

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 20th December 2017 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr R Campbell – Prior Engagement
Cllr I Mason - Holiday
Cllr A Morris – Work Commitment
Cllr KMN Oakes - Unwell

County Councillor Anne Whybrow

In Attendance: District Councillor Wendy Marchant, 6 Members of Public and Town Clerk Kevin Hunter.

C217/17 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 6th December 2017.

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

C218/17 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for Payment

C219/17 To receive a presentation from Mid Suffolk District Council on use of the Section 106 Developer Contributions from the St Georges Park (former Needham Market Chalk Quarry) housing development and reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Tony Bass, Strategic Leisure Advisor, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. Mr Bass introduced himself and described the purpose of his role at the District Councils. He presented an overview of the current position relating to the allocation of Section 106 funds due from the developers of St Georges Park (former Needham Market Chalk Quarry). The Town Council had submitted requests for funding totaling £500,000 towards a range of projects which would benefit the local community. He acknowledged the Town Council had not been given the opportunity by the District Council to conclude its Section 106 funding requests and this was causing him to look at what flexibility is available within the current scope of the Section 106 agreement. £200,000 is allocated within the current Section 106 Agreement for improvements to drainage at Crowley Park which is not now necessary following improvements to the efficiency of surface water drainage on the periphery of Crowley Park. Funds allocated within scope of the Section 106 Agreement to improving/replacing the 1st Needham Market Scouts hut and the refurbishment of the outdoor sports courts at Needham Market Community Centre remain valid. Mr Bass stressed the need to consider a phased approach to use of Section 106 funds which will require co-ordination, investigation of additional funding from other sources, a strategic approach and a timeframe for delivery. He added Mid Suffolk District Council has good practice to follow with regard to deployment of Section 106 funds and sports and recreation projects need to reflect the 'bigger picture'. He referred to the broader perspective taken by the District Council as well as specific projects which are in the pipeline such as Needham Market Football Club's plan to create an all-weather football pitch facility He encouraged the Town Council to work with the District Council towards a strategic plan for Sport and Recreation facilities in Needham Market and, in the meantime, to act on priority needs and deliver clearly defined projects.

Cllr Darnell asked if the District Council will retain any of the Section 106 funds as part of its administrative role. Mr Bass replied he believes there is an applicable District Council 'administrative fee' but he was not able to advise on whether fees are also applied in relation to the District Council's involvement in any working up of plans and/or management of project delivery.

Cllr Phillips asked if Mid Suffolk District Council had an eye on using Section 106 funding towards its long-held ambition to create a 'Visitor Centre' at Needham Lake. Mr Bass replied the District Council is tasked with looking at the use of Section 106 funds on a broader, more strategic basis than would necessarily be taken by any Town/Parish Council and this is part of his job role.

Cllr Carter related to the Needham Market Railway Station 'Access for All' campaign and the need to consider accessibility in any future Sport and Recreation projects. Mr Bass replied there are accessibility obligations which would need to be taken account of in future planning of Sports and Recreation facilities and confirmed the Needham Market Railway Station 'Access for All' campaign, which he is aware of, is not in scope of that future planning.

Mr Bass concluded by asking the Town Council to firm up on its proposals to refurbish/replace the pavilion facility at Crowley Park, including whether Football Association funds could be released towards its cost. He stressed it was necessary for the Town Council to be specific about the change of use of funds currently included in the formal Section 106 Agreement to enable the District Council to advise on what flexibility could be applied to use of those funds. He confirmed, if necessary, the District Council will look at any legal implications.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bass for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned for a few minutes during which time Mr Bass departed and seating etc. was reorganised.

Cllr Stansfield strongly recommended that, in view of the advice received from Mr Bass, the Town Council's Recreation and Sport Section meet as soon as possible to firm up on the priority for use of Section 106 funds and this be reported to the Town Council's next scheduled meeting (17th January 2018). Cllr Phillips, Leader of the Council's Sport and Recreation Section, agreed to take the recommendation forward.

There was no County Councillor 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:

- Access For All Campaign, Needham Market Railway Station – update including: the letter drafted by SCC Senior Public Transport Officer Joseph Hough, has been sent off to the Transport Minister with the support of our Member of Parliament Jo Churchill, Bosmere County Councillor Anne Whybrow, District Councillors and the Senior County Councillor (Transport); there are now over 1,000 signatures on the petition, the annual rail passenger numbers for Needham Market Railway Station have increased to nearly 100,000.
 - Former MSDC Needham Market HQ Building - the following question has been put to the Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council, Cllr. Nick Gowrley, for Mid Suffolk's Full Council on Thursday 21.12.17:
 - “On January 18th 2018, Mid Suffolk's Design Team will be presenting the recommended option for Needham Market H.Q. Building to all District Council Members and Needham Market Town Council, for comments and views.
 - Will this recommended option include further options which have come from an Officer recently:
1. NHS Child Immunisation Team are looking for 2500 sq. feet of space
 2. Suffolk and Norfolk Police Dog Unit used to train search and rescue dogs and drugs dogs at Paddock House, Eye, when SCC owned it, but not since MSDC bought it, and hence are looking for an alternative training site.
 3. Film Suffolk are permanently looking for sites for various uses with the bait of the “Lovejoy Effect” on tourism in lieu of any cash payment – a set of pipes and tracking in the ceiling like Mid Suffolk's server room at Needham Market is what they're after at the moment.

Allowing other organisations to use part or all of Needham Market H.Q. would bring benefits in the form of footfall in the High Street, which would help the local economy.

Supplementary question: There is also the possibility of receiving some rental income/reduction in security costs, should we actively seek commercial use. It is understood the Development Team's activities may take precedence. WHY did these new options not go to the 'All Together' Group in October?

District Councillor Marchant added Merry Christmas and Happy New Year wishes to all present.

Cllr Annis, referring to a local press article on the resignation of the Leader of Babergh District Council, asked whether the Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council, in view of the apparent chaotic District Councils merger plans, should be considering the same course of action. District Councillor Marchant informed the meeting that Babergh District Councillors have been able to voice their opinions on behalf of their electorate via the involvement of the Scrutiny function at Babergh District Council. That opportunity had been denied to Mid Suffolk District Councillors as a result of the Chief Executive's view that for Babergh District Council, a formal decision had to be taken by the Council on progressing a merger whereas for Mid Suffolk District Council, the Council is only required to endorse its decision.

C220/17 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Saturday 16th December – Mid Suffolk Brass Band Christmas Concert held at St Mary's Church, Stowmarket

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C221/17 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. It included an update on the work being undertaken by AECOM on Council's behalf, investigating the feasibility of creating a relief road connecting Barking Road to Stowmarket Road. AECOM has initially provided high-level plans for two options. The first takes account of the parcels of land identified on the North/West boundary of the town which appear in the Mid Suffolk District Council 'Call for Sites' documentation and which could generate an estimated 559 new dwellings. A second option, extending those sites to the indicative route of a relief road along the North/West boundary, could generate an estimated 972 new dwellings along with associated community infrastructure.

C222/17 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. *Actions from Town Council Meeting 06.12.17:*

C209/17 – Link to MSDC report on move to Endeavour House circulated 15.12

C215/17/5b – Email sent to MSDC 11.12 regarding Planning process (DC/17/05549)

2. *Issues:*

- Needham in Bloom – replacement of High Street planters update

Cllr Lea reported progress on specifying and costing of Needham in Bloom's preferred option. The Clerk added he anticipated a budget of £1,500 to £2,000 being required, for the replacement of the original planters, which were purchased by the Town Council and had served their purpose for many years.

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

None

C223/17 SECTIONS.

C223/17/1 Finance/General Purposes

C223/17/1a 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.

C223/17/1b To consider adoption of the 6-months accounts to 30th September 2017.

Cllr Annis presented the 6-months accounts to 30th September 2017, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Annis proposed the 6-months accounts to 30th September 2017 be adopted. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C223/17/1c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was nothing further to report.

C223/17/2 Recreation & Sport

C223/17/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips reported, in response to the Section 106 Developer Contributions issue discussed earlier in the meeting, he would be calling a meeting of the Section as early as possible in the new year.

C223/17/3 Town Property and Services

C223/17/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

There was no report.

Cllr Phillips proposed Council's best wishes be sent to Cllr Oakes in her convalescence. Council agreed.

C223/17/4 Newsletter and Communications

C223/17/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr M Spurling reported a Section meeting had been held on Wednesday 13th December. The meeting had included:

- Development of the new Town Council website is in hand. Cllr Carter is to discuss progress with the Clerk
- A future Town Council meeting agenda item should allow discussion on whether the home addresses of Councillors should be omitted from the Newsletter
- There is a potential shortage of Newsletter deliverers and a request for additional volunteers will be included in the next (February 2018) Newsletter
- Newsletter front covers for 2018, excepting July and August, have been allocated

Cllr D Spurling said, in view of the potential shortage of voluntary Newsletter deliverers, it may be necessary for Council to consider alternatives to the current delivery regime. Cllr Annis added the new website may be an important factor in the future of the Newsletter as a lot of people now access the Newsletter type of journal online.

C223/17/5 Planning.

Cllr X Stansfield gave a verbal report from the Planning Section meeting that had taken place on Monday 18th December.

C223/17/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr X Stansfield reported the following planning decisions had been received:

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

Planning Permission has been Granted.

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

Advertisement Consent has been Granted.

Cllr M Spurling questioned why Mid Suffolk District Council has approved illuminated signage in a Conservation Area. Cllr Darnell added the District Council, in granting approval, has disregarded a long-standing Town Council policy which resisted illuminated signage in the town's Conservation Area.

C223/17/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr X Stansfield reported the following planning application had been received:

DC/17/05549 – Land North West of Hill House Lane – Outline Planning Permission (with Some Matters Reserved) – Erection of 64 No. dwellings (including 22 No. affordable homes) with vehicular access from Stowmarket Road together with 2 No. dwellings accessed from Hill House Lane.

Cllr X Stansfield confirmed the Planning Section had been delegated (6th December 2017 – Minute 215/17/5b) the decision on the Town Council's response to this application and, the Section recommended approval. The submission to the Planning Authority consultation on the application had been submitted accordingly.

Cllr Darnell asked how access from the proposed development onto Stowmarket Road is going to be managed. Cllr Stansfield referred to the numerous submissions from various authorities, including Suffolk County Council Highways, posted on the Mid Suffolk District Council website. The submissions picked up many of the points which were in Section Members minds when considering this Outline Application and, they are points the developer will need to satisfy the Planning Authority on, at the Detailed Planning Application stage.

C223/17/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr X Stansfield reported the Section will next meet on Monday 15th January 2018 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C223/17/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C223/17/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris gave a verbal report on The Swan Yard Public Footpath, where flooding has again taken place, the cause of which he is investigating.

Cllr Phillips asked if there had been any news received on the appeal regarding the obstructed public footpath off Barking Road. Cllr Norris replied he is still awaiting notice of the availability of a Planning Inspector to determine the appeal.

C224/17 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Annis asked whether Councillors were aware the annual carol singing around the local hostelrys is taking place on Friday 22nd December and all are welcome to join in.

The Meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Chairman **Date**