

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 February 2018 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr R Campbell – Work Commitment
Cllr RP Darnell - Holiday
Cllr I Mason – Holiday
Cllr A Morris - Work Commitment
Cllr M Spurling - Work Commitment

In Attendance: County Councillor Anne Whybrow, District Councillor Wendy Marchant, one member of public and the Town Clerk.

C023/18 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 7th February 2018.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 7th February 2018 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Stansfield proposed a vote of thanks to the Clerk for articulating the business covered by the 7th February meeting accurately and comprehensively.

C024/18 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)
Cllr KMN Oakes - Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)
Cllr X Stansfield - Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)

C025/18 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

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

- Suffolk School Travel Consultation – latest developments and advice specific to how some children in Needham Market may be affected by the proposed changes
- Suffolk County Council Highways Service – update on changes to road signage proposed by the Town Council, one of which will result in a new sign being put in place but, the other change sought is deemed unnecessary by the Highways Service
- Access for All, Needham Market Railway Station – Jo Churchill MP asked to organise an opportunity for the group to meet with the Secretary of State for Transport

Cllr Phillips asked who is responsible for keeping road signs clean and clear. County Councillor Whybrow replied the County Council Highways Service is responsible however, they do not treat it as a priority and it is one of the tasks for which they are hoping volunteers will come forward to undertake.

Cllr D Spurling commented Needham Market High School pupils have, for many years, been dispersed between Stowmarket, Stowupland and Claydon High Schools and School Transport should continue to reflect and support that circumstance. County Councillor Whybrow said she is still looking into that situation.

Cllr Lea said Suffolk County Council Highways Service's seeking of volunteers to undertake tasks the Service is responsible for is contrary to their recent advice received regarding community involvement in the desperately needed repainting of Badley Bridge railings. County Councillor Whybrow recalled the Highways Service did not advocate a community solution to the repainting of

the Badley Bridge railings due to their proximity to a highway and therefore, cannot understand how the same logic would not be applied to the cleaning of road signs and the clearing of overgrowth from around road signs.

Cllr Ward commented on the number of road signs which are obscured and/or where their condition impairs visibility.

Cllr Norris asked, if Suffolk County Council manages to gain volunteer labour to carry out Highways Service responsibilities, would the volunteers be covered by appropriate insurance. County Councillor Whybrow said the communication she has seen which has been sent to Town/Parish Councils, states volunteer insurance cover is something the Service is looking into.

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:

- Planning Briefing on the Year Ahead – Planning Officers gave an outline of expectations for the coming year during an event for Councillors held in the Players Suite at Ipswich Town Football Club, the use of which is being questioned
- MSDC's HQ Building, Needham Market – Public Consultation Open Event has apparently been deferred to April
- Application for Variation of Licence Conditions, The Limes Hotel – Licensing Hearing taking place on 26th February
- Needham Lake – Meeting held between the Model Boat Club and the Environment Agency regarding maintaining water levels
- Public Toilets for Needham Market – Mid Suffolk Officers arranging a meeting with the Town Clerk, District Councillors and others
- Planning – Application for 351 dwellings on the Ipswich/Whitton/Claydon boundary refused permission

District Councillor Marchant described the detrimental impact resulting from the District Council's lack of a 5-year Housing Land Availability Supply and, whilst there are many planning applications for development being submitted and/or approved across the District, they will not mitigate the District Council's failure as new dwellings, in prevailing circumstances, do not count in the equation until they are completed. District Councillor Marchant suggested a Land Tax could be used to deter the current trend of the 'banking' of development land.

Cllr Phillips referred to the District Council's use of Ipswich Town FC facilities as the venue for meetings when its former offices sit empty. District Councillor Marchant said she is aware of District Councillors complaints regarding having to attend meetings in Ipswich, which is far more difficult to access than was Needham Market. County Councillor Whybrow commented she understands there is a reciprocal arrangement in place with Ipswich Town Football Club involving matchday parking.

The member of public present had no question to raise.

C026/18 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Friday 16th February – Needham Market Entertainment Company 'Wizard of Oz' pantomime at the Community Centre.

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C027/18 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris presented a brief verbal report, confirming he, Cllr Stansfield and the Clerk are to, on 1st March, attend AECOM's London office to discuss the latest position on progress on the Needham Market Relief Road feasibility exercise.

C028/18 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. *Actions from Town Council Meeting 07.02.18:*

C015/18 – Precept for 2018/19 of £114,827 notified to and acknowledged by, Mid Suffolk District Council

C015/18 – March Newsletter Town Council News item includes the Council Tax set for 2018/19 and the resulting 5p weekly increase

C016/18 (Outstanding) – Chairman of Institute Trustees not yet notified

C017/18 – Horologist engaged to carry out works to the Town Clock

C018/18 – Needham in Bloom advised to continue with purchase of planters and associated materials

C019/18 (Outstanding) – Mid Suffolk District Council to be replied to regarding its 'Stowmarket Vision for Prosperity' project

C020/18 (Outstanding) – Incidents in the town yet to be taken up with Mid Suffolk District Council

C020/18 – The Community Hub issue is to be raised at the meeting scheduled with Mid Suffolk District Council regarding s106 funding

C020/18 – Email sent to the Licensing Officer 14th February regarding The Limes application for variation to their license

2. *Issues:*

- The Consistory Court of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich has approved the improvement works to be carried out on the War Memorial located at the Burial Ground

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

None

C029/18 SECTIONS.

C029/18/1 Finance/General Purposes

C029/18/1a 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 Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C029/18/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was no report.

C029/18/2 Recreation & Sport

C029/18/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips reported the incidents of recent vandalism on Crowley Park play equipment would be brought to the attention of the local community via the Town Council's March edition Newsletter.

C029/18/3 Town Property and Services

C029/18/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes reported an enquiry had been received regarding the Town Council's land on Barretts Lane, currently in use as a small public car park and formerly the location of the town's public toilet building. The enquiry asked whether the Town Council wished to dispose of the land and, if so, at what price.

Cllr Oakes referred to similar previous enquiries which had led to time consuming and ultimately aborted proposals and valuations involving the land in question and advised, at this point, the future of the former Mid Suffolk District Council Offices site and the impact that will have on public parking provision in the town, should be taken account of.

Cllr Oakes proposed, in view of the lack of clarity on the future of the former Mid Suffolk District Council Offices site, the enquiry be held in abeyance for three months at which point it will be reviewed. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C029/18/4 Newsletter and Communications

C029/18/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

There was no report.

C029/18/5 Planning.

Cllr Stansfield reported a Planning Section meeting had not been held on Monday 19th February due to lack of business.

C029/18/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning decision had been received:

DC/17/06327 – 41 Jubilee Crescent - Erection of single storey rear conservatory extension.

Planning Permission has been Granted.

The Clerk reported no prior notification had been received from Mid Suffolk District Council regarding this planning application and therefore the Town Council had not been consulted. The lack of consultation and its effect on the lawfulness of the Planning Permission has been raised with the District Council.

C029/18/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning applications had been received:

DC/18/00701 – Lake Park, Ipswich Road - Application to Modify the S106 agreement relating to planning application 3153/14 - Minor amendments to the Affordable Housing Scheme.

The Clerk advised the application to modify the S106 agreement demonstrates the District Council's willingness to seek modification for its own purposes whilst at the same time not responding in the same way to the Town Council's request for modification of the S106 agreement. The Town Council's request results from the District Council's failure to complete the consultation process with the Town Council prior to the S106 agreement becoming a formal document.

DC/18/00344 – 7 Jackson Way – Erection of side/rear extension (following removal of garage).

Cllr Stansfield described the detail of the extension for which planning permission is sought. Cllr Lea asked if the proposed works would leave an off-road parking area at the property. Cllr Stansfield said the plans accompanying the application show an off-road parking area is preserved.

Cllr Stansfield proposed support for approval of the application. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C029/18/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Annis reported his attendance at a recent SnOasis Parish Alliance meeting, held to consider the application for Reserved Matters in relation to the proposed SnOasis development, which already has planning approval. Issues discussed included:

- Suffolk County Council is looking into the position regarding the commitment, which is included in the formal S106 agreement pertaining to the proposed development, for inclusion in the development of a new railway station.
- Transport solutions set out in the application for Reserved Matters are inadequate and may lead to Passenger Service Vehicles using the B1113 through Needham Market.
- Mid Suffolk District Council is expressing concern at the ongoing costs of consultants engaged by them on the application for Reserved Matters. The impression being given is the District Council may use perceived economic benefits from the outcome of the development as the basis for conceding to proposals put forward by the developer, potentially to the detriment of local communities.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Section will next meet on Monday 5th March 2018 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C029/18/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths
C029/18/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris gave a verbal report. It referred to:

- There is nothing on the National Highways reporting system which shows road works are scheduled to take place in Needham Market
- An invoice received from Suffolk County Council, for street lighting energy costs, maintenance costs and associated administration costs for the Town Council's 200 plus street lights in the town, for 2017/18, shows a reduction of 4.3% on the same costs for 2016/17.

The Clerk reported he has received notification a survey of parking in various areas of Needham Market is to be carried out in the near future. This will involve survey equipment being installed overnight.

Cllr Phillips asked if there is any news on the current road closure in place at the junction of The Causeway and the High Street. Cllr Norris reported no information has been received regarding the duration of the closure further to that provided recently by Mid Suffolk Council. Cllr Carter said the placing of barriers and diversion signage shows no regard for people with restricted mobility. The Clerk added he understood scaffolding is shortly to be erected to allow repairs to be carried out to the Town Hall, the falling of masonry from that building being the cause of the road closure.

Cllr Stansfield reported he had become aware of a light aircraft flying over the town, during an early morning, following what appeared to be a systematic flight path indicating some form of survey was being carried out.

C030/18 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Annis asked if Councillors were aware maintenance work on the Town Clock is to start on Monday 25th February and this will result in no chiming of bells for a while.

The Meeting closed at 8:22pm.

Chairman **Date**