

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 16th November 2016 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr D Campbell – Holiday
Cllr I Mason – Holiday

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

Cllr Stansfield proposed three additional items be added to the agenda (7a,7b and 7c) all of which would allow for reports from recent meetings to be tabled. Council agreed.

C210/16 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 2nd November 2016.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 2nd November 2016 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C211/16 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment
Cllr JE Lea – Accounts for payment (Payment of Expenses)
Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters
Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment (Mayoral Expenses)

C212/16 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors 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. It included reference to:

- Cabinet Meeting November 15th – summary details from the agenda of items discussed including a review of the 2016/17 Forecast for Spending which highlighted over and underspends in individual service areas
- Devolution Update – final decision in the devolution process is approaching
- Sizewell C Plant Consultation – next stage of formal public consultation will run from the end of November to early February 2017
- New Highways Maintenance Plan – brief details including proposals for prioritising work and a more pro-active approach

County Councillor Truelove added the underspend referred to in the report relating to Adult and Community Services is a result of the inability of Suffolk County Council to recruit people into jobs.

Cllr Darnell asked what the County Council will do about the reported overspend of £8.1m forecast for its Children and Young People's Services. County Councillor Truelove replied the services will try and recover to the budgeted for position over the remainder of the financial year.

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:

- First Anniversary of the Great Run Local – the volunteer organisers of the run, which takes place every Sunday at Needham Lake, have been congratulated, with over three hundred participants turning up for the anniversary event
- Refreshment Van at Needham Lake – response to question raised at a previous Town Council meeting confirming the franchise is due for renewal April 2017 which may allow the opportunity to increase operational times
- Glass Recycling – response to a question raised at a previous Town Council meeting which set out the reasons why the District Council does not operate a household glass recycling service
- Recycling – correction provided to a previous report that the overall recycling rate was reducing as, when comparing 2014/15 to 2015/16, it increased from 44.78% to 45.67%
- Proposal for a Processing Plant on Land North of Roots and Shoots – the Planning Application has been withdrawn and the land is again being advertised for sale

Cllr Darnell commented he thought the annual percentage increase in recycling rate is very low. District Councillor Norris described and clarified some of the factors which affect the recycling rate.

The member of public present had no question to raise.

C213/16 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Sunday 6th November – First Anniversary of the Great Run Local, Needham Lake
 Thursday 10th November – Annual General Meeting of Needham Market Community Centre
 Thursday 10th November – Annual General Meeting of Needham Market Community Council
 Friday 11th November – Service of Remembrance, Barretts Lane Corner
 Sunday 13th November – Needham Market Remembrance Service, Christchurch

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C214/16 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris reported his repeated efforts to try and arrange a meeting with Mid Suffolk District Council to discuss the hiatus position affecting progression of the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan had at last reached the point where potential dates were being exchanged.

Cllr Norris referred to information received from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils regarding the Neighbourhood Planning Bill which is currently passing through Parliament bringing with it the promise of improvements in clarity about the status and timing of the impact of the neighbourhood planning system. He explained the Bill is particularly pertinent to the position the Town Council finds itself in, within a District where the Planning Authority (Mid Suffolk District Council) has failed to maintain its Local Plan and 5-year Housing Land Supply Policy and, read out a high-level summary of its objectives.

C215/16 To receive a report from the Needham Market Dementia Action Alliance Working Group.

Cllr Lea presented her report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to: training received by members; the subsequent formation of the Group; its objective and, activities it has undertaken and is planning.

Cllr Ward proposed Council support the initiative the Group has embarked on. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C216/16 To receive a report from the Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils held on 14th November

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

- the election of officials for the coming year
- the approval of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2015/16
- the subject (Neighbourhood Plans) of the address given by the guest speaker
- motions to be put forward for debate by the National Association of Local Councils

C217/16 To receive a report from the Mid Suffolk Town and Parish Liaison Meeting held on 10th November

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

- presentation on the joint Local Plan being created for the Mid Suffolk and Babergh Districts
- update on the Mid Suffolk District Council planning service
- presentation on Mid Suffolk District Council's proposed Public Access arrangements
- presentation on the Norfolk/Suffolk devolution proposal

Cllr Norris said despite having received past assurances from Mid Suffolk District Council it would not be moving its headquarters to Endeavour House, Ipswich nonetheless that is the decision the Council has now taken.

Cllr Ward commented his experience of Council's moving public access arrangements to 'single points' is disastrous as it inevitably creates queuing along with front line staff who have little knowledge of the Council's business. The proposed changes reflect Mid Suffolk District Council's objective of moving away from its constituents.

Cllr Norris said, in his District Councillor role, he would follow up the many unanswered questions which surround the District Council's intended move out of its own locality. Fundamental issues do not appear to have been thought through.

Cllr Annis described the consultation which has taken place on devolution as a mockery, contending that, for Suffolk, it has been a fait accompli from the outset.

C218/16 To receive a report from the meeting of the Gipsy Lane Level Crossing Design Group Panel held on 14th November

The member of public present (Mr Graham Oxenham) is a member of the Design Group Panel and he was requested by the Chairman to present his update report on progress with the proposal to close the Gipsy Lane pedestrian rail crossing and replace it with an alternative route. The report was tabled and a copy will be appended to the Minute Book.

The report focussed on the preferred alternative route which would provide a new footpath arrangement taking users under the railway line via an existing culvert. Viability and safety issues had been assessed and this is culminating in Network Rail organising a further public information event to be held at Needham Market Community Centre on 14th December to update the public on the results from the public consultation and the design development of the culvert option as the diversionary route.

The report described the next stage of the project which will include formal pre-planning advice from Mid Suffolk District Council. The report concluded with information from Network Rail, that it intends

to develop plans and undertake physical works, with the aim of closing the Gipsy Lane level crossing by the end of March 2019.

The report also included a very helpful table setting out the 'journey', from the fatality which occurred at the crossing in November 2011 and which initiated the call for closure, to date.

Cllr Carter asked if access via the culvert route would be affected by flooding issues. Mr Oxenham described the route arrangements in further detail including the means of mitigating potential flooding issues.

C219/16 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 02.11.16:

C208/16/6a – Information requested from SCC Roads and Transport Service regarding contingency arrangements in the event of extended closure of the Orwell Bridge Crossing

C209/16 – Agenda item added

2. Issues

- High Street Car Park – following application to Mid Suffolk District Council, Small Business Rate Relief has reduced liability (2016/17) from £1,320 to nil

3. Correspondence to be noted:

- Letter received 15th November from Anglian Water, giving advance notice that from April 2017 businesses (including public sector organisations) will be able to buy the retail element of water supply services, as is already the case with other utilities

C220/16 SECTIONS.

C220/16/1 Finance/General Purposes

C220/16/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

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

Cllr Phillips proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Carter seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C220/16/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Annis presented Minutes from the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Section held 15th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The meeting had discussed and resolved matters under:

- Town Council's Financial Management
- Town Council Risk Assessment
- Report on the current situation regarding the Institute and Club
- Budget for the financial year 2017/18

- Matters raised by Section Leaders
- Employment Committee Report

Cllr Phillips proposed the report be adopted. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C220/16/1c Adoption of Council's Risk Assessment 2016/17

Cllr Annis reported the Clerk had individually reviewed the 17 elements included in scope of the Council's Risk Assessment and produced a report on each. The outcome had been reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 15th November.

Cllr Lea proposed Council adopt the Risk Assessment for 2016/17. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C220/16/2 Recreation & Sport

C220/16/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips gave a brief verbal report which included the proposed Recreation and Sport Section budget for 2017/18.

C220/16/3 Town Property and Services

C220/16/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes presented Notes from the meeting of the Town Property and Services Section held 14th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The Section had discussed various matters including the imminent High Street Christmas Tree arrangements and the setting the Section budget for 2017/18.

Cllr Oakes requested support from Councillors towards the physical activities involved in preparation of the Christmas trees and their installation in the High Street. Cllr Phillips endorsed the request.

C220/16/4 Newsletter and Communications

C220/16/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea presented Notes from the meeting of the Newsletter and Communications Section meeting held on 8th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The meeting had resolved the Section budget for 2017/18, newsletter advert rates for 2017/18 and received an update on the review of the Town Council's website.

C220/16/5 Planning.

Cllr M Spurling presented Minutes from the Planning Section meeting held on 14th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C220/16/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr M Spurling reported no planning decisions had been received prior to the Section meeting although the following notice had since been received:

3934/16 – 16 Crowley Road – Erection of a two storey side extension and front porch

Planning Permission has been Granted.

C220/16/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr M Spurling reported the following planning applications had been received:

4051/16 – 107 High Street – Re-roof kitchen extension with clay peg tiles and re-roof two storey rear extension. Roof repairs to front elevation and re-point rear chimney.

Cllr M Spurling proposed Council recommend approval of the application. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

4403/16 – 7 Alexander Drive – Erection of a single storey front extension.

Cllr M Spurling proposed Council recommend approval of the application. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

4314/16 – Brambles, Gipsy Lane – Proposed two storey side extension and associated alterations together with conservatory.

Cllr M Spurling said the proposal may affect the residential property closest to the boundary on which the two storey extension would be erected but he had been unable to contact the occupier of that property.

Cllr Lea asked for details of the scale of the proposed extension which Cllr M Spurling provided.

Cllr Phillips proposed Council, in principle, recommend approval of the application subject to Cllr M Spurling contacting the occupier of the property referred to above. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

4427/16 - Lion Barn House, Maitland Road – Erection of 8 No. flats and associated vehicular access and external works following demolition of existing dwelling.

Cllr M Spurling said a planning application (3779/15) at the same location for the development of flats had been refused and the Town Council's reasons for objecting to that application remained valid and should be applied to this latest application.

The Clerk advised the consultation response date for Council to submit its comment to Mid Suffolk District Council is 6th December and the next Town Council meeting is the day after.

Cllr Phillips proposed Council should seek an extension of the consultation period to 8th December. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Norris said that he and District Councillor Wendy Marchant would attend the Planning Committee as and when the application is taken forward for consideration.

C220/16/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr R Campbell reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 5th December 2016 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C220/16/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C220/16/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris presented Notes from the Highways, Lighting and Footpaths Section meeting held on 16th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The meeting had discussed and resolved the Section budget for 2017/18 plus the following matters:

- Badley Bridge Railings – Suffolk County Council will not agree to repainting the railings due to the lead content of the current covering
- Speeding in the High Street during the night – details of Vehicle Activated Schemes, their cost and practicality

Cllr Norris said he had made a subsequent enquiry to Suffolk County Council to ask how much it would cost to replace the Badley Bridge Railings entirely. The estimated cost provided was a

minimum £5,000. He agreed to continue to pursue the matter as the railings present an eyesore to road users entering the town from the Stowmarket direction and it cannot be satisfactory the paint on the railings, being lead based, is being allowed to deteriorate and peel off, some of which drops into the watercourse below the bridge.

Cllr Ward suggested the Police should be requested to monitor for speeding traffic in the High Street. The Clerk advised, having held recent discussions with the Police, actual and not anecdotal evidence is required before Police will become involved in such matters. The Clerk agreed to include, in the December edition of the Town Council Newsletter, encouragement to members of the public to report actual incidents to the Police via the dial 101 telephone reporting system, plus to the Town Council Office. By that means a picture of the situation can be created and taken forward with the Police should it be warranted.

Cllr Darnell requested an item to discuss the problem further be included on the agenda for Council's 21st December meeting. Cllr Phillips proposed the matter be further discussed as requested by Cllr Darnell. Cllr Carter seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C221/16 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Annis asked Councillors if they are aware of the worsening state of a property situated off Mill Lane. He explained Mid Suffolk District Council has been attempting to resolve the problem for more than 10 years yet despite issuing Orders and making inspections they have failed to prevent the deterioration of the property which is covered with derelict buildings, vehicles, and all manner of materials including gas containers. A recent report by Mid Suffolk District Council's Senior Enforcement Officer highlighted the perfunctory attempts which had been made to enforce the owner to tidy the site. The report had concluded by describing four options open to the District Council. Three of the options would mean taking a course of action, the fourth was to do nothing further and close the case. The Officer's decision is to adopt the fourth option. Cllr Annis said he cannot accept that decision as it is incumbent on the District Council, which has the necessary authority and powers vested to it, to deal with and resolve the problem. Cllr Annis asked if Council supported his view. Council agreed.

Cllr Lea asked if Councillors were aware numbers from the uniformed organisations (Scouts etc.), invited to the recent Needham Market Remembrance Service, were restricted at the request of Christchurch, where the Service took place. Cllr Lea said the uniformed organisations welcome the invitation they receive from the Town Council to attend the Service and they acknowledged the restriction is not imposed by the Town Council. The Town Council has always encouraged maximum participation.

The Meeting closed at 8:49pm.

Chairman **Date**