

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 17th May 2017 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr R Campbell – Study
Cllr TS Carter - Holiday
Cllr AL Ward – Family Commitment

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Anne Whybrow, District Councillor Wendy Marchant, 7 members of public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C090/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held 3rd May 2017.

The Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 3rd May 2017 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C091/17 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)
Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters
Cllr KMN Oakes – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)
Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for Payment
Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)

C092/17 To receive an update from Mid Suffolk District Council on the future of the Needham Market Middle School site and the Council's Needham Market Headquarters building and, reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

Cllr Stansfield welcomed the Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council Councillor Nick Gowrley, Assistant Director Louise Rawthorne and a consultant engaged by the District Council.

The Leader of the District Council delivered a discourse on the broad ambition the District Council holds to become a catalyst of regeneration.

As far as Needham Market is concerned and, starting with the District Council Office site (following their departure to Ipswich later this year), they are to appoint a Design Panel Team to come up with redevelopment schemes. A mix of development was referred to, to include possibly any of; housing, employment, retail, health and care. It was confirmed the public car park on Hurstlea Road is within scope of the redevelopment area. The District Council estimates it will be 12 to 18 months before redevelopment commences. A 'Sounding Board' is to be established and the Town Council will be able to nominate a representative to join its proposed 6-weekly meetings. Consultants engaged by the District Council predict there will be a negative socio-economic impact on the town but only in the short-term. Their opinion is the initial negative impact will be mitigated by workers coming to the town during the construction phase and, in due course, residents of new dwellings on the site will spend their money in the town. The District Council's hope is that, in the long-term, regeneration of the site will help Needham Market thrive.

The District Council's proposal for the former Middle School site is to develop it for a mix of market and affordable housing. The District Council is seeking a development partner to manage the subsequent new housing. A new 'Community Hub' building will be included in the development. It is hoped work will start on physical development around April/May 2018. The formal Planning process will provide the opportunity for the local community to consider and comment on whatever proposal is put forward.

The audience put questions to the District Council representatives. Concerns were raised regarding the socio-economic impact of the move of the District Council out of the town and the prospect Needham Market may follow in the path of Stowmarket particularly as recurrent proposals which have sought to regenerate the core of Stowmarket have floundered over many years.

More specific questions were posed regarding the former Middle School site, in particular relating to access. No satisfactory assurances were forthcoming.

Chairman of Town Council Xy Stansfield thanked the representatives from the District Council for attending, but not without expressing the view that the District Council, in relation to its approach to the future of Needham Market, has drawn a veil across its decision-making processes, largely abandoned meaningful consultation and stunted the flow of information.

There was no County Councillor report (County Councillor Whybrow is currently being inducted to her new role).

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:

- River Gipping Trust – Annual meeting attended
- Access for All, Needham Market Railway Station – information on the current campaign which includes a petition

Cllr Mason commented Network Rail operates a taxi facility for people with insufficient mobility to allow access to the Needham Lake side Needham Market railway station platform, but they have no record of it being used plus, he recommended the bus route into Ipswich as another alternative. Cllr Stansfield acknowledged the taxi facility exists but doubted whether it delivered a feasible option for people with limited mobility. District Councillor Marchant added she is aware the taxi facility is not a straightforward option.

C093/17 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Sunday 7th May – Community Centre Music Concert

Tuesday 16th May – Dementia Friendly Group meeting held at Christchurch

Wednesday 17th May - Planning Committee held at Mid Suffolk District Council Offices

Cllr Lea thanked Cllr Stansfield for attending the Dementia Friendly Group and for his becoming a 'dementia friend'.

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C094/17 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris presented his report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included agenda items for the Working Group meeting taking place on Thursday 18th May with an invitation all Councillors will be welcome to attend.

C095/17 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 03.05.17:

C087/17 – Email sent 8th May to the Headteacher, Bosmere Community Primary School, regarding the parking issues related to the school

2. Issues:

- Internet Café – update

Cllr Lea gave background information on the Internet Café plus the latest position, as indicated on its Facebook page and, suggested the Town Council keep a watching brief mindful of having recently passed over a grant of £1,000. Cllr M Spurling reported it is possible that he and Cllr D Spurling may take over the operation of the Internet Café.

Cllr Lea recommended the Town Council support the continued operation of the Internet Cafe, if that comes about, the detail to be overseen by the Town Clerk. Council agreed.

- Public Toilet – A meeting has been arranged with a local Planning Agent to take place, on site, on Friday 9th June

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Copy letter dated 4th May, sent to a resident by the East of England Co-op regarding the Barking Road Food Store car park
- Letter dated 10th May from Citizens Advice, Stowmarket thanking Council for the £1,000 grant awarded
- Letter dated 11th May from Needham Market Neighbourhood Watch requesting grant support

Council agreed the grant request received from Needham Market Neighbourhood Watch should be an agenda item for its 7th June meeting.

C096/17 SECTIONS.

C096/17/1 Finance/General Purposes

C096/17/1a 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 Mason proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Norris seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C096/17/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Annis said he was standing down as Section Leader in accordance with the Section's resolution recommending Section Leaders/Members should rotate their commitment over the scope of the Council's numerous Sections.

Cllr Annis proposed Cllr Morris as Finance & General Purposes Section Leader for 2017/18. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Annis confirmed the next meeting of the Section will take place on Tuesday 6th June at 10am in the Town Council Office.

C096/17/2 Recreation & Sport

C096/17/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Stansfield referred to Council's resolution made at the Annual Town Council Meeting held on 3rd May to defer the election of a Section Leader for 2017/18.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Cllr Phillips as Section Leader for 2017/18. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C096/17/3 Town Property and Services

C096/17/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes presented Notes from the Section meeting held on Tuesday 25th April which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The Notes included updates on the following:

- Queen's birthday memorial plaque
- Bus shelter refurbishment
- Replacement of Notice Boards
- The (edge of) Town Signs

C096/17/4 Newsletter and Communications

C096/17/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr M Spurling presented Minutes from the Section meeting held on Wednesday 10th May which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The Minutes included the following items:

- Cllr Lea elected to Deputy Section Leader
- Town Council Website – work on a new website to be taken forward by Cllrs Carter and M Spurling
- Newsletter – ways to improve the Newsletter discussed

Cllr Phillips commented he remembered a time when the Newsletter included competitions which were popular. Cllr Lea confirmed inclusion of competitions was discussed at the Section meeting.

C096/17/5 Planning.

Cllr M Spurling reported no Section meeting had taken place on Monday 15th May due to insufficient business.

C096/17/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

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

0130/17 – 137 High Street - Installation of a metal energy panel on recessed part of external wall.

Planning Consent has been Granted.

1112/17 – 142 High Street – To change the roof above existing extension from flat roof to double pitch roof. Change colour from purple to cappuccino.

Planning Consent has been Granted.

1239/17 – 6 Freehold Road - Erection of 2 storey side extension

Planning Consent has been Granted.

C096/17/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr M Spurling reported no planning applications had been received.

C096/17/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr M Spurling reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 5th June 2017 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

Cllr Annis reported the next meeting of the SnOasis Parish Alliance will take place on Tuesday 23rd May, which he will attend. The meeting will focus on the latest notice received from Mid Suffolk District Council in relation to Planning Application reference 4494/16, which is a major application seeking approval of Reserved Matters over the full scope of the proposed development (phases 1-8).

Cllr Stansfield complimented the town's District Councillors, Mike Norris and Wendy Marchant, for actively supporting the recommendation of refusal in relation to the planning application which proposed redevelopment of the Lion Barn House site. Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Committee went with that recommendation and refused the application.

C096/17/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C096/17/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris presented Notes from the Section meeting held 11th May, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. They included reference to:

- Fence Barking Road – draft report dated 12th May received, which when finalised will be submitted to the County Council's Rights of Way Committee, being held at 10am on Wednesday 21st June.
- Gas Main replacement along the B1113 Needham Market to Stowmarket – works due to be completed by the end of March remain ongoing.

Cllr Norris added he now understands the Gas Main replacement works on the B1113 may now extend until the summer and completion of the entire project may not now be until November/December this year.

Cllr Mason asked what the latest position is regarding the relocation of HGV signage at Foxglove Avenue. Cllr Norris said he would seek clarification from the County Council.

Cllr Lea reported she has noticed Stowmarket Town Council workers prepare and repaint bridge railings at Stowmarket, similar to those at Badley Bridge.

C097/17 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Norris asked if Councillors are aware he will be standing down from Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Committee. Wendy Marchant is to be his replacement.

The Meeting closed at 9:15pm.

Chairman **Date**