

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 19th December 2018 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr D Spurling (In the Chair), Councillors; N Andrews, BE Annis, C Campbell, RP Darnell, JE Lea, S Phillips, P Potter, M Spurling, X Stansfield and AL Ward.

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr D Campbell – Family Commitment
Cllr I Mason – Holiday
Cllr M Norris – MSDC Full Council

District Councillor Wendy Marchant - MSDC Full Council

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes, one member of public and the Town Clerk.

C227/18 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 5th December 2018.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 5th December 2018 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C228/18 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr P Potter – Planning (DC/18/05104)

C229/18 To receive a report from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

County Councillor Kay Oakes presented her report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included:

Suffolk County Council's budget setting for 2019/2020 On 14 November, Suffolk County Council published key papers which mark the beginning of a three-month process to agree Suffolk County Council's budget for 2019/20. To balance its budget for the next financial year, the council needs to save around £25m.

Suffolk wins praise at the national Community Energy Awards 2018 On 5 November, it was announced that the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership has received a national award for supporting local communities to be more energy efficient.

A useful link to share with residents and community groups 'Can Do Health and Care' is about local health and care services working in a more joined up way. Health, care, voluntary and community organisations in Suffolk and North East Essex are working together with a shared vision and plans to improve the health and care outcomes for the one million people living locally.

How will proposed changes to the local Citizens Advice (CAB) affect you? Suffolk County Council is carrying out a consultation to understand the equality impacts there may be as a result of proposed changes to the local Citizens Advice (CAB) grant funding which the authority currently provides.

At the Council's Scrutiny meeting on 22 November 2018, the committee considered details of proposed savings totaling £11.2m so the council can balance its budget. Amongst these savings was the proposal to remove the funding grant that the county council gives Suffolk's CAB.

Committee members recommended changing the proposal to a phased reduction – a recommendation that was later agreed by Cabinet. It is now proposed that the grant will reduce by half to £184,000 in 2019/20 before ending in 2020/21.

A consultation regarding this decision will run from 12 noon on Monday 17 December until 5pm on Wednesday 23 January.

Comments made through the consultation will be used to help inform the final decision on the council budget, which is due to be made by full council on 14 February 2019.

County Councillor Oakes encouraged Councillors to respond to the consultation on future grant to Suffolk's CAB.

County Councillor Oakes reported following up the long-outstanding issue of additional road signage to dissuade Heavy Goods Vehicles from using a route via Foxglove Avenue to try and avoid the High Street weight limit. The County Council's Highways Service is not interested in implementing a solution and have recently corresponded with Cllr Norris setting out their reason why.

County Councillor Oakes reported the answer received from the County Council's Highways Service regarding the recent imposition of a license procedure for Local Councils intending to use mobile working platforms. The license fee is £70 and is administered by a Licensing Team the County Council has created aimed at providing a consistent approach across Suffolk. It is likely the initial license fee of £70 will be increased. Cllr Darnell said it sounded like a typical case of the introduction of a license fee to pay for the County Council team set up to administer it.

County Councillor Oakes reported she is due to meet with the Chief Executive of Mid Suffolk/Babergh District Councils on 31st January and she would welcome, prior to that meeting, a report from the Town Council on issues it has with the District Council. Cllr Lea commented one of the main issues is the way the District Council goes about its business with no meaningful consultation adding the point, whatever they decide to do just happens.

A District Councillors report was tabled, a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included:

CHRISTMAS IN NEEDHAM MARKET Happy Christmas to Needham Market Town Council and complements for the pretty multi coloured lights on the Christmas Trees in the High Street; and thank you to the Community Council for the Carol Concert in the Community Centre with children from Bosmere School taking part, and a collection to St. Elizabeth Hospice; also all the Carol Services and celebrations in the churches in the town publicised with a flier in Needham Market Newsletter distributed by the Town Council with the help of volunteers. I have given a couple of dozen copies of the calendar of bin collection over Christmas and for the forthcoming year to the Town Clerk.

MID SUFFOLK'S FULL COUNCIL The two main items for discussion at Mid Suffolk's Full Council are Treasury Management half yearly report; and a three yearly statutory requirement to adopt the statement of principles, as updated, of the Gambling Act 2005. Also it is for the Council to determine whether to pass a 'No Casino' resolution under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE, organised by Needham Market Town Council. Wendy attended and listened to residents views. As Mid Suffolk. Dis. Cllrs. and Ward Members we will attend the Planning Meeting and can speak, but not vote, and must remain impartial until then, but can listen to all points of view prior to that.

MID SUFFOLK SUPPORTS TWO POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS to work in partnership with Suffolk Constabulary. £149,000 has been approved which will fund 2 PCSO's for two years, and vehicle use. This will tackle community concern about anti-social behaviour, inconsiderate parking, speeding, and build a stronger police presence. This will be in addition to the PCSO's funded by the police.

The member of public present informed Council he had submitted comment on the District Council's proposed redevelopment of its former Offices HQ site in the town, copied to the Town Clerk and, he asked whether the meeting referred to by County Councillor Oakes with the Chief Executive of Mid Suffolk/Babergh District Councils will be open to the public. County Councillor Oakes confirmed the meeting will be private.

C230/18 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Monday 10th December – Needham Market Community Council Christmas Carol Service
Thursday 13th December – Ashburnham Club Christmas Lunch

The Deputy Mayor reported attending:
Thursday 13th December – Ashburnham Club Christmas Lunch

C231/18 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris had provided a report which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included:

Meeting with MSDC Officers on the former Middle School site Planning Application.

Wendy and I were present at the above meeting on Monday of this week that was requested by MSDC following the Town Clerk's email detailing the Town Council's concerns regarding the Planning Application that has been submitted by MSDC on this site, which they purchased from Suffolk County Council.

I will leave Councillor Stansfield, as Leader of the Planning Section, to detail the outcomes from the meeting, and from the Public Consultation event held on Saturday 8th December.

MSDC/Babergh Joint Local Plan.

A series of presentations is being made to MSDC elected members political groups on the MSDC/Babergh Joint Local Plan, and a meeting with our group has been requested by MSDC for 3.00pm this afternoon. Further details will be made available when they are known.

C232/18 To consider co-opting to Council's vacant seat.

Cllr Potter said she had requested this agenda item being aware there is interest within the local community from people wishing to become Town Councillors and, it may also help generate interest in the forthcoming full Town Council election due in May 2019.

Cllr Lea said she acknowledged the merit of Cllr Potter's suggestion and explained the Town Council is not obliged to seek to fill the vacancy (within 6 months of a full Council election) and further, the impracticality of following the necessary process for seeking to fill the vacant seat in the short timescale before arrangements for the full Town Council election have to be initiated.

Cllr Lea proposed Council do not seek to fill its vacant seat. Cllr Annis seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C233/18 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 05.12.18

C224/18 – Notice to Councillors to be sent following approval of 5th December Minutes

C226/18 – Item included on agenda (co-option)

2. Issues:

- Scout Hut Project – update
- Donations to Citizens Advice Bureaux – advice received
- GDPR – Publication of Councillors personal details

3. Correspondence to be noted:

- Email dated 6th December from the Corporate Manager Democratic Services regarding the District Council's 2018 Review of Polling Districts, Polling Stations and Polling Places
- Letter received 17th December from The Pensions Regulator regarding employers legal duties to re-enrol employees who elected to leave the workplace pension scheme

C234/18 SECTIONS.

C234/18/1 Finance/General Purposes

C234/18/1a 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 Annis proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C234/18/1b To receive and adopt the Council's Risk Assessment 2018/19.

The Clerk reported a further delay in receipt of the Annual Report on the play areas and playing field at Crowley Park and requested deferral of the item until the next Council meeting. Council agreed.

C234/18/1c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was no report.

C234/18/2 Recreation & Sport

C234/18/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips presented his reports on the Sections' Revenue and Capital Budget requirements for 2019/20, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. He added the Capital Budget requirement will be dependent on key decisions due on various projects and the approach to budget management will therefore need to be flexible.

Cllr Phillips proposed adoption of his reports. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Phillips added he will be calling a Section meeting shortly to allow consideration of plans received from Council's consultant architect for the rebuild of Crowley Park pavilion.

C234/18/3 Town Property and Services

C234/18/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea confirmed a Section meeting will take place on Tuesday 15th January at 10am in the Town Council Office.

C234/18/4 Newsletter and Communications

C234/18/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Andrews confirmed a Section meeting will be held on Thursday 10th January at 7pm in the Town Council Office.

C234/18/5 Planning.

Cllr Stansfield presented a verbal report from the Planning Section Meeting held Monday 17th December.

C234/18/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following Planning Decision Notice had been received:

DC/18/05039 – Needham Market Community Centre, School Street - Refurbishment of existing sports areas to provide two fenced and floodlit netball/tennis courts and creation of additional car parking spaces (re-submission of DC/18/02920)

Planning Permission has been Granted.

DC/18/03965 - Land Adjacent To 96 Stowmarket Road - Submission of details under Outline Planning Permission DC/17/03201- Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for the erection of 9 dwellings with garages; Construction of vehicular access; and Provision of pedestrian link to rail underpass.

Reserved Matters have been approved.

DC/18/04551 – 23 Fairfax Gardens – Erection of 1 No. dwelling, with associated works to existing vehicular access

Planning Permission has been Granted.

DC/18/04553 – 31 Quinton Road – Erection of a two storey side extension with Juliet balcony to rear (following demolition of garage)

Planning Permission has been Refused.

0656/16 - Land Adj 24 Crowley Road - Erection of 2 No. one bedroom dwellings and 1 No. two bedroom dwelling, (following demolition of extension to 24 Crowley Road) Widening of existing lay by to provide additional parking spaces.

Planning Permission has been Refused.

DC/18/05080 – Cedar Walk, High Street - Notification of works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order MS289

Consent has been granted.

DC/18/05162 - Land to Rear of 6-16 Chainhouse Road, School Street - Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Removal of 19 (no) Willow trees and clear site.

Planning Application Withdrawn.

C234/18/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr Stansfield reported the following Planning Application had been received:

DC/18/05410 – 12 Bridge Street – Erection of rear dormer, new windows to front elevation.

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

C234/18/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Stansfield reported on a (copy) letter received from Suffolk Preservation Society, the original of which had been sent to Mid Suffolk District Council. The letter referred to Planning Applications DC/18/05254 and DC/18/05104, both of which relate to the former Mid Suffolk District Council Office HQ site at 131 High Street. The letter sought clarification on a number of issues raised and set out concerns the Society has pertaining to the proposals to redevelop the site.

Cllr Stansfield referred to a meeting held on Monday 17th December between Town Councillors and Officers from Mid Suffolk District Council regarding the District Council's Planning Application to redevelop the former Needham Market Middle School site. The District Council Officers were seeking ideas to mitigate the objections being raised mainly concerning access to the site. The Town Councillors present, being fully aware of the issues regarding access to the site, confirmed the view that the access is grossly inadequate, unsafe and totally incompatible with the proposal for the development of 41 new dwellings. The meeting concluded with an agreement to disagree on that point.

Cllr Stansfield read from an email received from the Acting Chief Planning Officer, Mid Suffolk District Council, in response to the Town Council's request for an extension to the deadline for submitting its consultee comment on the District Council's Planning Application for redevelopment of the former Needham Market Middle School site, in which he stated "In my opinion it would be reasonable to have reasonable regard to the Christmas period but by the same measure this is often a time when individuals and Parish Councils naturally have more time and opportunity to read the documentation and gather their thoughts together." Town Councillors found the statement unfounded and contemptuous. Cllr Stansfield proposed the Clerk reply to the Acting Chief Planning Officer accordingly. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Lea said she was very frustrated by Mid Suffolk District Council's continual claim to have carried out consultation on its former Needham Market Middle School site redevelopment proposal when everyone locally knows what they conducted as supposed consultation was defectively managed and fundamentally meaningless.

Cllr Stansfield referred to the approach to affordable housing requirement taken by Mid Suffolk District in its proposals to redevelop its former Offices HQ site and former Needham Market Middle School site which results in a total imbalance between the sites. The approach also reflects the District Council's desperation to gain approval for its proposal to redevelop the former Needham Market Middle School site for affordable housing as, if that proposal is not granted planning consent, its planning application for its former Offices HQ site will have to be withdrawn, as the latter would then fail its own policy regarding affordable housing requirement.

The Clerk confirmed Council's Planning Consultant and Traffic Engineer Consultant are engaged in producing the Town Council's objection to the District Council's proposal to redevelop the former Needham Market Middle School site and were being kept aware of the position regarding the deadline for its submission. The Planning Consultant has advised the District Council may fall foul of not allowing reasonable opportunity for submission of consultee comment which could result in an unlawful decision being made which is then open to legal challenge.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 14th January in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C234/18/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C234/18/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Phillips presented a report written by Cllr Norris, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report referred to:

'Unsuitable for HGVs' signs at the bottom of Foxglove Avenue / Moving the 'Weight limit ahead' sign further back along Barking Road.

Unfortunately we do not seem to be getting much further with these two items as County Cllr. Kay Oakes will have mentioned in her report.

It appears that SCC Highways officers do not appreciate the impact on the town of HGVs circumnavigating the 7.5 tonne weight limit on the B1113 through the High Street by using residential roads to avoid it, and this is a matter that will have to be pursued.

Fence, Barking Road.

The legal process to enforce the Amended Order that was mentioned in the Section Report to Town Council on 7th November is now under way, stipulating an access at the back of the fence adjacent to the cul-de-sac in Hargrave Avenue with a further access/exit at the point where the part of the route supported by sufficient user evidence turns left along the frontage of the Co-op store.

It is unlikely that this matter will be concluded until the end of February, when the period for any objection against the Amended Order expires, subject to any objection being received before then, which will inevitably delay the process further.

Public Inquiry, Gipsy Lane Rail Crossing Diversion Order.

Notification has been received from the Planning Inspectorate that this will take place at Creeting St Mary Diamond Jubilee Hall, All Saints Road, Creeting St Mary IP6 8NF on Tuesday 4th June 2019 at 10.00am and is scheduled to last for 4 days.

C235/18 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr M Spurling asked if Councillors are aware a request was made by Suffolk County Council to hire Needham Market Community Centre for 4 days in April 2019 to host a public enquiry in regard to the closure of the Gipsy Lane over-rail crossing and the proposed rerouting of the related footpath. The Community Centre could not accommodate the request as it would have caused the cancellation of too many regular bookings.

The Meeting closed at 8:55pm.

Chairman Date