

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 6th December 2017 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr X Stansfield (In the Chair), Councillors; BE Annis, R Campbell, RP Darnell, JE Lea, MG Norris and M Spurling.

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr D Campbell - Holiday
Cllr TS Carter - Unwell
Cllr I Mason - Holiday
Cllr A Morris – Work Commitment
Cllr KMN Oakes - Unwell
Cllr S Phillips – Family Commitment
Cllr D Spurling - Unwell
Cllr AL Ward - Unwell

County Councillor Anne Whybrow
District Councillor Wendy Marchant

In Attendance: 4 Members of Public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C207/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 15th November 2017.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 15th November 2017 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C208/17 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment
Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment

C209/17 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 had provided a District Councillors report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to:

- New Public Toilets in Needham Market – meeting held with Planning and Conservation Officers
- MSDC Full Council 23rd November – main subject was the Boundary Commission's Report on proposed new Wards for District Councillors after the 2019 District Council elections
- MSDC Cabinet 4th December – issues included: need for a new swimming pool; Homelessness Prevention Officer to be appointed, high staff sickness rate and lack of facilities at the Stowmarket Drop in Centre
- Access for All, Needham Market Railway Station – Stakeholder Equality Group meeting being held on 6th December

Cllr R Campbell asked if the cost of the District Council's move to Endeavour House, Ipswich is known. District Councillor Norris said that question has been raised but it has been suggested no financial details will be released until the end of the current fiscal period when the District Council produces its 'outturn'. Without figures being available, it allows no grounds on which to challenge the District Council's economic rationale for the move. Cllr Annis said he felt it extraordinary the District Council was not advising the public on the outcome of its move.

The Clerk agreed to circulate the District Council's 'business case' on which the decision to relocate to Endeavour House was made.

Two members of public present expressed concerns regarding the outline planning application (DC/17/05549) for a new housing development off Stowmarket Road and asked whether the Town Council's engaging a consultant to look into the feasibility of a relief road connecting Stowmarket Road to Barking Road was premature. Cllr Stansfield explained the background to the Town Council's engagement with AECOM which has been arranged via central government support and which is part of the taking forward of the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan. He added the move by the Town Council is partly to gain some strategic control of future development in the context of Mid Suffolk District Council's failure to maintain its Local Plan and 5-year Housing Land Availability Policy. Cllr R Campbell suggested the District Council should be held accountable for its failures. Cllr Norris said the District Council has acknowledged its failings and improvements are being implemented in an area of its jurisdiction which has been a problem for many years.

C210/17 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Friday 17th November – meeting with a Planning Consultant from AECOM, including visits to various locations on the northern/western boundary of the town.

The Deputy Mayor was not present.

C211/17 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 details of a meeting held with a consultant from AECOM held on 17th November and feedback from the briefing received by District Council Members on 29th November on Neighbourhood Plans in the Mid Suffolk District.

Cllr Norris raised questions regarding the exactitude of Mid Suffolk District Council's reporting of Neighbourhood Planning taking place across its District. Cllr Annis said it is well known Neighbourhood Planning in the Mid Suffolk District is thwarted by the District Council's failure to meet its strategic planning obligations and, in the few places Neighbourhood Plans have been completed, housing development proposals have already overridden Neighbourhood Plans by virtue of that failure.

C212/17 To receive a report from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils Area Meeting 29th November.

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

- Details provided by speakers on the proposed changes to school transport in Suffolk
- Information from Elmswell regarding the impact Mid Suffolk District Council's failure to maintain a 5-year Housing Land Availability Policy is having on the local community
- Concerns raised regarding implementation of the new General Data Protection Regulation

C213/17 To consider a request for financial support received from Barking Parish Council in relation to the upkeep of the churchyard at St May's Church, Barking.

The Clerk read out the request received from Barking Parochial Church Council and apologised Barking Parish Council had been referred to in the agenda item.

Cllr Lea reminded Councillors of the financial support the Town Council provides towards the upkeep of Needham Market Burial Ground and the significant increase in that support which has recently been resolved.

Cllr Annis said he is not in favour of agreeing the request when the Town Council is empowered to support the town's burial ground and accepts the duty to do so as a key priority.

The Clerk provided information on the level of financial support provided by Barking Parish Council to Barking Parochial Church Council towards the upkeep of the churchyard at St Mary's Church, Barking and the granting of funds to charity by Barking Parish Council.

Cllr Lea proposed the request be refused. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C214/17 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 15.11.17:

C200/17 – email to Bosmere Primary School 16th November thanking them for supporting the Remembrance events

C204/17 – Barking PCC request on agenda

2. Issues:

- Town Council Meetings 2018 – single meeting in January (17th)
- New Temporary Public Toilets – update on Planning Application

Cllr Lea said Mid Suffolk District Council's current refusal of planning approval for the siting of temporary public toilets in a Conservation Area is utterly contradictory to their lack of attention to resolving the far more noticeable eyesore premises which are also in the Conservation Area and have deteriorated for years within a very short distance of the proposed site for the toilets. District Councillor Norris said this point has been raised with the District Council and their response is "two wrongs do not make a right". Cllr Stansfield referred to the pre-application advice received from the District Council which was adhered to in the planning application and, in view of the District Council's failures and inabilities, it is appalling a simple means of addressing a critical public need is obstructed.

The Clerk said he is aware the District Council is suggesting future funds realised from s.106 (Developer Contributions) may become available for a permanent toilet building to be built. The Town Council's current proposal to site a temporary building is mindful of the immediate critical public need for public toilet facilities whilst, at the same time acknowledging a permanent solution is desirable for the longer-term. That is the premise on which the planning application was made. The availability of funds from the Developer Contribution source is reasonably predictable but the timescale may not produce an outcome for some time, particularly as the District Council would effectively have a degree of control over that outcome.

3. Correspondence to be noted:

- Letter received 17th November from Jo Churchill MP providing information on a community project, that will be run throughout the United Kingdom to mark 100 years since the end of the First World War, taking place on 11th November next year
- Email dated 1st December from the ASB & Crime Reduction Officer, Stowmarket Safer Neighbourhood Scheme warning of theft from motor vehicles in the Stowmarket locality

- Email dated 4th December from Suffolk Association of Local Councils regarding Appointment on the SALC Board

The Clerk read out an email received from Mid Suffolk District Council that afternoon which conveyed, with no explanation, they would no longer be sending representatives to the Town Council's 20th December meeting to update the Town Council and the public on its proposals for its former Needham Market Headquarters site. Councillors reacted very angrily to the news particularly as the meeting has been well publicised via the Needham Market Newsletter and social media and, was undoubtedly attracting a high-level of interest amongst the local community. District Councillor Norris said he is aware a District Council briefing for its Members, which would have preceded the 20th December Town Council meeting, has been postponed until January.

Cllr Annis proposed a strong complaint be registered with the District Council citing pre-publicity and arrangements put in place for the meeting having to be cancelled plus, the let-down in light of public interest further damages council repute. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C215/17 SECTIONS.

C215/17/1 Finance/General Purposes

C215/17/1a 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 Lea proposed the accounts for payment be adopted with one exception. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C215/17/1b To receive and adopt the Council's Risk Assessment 2017/18

The Clerk reported having concluded the Council's Risk Assessment for 2017/18 and presented a hardcopy of the 17 risk factors, for inspection.

Cllr Annis thanked the Clerk for carrying out the Risk Assessment 2017/18 and proposed it be adopted. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C215/17/1c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Annis presented Notes from the Finance and General Purposes Section meeting held on 5th December, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

The meeting had considered the setting of Council's Budget Requirement for 2018/19. Aggregation of the individual Section budgets submitted, along with budgets for Administration, Grants and Donations, Neighbourhood Planning and Needham Market Burial Ground, totalled £107,500, which is the same as for 2017/18. The breakdown is as shown below:

Administration	£44,000
Highways Lighting & Footpaths	£13,500
Town Property and Services	£21,000
Grants and Donations	£4,000
Recreation and Sport	£15,000
Newsletter and Communications	£3,000
Neighbourhood Planning	£5,000

Needham Market Burial Ground	£2,000
Total Budget	£107,500

Cllr Annis proposed adoption of the Notes from the Section meeting, inclusive of the Budget for 2018/19. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C215/17/2 Recreation & Sport

C215/17/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was no report.

C215/17/3 Town Property and Services

C215/17/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes had provided a report from the Section meeting held on 21st November, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C215/17/4 Newsletter and Communications

C215/17/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr M Spurling reported a Section meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th December at 7:30pm in the Town Council Office.

C215/17/5 Planning.

Cllr R Campbell presented Notes from the Planning Section meeting held on 4th December, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C215/17/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

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

DC/17/03036 - Unit 7, Williamsport Way - Erection of new warehouse and manufacturing building with link connection to existing manufacturing building; Erection of two-storey extension to existing building to provide office/training/studio space, with facilities; Re-location of existing oil tank and generator to rear of existing building; and creation of additional car parking and on-site turning and manoeuvring space.

Planning Permission has been Granted.

DC/17/04906 - Unit 4 Plot 11, Lion Barn Industrial Estate, Maitland Road - Change of use of unit from B1 Light Industrial to D1 Education & Training (Full and part time training/tuition/classes in speech and drama/dance/singing/acting)

Planning Permission has been granted

DC/17/05126 - 27 Quinton Road - Erection of two storey side extension (following demolition of existing single storey side extension)

Planning permission has been granted

Appeal Reference: 1239/17 - Land to rear of 8 Freehold Road - Completion of building/dwelling commenced under previous planning approval 1093/99 including amendments and extension to form 2no. dwellings and associated parking.

Planning Permission has been granted on Appeal

DC/17/05388 – 17 Morris Way – Erection of single storey rear and front extension

Planning permission has been granted

C215/17/5b To consider Planning Applications

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

DC/17/05549 – Land North West of Hill House Lane - Outline Application – Erection of 64 No. dwellings (including 22 No. affordable homes) with vehicular access from Stowmarket Road together with 2 No. dwellings accessed from Hill House Lane.

Cllr R Campbell reported the developers applying for outline planning permission attended the Section meeting at 7:30pm to provide further details regarding their proposal. He had informed the applicants that the required statutory notices to advertise this development had not been displayed – the applicants agreed and advised him to contact Mid Suffolk District Council regarding this. Cllr Stansfield informed the applicants that the Town Council were investigating the possibility of creating a relief road to run between Stowmarket Rd and Barking Rd. The applicants were in agreement that the road would benefit the town and unlock the sites identified by Mid Suffolk District Council as potential for housing whilst at the same time providing a newly defined development boundary. The developers described their aspirations for the site which included housing which would be sympathetic to the surrounding area and a commitment to provide the designated number of affordable dwellings according with the overall development.

Cllr R Campbell reiterated Mid Suffolk District Council had failed to display statutory notices advertising the planning application and therefore the consultation process was invalid.

Cllr Stansfield proposed the question of compliance with the planning process be raised with Mid Suffolk District Council but if there are no grounds for challenge, the Planning Section be delegated to decide the application, that decision to be submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C215/17/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr R Campbell reported the Section will next meet on Monday 18th December 2017 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C215/17/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C215/17/6a 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.

Cllr Norris added he has received a response from Suffolk County Council regarding the action being taken to remove a fence placed across an established footpath, off Barking Road. The Suffolk County Council Officer dealing with the case hopes to be able to submit an Order to the Planning Inspectorate by 8th December.

C216/17 Questions under Standing Order 40.

There were no questions.

The Meeting closed at 9.02pm.

Chairman Date