

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 17th January 2018 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr R Campbell – Work Commitment
Cllr I Mason - Holiday

The Town Clerk was unwell and did not attend.

In Attendance: County Councillor Anne Whybrow and District Councillor Wendy Marchant.

C001/18 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 20th December 2017.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 20th December 2017 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C002/18 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr JE Lea - Accounts for Payment
Cllr KMN Oakes - Accounts for Payment (Personal Expenses)
Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for Payment

C003/18 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

County Councillor Whybrow presented her report, a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. It included reference to:

- Suffolk School Travel Consultation Launched – people who have not chosen their closest school for their children's education may no longer receive financial support
- Suffolk to Retain 100% Business Rates – Suffolk chosen as one of only 10 areas to pilot retention of 100% business rates in 2018/19
- Fully Funded Central Heating Systems – means tested scheme being introduced aimed at those households that are in fuel poverty

County Councillor Whybrow said she favoured phasing in of any removal of school transport funding support for parents as some may not be able to afford the change.

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's HQ Building, Needham Market – District Councillors received a briefing on 12th January regarding the future of the site which is to be followed by a briefing for Town Councillors at the end of January and public consultation in February
- Access for all Campaign, Needham Market Railway Station – update
- Skate Board Park for Needham Market – Needham Market District Councillors to attend a meeting on 15th January with the Committee which has been set up to look into how a skate park might be provided for the town

C004/18 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Thursday 21st December – Ashburnham Club Carol Service and Christmas Lunch.

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C005/18 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris reported, an update on progress on work being undertaken by AECOM on the feasibility of a new town boundary relief road, should be available around mid-February.

The Chairman suggested the following item be added to the agenda. Council agreed.

C005a/18 To consider options relating to the relocation of the Heavy Goods Vehicle Weight Limit signage on Barking Road.

Cllr Norris referred to the latest information received from Suffolk County Council on the options and costs for relocating the Heavy Goods Vehicle Weight Limit signage on Barking Road, the details of which are:

Relocation of existing '7.5t weight limit in 600 yards' sign at Barking Road, Needham Market.

Professional Services Estimate = £392.03

Construction Estimates:

Option1: To use existing sign, relocate near to access with Anglia Wildfowl and cover 600 yards with new 920 yards plate = £571.29.

Option 2: To remove existing sign and add new sign near to access with Anglia Wildfowl = £738.50.

Scheme Estimate Option 1 = £963.32

Scheme estimate Option 2 = £1130.53

Suffolk County Councillor Anne Whybrow confirmed the cost of the sign relocation will be met from her Locality Budget. It was therefore agreed, with both schemes providing a feasible solution, Cllr Whybrow make the final decision on the scheme to be implemented.

C006/18 To consider Mid Suffolk District Council's proposed merger with Babergh District Council.

Numerous Councillors expressed their concern consultation on the proposed merger, though welcome, is being managed in a very biased approach which is clearly seeking to prompt support for the merger.

Cllr Annis said his view is the merger is the start of the creation of unitary authorities which will cover the East and West of Suffolk respectively.

Cllr Darnell commented the conduct of the Mid Suffolk and Babergh Councils and their management, in the recent course of their merger proposal, is shambolic.

C007/18 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

Cllr Lea read from a letter received from Mid Suffolk District Council explaining the reasons supporting the suggestion that a presentation to a public meeting on their proposals for the future of their Needham Market Offices site would not be appropriate at this point. It is further suggested that a public consultation drop-in event be held in February preceded by a meeting between representatives from Mid Suffolk District Council and the Town Council. This would allow for unconstrained discussion between representatives from Mid Suffolk District Council and the Town Council whilst the consultation drop-in event would be far more appropriate to allow for the display of relevant material (plans etc.).

Councillors accepted the explanation and suggested way forward with the meeting between representatives from Mid Suffolk District Council and the Town Council arranged for Wednesday 31st January.

C008/18 SECTIONS.

C008/18/1 Finance/General Purposes

C008/18/1a Accounts for Payment and Confirmation.

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

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

C008/18/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was nothing further to report.

C008/18/2 Recreation & Sport

C008/18/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips presented Notes from the Section meeting held on 10th January, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

The main purpose of the meeting had been to consider the feasibility of refurbishing Crowley Park pavilion, or alternatively, replacing the pavilion with a new-build.

Cllr Phillips proposed Council adopt the Notes from the Section meeting. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C008/18/3 Town Property and Services

C008/18/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Oakes had nothing to report.

Cllr Annis reported the scaffolding installed around St John's Church in the High Street presented an ideal opportunity for gaining easier access to mechanical components of the Church clock. Those mechanical components require long-term maintenance and he is to obtain a quotation from a local horologist whilst the access opportunity is available.

C008/18/4 Newsletter and Communications

C008/18/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr M Spurling had nothing to report.

C008/18/5 Planning.

Cllr M Spurling reported a Planning Section meeting had not taken place on Monday 15th January due to lack of relevant business.

C008/18/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

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

DC/17/04201 – Land off Hawks Mill Street – Erection of 6 no. two bedroom flats with 1no. allocated parking space.

Planning Permission has been Refused.

C008/18/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr M Spurling reported no planning applications had been received.

C008/18/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr M Spurling reported the Section will next meet on Monday 5th February 2018 in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

Cllr Darnell said, as a result of his enquiry to Central Government, he can confirm all new housing development, by law, has to include provision for connection to high-speed broadband.

Cllr Annis, who represents the Town Council on the SnOasis Alliance, reported he is having difficulty gaining access to relevant papers which should be available for public viewing on the Mid Suffolk District Council website.

C008/18/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C008/18/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris reported there is currently nothing affecting Needham Market shown on the Traffic Management Website which is now the source of information and updates.

Cllr Carter raised a question regarding access to the Robins Children's Centre. Cllr Norris agreed to look into the matter.

C009/18 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Darnell asked if Councillors shared his concern at the deteriorating condition of the Old Town Hall building in the High Street, which is an important Listed Building in the Conservation Area.

The Meeting closed at 8.26pm.

Chairman **Date**