

## **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 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 at 7:30pm.

**Present:** Cllr JE Lea (In the Chair), Councillors BE Annis, D Campbell, R Campbell, RP Darnell, MG Norris, S Phillips, D Spurling, M Spurling, X Stansfield and AL Ward.

Cllr Lea informed Council Cllr Rowland had tendered her resignation. Councillors expressed their regret that Cllr Rowland has resigned although understood her reasons for doing so. The Clerk was requested to convey Council's gratitude to Cllr Rowland for her time served as a Councillor.

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr TS Carter - Unwell

Cllr I Mason – Abroad

Cllr KMN Oakes – Work Commitment

Suffolk County Councillor Julia Truelove (attending Somersham PC)

**In Attendance:** Mid Suffolk District Councillor Wendy Marchant, Graham Oxenham from the Gipsy Lane Design Panel and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

### **C012/16 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016.**

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **C013/16 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.**

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment

Cllr JE Lea – Accounts for Payment

Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters

Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment

### **C014/16 To receive a report on progress by the Gipsy Lane Design Panel and reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and to take questions from members of the public**

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:

- MSDC & Babergh Financial Budgets 2016/17 – information on changes to Central Government funding received and current estimate of a need to save a further £1.7m (or increase revenue accordingly) over the next 3 years
- Devolution – events to be held to increase Councillors' knowledge of the devolution issue
- MSDC Local Plan Review – Councillors received a briefing on the Growth Agenda
- Network Rail, Gipsy Lane Crossing – update on the latest position
- District Councillors' One-Off Locality Awards – applications received totalled £27,750 and the £10,000 (joint) award has been allocated after careful consideration

Cllr Lea welcomed Graham Oxenham (GO) from the Gipsy Lane Design Panel (GLDP).

GO confirmed he is the co-Chairman of the GLDP. He briefly outlined the background history which preceded the GLDP coming into being, described the purpose of the GLDP and what the meetings of the GLDP have included. He made reference to the most recent Network Rail public consultation event at which 7 replacement rail crossing options were displayed. At the most recent GLDP

meeting and, in line with public preference, the options being taken further have reduced to 2. These are option E, the rerouting of the pathway via Stowmarket Road and using one of the 2 existing culverts under the rail line, and option D, the construction of an underpass at the Gipsy Lane crossing.

GO continued by confirming feedback from the recent public consultation established the 2 footbridge options were the least favoured by those who responded to the consultation and Network Rail has conceded a footbridge will not now be installed at the Gipsy Lane crossing. Examination work on Option E is being taken forward by Network Rail including discussions with Mid Suffolk District Council Planning Service and Suffolk County Council's Rights of Way Service.

Cllr Lea suggested, in view of the would be need for pedestrians to share a relatively narrow pavement with cyclists should Option E be routed down to Badley Bridge beside the busy Stowmarket Road, the route should instead divert off the Stowmarket Road immediately after the last residential property and run parallel to Stowmarket Road and adjacent to the railway embankment. GO said that approach had been raised before and he will follow it up again with the GLDP.

Cllr Lea asked GO if he would be kind enough to ensure the Clerk receives minutes from the GLDP meetings.

Cllr R Campbell said he is aware the new surface drainage arrangements that would result from the proposed Hill House Lane new housing development would add to the flow of water that runs under Badley Bridge. Therefore, if the new housing development is to go ahead, this additional flow must be included in river flow modelling as it will impact on the use, by pedestrians, of the culvert under the railway line. GO described the culvert arrangement in more detail and how it is intended triaging the flow of water through the culverts would work.

The Clerk asked what timescales are now in place for resolving the commitment made by Network Rail to close the existing Gipsy Lane over-rail crossing. GO outlined the next steps in the process for consideration and agreement on Option E. This could result in the start of the construction of new footpaths etc., in the near future. However, he did add that if Option E is not possible or agreed, attention would revert to Option D. This would mean cost implications and issues needing to be revisited (the cost of Option D is estimated to be considerably more than Option E) and Option D may be prohibited by Network Rail's budget constraints.

#### **C015/16 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.**

The Mayor reported attending:

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January – Mayor's Charity Concert, Bury St Edmunds

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

#### **C016/16 To receive a report from the Strategic Planning Working Group.**

Cllr Norris reported he is still yet to receive a response from Mid Suffolk District Council on outstanding issues relating to the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan and would follow this up as necessary.

Cllr Lea asked, in view of the lack of progress with Mid Suffolk District Council, could the existing draft Neighbourhood Plan not be used for submission to the next stage of the process. Cllr Norris said he would strongly advise against that as the content of the existing draft Neighbourhood Plan would not be suitable for formal examination, as it is known the effect of the 'Housing Crisis' is impacting across the country and this is the basis of the need for updated information from the District Council.

**C017/16 To agree a response to the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service's Consultation on the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2015-18**

Cllr Phillips said there is no proposal to change the Needham Market Fire station and therefore is there any issue for the town.

Cllr Annis said he felt reassured by the presentation given by the Deputy Chief Officer of the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, to Council's 20<sup>th</sup> January meeting, so long as what is proposed in the Integrated Risk Management Plan goes ahead.

Cllr Lea asked the Clerk to respond to the consultation according to the views expressed and, adding the Town Council is willing to support the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, as and when it is able to.

**C018/16 To nominate and agree a representative to be a Trustee of Needham Market Institute and Club.**

Cllr Lea reminded Councillors that, in the course of recently agreeing to provide a grant/loan to the Trustees of Needham Market Institute and Club, it had been made clear to the Trustees the Town Council wished to be represented by a nominated Trustee. The Trustees have subsequently invited a nomination.

Cllr Annis proposed Cllr Phillips be nominated. Cllr D Campbell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**C019/16 To consider the 'Clean for the Queen' and the 'Tidy Town Pledge' initiatives.**

Cllr Lea said the Town Council News article in the February edition of the Needham Market Newsletter included information on the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign and asked for members of the community to volunteer to support it. Volunteers will be organised and equipped to carry out activities over the weekend of 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> March.

Cllr Phillips suggested organisations such as the Scouts should be contacted directly to encourage their involvement. Council agreed.

Cllr Lea added, having looked into the 'Tidy Town Pledge' initiative, her recommendation is it is not relevant to Needham Market as it would focus on the High Street where Council's own litter pickers maintain cleanliness and tidiness to an excellent standard and High Street traders already lend their support to several other initiatives which add to the attractiveness of the town. Councillors agreed with the recommended approach.

Cllr Lea proposed an item be included in a future Council meeting agenda, for Council to consider sending Her Majesty the Queen congratulations on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Council agreed.

**C020/16 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.**

*1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 20.01.16:*

**C003/16** – Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service item on Council's 03.02.16 agenda

**C007/16** – Council's precept notified to Mid Suffolk District Council and their confirmation has been received

**C009/16** – Needham Market's entry for Suffolk's Most Active Community has been written and will be submitted 04.02.16

Cllr Lea thanked Cllrs Annis, Carter and Phillips for the information they had sought and provided which has helped towards generating the entry. The Clerk agreed to send Councillors the entry as submitted.

## 2. *Issues:*

- Needham Market Civic Service – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October at the Parish Church of St John the Baptist Church. The soon to be installed new Bishop of Dunwich, Mike Harrison, will be in attendance
- Needham Market Internet Café – Cllr Lea and I will be meeting with representatives from the Internet Café, Suffolk County Council, Community Action Suffolk and Mid Suffolk District Council on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February

Cllr Phillips said he is concerned the two people that operate the Internet Café on a day-to-day basis are also currently encumbered with the responsibility of being two of the three current Directors of the Community Interest Company set up to create and manage the facility and he advocated the suggestion that this situation should be relieved if possible. Council agreed. Cllr Lea confirmed the meeting on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February will include discussion on that issue.

- Local Policing in Suffolk – the review document setting out the changes which will take place with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, has been updated. The updated review document can be accessed via the Suffolk Constabulary website – the document is titled ‘Constables County – All Change for Suffolk’

## 3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Letter received 29<sup>th</sup> January from the Leader of Suffolk County Council in response to Council’s letter of 19<sup>th</sup> January regarding Ipswich Park and Ride closure (copies of both are in the Correspondence File)

## **C021/16 SECTIONS.**

### **C021/16/1 Finance/General Purposes**

#### **C021/16/1a 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 Norris asked what the ‘additional amount’ being paid to Cllr Oakes was for. Cllr Annis said the need for the payment had been explained at Council’s last meeting and was in respect of the residual balance due to Cllr Oakes resulting from her purchase of Christmas Trees, on Council’s behalf, prior to Christmas.

Cllr Darnell asked what the payment due in relation to the Town Clock covered. Cllr Annis confirmed the Town Clock had required repair and this had been arranged, to avoid additional call-out expenses, to coincide with the annual service and therefore the cost covered both.

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

#### **C021/16/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Annis reported notification has been received from Mid Suffolk District Council of their arrangements for remitting the Town Council’s precept and Council Tax Compensatory Grant Scheme funds for 2016/17. All was satisfactory.

Cllr Annis referred Councillors to the Council's 9 month accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015, which were tabled and which will be included on the agenda for its 17<sup>th</sup> February meeting, for adoption. If any Councillor has a question on the accounts, this should be raised with either he, or the Responsible Finance Officer, before the 17<sup>th</sup> February meeting.

Cllr Annis confirmed the Finance and General Purposes Section will next meet on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 10am in the Town Council Office.

### **C021/16/2 Recreation & Sport**

#### **C021/16/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr Phillips referred Councillors to the agreed purchase of a container unit which will be located at Crowley Park to provide much needed secure storage space. A fresh quotation has been received which will allow the purchase of the container at around £600 less than originally anticipated. He proposed the purchase, at the lower quotation, proceed as soon as possible. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

### **C021/16/3 Town Property and Services**

#### **C021/16/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

There was no report.

### **C021/16/4 Newsletter and Communications**

#### **C021/16/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Lea reported the production of the Town Trail leaflet was progressing with photographs for inclusion currently being taken and compiled.

### **C021/16/5 Planning.**

Cllr Stansfield reported that, due to insufficient business, the Planning Section meeting scheduled for Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February had not taken place.

#### **C021/16/5a To receive Planning Decisions.**

Cllr Stansfield reported no planning decisions had been received.

#### **C021/16/5b To consider Planning Applications**

Cllr Stansfield reported that the following planning applications had been received:

**0100/16 - Land at Shrubland Lodge, Shrubland Park, Beacon Hill, Norwich Road, Coddensham  
- Installation of 25m high monopole supporting 3no. antennas, 2no. 300mm diameter dishes  
and installation of 3no. equipment cabinets plus small meter cabinet and development  
ancillary thereto within a new 5.5m x 10m compound with a 2.1m high palisade fence.**

Cllr Stansfield reminded Councillors that consideration of this application had been deferred at Council's 20<sup>th</sup> January meeting as further details had been received at late notice from Mid Suffolk District Council and, consequently, the consultation period on the application had been duly extended.

Cllr Stansfield described the application, including the nature of the additional information received and proposed Council submit the comment it has no objection to approval of the application. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

#### **0182/16 – 43 Steggall Close - Erection of a two storey side extension.**

Cllr Stansfield described the detail of the application and proposed Council recommend its approval. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

#### **C021/16/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr Stansfield reported he had attended Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Committee that morning in respect of planning application 3779/15 which sought redevelopment of the Lion Barn House site to provide 11 flats. The Planning Committee unanimously refused the application. He thanked District Councillors Wendy Marchant and Mike Norris for their statements to the Planning Committee in support of the Town Council's recommendation the application be refused.

The Clerk reported he had received a telephone call from agents acting for Hopkins Homes. Hopkins Homes is proposing to submit a planning application to develop land off Barking Road to provide 150 new dwellings. Hopkins homes are to hold a public exhibition, in Needham Market Community Centre in early March, setting out the development proposal. The Clerk has requested the development proposals be presented, in advance of the public exhibition, to Council's 2<sup>nd</sup> March meeting.

Cllr Phillips said that around two years ago, development of land adjacent to the Doctors Surgery, Barking Road had been mentioned and this would include an extension to the cramped parking area, at the Surgery, alongside residential development.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February in the Town Council Office at 7.00pm.

### **C021/16/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths**

#### **C021/16/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

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

- Fence across Public Right of Way, Barking Road – a reply has been received from Suffolk County Council which indicates the work being undertaken to investigate the situation. Approximately 35 responses have been received to enquiries seeking evidence from local residents and the weight and strength of this evidence is being gauged. A meeting is to be held with the landowner who erected the fence. The evidence collected will be assimilated in a draft report to the County Council's Public Rights of Way Committee with a recommendation either for an order to be made or the claim rejected. It is hoped the draft report will be available for circulation in February.
- Suffolk County Council – National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey – the annual survey is being extended this year to include the perspective from all local town and parish councils. The Section members are to meet to complete the survey.

Cllr Phillips said the level of public response indicates the significance of the Public Right of Way, Barking Road issue.

Cllr Lea reiterated the problem she had previously raised regarding the signage for the current B1078 Barking Road closure. Cllr M Spurling said he had been caught out by the signage wording which misrepresents where the actual closure is in place and he also noticed the damage caused to roadside verges by vehicles needing to turn round to avoid the closure.

Cllr D Campbell said the extended period of road closure at Barking is affecting businesses in the town as people from Wattisham and other areas who would ordinarily shop in the town were migrating to shop in Hadleigh and, there is concern as to whether this trade would return to Needham Market.

Cllr Ward asked if businesses could claim for loss of business. Cllr Lea said that question has been raised before and there are schemes for compensation but they are complex and arbitrary.

Cllr M Spurling said he understood Suffolk County Council was responsible for Barking Road remaining entirely closed whilst Anglian Water carry out the major project being undertaken in Barking. Cllr Norris agreed to check the situation in respect of SCC/Anglian Water's notices regarding the road closure.

**C022/16 Questions under Standing Order 40.**

Cllr Stansfield asked if Councillors were aware a photograph of a sunset over Needham Market had featured in a recent BBC weather bulletin.

Cllr M Spurling asked if Councillors were aware the pre-school building off The Drift is being taken over by 'Jigsaw' and questioned whether this compromised the future of the building which was built following fund raising. Cllr Annis said he thought ownership of the building would have reverted to Suffolk County Council when the previous occupier vacated it. Cllr Lea suggested County Councillor Julia Truelove be asked to clarify the matter when she next attends Council.

Cllr Annis asked if Councillors were aware of the events to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 21<sup>st</sup> April, being held in the Community Centre plus the town's beacon is to be lit and, he asked Councillors to support the events if possible.

Cllr Lea asked if Councillors were aware her Mayor's Charity Quiz is being held in the Community Centre on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March with tickets at £4 per participant.

**The Meeting closed at 8:30 p.m.**

**Chairman .....**      **Date .....**