

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 July 2016 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr X Stansfield (In the Chair), Councillors, D Campbell, R Campbell, TS Carter, JE Lea, I Mason, A Morris, MG Norris, KMN Oakes and S Phillips.

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr BE Annis – Concert Rehearsal
Cllr RP Darnell – Prior Appointment
Cllr D Spurling – Holiday
Cllr M Spurling - Holiday
Cllr AL Ward – Visiting Family

Suffolk County Councillor Julia Truelove – attending Somersham Parish Council Meeting

In Attendance: Mid Suffolk District Councillor Wendy Marchant, one member of public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C123/16 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 15th June 2016.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 15th June 2016 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C124/16 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters
Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for payment (Mayoral Expenses)

C125/16 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and to take questions from members of the public

County Councillor Julia Truelove had provided a report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to:

- Devolution – update including details from the proposals and responses to an authorised poll
- Review into Adult Care Resources – The County Council, with other partners, has commissioned an independent review of the market, which will run from mid-July to early September

The Clerk said he had been asked by County Councillor Truelove to inform the meeting that the Local Flood Group is scheduled to meet in October.

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:

- Navigator Project – being co-ordinated by the District Council and involves going into schools and linking with business to encourage young people to develop skills
- Super SIPS Ltd – presentation received about proposals for an insulating material processing plant at Badley
- Economic Development – Mid Suffolk's two economic development officer jobs have been expanded to eight across the Mid Suffolk and Babergh Districts
- Devolution – Mid Suffolk District Council voted to approve the devolution proposal as it stands

Cllr Norris confirmed he had asked a question, during the District Council's debate on the devolution proposals, regarding public consultation, as referred to in the District Councillors report and it was also indicated during the debate there will be 'setting up' costs when the proposals go ahead.

The member of public present asked if the Town Council is aware Suffolk County Council is carrying out an assessment of improvements to the footpath which runs from the Gipsy Lane rail crossing, over the River Gipping and towards Creeting St Mary. The improvements would enable use of the path by cyclists. The member of public expressed his apprehension regarding the relationship between what would be a widened path, with his own property plus, if the improvements were to be approved, how construction would be managed. He also added the route of the footpath on the Creeting St Mary side of the river is in a flood plain and is consequently often impassable.

C126/16 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Saturday 18th June – Opened Fete held at Drift Court

Saturday 25th June – MSDC Chairman's 'Armed Forces Day' held at Stowmarket

Sunday 26th June – Mayor of Felixstowe's Civic Service

Wednesday 29th June – Annual General Meeting of Stowmarket Newstalk

Thursday 30th June – The High Sheriff of Suffolk's Evening with Aldeburgh Music held at Snape Maltings

Sunday 3rd July – Mayor of St Edmundsbury's Civic Service

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C127/16 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. The report included:

- Information forthcoming from the meeting held with representatives from Mid Suffolk District Council held on 16th June which included that Council's timetable for completing its updated Local Plan (by the end of 2017 with a consultation process due to commence early 2017/18)
- Attended the Network meeting for all Neighbourhood Plan Groups in the Babergh/Mid Suffolk area held at Woolpit Village Hall on 16th June
- Postponement of the Working Group meeting scheduled for 30th June

Cllr Phillips commented there is now a strong possibility house building in the town will precede the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan which will result in substantial loss of developer contributions (via the Community Infrastructure Levy) to the local community.

Cllr Lea reported her attendance at the meeting held with representatives from Mid Suffolk District Council, held on 16th June, and said she was deeply frustrated the representatives did not focus at all on the matters pertinent to Needham Market which had been referred to them prior to the meeting. Instead, the meeting had been taken up primarily by delivery of broad-spectrum presentation material which was to be imparted to the Neighbourhood Plan Groups from across the Babergh/Mid Suffolk area, later that day.

Cllr R Campbell suggested Council should consider challenging the status of Community Infrastructure Levy contributions for Needham Market which have been designated in the 'low' category. The Clerk advised the process for setting the status of contributions had taken place some time ago and the more immediate issue is; with a Neighbourhood Plan in place the local community would get 25% of the total contribution, without a Neighbourhood Plan that reduces to 15%.

Cllr Norris undertook to reschedule the Working Group meeting and will also follow up the offer by the District Council representatives, made at the 16th June meeting, of direct District Council Officer support towards carrying forward activities relating to the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan.

C128/16 To receive a report from the SALC Area Meeting held 16th June.

Cllr Lea reported she and Cllr R Campbell had attended the Mid Suffolk South Area meeting of SALC on Thursday 16th June.

There was a presentation by Sue Davey, Community Transport Manager, who explained the new system of Community Transport. The scheme aims to make provision for residents to make journeys where scheduled bus and train services do not exist. The new scheme started on 13th June so some teething problems are to be expected. The scheme, based on the seven District Councils, replaces the previous service based on the seventeen rural district links. Concessionary passes will not be valid for use on the service, but it will be possible for pass holders to trade in their passes for an annual issue of vouchers worth £100. Adult fares for single journeys start at £2 for a journey of up to five miles and scaling up to £4 for a journey of between fifteen and twenty miles. The service will be available from 7am till 7pm, Monday to Saturday and bookings can be made one week in advance. The new service will be closely monitored.

The other matter discussed was the present situation with regard to the Neighbourhood Plans. Many parishes are experiencing problems brought about by Mid Suffolk District Council's inability to provide a five year building land supply. It was also clear that it had given developers the upper hand with regard to planning applications.

Cllr R Campbell commented he sensed the meeting audience in general appeared some way behind in their understanding of the Neighbourhood Plan process compared to Needham Market Town Council. Cllr Lea said this may be at least partially due to the prior regimen of Parish Plans which placed no emphasis on communities planning for housing growth.

C129/16 To consider road names for the Needham Chalk Quarry development.

Councillors each had a copy of a letter, received from Mid Suffolk District Council on 16th June, which included names for eight roads suggested by the developers of the Chalk Quarry site and inviting the Town Council to propose names for the remaining two roads.

Cllr R Campbell said he did not recognise the relativity of the majority of the names suggested by the developers and, on the basis they would be meaningless to the local community, their suggested use should be rejected.

Cllr Mason agreed the irrelevance of the use of names of people connected to the Chalk Quarry but advocated the developer's suggested inclusion of both of the names 'Watering' and the 'Limes' fulfilled a recognisable historical connection with the site.

Cllr Lea expressed her concern the District Council is asking the Town Council's input in relation to just two of the ten roads to be named which, in principle, is a significant departure from the usual practice of being requested to suggest names for all roads to be included in any new development.

Cllr Oakes said the eight road names suggested by the developer offered no theme to follow and, for any noteworthy new development, adopting a themed approach to road names engenders future identity and aids the general location of roads.

Cllr Phillips proposed a reply be sent to the District Council setting out Councillors comments and requesting jurisdiction over all ten road names. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal which was carried unanimously.

C130/16 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. *Actions from Town Council Meeting 15.06.16:*

C121/16/6a – Cllr Norris email 20th June covered action

2. *Issues:*

- Gipsy Lane Rail Crossing – Press reports plus proposed change to Gipsy Lane footpath to enable use by cyclists

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the difference in the estimated cost of constructing an underpass at the Gipsy Lane rail crossing compared to the option of diverting the footpath route via an existing culvert further down the track. It had been discussed previously by Council that if the solution to closure of the Gipsy Lane over-rail crossing could realise funds to improve aspects of the local pathway network, that should be a matter for the local community to become involved in. Currently it appears the use of potential 'residual funds' is possibly being usurped by Suffolk County Council.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Suffolk County Council be requested to consult with the Town Council on its plans for creating a cycle route from the Gipsy Lane rail crossing to Creting St Mary and how the funding for such a plan is to be raised. Cllr Carter seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal unanimously.

- Town Council's Insurance Cover – 2016/17 premium confirmed at £2,996.56 which includes extended cover and an increase in Insurance Premium Tax from 6% to 9.5% (2015/16 total premium was £2,749.55)

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

None

C131/16 SECTIONS.

C131/16/1 Finance/General Purposes

C131/16/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

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

Cllr Phillips queried the payment to a storey-teller. Cllr Lea said the storey-teller had been engaged by Needham Market Library as part of its recent 'story-telling week' event and the payment falls within scope of the support the Town Council provides annually to our local library.

Cllr Lea proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Norris seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C131/16/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader

There was no report.

C131/16/2 Recreation & Sport

C131/16/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips presented Notes from the meetings of the Section and the Crowley Park Users Group, both held on Tuesday 28th June, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Phillips, referring to the item 'Comments from Town Warden' included in the Users Group Meeting Notes, said he is to follow up the suggested tree replacement proposal with the Town Warden and this issue will be brought forward for discussion at a future Section meeting.

Cllr Phillips reported he is to contact Needham Market Cricket Club regarding the, as yet to be commenced, installation of 'cricket nets' on Crowley Park, which had received planning approval some time ago and may now have lapsed.

Cllr Mason asked if Crowley Park had been sprayed with weedkiller. The Clerk advised the Council's contractor has recently carried out weed control activity on Crowley Park and would check on the extent of that activity.

C131/16/3 Town Property and Services

C131/16/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes had no report.

C131/16/4 Newsletter and Communications

C131/16/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea reported a meeting has taken place between Cllr Carter, the Clerk and herself regarding improvements to the website. Cllr Carter agreed to act as Council's webmaster and he will liaise with the Clerk to achieve this. It was considered that, in the interests of transparency, Town Councillors' photographs should appear on the website along with a short pen picture. Also in the interests of transparency it is proposed to put all notes from Council Sections meetings on the website.

Cllr Carter recommended a discreet email account be set up to enable material for posting to Council's social media sites to remain separate from its core email traffic. Council agreed the recommendation.

C131/16/5 Planning.

Cllr Stansfield presented Minutes from the meeting of the Planning Section held on Monday 4th July, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C131/16/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning decisions had been received:

2162/16 – 3 Mill Stream Court, Hawks Mill Street – Fell because of excessive shading and low amenity value. Tree to be felled will not be able to replant as no space available. Sycamore tree.

The Planning Authority does not object.

1183/16 and 1185/16 (Listed Building Consent) – Hill House, Hill House Lane – Alteration, conversion and extension of existing single storey outbuilding presently used in association with a dwelling to provide 1 no. separate dwelling.

Applications Withdrawn by applicant.

C131/16/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning applications had been received:

2511/16 – 7 Orchid Way – Erection of a two storey side extension following demolition of existing car port.

The Section recommended Council support approval of the application. Cllr Stansfield proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr Oakes seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

2580/16 – 1 Lupin Way – Erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory.

The Section recommended Council support approval of the application. Cllr Stansfield proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr R Campbell reported the following planning application had been received since the Planning Section meeting held on 4th July:

2367/16 – Mawes House, Flat 24, 141 High Street – Replacement of timber sliding sash windows to sliding UPVC sash windows to front and rear elevations.

Cllr R Campbell described the works proposed. Cllr Lea proposed Council support approval of the application on condition the works are sanctioned by the District Council's Conservation/Heritage Officer. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C131/16/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Stansfield referred to the information provided to Councillors, by the Clerk, in respect of a Screening Opinion request (ref:2548/16) received by Mid Suffolk District Council in relation to Outline Planning Consent for construction of 152 dwellings on Land on the North West side of Barking Road (part in the Parish of Barking). Mid Suffolk District Council's decision, dated 22nd June, is an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

No notice of consultation had been received by the Town Council and subsequently the Section recommended the Town Council request the Clerk to write to Mid Suffolk District Council for the reasons for its decision, including who was consulted prior to the decision and the responses received from consultees. Cllr Stansfield proposed the course of action recommended by the Section be approved. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr R Campbell reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 18th July in the Town Council Office at 7pm.

C131/16/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C131/16/6a 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:

- Review of the 7.5 tonne weight limit – HGVs travelling along Foxglove Avenue and Quinton Road – response awaited from Suffolk County Council Highways Engineer for estimate of cost to relocate existing signage and install additional signage
- Road Closure, B1078 Coddensham Road, at the Railway Bridge - Closure period now changed from daytime on 20th July to 22.00hrs on that day to 06.00hrs the following morning
- Fence, Barking Road – Public Rights of Way Claim – update setting out the next stages and anticipated timescales
- Boundary Wall, Bosmere Court, School Street – the condition of the wall is being investigated by structural engineers commissioned by Orbit Housing and Mid Suffolk District Council

Cllr Norris added he had received an estimate of £400 from Suffolk County Council as the cost of signage relocation on Barking Road (first item above) but, it related to relocation to an incorrect position and he will therefore follow this up.

Cllr Mason reported a vehicle had knocked over a bollard at the junction of Quinton Road with Foxglove Avenue. The Clerk confirmed the incident and damage caused had been reported to Suffolk County Council Highways.

Cllr Phillips said he remained convinced Mid Suffolk District Council should have prevented the construction of the fence referred to in the third item above by using its development control powers.

Cllr Phillips reported the green amenity space on Crowley Road is now being traversed by the drivers of a number of vehicles, to gain access to front gardens to park. Cllr Norris said he will follow the report up. Cllr Mason said he thought the ownership of the green amenity space had changed but still remained public land. He advocated dropped kerbs where appropriate to ease the effect of cars otherwise parked on the road. Cllr Phillips said the impact of cars traversing the green amenity space leads to grass being cut up. He added he understood planning approval had been granted for the creation of additional parking spaces at the location in question but, this has not been taken forward.

C132/16 Questions under Standing Order 40.

There were none.

The Meeting closed at 8:47 p.m.

Chairman Date