

NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL held in the Green Room, Needham Market Community Centre, School Street, Needham Market, on Wednesday 19th August 2015 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr D Spurling – Church Commitment

Mid Suffolk District Councillor Wendy Marchant

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Julia Truelove, one member of public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C132/15 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 5th August 2015.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 5th August 2015, subject to a minor amendment, were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C133/15 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)

Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters and Accounts for Payment (Christchurch Christmas Tree)

Cllr S Rowland – Planning Matter

Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for Payment (Elton House)

C134/15 To receive reports from District Councillor Marchant, the Police and to take questions from members of the public

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

- New Vaccination Programme Launched to Protect Against Meningitis – 17 and 18 year olds targeted
- Budget Cuts to Restrict Police Attendance at Parish Council Meetings – part of the result of having to achieve Government savings of £30.5m by 2020
- Restricted Education Team – all 650 County Council Education staff to have to apply for revised jobs
- Ipswich Heritage Centre, Future Home to County's Records – proposals to develop a new £17m heritage centre on Ipswich's UCS campus

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

- Housing Revenue Account – problems with various aspects of revenue collection etc.
- Withholding of Grant Funds by the District Council – grant funds intended by Government to be passed to Local Councils, being withheld
- Complaints, Comments and Compliments – basic statistics showing an increase in complaints received across Mid Suffolk and Babergh Councils

Cllr Lea, with reference to the Grant Funds item, confirmed the Town Council's concerns are related to the Council Tax Compensatory Grant element of funds received from the District Council, not the precept. The actual precept amount requested by the Town Council had been received in full from the District Council.

The Police had provided a report which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included details of each of the 19 crimes reported for Needham Market in the month of June 2015.

The member of public, Mr Alan Parsons, who was representing the Trustees of the Needham Market Institute and Club, gave brief details of the circumstances following the recent closure of the facility.

Cllr Phillips asked if the Institute building is Listed for planning purposes. A number of those present commented they thought no but, the building is located within the Needham Market Conservation Area.

C135/15 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Thursday 6th August – Meeting with Lyn Gash, Suffolk County Council’s Museum Development Manager

Saturday 15th August – VJ Parade and Wreath Laying Ceremony, Bury St Edmunds

Saturday 15th August – Uvedale Hall Summer Barbeque

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C136/15 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 included:

- Confirmation the period for Pre-submission (community) consultation on the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan (final draft version) has been extended to 8th September and this has been widely advertised
- Arrangements for submission of responses and the collation of responses following the end of the consultation period

The Clerk confirmed a survey response pro-forma is now available in hardcopy and it will also be posted on Council’s website.

Cllr R Campbell said he could set up a response option (using survey monkey with a link from the Town Council’s website) if Council wished. Council requested the Clerk to follow this up with Cllr R Campbell.

C137/15 To consider the withholding of Council Tax Compensation Grant by Mid Suffolk District Council.

Councillors reiterated their strong objections to the current position whereby the District Council is reducing the level of Council Tax Compensatory Grant by 25% year-on-year which will ultimately result in no grant being passed across once 2017/18 is reached.

Cllr Annis reported the Clerk had contacted the Suffolk Association of Local Councils who confirmed they are in the process of taking up the issue of withholding of Council Tax Compensatory Grant with the Minister for Communities and Local Government.

The Clerk provided information on the amounts of grant due, paid and withheld, both affecting the Town Council and in total across the Mid Suffolk District.

Cllr Phillips proposed a letter be sent to the local MP, the Minister for Communities and Local Government and Mid Suffolk District Council setting out Council’s objections. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C138/15 To consider a request from the Parish Church of St John the Baptist to work in partnership towards promoting the town.

Cllr Lea referred to an earlier occasion when the Town Council had successfully worked in partnership with the Parish Church.

Several Councillors commented the request should be acceded to and, following a request for volunteers to take the matter forward, Cllrs Lea, Phillips and Carter agreed to become involved and report back to Council accordingly.

Cllr Ward suggested use of Council's website to promote the Parish Church's roof repair fund-raising campaign.

Cllr Annis asked whether it would be worthwhile publishing an updated Needham Market Town Guide. Cllr Lea explained the circumstances (in the main lack of advertisement income) which caused Council to stop the publication of the Town Guide and suggested perhaps an up-to-date 'Town Trail' leaflet may be more suitable.

Cllr Phillips said a leaflet style publication could be included as an insert in a future edition of Council's monthly Newsletter.

C139/15 To consider a request, received from the Trustees of Needham Market Institute for support.

Cllr Annis described the Institute as a community asset which both the Town Council and Mid Suffolk District Council had an interest in preserving, if at all possible, and proposed, on that basis, the Town Council seek to arrange a meeting between the Institute Trustees, the Town Council and the District Council to initially gain more understanding between the parties and to assess whether it may be feasible to preserve the facility of the Institute either in its existing form or for some other purpose which would benefit the local community. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal.

Following discussion on the merits of the proposal made by Cllr Annis, Cllr Darnell made a counter proposal that Council provide a loan of £5,000 to the Institute Trustees. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal.

The Chairman called a vote on the proposal made by Cllr Annis. Council agreed the proposal. It was further agreed Cllrs Lea, Annis, R Campbell and Phillips, plus the Clerk, represent Council on this matter.

Cllr Darnell asked for his proposal to be put to a vote.

Cllr Lea explained the proposal made by Cllr Darnell could not be taken as an amendment to the proposal made by Cllr Annis, as it was in direct contradiction. Cllr Darnell accepted that explanation but pressed his proposal should nevertheless be put to a vote. Cllr Lea acceded and, on being put to the vote, the proposal was not carried.

C140/15 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 05.08.15:

C127/15 - Mid Suffolk Disability Forum notified by email 13th August of Cllr D Spurling's appointment

C128/15 – Letter sent 13th August to Trustees of Needham Market Institute

C129/15 – Letter from Parish Church of St John the Baptist emailed to Councillors 13th August and on 19th August meeting agenda

C129/15 – Aviva Cycling Event Poster included in September Newsletter
C129/15 – Notice of current Police survey included in September Newsletter
C129/15 – Notice of SCC disposal of surplus Middle School items included in September Newsletter

2. *Issues:*

- Needham Market Cricket Club – requesting security of tenure at Crowley Park for a duration of 10 years to allow the Club to pursue grants for the purpose of improving facilities

Cllr Philips referred to the tenure arrangement agreed, in the past, with Needham Market Football Club and proposed it would be appropriate to offer Needham Market Cricket Club an equivalent security of tenure. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal which Council agreed unanimously.

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Letter received 13th August from Needham Market & Barking Welfare Charities inviting Council to send a representative(s) to attend the Charities Annual General Meeting which will be held at Barking Village Hall on Thursday 8th October at 7:30pm

Cllr Ward agreed to attend as Council's representative.

C141/15 SECTIONS.

C141/15/1 Finance/General Purposes

C141/15/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

Cllr Annis referred to the accounts for payment which had been deferred from Council's 5th August meeting, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. Cllr Phillips proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Council agreed.

Cllr Annis presented the current meeting accounts for payment, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. Cllr Ward proposed they be adopted. Council agreed.

C141/15/1b To consider adoption of the 3 months accounts to 30th June 2015

Cllr Annis presented the three month accounts to 30th June 2015, which had been tabled at Council's 5th August meeting. There had been no questions arising and therefore Cllr Annis proposed their adoption, which Council agreed.

C141/15/1c To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Annis reported the F&GP Section is due to meet next on Tuesday 25th August at 10am in the Town Council Office.

C141/15/2 Recreation & Sport

C141/15/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips reported his current engagement in two issues, the first being replacement of the (garage) door of the Crowley Park store building and the second being control of weed growth on Crowley Park.

C141/15/3 Town Property and Services

C141/15/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes confirmed the Town Property and Services Section would next meet on Tuesday 8th September at 7pm in the Town Council Office.

Cllr Annis asked whether the notice board located on the Barretts Lane car park could be replaced. Cllr Oakes confirmed replacement of existing notice boards is included in the business to be discussed by the Section when it next meets.

C141/15/4 Newsletter

C141/15/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

There was no report.

C141/15/5 Planning.

C141/15/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following decisions had been received:

4031/14 - 13 Burton Drive - Conversion of existing garage and extension to front elevation porch to create annex accommodation. Erection of conservatory on rear elevation of extension.

Planning Permission has been Granted.

1052/15 – 10 Station Yard – Erection of storage shed for use of the Curry Inn and Flats 1 & 2.

Planning Permission has been Granted.

1559/15 - 11 Hawks Mill Street - Block up 1 no. external modern door. Remove one of the wooden framed windows and installation of smaller wooden window

Planning Permission has been Granted.

2133/15 – 10-12 Station Yard – Erection of Conservatory to increase available dining area

Planning Permission has been Granted.

2191/15 - 58 Stowmarket Road - Creation of dropped curb

Planning Permission has been Granted.

C141/15/5b To consider Planning Applications

Having declared an interest in the next item, Cllr Rowland temporarily left the meeting.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning application had been received:

2599/15 – 8 Clover Close – Erection of two-storey extension to side elevation (including single storey element to front elevation) and single-storey extension to rear elevation.

Cllr Stansfield said he observed the proposed extensions overlooked neighbouring properties and the applicant had not sought pre-application advice from the Planning Authority.

Cllr Stansfield proposed the application be recommended for refusal.

Cllr Mason suggested the application should be supported but on condition opaque glass is specified for windows which overlook neighbouring properties.

Cllr Stansfield said a recommendation for refusal would focus the Planning Authority on the grounds for that recommendation.

Cllr Mason asked whether a refusal would result in the applicant having to make a fresh application with subsequent cost. Cllr Stansfield said his understanding is relatively minor changes to planning applications, such as replacement of glass, would not incur a fresh application having to be made.

Cllr Ward seconded Cllr Stansfield's proposal to recommend refusal of the application. On being put to the vote, the proposal was carried by 6 votes for with 2 against.

Cllr Rowland returned to the meeting.

C141/15/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Stansfield had nothing further to report.

C141/15/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C141/15/6a 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. The report included:

- Advice Notice of Significant Road Closure at Barking – details of the forthcoming road closure (part or full) which will continue for several months as Anglian Water replace the water main which runs along the B1078 (information forwarded by the Clerk to Barking Parish Council not received from Suffolk County Council Highways)
- Cycling on Pavements – complaint received which has been forwarded to the local Police who are to give the problem their attention

Cllr Norris added he is chasing Suffolk County Council for a start date for the additional parking restrictions due to be implemented in the town.

Cllr Lea said she could not understand why the Town Council had not been notified directly by the County Council of the forthcoming road closure at Barking as many of the town's residents will be affected. This also applied to the series of recent road closures along the High Street for which no pre-warning had been received.

Cllr Oakes said she is aware the subject of cycling on pavements comes up regularly at Neighbourhood Watch meetings. Cllr Norris reiterated the problem will now be actively policed.

Cllr D Campbell said he thought the recent repairs to the road surface on Barking Road appeared to be poorly finished. Cllr Norris agreed but said he understands the County Council Highways contractors are due to return to resurface the road.

Cllr Mason said he was aware of the regularity with which road accidents occur at the 'Barking Bends' and suggested that twisty section of road should be improved alongside the planned works which would see the road closed over the next few months. Council agreed the Clerk write to Suffolk County Council with that suggestion.

Cllr Carter suggested the cycling on pavements issue should be referred to in the next edition of Council's monthly Newsletter. Council agreed.

C142/15 Questions under Standing Order 40.

There were none.

The Meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

Chairman Date