

## **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 20<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at 7:30pm.

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

**Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr R Campbell – Unwell

Cllr TS Carter – Holiday

Cllr A Morris – Prior Engagement

**In Attendance:** County Councillor Anne Whybrow, District Councillor Wendy Marchant and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

**C161/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017.**

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**C162/17 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.**

Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment (Mayoral Expenses)

**C163/17 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.**

County Councillor Whybrow presented a verbal report. It included reference to:

- An extract from Suffolk County Council Highways Maintenance Operational Plan which set out the response times to repair of potholes, depending on their severity
- A recently released document which sets out Suffolk County Council's support available to communities undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Lea asked whether there has been any progress on improving the appearance of the metal railings at Badley Bridge. County Councillor Whybrow said she is following up the issue within Suffolk County Council.

Cllr Mason said the poor condition of the cycle path between Needham Market and Stowmarket resulted in nearly all cyclists on the route having to use the road instead of the path. County Councillor Whybrow agreed to raise the matter within Suffolk County Council. Cllr M Spurling added he is aware hedges overgrowing the path cause cycle tyre punctures which clearly deters usage.

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 for Infrastructure – presentation attended relating to distribution of developer contributions (s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy)
- Endeavour House – conducted tour of the building by District Councillors
- Scrutiny (Committee) – recent meeting discussed the District Council's performance on 'voids' i.e. the length of time a council house is vacant between one tenant moving out and another moving in, which has increased from 29 days in 16/17 to 37 days in the current fiscal period
- Access for All at Needham Market Station – meeting of various parties arranged for Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

Cllr Mason asked whether Mid Suffolk District Council staff had been offered financial compensation in relation to loss of free parking when their transfer from Needham Market to Ipswich takes place. District Councillor Marchant said she was not sure.

Cllr Phillips said local reports give the impression District Council staff have been treated abysmally in relation to Mid Suffolk's proposed closure of its Needham Market offices and transfer of staff to Ipswich. Cllr Annis added the whole process undertaken by the District Council kept people in the dark and has resulted in a complete fiasco, for which that Council should be made accountable.

Cllr Phillips proposed a letter be sent to Mid Suffolk District Council expressing the Town Council's concerns regarding the treatment of District Council staff. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

District Councillor Norris confirmed it is the District Council's intention to engage security personnel to protect their Needham Market Offices building following their vacation.

**C164/17 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.**

The Mayor reported attending:

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September – Stowmarket Civic Service

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September – Reading Competition Presentations at Needham Market Library

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September – St Edmundsbury Battle of Britain Commemoration and Thanksgiving Service

The Deputy Mayor had no activity to report.

**C165/17 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.**

Cllr Norris gave a verbal update on AECOM's most recent engagement with Mid Suffolk District Council's Strategic Planning Officer. AECOM is currently seeking more detailed information on the sites for potential future housing development, located on the current Needham Market development boundary and, identified in the District Council's most recent Draft Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).

**C166/17 To receive a report from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils South Area Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September.**

Cllr Lea gave a brief overview of subjects covered by the most recent SALC South Area meeting, which included:

- Policing – lots of concerns expressed regarding lack of coverage plus calls made to the 101 Police contact number for non-emergency issues are being abandoned due to the time taken to get a response
- Development Proposals Being Made and Those Already Agreed – Some Parishes being swamped
- School Transport – Detrimental impact of Suffolk County Council's decisions

**C167/17 To receive a report from the meeting of the Needham Market Institute Trustees held on 5<sup>th</sup> September.**

Cllr Phillips presented Minutes from the meeting of the Needham Market Institute Trustees held on 5<sup>th</sup> September, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Ward asked if any plans were yet available showing the proposed redevelopment of the Institute building. Cllr Phillips said indicative proposals have been seen by the Institute Trustees but, as yet, no formal plans have been submitted.

**C168/17 To consider a request for financial support in relation to the Needham Market Christmas Fair 2017.**

Councillors were each provided with a copy of the letter making the request.

Councillors discussed concerns regarding the suitability and potential welfare implications of involving livestock in the event.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council decline the request. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council unanimously agreed the proposal.

Cllr Oakes said she had received a further request from a Needham Market Christmas Fair 2017 organiser requesting the funding of new edge of town signage in relation to the event. Councillors agreed the further request to be added as an agenda item for the next meeting of Council (4<sup>th</sup> October).

### **C169/17 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.**

#### *1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 06.09.17:*

None

#### *2. Issues:*

- s106 Funds, Hopkins Homes Development of the Former Needham Chalk Quarry – still no response received to my request sent to Mid Suffolk District Council on 21<sup>st</sup> August for a continued dialogue on allocation of funds

Cllr Annis said Needham Market Community Centre Management Committee had made a request to Mid Suffolk District Council 4 weeks ago relating to s106 funds and are too, awaiting a response.

District Councillor Norris agreed to follow the matter up.

- Needham Market Civic Service 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017 – 3pm at the Parish Church of St John the Baptist (or arrive at Church by 2:45pm) – Procession from (leaves at 2:50pm) and back to the Community Centre – Afternoon Tea at the Community Centre

#### *3. Correspondence to be noted:*

- Email dated 19<sup>th</sup> September from Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice inviting Councillors to their Annual General Meeting, 1pm Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October at Stowmarket Community Centre, Hillside.

Cllrs Lea and Norris agreed to attend.

- Survey documents received from Creeting St Mary Primary School following pupils recent visit to Needham Market

### **C170/17 SECTIONS.**

#### **C170/17/1 Finance/General Purposes**

##### **C170/17/1a 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 Annis proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

##### **C170/17/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

There was no report.

### **C170/17/2 Recreation & Sport**

#### **C170/17/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr Phillips had nothing to report.

### **C170/17/3 Town Property and Services**

#### **C170/17/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Oakes reported the go-ahead has been received from Suffolk County Council necessary to allow the installation of artificial Christmas Trees, along with new LED lighting, in the High Street for the coming festive season. The Town Warden is to now carry out the required preparatory work.

### **C170/17/4 Newsletter and Communications**

#### **C170/17/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr M Spurling reported a Section meeting will be held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 7:30pm in the Town Council Office.

### **C170/17/5 Planning.**

Cllr M Spurling presented Notes from the Planning Section meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

#### **C170/17/5a To receive Planning Decisions.**

Cllr M Spurling reported the following planning decisions had been received:

#### **DC/17/03682 - 60 High Street - Application for Listed Building Consent - To erect tiled stud work walls in front of the existing brick oven door and the existing window.**

Listed Building Consent has been Granted.

#### **DC/17/03595 - 11 Hawks Mill Street - Removal of part of the rear wall and erection of rear extension**

Planning Permission has been Granted.

#### **C170/17/5b To consider Planning Applications**

Cllr M Spurling referred to the following planning application:

#### **DC/17/04416 - Under The Railway Culvert Over The River Gipping West Of Gipsy Lane 360M Nw From 78 Stowmarket Road Needham Market - Construction of a pedestrian walkway within an existing culvert, the construction of a footpath to the culvert walkway from Stowmarket Road, and the construction of a ramped footpath that will connect an existing farm track, leading from the culvert to the north, that will connect it to Gipsy Lane's existing public footpath.**

The Chairman asked Cllr Norris if he would bring forward the relevant item included in his Highways, Lighting & Footpaths Section report, for discussion. Cllr Norris agreed and presented the relevant item.

Cllr Stansfield said Suffolk County Council's ambition to create a new cycle route from Needham Market to Jacks Green, Creting St Mary has substantially distracted the Gipsy Lane Railway Crossing Closure Project away from its overriding purpose, which is to provide an alternative footpath route which allows the existing crossing to be closed.

Cllr Annis expressed deep frustration at the overbearing involvement of Suffolk County Council when all other stakeholders are trying to achieve the objective of closure of the over-rail crossing, with a suitable alternative footpath route in place, at the earliest opportunity.

The Clerk confirmed the deadline for submission of comments from the Town Council to Mid Suffolk District Council, in respect of the planning application, has been extended to 5<sup>th</sup> October.

Cllr Mason questioned the accuracy of the wording of the Planning Application where reference is made to 'The River Gipping' and suggested the Railway Culvert spans the River Bat.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council continue its pursuit of an acceptable and expedient solution to the need to re-route the footpath, with due regard to public interest and to the concerns of the primary landowner affected, with a further report to come before Council's 4<sup>th</sup> October meeting. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr M Spurling reported the following planning applications had been received:

**DC/17/04420 – 102 High Street – Change of use from opticians to residential use**

The Planning Section recommended approval of the application.

Cllr M Spurling proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**DC/17/04064 – Rhs Shop, 7-9 Station Yard – Application for advertisement consent. Sign 1. Internally illuminated logo panel with letters only to illuminate. Sign 2. Halo illuminated individual letters. Sign 3. Non illuminated dibond panel with vinyl text. Sign 4. Non illuminated dibond panel with vinyl text. Sign 5. Non illuminated dibond panel with vinyl text. Sign 6. Internally illuminated projection sign with letters only to be illuminated. Sign 7. Non illuminated poster frames (x2). All to front elevation.**

The Planning Section recommended approval of the application.

Cllr Mason reminded Council it has a long-standing policy to object to the installation of internally illuminated signs within the Conservation Area.

Cllr Mason proposed, as the property in question is within the Conservation Area and consent is sought for internally illuminated signage, Council recommend refusal. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**DC/17/04201 – Land off Hawks Mill Street – Erection of 6no. Two bedroom flats, each with 1no. Allocated parking space.**

The Planning Section recommended refusal of the application on the grounds of overdevelopment, impact on its setting and damage to existing residential amenity.

Cllr M Spurling proposed Council object to the application on the above grounds. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**C170/17/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr M Spurling reported the Section will next meet on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 in the Town Council Office at 7.00pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

**C170/17/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths**

**C170/17/6a 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. It included reference to:

- Gipsy Lane Crossing Diversion, Planning Application DC/17/04416 – report on a meeting held between our District Councillors and Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Service representative which discussed the status of the re-routed footpath for which planning consent is being sought by Network Rail.
- Temporary Suspension of the 7.5 Tonne Weight Limit – this will operate from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September and affects the B1113 from Great Blakenham to the junction with Grinstead Hill whilst works are being carried out on the C450, Ipswich Road, Offton.

Cllr Norris added the Section will meet on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September at 10am in the Town Council Office.

Cllr M Spurling referred to the plethora of sprayed markings which had appeared in the past few days on roads and pavements throughout the town. Cllr Norris said he was investigating their

source and suggested they may be part of a process to update Suffolk County Highways Service records.

**C171/17 Questions under Standing Order 40.**

Cllr Annis asked if Councillors were aware, although the SnOasis Parish Alliance has a monthly meeting schedule, the meeting due to take place in October has been postponed owing to the failure on the part of the development proposer, to provide detailed information in the anticipated timescale.

**The Meeting closed at 8:54pm.**

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