

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 15th June 2016 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr KMN Oakes – Prior Engagement

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

C114/16 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 1st June 2016.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 1st June 2016 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C115/16 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr R Campbell – Planning Matters

Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters

Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for payment

C116/16 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and to take questions from members of the public

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

- Cabinet Decisions – included the retention of two remaining Ipswich Park and Ride facilities and the changes to operating arrangements
- Rural Transport Service Launched – the new model based on Suffolk being a single designated area
- Needham Market Flood Risk Issues – update report has been issued by the County Council/Environment Agency, to be considered by the Needham Market Flooding Group

County Councillor Truelove added the County Council's Raising the Bar initiative award process had attracted two nominations for achievements attained at Claydon High School, which until recently had fallen short of normal standards.

County Councillor Truelove expressed her deep disappointment on learning the outcome of the Hill House Lane Planning Appeal, particularly when the County Council, District Council and Town Council were strongly opposed to its approval and the implications the decision may have on other new build proposals.

Cllr Annis said he supported County Councillor Truelove's wish to see the Needham Flooding Group reinvigorated following the recent Flood Risk update report and, referring to the update report, agreed the flood risk situation had been improved as a result of river weed clearance but added channel maintenance remains well short of being effective.

Cllr Mason asked who is responsible for clearing the river. Cllr Annis confirmed it is the Environment Agency.

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:

- Community Transport – details of the new model now in operation
- Growth & Vibrant Communities – drop in public consultation session held at Needham Market Community Centre on Thursday 9th June as an initial activity in the District Council's 'Building a Sustainable Future' initiative
- Parish Liaison Meeting – had included a presentation on Devolution by the District Council's Chief Executive
- Queen's 90th Birthday – highlights from the Royal British Legion Women's Section event held on Saturday 14th June at Needham Market Community Centre

At the request of Cllr Stansfield, the member of public present (in his capacity as a Trustee of Needham Market Institute and Club) presented an update on progress with the sale/disposal of furniture etc. and confirmed with £841 income resulting the Institute's bank balance stood at £1,292. He also confirmed a new quotation was being sought for (buildings) insurance cover and an architect had visited the Institute premises to take measurements in preparation for drawing up a proposal for change of use.

C117/16 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Sunday 5th June – Eye Civic Service

Thursday 9th June – Mid Suffolk Town & Parish Liaison Meeting

Thursday 9th June – Mid Suffolk 'Building a Sustainable Future' consultation event

Saturday 11th June – HM Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk's Service to Commemorate HM The Queen's 90th Birthday

Sunday 12th June – Thetford Civic Service

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C118/16 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:

- Meeting arranged with Mid Suffolk District Council for Thursday 16th June to discuss the District Council's emerging Local Plan and its relationship with the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan, which Cllr Norris will attend
- There is a Network Meeting arranged for Neighbourhood Planning Groups within the Mid Suffolk/Babergh area to be held at Woolpit Village Hall on Thursday 16th June, which Cllr Norris is to attend
- Confirmation of the Planning Inspectorate decision to allow 37 dwellings to be developed on Hill House Lane plus the District Council has received and registered (ref: 2548/16) an Outline Planning Application for 152 residential dwellings on land on the North-West side of Barking Road

Cllr Carter said he was willing to attend the Network Meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Groups.

C119/16 To consider the proposals for (East Anglia) devolution.

Cllr Stansfield said he felt the proposals for devolution were a 'fait accompli' as they were being pushed through by the County and District Councils. He understood there may be a referendum on whether there should be a Mayor appointed in any devolved area and the outcome may affect the level of funding, from Central Government, a devolved area is to receive.

Cllr Lea, referring to the newly created then subsequently abolished Regional Assemblies, “we have been here before” and seen vast sums of money spent on discussions which ultimately produced a very short-lived outcome.

Cllr Mason said there have been many ‘quangos’ created in the past, unelected bodies which predominantly serve to generate ‘jobs for the boys’.

Cllr Phillips said it is not clear who will cover the cost of a newly created devolved area Mayor and all the attendant administration which will be deemed necessary.

Cllr Annis said there would be no advantage from creating an additional tier of government if all the numerous existing tiers are sustained and there is a need to reduce, not increase, bureaucracy.

Cllr Norris said the devolution proposal was not being ‘ram-rodged’ through by District Council’s and there will be public consultation, the outcomes of which will be fed into the ‘model’.

Cllr Darnell commented the outcome of the referendum on the merging of Mid Suffolk and Babergh showed the public did not support the change, which nevertheless has been taken forward.

Cllr Lea said the public are already confused as to who is responsible for what across local government and another local government body will increase perplexity.

The Clerk provided some facts and figures relating to the devolution proposal.

C120/16 Clerk’s Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 01.06.16:

C112/16/6a – Email sent 8th June to Headteacher, Bosmere Community Primary School regarding car parking on Quinton Road verges

Cllr Mason commented parking on verges does not avoid yellow line parking restriction enforcement, which is warned by signage where yellow lines are in place.

C113/16 – Devolution item on agenda

2. Issues:

- Registration of Public Realm Area (Needham Maltings) with the Land Registry – this is being undertaken by Council’s Solicitor and the cost will be partly met by Taylor Wimpey Ltd

3. Correspondence to be noted:

None

C121/16 SECTIONS.

C121/16/1 Finance/General Purposes

C121/16/1a 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 Ward proposed the accounts for payment be adopted. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C121/16/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Annis presented Minutes from the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Section held on Tuesday 7th June, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The meeting had discussed the following:

- Council's finances and investments
- Council's Risk Assessment
- Council's Insurances
- Report from the Employment Committee
- Review of the Council's Sections structure
- Administration of Council's car parks
- Section Leaders reports

Cllr Carter agreed to act as Council's mentor regarding development of its electronic media functions and to impart his knowledge of such matters to other Councillors.

Cllr Phillips said he was encouraged by the debate which had taken place under the Review of the Council's Sections structure and thanked Cllr Annis for his comprehensive record of the debate and its outcomes.

C121/16/2 Recreation & Sport

C121/16/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips had nothing to report.

C121/16/3 Town Property and Services

C121/16/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

On behalf of Cllr Oakes, Cllr Stansfield presented Notes from the Section meeting held Tuesday 14th June, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Lea, referring to the replacement of the edge of town 'Needham Market' signs, said the sign boards had been displayed successfully on oak posts for more than 30 years and therefore serious consideration should be given to continuing with the use of oak posts. Cllr Darnell added metal posts, as an alternative, may rust in relatively short time.

Cllr Stansfield proposed the Section should endeavour as far as possible to procure oak posts for the edge of town signs. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Phillips suggested costing of both oak and metal posts was still desirable in helping Councillors reach a final decision.

C121/16/4 Newsletter and Communications

C121/16/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea thanked Cllr Carter for his agreeing to take a main role in development of Council's social media functions.

C121/16/5 Planning.

Cllr R Campbell presented Minutes from the meeting of the Planning Section held on Monday 13th June, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C121/16/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr R Campbell reported no planning decisions had been received.

C121/16/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr R Campbell reported the following planning application had been received:

2331/16 – 8 Lilac Walk – Alterations and single storey rear extension

The Section noted the comments shown regarding pre-application advice and agreed the application satisfied the relevant policies.

The Section recommended Council support approval of the application. Cllr Annis proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C121/16/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr R Campbell referred Councillors to the item on Guidance which has been issued to Town and Parish Councils regarding the operation of the Community Infrastructure Levy Scheme, and the item relating to discussion by the Section on the recent Planning Inspectorate decision to allow approval for development at Hill House Lane (Planning Application 3679/13)

Cllr Phillips asked if Council should consider proposing a formal response to the Planning Inspectorate's decision. Cllr Stansfield read out a reply the Town Clerk had provided to a member of public to an enquiry regarding the Planning Inspectorate's decision and recommended the reply form the basis of replies to any requests for information received, on the Town Council's position, from the public, the Press etc. Cllr Phillips proposed Council adopt Cllr Stansfield's recommendation. Cllr D Campbell seconded the proposal. Council unanimously agreed the proposal.

Cllr R Campbell reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 4th July in the Town Council Office at 7pm.

C121/16/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C121/16/6a 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.

Cllr Norris referred to the item regarding HGV's travelling along Foxglove Avenue and Quinton Road and explained the advice he had received from a Suffolk County Council Highways Engineer. As there is no ready-made solution he confirmed the next course of action is he will call a Section meeting to further discuss the issue.

Cllr Mason commented whilst Heavy Goods Vehicle drivers are warned of the weight limit in Needham Market High Street, as far away as near to the Muntons factory site at Badley, there is no equivalent warning for those drivers approaching Needham Market on the B1078 Barking Road route. He suggested signage at the junction of Barking Road and Foxglove Avenue is necessary and it should warn HGV drivers they would be 'going into' a route which leads to no avoidance of the weight limit. Cllr Norris said he would take Cllr Mason's comments into account when liaising with the County Council.

Cllr Annis proposed the Clerk request Suffolk County Council to put signage in place, at the junction of Foxglove Avenue/Barking Road, making it clear HGV's should not access Foxglove Avenue. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr M Spurling expressed concern Suffolk County Council proposed closure of the B1078 Coddendam Road on Wednesday 20th July (to allow for railway bridge examination) which will cause a lot of problems with the nearby car boot sale being held that day. Cllr Norris agreed to request the County Council change its proposal.

Cllr Phillips asked if there had been any progress on Council's objection to the fence which has been erected at a property on Barking Road and which had closed off a right of way. Cllr Norris referred to an update report he had made in February 2016 and confirmed the owner of the fence had made a request for a meeting with the County Council in order to state his case. Cllr Phillips said he felt the timescales for dealing with the issue have become stretched. Cllr Mason commented the fence appears, in any case, to breach planning regulations.

C122/16 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr R Campbell asked if Councillors were aware development of new homes in Needham Market attracts the 'low' category of developer contribution under the Community Infrastructure Levy Scheme and, whilst Needham Market has no Neighbourhood Plan in place, the Town Council will receive a lesser (15% as against 25% with a Neighbourhood Plan) of this already 'low' contribution.

The Meeting closed at 8:50 p.m.

Chairman **Date**