

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 21st June 2017 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr JE Lea - Holiday

In Attendance: District Councillor Wendy Marchant, Arthur Charvonja Chief Executive Mid Suffolk/Babergh District Councils, eight members of public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C109/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 7th June 2017.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 7th June 2017 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C110/17 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr S Phillips – Planning (5 Crowley Road)

Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment (Mayoral Expenses)

C111/17 To welcome and receive an address from Arthur Charvonja, Chief Executive, Mid Suffolk/Babergh District Councils To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

Arthur Charvonja, recently appointed Chief Executive, Mid Suffolk/Babergh District Councils addressed the meeting, initially providing details of his career to date followed by a description of his ambitions in his new role. He stated the impending relocation of the District Councils out of their administrative areas (they will be the only councils in the country to do this) is sending a negative message to their constituents. He added the two Councils have an 'identity crisis' and his aim is to rebrand them including adoption of a single set of 'values'.

The Chairman invited questions. The questions posed included references to:

- The future of the Hurstlea Road public car park following the District Council's move out of Needham Market
- The recent change of governance arrangements at Mid Suffolk District Council from an Executive/Scrutiny model to a Leader/Cabinet model
- Meaningful consultation with the local community prior to Mid Suffolk District Council embarking on formal proposals for the future of its office headquarters and former Needham Market Middle School sites
- The potentially damaging impact on the local business community from Mid Suffolk District Council's decision to vacate its Needham Market office headquarters
- The lack of understanding on the part of Mid Suffolk District Council as to what is important to people with reference to its failure to maintain an up-to-date Local Plan or a 5-year Housing Land Availability Policy, both of which are critical to protect communities from inappropriate development
- Incongruity of decision making between Councils which has led to Needham Market Middle School having been shut and abandoned since July 2015 whilst Bosmere Primary School is bursting at the seams
- The systems in place which have fuelled the housing crisis and particularly the lack of affordable housing
- The Right to Buy scheme for Council/Housing Association properties, its operation and where proceeds from it go

The Chairman thanked Arthur Charvonia for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned for five minutes to allow those who wished to leave prior to moving on to the remainder of Council's business, to do so.

There was no County Councillor's 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:

- Grants for Local Organisations, Locality Awards – our two Needham Market District Councillors have a total of £12,500 to distribute
- Flooding, Barretts Lane – meeting held with residents and a Suffolk County Council Officer
- More Houses Planned for the Mid Suffolk District – five different developers have proposals to develop housing in the parish of Thurston
- Planning Application for New Housing off Barking Road – the 14th June Planning Committee deferred a decision pending a site visit taking place

The Members of Public present had no question to raise.

C112/17 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Friday 9th June – meeting with Planning Agent regarding new public toilets

Friday 9th June – Thetford Mayor's Civic Reception

Tuesday 13th June – Boundary Commission presentation held at Bildeston

Wednesday 14th June – Planning Committee, Mid Suffolk District Council (Hopkins Homes proposed development off Barking Road)

Saturday 17th June – Strawberry Fayre, Alder Carr Farm (awarding prizes)

Sunday 18th June – Mayor of Felixstowe's Civic Service

Wednesday 21st June – Mayor of Ipswich's launch of 'Suffolk Day'

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C113/17 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris reported the Mid Suffolk District Council Neighbourhood Plan Officer has offered to deliver a briefing to the NMNPWG and potential dates for that are awaited.

C114/17 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 07.06.17:

C103/17 – Request for accounts plus expenditure information sent 20th June to Needham Market Neighbourhood Watch

C104/17 – Notice to Mid Suffolk District Council regarding Hurstlea Road car park not yet sent

2. Issues:

- Electoral Review of Mid Suffolk – current consultation on ward patterns closes on 14th August

- Mid Suffolk District Council Planning Pre-Application Charges – charges for advice being introduced from 1st July

Cllr Phillips suggested charging for pre-application advice will dissuade people from taking that opportunity which will, in due course, make the planning process even slower than it is currently.

Cllr Mason commented Mid Suffolk District Council's planning processes remain horrendously slow and cited an example he is personally involved with.

Cllr Mason proposed the Town Council should send an objection to Mid Suffolk District Council, copied to our local Member of Parliament, regarding its decision to introduce charges for pre-planning advice, the fact it includes charges for Town and Parish Councils seeking advice and it is clear from the scale of charges they are heavily weighted towards disadvantaging householders who wish to, for example, simply extend their property. The objection to also include the question as to where the additional income from the charges will go. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

- Tour of Britain (Cycling) Event Funding – funding available to support related events

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Invitation to Councillors to attend the Simply Brass (Youth Brass Band) concert at NM Community Centre on Saturday 15th July starting at 7pm

C115/17 SECTIONS.

C115/17/1 Finance/General Purposes

C115/17/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

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

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

C115/17/1b Accounts for Year Ending 31st March 2017

Cllr Morris proposed the accounts for Year Ending 31st March 2017 be adopted. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal

C115/17/1c Confirmation and signing of Annual Audit Return for Year Ending 31st March 2017

Cllr Morris read out the relevant questions (1 to 8) shown on the Annual Audit Return. In every case Council confirmed it is satisfied the relevant responsibilities and obligations have been adhered to and therefore the 'Yes' box on the Return should be completed in each case.

On completion of the Return, it was duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting Cllr Stansfield and by the Clerk, as the Proper Officer.

C115/17/1d To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Morris had nothing further to report.

C115/17/2 Recreation & Sport

C115/17/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips had nothing to report.

C115/17/3 Town Property and Services

C115/17/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes had nothing to report.

C115/17/4 Newsletter and Communications

C115/17/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr M Spurling had nothing to report.

C115/17/5 Planning.

Cllr R Campbell presented Minutes from the Planning Section Meeting held on Monday 19th June, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C115/17/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

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

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

Planning Consent has been Refused.

1618/17 – 43 Jubilee Crescent – Erection of a single storey rear extension

Planning Consent has been Granted.

C115/17/5b To consider Planning Applications

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

1824/17 - Hill House, Hill House Lane - Application for Consent to Carry Out Works to Tree(s) protected by a Tree Preservation Order

The Section recommended that the application is passed to the Arboricultural Officer at MSDC for consideration. Council agreed the recommendation.

1629/17 – 5 Crowley Road - Erection of 2 storey side extension

The Section recommended approval.

Cllr Mason proposed Council agree the recommendation. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

1850/17 – Unit 4, 3 Station Yard – Change of Use of Commercial Land to Residential and Erection of 2 no. 2.5 storey Attached Dwellings Following Demolition of Existing Buildings.

Having discussed the application and concerns regarding how the site would be able to accommodate the proposed dwellings, providing suitable car parking and access it was decided that a site visit would be helpful and so Section Members made an impromptu site visit. Whilst it was agreed that the existing building(s) are in poor condition and the proposed dwellings would provide a positive effect on the locality, concerns about potential access to the site would appear justified. It was noted that on the plans provided (image 4) on the Taylor Wimpey site there is a barrier across the proposed access to the applicant's site which would have to be removed otherwise the only access would be through a narrow access drive via Station Yard. If access to the development is through Jubilee Crescent the Section recommended approval of this application however, if the only means of access is via Station Yard the Section recommended refusal.

Cllr R Campbell proposed Council agree the recommendations as described above. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C115/17/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr R Campbell reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 3rd July 2017 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

Cllr Annis, in his capacity as the Town Council representative on the SnOasis Parish Alliance, presented a comprehensive summary of the sustainability issues which are apparent in the latest applications seeking Approval for Reserved Matters attached to the Planning Approval in place to carry out the development of SnOasis. He described where the application failed to meet sustainability criteria, which includes the dropping, from the detail of the development proposal, of the commitment to create a railway station at Great Blakenham included in the original design and intended to serve SnOasis.

C115/17/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths
C115/17/6a 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:

- Fence Barking Road – the Suffolk County Council Rights of Way Committee has resolved to add the two routes in question, one of which is blocked by a fence, to the definitive footpaths map. There is a right of objection to the decision which is open for a 6-week period.
- HGV Signage at Foxglove Avenue – clarification being sought as to why the HGV restriction signs cannot be added to the existing road sign posts.
- Badley Bridge Railings – still awaiting feedback from Suffolk County Council on suggested ways of dealing with the poor appearance of the railings
- Review of Street Furniture and Signage in the Town – list of issues identified following a ‘tour’ of the town, of which a number will be referred to Suffolk County Council

Cllr Norris proposed Council endorse the suggested way forward attached to an item identified on the list created following the review of street furniture and signage in the town, that is corresponding with residents/businesses who are allowing weed growth along the curtilage of their High Street property. Cllr Carter seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C116/17 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Mason asked if Councillors are aware of the numerous pathways in the town which are subject to overgrowth.

The Meeting closed at 9:18pm.

Chairman **Date**