



Needham Market Town Council
Community & Assets Committee
Minutes – 16th June 2021

Present: Chairperson, Cllr Phillips, Cllrs Annis, Kett, Lea, Norris, O’Shea, Reardon, Stansfield.

The Town Clerk was in attendance.

CA001/21 Chairperson’s Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

Cllr Phillips welcomed Councillors to the first meeting of the Committee since its inception.

Apologies received from: Cllr Ost.

CA002/21 To elect a Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for 2021/22.

Cllr Phillips proposed Cllr Kett. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed the proposal.

CA003/21 To receive Councillors Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

CA004/21 To consider the scope of the Committee’s responsibilities.

Councillors referred to the delegated authority terms under which the new Committee is operating and, at this early stage, proposed no change.

CA005/21 To consider outstanding projects including those in course of delivery.

Cllr Lea referred to the following:

- Barretts Lane Toilets (including the use of the external tap by Needham in Bloom)
- Cycle racks for Jubilee Crescent and Barretts Lane
- Review of street furniture condition and appropriateness
- Damaged fence off Jubilee Crescent

Cllrs Lea, Norris and Reardon agreed to form a Working Group to undertake a review of all Council's street furniture.

Cllr Norris proposed the review should include tourism signage, Badley Bridge railings plus resurrection of the review of on-street parking and the potential opportunity to utilize mobile vehicle speed monitoring equipment which may be available via Suffolk County Council.

Cllr Annis reported on work undertaken to provide a safe and easier access to enable maintenance of the Town Council clock which is located on the exterior of St John's Church in the High Street.

Cllr Phillips reported on the recent refurbishment of the interior of Crowley Park pavilion. Crowley Park is also being considered as a hub for a broader range of activities and it is critical the s.106 (Developer Contribution) funds that are available to the Council, should be the basis for funding any project.

A member of the public present (David Boreham) explained to Councillors his thoughts on future provision of activities and a venue for young people in the town that they could identify with. He has been working with The Mix, Stowmarket to explore possibilities and a future venue could be managed/staffed as a 'detached project' under their wing. He stressed the need for investment and welcomed the Council's thoughts regarding use of s.106 funds.

Councillors expressed their support for taking forward future provision of services for young people in conjunction with The Mix. Cllr Annis referred to the commitments made by Mid Suffolk District Council regarding the replacement of the former Community Café, School Street that had operated as a venue for young people but was demolished as part of the District Council's redevelopment of the former Needham Market Middle School site for new housing. Cllr Annis reported the District Council has consistently backed away from its commitments and he has no faith in an outcome being achieved which is beneficial to the town.

Councillors agreed a statement will be provided to set out its position on future services for young people in the town with the intention it works in partnership with the The Mix and any other relevant organisations.

Councillors thanked David for his clear commitment to the subject of services for young people in the town.

Cllr Reardon reported on Communications including the imminent availability of a new website for Council that will incorporate links with social media platforms on a 'one-button operation' approach.

CA006/21 To receive a report on the management of the Committee's finances.

The Clerk reported his disappointment and frustration with lack of progress on aligning the Council's financial reporting system with its new Committee structure, as a result of long-term staff sickness absence. That situation will be remedied as soon as is practicable. The original reports on the former Section structure remain as a control and no issues were required to be reported to the Committee at this point.

CA007/21 To consider new projects, their prioritisation and funding.

The Clerk explained this item was most related to developer contributions funds (Community Infrastructure Levy) being received by Council. The reporting of the Council's CIL funding position is up-to-date as far as the figures are concerned but the Council has yet to formally consider and agree its use of the funds.

Councillors agreed this item should be included on its next meeting agenda such that drawing up a list of projects for funding and their prioritization could be undertaken.

CA008/21 To consider the Council's Communications functions.

Councillors agreed the work being undertaken by Cllr Reardon was moving the Council in the right direction. It was laying the ground for more effective means of communication with the public but would also consider the 'two-way' aspect of communication in that the methods used by members of public to communicate with the Council may be diversified and improved.

CA009/21 To consider Crime Prevention and Community Health and Wellbeing issues.

Councillors considered various aspects of this Committee responsibility that had previously been managed on an ad-hoc basis under its previous Section framework. Discussion encompassed relationships with the Police, the provision of local health services and how the Council may be more effective in key relationships. Cllr Phillips agreed, as a first formal step on known health service provision concerns within the local community, to engage with the NHS Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group.

CA010/21 To consider the Council's role in Climate Emergency.

The Clerk outlined the role of Local Councils in this area of business and the difference between that and Emergency Planning, which is related but is focused on response mechanisms rather than from a causal perspective.

Cllr O'Shea said he continues his work on producing a Flood Risk Report for the town that reflects, to some extent, the impact of Climate Change and the need to consider that in future plans for development of the town that could exacerbate the risk of future flooding.

The Meeting closed at 8:25pm.

Signed..... Committee Chairperson

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