

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 at 7:30pm.

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

**Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr TS Carter – Family Commitment

Cllr I Mason – Holiday

Cllr D Spurling – Unwell

Suffolk County Councillor Julia Truelove

**In Attendance:** District Councillor Wendy Marchant, one member of public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

**C009/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017.**

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**C010/17 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.**

Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters

Cllr X Stansfield - Accounts for Payment (Mayoral Expenses)

**C011/17 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.**

There was no County Councillor report.

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:

- Housing Workshop – held for District Councillors to think of new ways of helping solving the problem of the housing shortage and lack of affordability of housing for a lot of people
- Other Workshops Attended – District Councillors attended: Environment Task & Finish Panel; The Role of The Council, Local Enterprise Partnership and Boundary Review
- Confirmation of Public Access Point – when the District Council vacates its Needham Market HQ to go to Endeavour House, Ipswich a Customer Access Point will operate in Stowmarket at 54 Ipswich Street
- Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre – confirmation the reduction in annual payment from Stowmarket High School for use of Stowmarket Leisure Centre facilities, from £82,000pa to £35,000pa, is on an ongoing basis

Cllr Oakes asked where the sole future Mid Suffolk District Council Customer Access Point (54 Ipswich Street, Stowmarket) was located. District Council Marchant replied it is the building which served as a face-to-face Customer Access Point a few years ago when the District Council's customer service function was delivered in partnership with Suffolk County Council.

The member of public present had no question to raise.

**C012/17 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.**

The Mayor reported attending:

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January – 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration, Drift Court

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

**C013/17 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.**

Cllr Norris reported a meeting has been arranged with Mid Suffolk District Council representatives to take place on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February and he will report from that to Council's next meeting (15<sup>th</sup> February).

**C014/17 To receive an update on Council's response to the Application for Reserved Matters (Planning) for the SnOasis Project, Great Blakenham.**

Cllr Annis reported a response document summarising Council's comments has been drafted by the Clerk. Following receipt of an invitation for the Town Council to join the SnOasis Parish Alliance (SPA), which is reforming, the draft document was shared with parishes already committed to or considering joining the SPA. A subsequent invitation was received giving the opportunity for the Town Council's draft response to be presented to the initial meeting of the reformed SPA, that was held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January. Cllr Annis attended the SPA meeting and presented the draft response. The Parish Council representatives generally supported the Town Council's view and the Clerk of the SPA forwarded a copy, the following day, to all Parishes in scope of the SPA for their comment. A revised draft is expected shortly and, if it is acceptable to all, will be adopted as the formal response of the SPA to the Application for Reserved Matters.

Cllr Darnell asked firstly whether the SPA has accepted the SnOasis proposal has Outline Planning Approval and, secondly is not setting out to delay the process of the current application for Reserved Matters. Cllr Annis replied yes to the first point and commented the role of the SPA is to try and achieve the best outcome for all who will be impacted by development of SnOasis.

Cllr Annis added the SPA will require financial support which at present would be used to cover its administrative costs. The financial support required may be split prorata to the numbers of electors per parish.

Cllr Darnell proposed Council do not provide financial support to the SPA and, if Council chose to do so, a referendum should take place. There was no seconder.

Cllr Annis explained one reason behind the approach being suggested by the Town Council and which is likely to be formally adopted by the SPA, seeks to avoid communities potentially facing the high cost of employing planning experts. The overall costs of the SPA should remain, by contrast, relatively minimal.

Cllr Phillips proposed Council support the SPA by contributing to its administrative costs as indicated by Cllr Annis nonetheless withholding a decision on any further element of costs which may come about in due course. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council, by a majority vote, agreed the proposal.

**C015/17 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.**

1. *Actions from Town Council Meetings 18.01.17:*

**C007/17/5b** – Response sent 27<sup>th</sup> January to Suffolk County Council consultation on the application for variation of conditions at the Debrac Centre (copy in Misc. file)

2. *Issues:*

- Calendar of Council Meetings – revision to the Annual Town Council Meeting date from 17<sup>th</sup> May to 3<sup>rd</sup> May (to accord with Standing Orders)
- Cattle Tunnel Tree Removal – large redwood successfully cut down during week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> January (EADT article/photo in Misc. file)
- Provision of new public toilets – options being investigated

Cllr Phillips said he felt the option of procuring a portable building and cladding it externally represented a cost-effective approach and cited examples he has seen at sporting venues which provide adequate facilities and can be blended with their location using cladding. Cllr Lea agreed a portable building would be suitable as the basis for providing a new toilet facility at the rear of the High Street car park.

- Suffolk Local Policing Review – outstanding agenda item

Cllr Phillips said he has received feedback from town residents in relation to parking issues. District Councillor Marchant advised the District Council is due to consider the possibility of taking on parking enforcement at its next Executive meeting, the opportunity for which arises as a result of the recent enactment of The Civil Enforcement of Parking Regulations. Cllr Lea said she is aware Ipswich Borough Council has already taken on parking enforcement responsibilities but did not know whether its operational cost is being covered by income from the imposition of fines. District Councillor Marchant advised the Police will provide some financial support to the District Council if it takes on responsibility for parking enforcement but the process of change could take up to two years.

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Suffolk Local History Council email 20<sup>th</sup> January confirming its annual Society Day is to be held on March 4<sup>th</sup> at Blackbourne Hall, Emswell – the programme for the day can be seen on the SLHC website

The Clerk added an application for membership has been received from the Suffolk Preservation Society. The annual membership fee is £30. Cllr Carter is due to attend a Suffolk Preservation Society training course the fee for which is £40 but if the Town Council is a member, attendance is free.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council agree expenditure of £30 to become a member of the Suffolk Preservation Society. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**C016/17 SECTIONS.**

**C016/17/1 Finance/General Purposes**

**C016/17/1a 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 Annis proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**C016/17/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr Annis reminded Councillors a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Section is to be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February, the start time of which is now brought forward to 9:30am, when the main item will be the setting of the Council Tax precept for 2017/18.

**C016/17/2 Recreation & Sport**

**C016/17/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr Phillips reported he will shortly be sending out a Section meeting agenda.

**C016/17/3 Town Property and Services**

**C016/17/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Oakes thanked Cllrs D Campbell, Morris and Phillips for their recent help in taking down the Christmas trees in the High Street.

**C016/17/4 Newsletter and Communications**

**C016/17/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Lea reported a Section meeting will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February now at the revised start time of 11:30am in the Town Council Office to which all Councillors are invited to attend.

**C016/17/5 Planning.**

Cllr R Campbell reported no Planning Section meeting had been convened on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January due to insufficient business.

**C016/17/5a To receive Planning Decisions.**

Cllr R Campbell reported the following planning decisions had been received:

**3729/16 – St. John the Baptist Church, High Street - Replacement of render with lead to the clerestory.**

Planning permission has been granted

**4795/16 – Unit 15 Plot 5, Lion Barn Industrial Estate, Maitland Road – Change of use from vehicle repair shop (B2) to Canine Creche (sui generis).**

Planning permission has been granted

**C016/17/5b To consider Planning Applications**

Cllr R Campbell reported the following planning applications had been received:

**0022/17 – 20 High Street - Installation of 2 no. fixed hanging signs and 1 no. arched sign between existing facing masonry brick piers.**

Cllr Phillips said the proposed signage was going in an ideal position.

Cllr R Campbell proposed Council recommend approval of the application. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**0183/17 – Hawksmill House, 37 Hawksmill Street – Removal of Cypress leaning at 45% angle towards building approx. 6ft from watercourse.**

Cllr R Campbell proposed Council recommend approval of the application on condition the District Council's Tree Officer agrees with the application. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**C016/17/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr R Campbell reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

**C016/17/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths**

**C016/17/6a 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:

- Badley Bridge Railings – quotations received for two options for refurbishing the bridge railings at £4,800 and £9,300 respectively plus £1,200 in each case if hot dip galvanising is an additional requirement.
- Land to the north of Roots and Shoots, Badley – response received from a Mid Suffolk District Council Planning Enforcement Officer regarding the gated entrance to the site. They recommend no action be taken.
- Railway Improvement Works – reference to the schedule of works received from Network Rail to take place from 11<sup>th</sup> February to 9<sup>th</sup> April.

Cllr Lea commented it is a shame Network Rail does not send out its works information earlier as Council could include advance warning of it in its monthly newsletter.

Cllr Phillips asked if anything further had been received in respect of the fence erected across a public footway on Barking Road. Cllr Norris replied he has had no further contact from Suffolk County Council on the matter but would follow this up yet again.

Cllr M Spurling asked, if the Town Council took responsibility for the refurbishment of the Badley Bridge railings, would that mean taking responsibility for the railings in the future. Cllr Stansfield replied the Town Council is having to take its current course as Suffolk County Council will not carry out the necessary work and it will be imperative should the Town Council arrange and pay for refurbishment, an agreement is made with Suffolk County Council that this in no way implies future responsibility rests with the Town Council.

Cllr Darnell suggested, now costs for refurbishment of the Badley Bridge railings are known, whether Council should arrange and pay for the works should be an item included on a future Town Council meeting agenda. It was agreed by Council the suggested way forward was premature. Suffolk County Council has yet to reply to the long outstanding request for the cost for them to carry out the work and, if it becomes necessary, it is unknown whether the Town Council can be given authority to carry out the work. Cllr Phillips said Suffolk County Council should be pursued harder to get them to take what is their responsibility for necessary work. Cllr Norris replied he has strived to make that point to Suffolk County Council Highways but they remain adamant the bridge railings will need to deteriorate to a state of total disrepair before they will act.

Cllr R Campbell said he remembered one of the options previously discussed was whether the Badley Bridge railings could be clad and, asked if had this been followed up. Cllr Norris said his priority had been to get quotations for refurbishment but he will now request further costings for any cladding solution that may be practical.

Cllr Phillips suggested that when all the facts and figures regarding the Badley Bridge railings are in place, the Town Council release a press statement so that members of the public become aware of how Suffolk County Council is neglecting its responsibilities for Highways maintenance.

Cllr R Campbell reported seeing several bags containing dog waste which are either discarded in or hanging on hedging in the Hill House Lane area. The Clerk said he would refer to the problem in the March edition of Council's newsletter.

The Clerk referred to the many reports received regarding potholes, particularly in the Coddendam Road railway bridge area. On checking the Suffolk County Council on-line report system it is clear the County Council's Highways service is not treating pothole repair as a priority. The numerous reports are classified category 6 repairs which shows a response time for work to start of within 14 calendar weeks. Cllr Darnell said he noticed the potholes had been outlined with yellow paint. The Clerk displayed a photograph from the County Council website showing a pothole lined in yellow paint but with an explanation that if the pothole sits within a broader area of road requiring repair it will not be treated until the works to carry out the surrounding road area are undertaken.

Cllr Ward said many potholes cause vehicles to stray across the carriageway endangering other traffic. Cllr Annis added potholes have a tendency of rapidly deteriorating further and their condition should be monitored and reclassified by the County Council, as necessary.

Cllr Phillips reported the recently repaired road surface at the Stowmarket Road end of the High Street again shows signs of sinking. Cllr Norris said this has been reported to the County Council's Highways service and they had advised don't worry about it.

**C017/17 Questions under Standing Order 40.**

Cllr Darnell asked if Councillors were aware Cllr Mason is due to return to Suffolk on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

**The Meeting closed at 8:40pm.**

**Chairman .....**      **Date .....**