.78

Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch
- It was resolved that these accounts be paid.

(iv) Authorised Amount to be Spent by the Clerk - At a meeting of the Finance Committee held on Tuesday, 23rd January 2024, it discussed the authorised amount which could be spent by the Clerk and under what circumstances. It recommended that the Clerk be given the power to spend up to £500 in any calendar month without prior approval of the Council to expedite payments - all expenditure to be reported to the next meeting of the Council. Whilst the Clerk appreciated that such a move was intended to help speed up things happening, he was wary of taking on such a power. It was suggested that the amount should be £600 to tie in with the limit which could be spent on the prepaid card. Proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor J Whittaker - **It was resolved that the Clerk be authorised to spend up to £600 if he wished to do so.**

13/02/24

Beacon

Since the last meeting of the Full Council the Clerk had informed North Lincolnshire Council that Epworth Town Council was prepared to take responsibility for the Beacon. He was going to meet onsite with the current landowner, the potential new landowner, and also Councillor Grantham who was prepared to move and relocate it, then he would be in a position to submit a permitted development enquiry as advised by North Lincolnshire Council. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the information be noted.**

14/02/24

Website

The Clerk along with Councillor Holt had received online demonstrations from Aubergine and Vision ICT and shared with councillors the names of 2 / 3 councils who used each company. They were similar in price, however one of them perhaps looked better, whilst the other one was a bit more intuitive to use. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Holt - **It was resolved that the Clerk should ask Aubergine to provide a new website for the Council with a one-off set-up cost of £800 + VAT and an annual subscription of £199 + VAT, along with the transfer of existing website**

content to the new website at a cost of £25 + VAT per hour and a .gov.uk domain name.

15/02/24

Weedkilling

The Clerk had obtained the following quote for the weedkilling of the Cemetery paths and car park:-

Complete Weed Control (Humberside) Ltd	£210 + VAT
--	------------

Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor R Whittaker
- It was resolved that the Clerk should ask Complete Weed Control (Humberside) Ltd to apply weedkiller to the Cemetery paths and car park at a cost of £210 + VAT.

16/02/24

Hedge

The Clerk had managed to obtain the following quotes to cut part of the Cemetery hedge:-

Arrand Tree Care	£500 + VAT
Paul Haywood	£480

It was noted that for the cheaper quote the cuttings would be put on a heap, whilst for the dearer quote the waste would be chipped.

Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Baker
- It was resolved that the Clerk should ask Arrand Tree Care to cut part of the Cemetery hedge at a cost of £500 + VAT.

17/02/24

Sustainable Planting Scheme

The Clerk informed councillors that after the last meeting of the Full Council it was suggested that the Combined Cemetery & Environment Committee should look at the Sustainable Planting Scheme. At a meeting of the Combined Cemetery & Environment Committee held on Tuesday, 16th January 2024, it asked the Clerk to put in a grant application for perennials and compost for the Planters. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Baker - **It was resolved that the action taken by the Clerk to apply for a grant of £903.23 from North Lincolnshire Council should be endorsed by Full Council.**

18/02/24

Items Raised By Councillors

(i) **Review of Standing Orders & Policies** - Councillor Baker informed Full Council that the Working Group had met to discuss the standing orders and some of them were due to attend an ERNLLCA session on this. They were hoping to meet again and finalise a draft copy of the standing orders for the next meeting. Proposed by Councillor R Whittaker and seconded by Councillor J Whittaker - **It was resolved that the update be noted.**

(ii) **Dementia Steering Group** - Councillor R Whittaker reported to Full Council about the last meeting of the Dementia Steering Group. There had been a guest speaker from Age UK and one of the ward councillors present to talk about transport. Information was provided about scam awareness, opening doors, use of tablets, what the churches were doing with elderly people, and social things in the area. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the update be noted.**

(iii) **Blinds** - Councillor Finch asked Full Council to consider the purchase of two vertical blinds to replace the two roller blinds in the Council Office. Councillors were provided with a quote of £230, however it was suggested that that they may be obtained cheaper than this. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the Clerk be allowed to spend up to £230 on vertical blinds.**

19/02/24

Groundsperson

There was a need to recruit a new groundsperson due to the retirement of the existing post-holder. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved that the Personnel Committee should be given the authority to interview and appoint a Groundsperson and all matters associated with it.**

20/02/24

Facebook

Councillors considered items for Facebook and suggested the following: D Day Events, Electrical Charging Points, North Lincs Council's Portal. Proposed by Councillor Finch and seconded by Councillor R Whittaker - **It was resolved that the Clerk post the above items on the Council's Facebook page.**

21/02/24

Date, Time & Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Full Council is due to be held on Tuesday, 5th March 2024, at 7.00 pm, in the Small Hall of the Imperial Hall, Chapel Street, Epworth. In addition, there is also a meeting of the Planning Committee due to be held on Monday, 12th February 2024, followed by a meeting of the Personnel Committee on Thursday, 15th February 2024, and then a meeting of the Combined Cemetery & Environment Committee on Tuesday, 12th March 2024, all at 7.00 pm, in the Chapel of Rest, Cemetery Lodge, Burnham Road, Epworth. Proposed by Councillor J Whittaker and seconded by Councillor Finch - **It was resolved the information be noted.**

22/02/24

Closure of Meeting

The Chairwoman declared the meeting closed at 9.14 pm.