

NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL held in the Lounge, Needham Market Community Centre, School Street, Needham Market, on Wednesday 2nd March 2016 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr JE Lea (In the Chair), Councillors R Campbell, TS Carter, RP Darnell, I Mason, MG Norris, KMN Oakes, S Phillips, D Spurling, M Spurling, X Stansfield and AL Ward

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr BE Annis - Family Commitment
Cllr D Campbell – Holiday

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Julia Truelove, Mid Suffolk District Councillor Wendy Marchant, 3 representatives from Hopkins Homes Limited, 12 members of public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C033/16 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 17th February 2016.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 17th February 2016 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C034/16 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters

C035/16 To receive a presentation from Hopkins Homes on a proposed development off Barking Road and reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and to take questions from members of the public

The representatives from Hopkins Homes Ltd outlined the development proposal for land off Barking Road. The proposal includes building of 150 new homes and an extension to the Needham Market Country Practice car park. 35% of the new homes will be affordable, under conditions set by the local Housing Authority (Mid Suffolk District Council). The context in which the proposal for the new housing development is being made was explained including reference to the national 'housing crisis' and the local Planning Authority's (Mid Suffolk District Council) lack of a Housing Needs Land Supply Policy. The development of 150 new homes should realise around £650,000 in Community Infrastructure Levy of which a percentage would be received by the Town Council (25% if a Neighbourhood Plan is in place or 15% if not).

Questions put to the Hopkins Homes representatives produced the following responses:

- The additional car park facility for Needham Market Country Practice will be included in a single planning application along with the 150 new homes i.e. the car park extension will not be a separate planning application
- Hopkins Homes are committed to carrying out comprehensive community consultation in addition to the statutory consultation process which the Planning Authority will introduce once a planning application is submitted
- With regard to adding further pressure on existing infrastructure, the representatives advised that Hopkins Homes is in contact with the Statutory Authorities who have responsibility for infrastructure (Suffolk County Council, Anglian Water, Environment Agency etc.) and are receiving positive feedback.
- Hopkins Homes proposed development of 266 new houses at Needham Chalk Quarry will go ahead. although it is due to take approximately 18 months to prepare the ground surface, prior to the start of actual building work
- The usual rate of new house building by Hopkins Homes Limited will apply to both the Needham Chalk Quarry site and the site off Barking Road, that is completion of around 40 new homes per year per site

- Central Government Policy, which promoted development on Brownfield sites (i.e. previously developed such as use as a Chalk Quarry) prior to use of Greenfield sites (i.e. previously undeveloped such as agricultural land), has ceased
- Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Officers want the development of 150 homes off Barking Road (if granted planning permission) to be able to facilitate further house building in the future (e.g. roadways capable of extension etc.)

Cllr Lea thanked the Hopkins Homes Limited representatives for their presentation and reminded all present of the drop-in public consultation event, which Hopkins Homes Limited are to host, at Needham Market Community Centre, on Monday 14th March, from 3pm to 8pm.

The meeting was adjourned briefly to allow the Hopkins Homes representatives to leave along with members of the public not wishing to stay for the remainder of the meeting agenda.

County Councillor Julia Truelove presented her report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to:

- Devolution Update – an agreement to bring devolution to East Anglia is expected shortly
- Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme – Central Government is providing funding towards social care
- Park and Ride Could Be Saved – consultation taking place with a view to re-launching the two Ipswich service locations currently under threat
- Short Stay Gypsy and Traveller Sites – sites thought to be deliverable will be the subject of public consultation
- Fire Service Consultation, Proposed Cuts – the proposal to cut the number of functional fire engines across the county will be debated at the next Full Council meeting
- Spring Clean Suffolk, Suffolk Waste Partnership – people encouraged to group together and organise litter picks in their community including in response to the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign

County Councillor Truelove added the County Council is to provide a website which will host detailed information on the devolution issue.

District Councillor Wendy Marchant presented the District Councillors report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to:

- Mid Suffolk's Budget Setting – Council Tax increase of just under 2% agreed and brief details of proposed amendments to budgets which were voted down
- Empty Commercial Premises – there are approximately 300 in Mid Suffolk and the Council is exploring the possibility of converting some of them into homes
- Council House Repairs – business case being worked on for Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils to carry out council house repairs 'in house'
- Commercial Wheeled Bin Glass Collection – being introduced in the Spring
- Clean for the Queen – District Council is strongly supporting
- Tourism Workshop – details from the event held on 29th February

Cllr Lea, relating to the last item above, said she has a supply of 'Heart of Suffolk' tourism leaflets which will be made available from the Town Council Office.

Cllr Lea outlined the arrangements for the 'Clean for the Queen' activities taking place in Needham Market on Saturday 5th March.

C036/16 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Saturday 27th February - Installation of the Right Reverend Mike Harrison as Bishop of Dunwich in the Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds

Monday 29th February - MSDC Workshop on Tourism Development

Wednesday 3rd March - Attended initial meeting of Needham Market Dementia Awareness Group

The Deputy Mayor reported attending:

Wednesday 3rd March - Attended initial meeting of Needham Market Dementia Awareness Group

Cllr D Spurling, at the request of Cllr Lea, gave a brief report on the initial meeting of Needham Market Dementia Awareness Group. Whilst there are other towns in the vicinity that are aiming to become 'dementia friendly' the meeting had concluded Needham Market should approach the issue autonomously but, would learn from the experience of other communities, where appropriate. A further meeting has been arranged for Friday 18th March at 2pm in Christchurch. A future 'open day' is to be planned which will seek to raise awareness of the dementia issue across the local community.

C037/16 To receive a report from the Strategic Planning Working Group.

Cllr Norris presented his report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report stated that documents on Housing Need Land Supply, which have been due from Mid Suffolk District Council for some considerable time, should be available by the end of March. Once received further work can commence towards finalising the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan.

C038/16 To consider sending a celebratory communication to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

Cllr Lea suggested a photograph of Council could be incorporated in a congratulatory card. Councillors agreed the suggestion, the Clerk to work on its production with Cllr Lea.

C039/16 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. . Actions from Town Council Meeting 17.02.16:

None

2. Issues:

- Rural Coffee Caravan Golden Age Fair Thursday 21st July, request for donation to cover cost of hire of Community Centre – to be an agenda item for 16th March Town Council meeting
- Town Councillor Vacancy – Official Notice dated 25th Feb – date by which a request an election ends is 16th March – otherwise the vacancy can be filled by co-option
- Needham Market, Crown Court Case – evidence regarding street lighting submitted (EADT reports in file)

3. Correspondence to be noted:

- Email dated 22nd February from Graduate Project Officer, Public Health and Protection asking for ideas to make Suffolk's 'Year of Walking' a success (the year is May 2016 to May 2017)
- Email dated 24th February from Service Redesign Team, Public Protection and Health Directorate, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service thanking the town Council for its comments submitted 4th February in response to the Integrated Risk Management Plan consultation
- Letter received 2nd March from East Anglian Children's Hospices requesting support, either financial or through offering volunteer time to help fundraise and raise awareness of EACH

C040/16 SECTIONS.

C040/16/1 Finance/General Purposes

C040/16/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

Cllr Ward presented the accounts for payment, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Ward proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C040/16/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader

There was no report.

C040/16/2 Recreation & Sport

C040/16/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips presented Minutes from the meetings of the Recreation and Sport Section and the Crowley Park Users Group, both held on Thursday 25th February, which were tabled and a copy of each will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Phillips added a 'poovac' machine had been ordered and received. The machine will allow for dog faeces to be sucked into a bag for clean and safe disposal and will be made available primarily for use by the sports clubs that play on Crowley Park.

Cllr Lea asked if the Crowley Park hedgerow on the boundary with Barretts Lane had been cut back. Cllr Phillips said it has not yet been cut back and there is concern regarding birds possibly nesting earlier than usual. The Clerk said he is aware Cllr Annis is chasing up the contractor who is to cut the hedge back, to get the job completed as soon as possible.

Cllr Phillips reported a quotation has been received for internal redecoration of Crowley Park Pavilion in the sum of £2,500. The Clerk said he understood the quotation included substantial preparatory works in advance of top coat decoration in comparison to simply adding another layer of paint which has, in the past, proved a short-lived solution.

Cllr Mason asked what is the latest position regarding the dog fouling issue on Crowley Park. Cllr Phillips said the problem has certainly reduced since bag dispensers had been placed at the park entrances. Dog walkers can take a free bag from any of the dispensers to pick up after their dog. The 'poovac' machine will be located at the park for use in clearing dog faeces not picked up by dog owners.

Cllr Lea referred to Council's previous consideration of banning dogs from Crowley Park but said she remained of the opinion that a ban would not cure the dog fouling problem and would penalise responsible dog owners. Cllr Oakes added that the Town Warden monitors Crowley Park and will warn people who are seen not picking up after their dog. The Warden will contact the District Council and/or the Police should his warning not be taken notice of. Cllr M Spurling said he is aware of a Council in London that is introducing DNA testing to identify dog fouling offenders.

C040/16/3 Town Property and Services

C040/16/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes had no report.

C040/16/4 Newsletter and Communications

C040/16/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea reported work on the 'Town Trail' leaflet continued and it is hoped it will be completed for distribution by the end of March.

C040/16/5 Planning.

Cllr Stansfield reported that, due to insufficient business, the Planning Section meeting scheduled for Monday 29th February had not taken place.

C040/16/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning decision had been received.

3779/15 - Lion Barn House, Maitland Road - Demolition of existing house and erection of 11 flats for affordable rent with associated vehicular access and external works.

Planning Permission has been refused.

C040/16/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr Stansfield reported that notice of a further period of consultation relating to the following planning application had been received:

0100/16 - Land at Shrubland Lodge, Shrubland Park, Beacon Hill, Norwich Road, Coddham - Installation of 25m high monopole supporting 3no. antennas, 2no. 300mm diameter dishes and installation of 3no. equipment cabinets plus small meter cabinet and development ancillary thereto within a new 5.5m x 10m compound with a 2.1m high palisade fence.

Cllr Stansfield reminded Council that, at its meeting held on 3rd February 2016 a proposal to recommend no objection to the application had been agreed. The recommendation has been submitted to the Planning Authority (Mid Suffolk District Council). The Planning Authority received further information/revised plans from the applicant and these are now subject to a further period of consultation.

Cllr Stansfield described the revised information/revised plans as insignificant and proposed Council repeat its recommendation for approval of the application. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C040/16/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Stansfield said he would be attending the Hopkins Homes consultation event being held on Monday 14th March at the Community Centre and encouraged as many other Councillors as possible to do so. Referring to the earlier presentation received from Hopkins Homes, he said it appears the Planning Authority's (Mid Suffolk District Council) lack of a 5-year Housing Land Supply Policy had left the 'stable door' wide open for developers to take forward proposals for development.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 14th March in the Town Council Office at 7.00pm.

C040/16/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C040/16/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris presented his report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to:

- Network Rail, Gipsy Lane Crossing – advice has been received that further work needs to be carried out by Network Rail relating to the practicality of taking forward preferred option E, diversion to an existing underpass at Badley Bridge Culvert, which is expected to take approximately 3 months

C041/16 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr D Spurling asked if Councillors are aware that horses defecate in the town and their riders make no effort to clear away the muck. He suggested horse owners should provide their mounts with 'horse nappies'. The Clerk explained that, whilst unpleasant, horse muck does not carry the same level of risk to human health which the far more toxic dog faeces pose. The possibility of Council purchasing a petrol driven trolley mounted vacuum is being investigated. Such a machine could support the activities of the town's Litter Pickers and Warden by helping with the clearing of animal waste, as well as litter and other detritus.

The Meeting closed at 9:12 p.m.

Chairman **Date**