

NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL held in Needham Market Community Centre on Wednesday 20th September 2023 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr J Reardon (In the Chair), Councillors: BE Annis, G Cave, A Farrow, C Goodchild, J Lea, I Mason, M Norris, M O'Shea, S Phillips, A Reardon and X Stansfield.

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr R Darnell - Holiday
Cllr T Lawrence – Holiday
Cllr Ost – Family Commitment

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes, Mid Suffolk District Councillor Ross Piper, Arthur Charvonja, Chief Executive, Babergh/Mid Suffolk District Councils plus two members of his senior management team, 11 members of public and the Town Clerk

C057/23 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 19th July 2023.

Cllr Mason proposed the Minutes of the 19th July 2023 Town Council meeting be adopted. Cllr A Reardon seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C058/23 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

There were none.

C059/23 To welcome Arthur Charvonja, Chief Executive, Babergh/Mid Suffolk District Councils and Members of his Senior Management Team and, to receive reports from the County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

Arthur Charvonja introduced himself and gave a short presentation setting out the changes that have taken place within the District Councils following this year's elections, which had returned a change in administration. The ruling Green Party is setting out to ensure their approach is grass roots led, based on the needs of each individual community. The two members of the District Council's management team spoke about housing and financial support Needham Market has received in the past few years. Mention was made of forthcoming Town and Parish Liaison Meetings.

Councillors and members of public present raised the following issues:

- The lack of Community Infrastructure Levy from the District Council's housing development off School Street.
- Problems experienced by the tenants of Hurstlea Court.
- Lack of car parking in the town.
- The potential impact of Central Government announcements on the Housing Crisis.
- An error made by the District Council's Planning Service affecting residents on Hill House Lane.
- What happens to the funds raised by sales of Council properties (Right to Buy).
- The town's Climate Action Group's experiences supporting the Meadow Management Scheme.
- What Environmental standards can the District Council's Planning Service impose on new housing developments.

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes gave a verbal report responding to questions raised by Town Councillors at the previous Town Council meeting. On replacing the High Street pedestrian crossing lights with halo style units, County Councillor Oakes said the existing lights were



changed to LED a year ago and the halo style cost considerably more, being around £1,650 for each unit.

District Councillor Terry Lawrence had provided a District Councillor's Report, which was circulated to Councillors, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

District Councillor Lawrence had provided the following responses to two questions raised at the previous Town Council meeting.

In respect of the Solar Farm decision, it was based on the legal advice we (MSDC) received. That legal advice was held in closed session and not available publicly. Sorry. Regarding the latest Gateway plans there is no buyer or lease holder involved so what is submitted in the planning app must be what is thought will draw in a buyer or lease holder.

District Councillor Ross Piper had provided a District Councillor's Report, which was circulated to Councillors, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

District Councillor Piper added he is liaising with residential occupiers at the recently completed Horsepond Place development regarding build quality.

A member of the public informed Councillors that the owner of Garnham's Field, off the B1113 in Badley Parish, has been told to cease selling refreshments from that location as there is no planning permission for that use.

C060/23 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

- Ipswich Mayor's Charity Fundraising Event
- The induction of Reverend Tracey James at the Parish Church of St John the Baptist

The Deputy Mayor was not present.

C061/23 To receive a report from Council's Civic Events Working Group.

Cllr Lea referred Councillors to the arrangements in place for Remembrance Services being held on 11th and 12th November. Also, confirmation the Needham Market Civic Service will take place on Sunday 28th April 2024.

C062/23 To review and readopt the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy.

The Clerk referred Councillors to the updated policy document that had been provided to them prior to the meeting.

Cllr Lea proposed Council readopt the updated Equality & Diversity Policy. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C063/23 To review and readopt the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

The Clerk referred Councillors to the updated policy document that had been provided to them prior to the meeting.

Cllr Phillips proposed Council readopt the updated Safeguarding Policy. Cllr Goodchild seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C064/23 To consider and adopt a Retention of Documents Policy.

The Clerk referred Councillors to the policy document that had been provided to them prior to the meeting.



Cllr Phillips proposed Council adopt the Retention of Documents Policy. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C065/23 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

The Clerk referred Councillors to a CCTV Policy document, circulated prior to the meeting, and recommended, in view of the Council's installation of a CCTV camera on Needham Market Community Centre premises, it is duly essential the Council has a policy under which that facility is operated.

Cllr Lea proposed Council adopt the CCTV Policy. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

The Clerk reported a summary from a meeting held with representatives from Needham Market & Barking Welfare Charities regarding the future of allotments in the town. The meeting established current allotment provision and administrative processes. Options for future allotment provision and management were discussed. The Charities are to consider their options and respond. The Clerk requested Council to endorse the approach being taken.

Cllr A Reardon proposed the Clerk continue the dialogue with the Charities, based on his report. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

With 9:30pm approaching, Cllr Lea proposed an extension of meeting time to allow for the remaining items on the agenda to be completed. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C066/23 Committees

Governance & Finance Committee.

C066/23/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

Cllr Annis presented the Accounts for Payment and Confirmation, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Annis proposed adoption of the Accounts for Payment and Confirmation. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C066/23/1b To receive a report on actions arising from the Council's Internal Audit Report 2022/23.

Cllr Annis described the Internal Audit report findings which included a small number of recommendations that would result in the Council fully meeting, rather than part meeting, audit requirements. All the recommendations are now either being met or are being worked on.

Cllr Annis also described the External Audit process which has been more difficult, taken longer and, at greater cost in audit fees, than previous years. The reason for the additional scrutiny is down to the increase in amount of funds the Council has managed in the 2022/23 period, as a result of receiving and expending substantial amounts of grant funds on major projects.

C066/23/2 Community & Assets Committee.

C066/23/2a To receive a report from the Committee Chairperson.

Cllr A Reardon provided updates and information on:

- CIL applications – confirmation of funds granted towards the reinstatement of a younger children's play area on Crowley Park and a replacement Scout Hut on the Camping Land
- Sustainable Transport
- Forthcoming second Thermal Camera Imaging Project



Cllr Phillips provided a verbal report on progress on the reinstatement of the younger children's play area at Crowley Park, including listing the play equipment to be installed and the respective quotations for the cost of that equipment across two suppliers, Active Garden £18,562 and Kompan £16,447.

Cllr Phillips proposed the play equipment listed at the cost of supply quoted be confirmed and orders placed. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C066/23/3 Planning Committee.

C066/23/3a To receive a report from the Committee Chairperson.

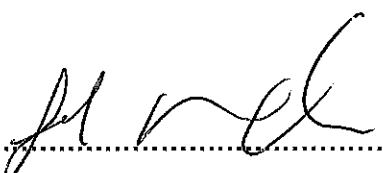
Cllr O'Shea reported the number of planning application consultation notices being received currently is very low and hence September's Planning Committee had been cancelled due to lack of business.

Cllr O'Shea referred to the Hill House Lane resident's concerns expressed earlier in the meeting. The treatment of changes to planning approvals by designating them as Non-Material Amendments has grown rapidly and is of concern to the Town Council. It results in there being no consultation when it may be the amendment sought actually does have a material affect, as in the Hill House Lane case.

C066/23/3b To receive a report on the review of the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr O'Shea reported the review process is currently due to commence with an initial meeting to be arranged in November. In the meantime, guidance will be sought from the Council's Neighbourhood Plan Consultant.

The Meeting closed at 9:50pm.

Chairperson  Date 15th NOVEMBER 2023