

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 5th December 2018 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr I Mason – Holiday

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes,

In Attendance: District Councillor Wendy Marchant, one member of public and the Town Clerk.

The Chairman invited Chris Campbell, who had been co-opted to Council at its 21st November meeting, to read out his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr C Campbell read out his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and signed it. The Clerk, being the Proper Officer, countersigned the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

C218/18 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 21st November 2018.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 21st November 2018 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C219/18 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr P Potter – Planning

Cllr M Spurling - Accounts for Payment

C220/18 To receive a report from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

District Councillor Wendy Marchant presented the District Councillors report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included:

ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR MID SUFFOLK

The Environment Panel met on Wed. 21.11.18. The recommendation from the Panel to Mid Suffolk's Cabinet is that consultants are appointed, who in fact don't even have environmental expertise, at a cost of between £10,000 and £15,000 to put together an environment strategy for Mid Suffolk, which will be used to influence all aspects of the council's work. Numerous other councils have produced environmental strategies, there were examples at the panel meeting – no point in reinventing the wheel. Two of us did not agree with these consultants being appointed, but there should be capacity within the council for their own officers to do it – or at least not consultants with no environmental expertise.

CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY On Wed. 21.11.18 there was a Member Briefing at Endeavour House on Crime and Community Safety. The facilitator was Mid Suffolk's Corporate Manager for Safe & Strong Communities. The three biggest things of concern are: County Lines; Street Gangs; and violence against women and girls (also men and boys). Of these, County Lines are the biggest threat, with drug gangs recruiting young people, and making the use of homes of vulnerable people, and moving out from the big cities to other areas – ruining people's lives. More work is being put into dealing with this problem.

OLD PEOPLE'S FAYRE Wendy attended this at Needham Market Community Centre on Fri. 30.11.18. Our Member of Parliament Jo Churchill was there. There were numerous stalls offering excellent advice to help the elderly – including: Safety advice for senior consumers; How to avoid scams; information about Cedrus Care Home, Stowmarket; Health Walks; the CAB with advice about saving energy; the Stroke Association; Dawn and Jan were there to tell us about the knitting and 'Meet Up Tuesday' at the Community Café, and many other stalls. Free refreshments were on offer. An excellent event to help the elderly.

CORPORATE PARENTING This was on Friday afternoon 30.11.18 at Endeavour House, Ipswich, and was presented by Suffolk County Council Officers, because corporate parenting is essentially the responsibility of the County Council, but District Councillors are very much encouraged to attend (there are to be repeat events at Bury St. Edmunds and Lowestoft), because the District Council is responsible for housing, and sometimes care leavers may require housing which the District Council might be able to provide. The number of children in care has been increasing in recent years.

BOSMERE SCHOOL There was a meeting on Friday evening 30.11.18 at Bosmere School, on issues relating to Bosmere School, and the Middle School site, with representatives from the Town, District and County Council, and Bosmere School, which was very positive and productive.

PLANNING APPLICATION 24 Crowley Road, Needham Market, Suffolk for 2 one-bedroom dwellings, and 1 two-bedroom dwelling, (following demolition of extension to 24 Crowley Road) widening of existing layby to provide additional parking spaces. There was a surprising decision on this planning application at the planning meeting this morning. The Planning Officer was recommending approval; and the house next door had been approved on appeal by the Government Inspector for a similar development, after the Planning Committee refused planning permission. Because the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) changed this year, paragraph 127 page 38 and paragraph 230, in connection with design. The Planning Committee felt it was overdevelopment, too cramped, rooms too small, not enough space at the side of the house – accumulative effect.

Cllr Phillips commented the planning application for development at 24 Crowley Road involved the change of use of land owned by Mid Suffolk District Council. District Councillor Marchant confirmed the District Council had agreed to sell the land involved but this was now immaterial as the planning application has been refused.

The member of public present had no question to raise.

C221/18 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had no activities to report.

C222/18 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris presented Notes from the Working Group meeting held 4th December, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The Notes referred to:

Progress with AECOM: A further meeting with AECOM to be arranged to agree the future programme of work and timetables for completing the detailed work towards finalising the Feasibility Study for including in the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan.

It will also be necessary for the Neighbourhood Plan to incorporate policies to meet local priorities and concepts that the community can benefit from in the longer term.

Establishing an applicable working group with MSDC and Suffolk County Council on the AECOM Feasibility Study: Tom Barker, Assistant Director – Planning & Communities, in his email of 30th October has stated: “It sounds as though it would be appropriate for us to be a member of such a group. I’ve copied this to Robert Hobbs as our Corporate Manager for Strategic Planning but have also copied to Paul Bryant, our Neighbourhood Plans officer, who I anticipate would be the Councils representative on the group”.

Further to the meeting that Cllr. Stansfield and myself attended on 7th November at Endeavour House with MSDC and SCC officers, MSDC have requested a further meeting with AECOM present to substantiate including sites that AECOM have included in the Feasibility Study as potential sites for development, in addition to those sites that MSDC have already accepted, to be included in their updated Local Plan, and also as to the extent to date of any contact with land agents and developers.

Former MSDC Offices site and Middle School site: These two planning applications by MSDC are interlinked to provide an overall element of affordable housing, the majority of which is proposed to be included on the former Middle School site. There was considerable discussion on these applications and on the arrangements for the Public Meeting regarding the former Middle School

site this Saturday 8th December from 10.00am to Midday, in the Burton Room at the Community Centre. A letter drop has taken place to residents on the traffic routes that would be affected, and it is intended that residents attending the Public Meeting will be advised that they can use the facilities in the Community Internet Café to submit comments online up until the end of December. Barking Parish Council have been advised of the Public Meeting taking place this Saturday.

MSDC/Babergh updated Joint Local Plan: Mid Suffolk and Babergh are currently working on the supporting documents necessary to produce an updated Joint Local Plan. The latest timetable available shows the following target dates:

- Preparation of draft Local Plan Preferred Options and Consultation: Consultation December 2018 to January 2019.
- Publication of draft Local Plan and Consultation: Technical Consultation April 2019 to May 2019.
- Submission: Documents sent to Government for Examination May/June 2019.
- Examination in Public: June 2019.
- Adoption: February 2020.

C223/18 To receive a report from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils Area Meeting 29th November.

Cllr Lea reported briefly on matters included in a summary document provided by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Those issues included a briefing from the local Safer Neighbourhood Team, a general update and a SALC member exchange on mutual topics.

C224/18 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. *Actions from Town Council Meeting 21.11.18*
None

2. *Issues:*

- Cllr Mason – correspondence received

Cllr Annis proposed Councillors be informed all business related to the Town Council must be referred directly to the Town Council Office. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

- Damage to Bus Shelter opposite The Swan – details referred to Council's insurer
- Gipsy Lane Rail Crossing – possibility of a Public Enquiry in April 2019
- Christmas Street Lighting Switching – options received from Suffolk County Council

Council agreed, as in past years, on the option for all-night lighting on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Email dated 28th November from the Housing Strategy Officer, Mid Suffolk District Council reminding recipients the BMSDC Homes Strategy Consultation closes on Friday 7th December.

C225/18 SECTIONS.

C225/18/1 Finance/General Purposes

C225/18/1a 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.

C225/18/1b To receive and adopt Accounts for the 6-month period to 30th September 2018

Cllr Annis referred Councillors to the Accounts for the 6-month period to 30th September 2018, which had been tabled at Council's 21st November meeting and confirmed no questions had been raised in respect of the accounts in the intervening period.

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the Accounts for the 6-month period to 30th September 2018. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C225/18/1c To receive and adopt the Council's Risk Assessment 2018/19.

The Clerk reported the Annual Report on the play areas and playing field at Crowley Park has not yet been received and therefore requested deferral of the item until the next Council meeting. Council agreed.

C225/18/1d To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Annis presented Notes from the Section Meeting held 26th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The Notes included:

Review of the Financial Management.

- a) Internal Audit. The current internal arrangements were satisfactory. The 6 monthly statement had been produced and was awaiting adoption by the Council at their next meeting. It was agreed that a 6 monthly statement gave sufficient indication of the Town Council finances bearing in mind that Section Leaders were able to monitor their section budgets. Currently there were no questions raised regarding the 6-monthly statement.
- b) The Town Council investments remained unaltered. The relatively high current account was noted, but it was accepted that with low interest rates prevailing, to move any monies at this stage would give very little advantage.

Town Council Risk Assessment

The Town Clerk reported that the annual review of the Risk Assessment was in hand and would be presented to the December Town Council meeting.

Review of the Town Council priorities for funding

It was agreed that the provision of public toilets was a priority and the project to install temporary toilets at the Jubilee Crescent car park should go ahead at an estimated cost of approximately £20,000. This should not detract from the possibility of more permanent toilets at Crowley Park and/or the Middle School site.

£7000 should be allocated to the Neighbourhood Plan in order to proceed with the Feasibility Study.

Investigations should continue into the refurbishment/replacement of the Crowley Park pavilion.

Investigations into the provision of a Skateboard Park and the upgrading of the Play Equipment on Crowley Park must continue.

Councillor Lea drew attention to the Suffolk County Council's proposed withdrawal of funding for the CAB and asked that the Town Council should give consideration to increasing their financial support. She suggested that a speaker from the CAB should be invited to give a presentation to the Town Council.

Employment Committee Report

The Town Clerk will be responsible for the Annual Appraisal of the Town Council staff. Councillors Lea, Stansfield and Annis will ensure that Annual Appraisal of the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk is carried out.

Councillors Phillips and Annis will meet with the Town Mayor on Friday 30th

November to discuss the complaint by the Town Clerk regarding Councillor Mason and the subsequent action taken by the Town Council.

Budget Setting for the financial year 2019 / 2020

The following budgets for consideration were presented by the respective Section Leaders (2018/2019 Budget):

Highways and Lighting	13,500	(13,500)
Recreation and Sport	15,000	(15,000)
Newsletter / communications	5,000	(3,000)
Strategic Planning	7,000	(5,000)
Town Property	30,000	(21,000)
Burial Ground	3,000	(2,000)
Donation and Grants	5,000	(4,000)
Administration	<u>45,000</u>	<u>(44,000)</u>
Total Budget	£123,500	(107,500)

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It was noted that the budget for the current financial year was £ 107,500. There was an estimated increase of 0.5% in the Council Tax Base in 2019/20 for Needham Market. The current reserves held by the Town Council were adequate.

Review the Arrangements for Civic Events.

It was agreed to recommend the setting up of a Working Group to be responsible for the organisation of civic events such as the Civic Service and the Remembrance Service. The group would liaise with the relevant bodies, including the Town Clerk, and would produce a working template for use in the future. In this way the Town Clerk could be relieved of much of the onerous tasks involved in such events, and a written procedure would be in place.

Matters Raised by Section Leaders

Highways and Lighting. The work started by the previous Suffolk County Councillor, Anne Whybrow to improve the signing to try to prevent HGVs using Foxglove Avenue / Quinton Road to avoid the HGV restrictions is to be continued by Councillor Kay Oakes.

Town Property. Councillor Lea suggested that the Town Council have an input into the facilities to be included in the replacement library. She had attended the AGM and was made aware of the importance of the library locally. During the erection of the Christmas trees in the High Street she had been made aware of the failings of some of the lamp post electrical fittings and it was important that the necessary work was put in hand to repair and adapt the installations. Some of the tree support brackets need attention to make sure the trees are secure and upright in the future.

Newsletter and Communications. Councillor D. Campbell is to be the new Section Leader. His deputy is Councillor N. Andrews. Three people have expressed an interest in the vacant position of Primary Distributor for the Newsletter, the next issue of which will be in February. It is essential that the Town Council web-site is reviewed and kept up to date.

Planning. Work is in hand to organise the leaflet drop to houses in the immediate area around the Middle School development site. The leaflet is designed to encourage people to comment upon the proposed development. It is important that objections should not be just negative but should have positive alternatives attached to them.

Recreation and Sport. An offer from a competent tradesman has been received to repair the damaged children's play train. The vandalised bird's nest swing is awaiting the spare parts necessary to repair it. Two decent weather and vandal proof containers will be required to house the football and cricket equipment when work starts on the pavilion. It is planned to remove the Barratts Lane hedge to enable the concrete and wire fence to be removed, prior to replanting or allowing the old hedge to re-grow.

Any Other Business

The two Town Signs are ready to be installed. The installation sites are being investigated and the necessary licenses will be applied for when the actual sites are established. A meeting has been arranged on Friday next at 4.30pm at Bosmere Primary School with all interested parties to discuss the subjects raised at the last meeting. Representatives from the school, the County, the District, the contractors and the Town Council should be in attendance. Main items for discussion should be access to the school and the future use of the whole area adjacent to the school.

Jo Churchill MP is hosting an Old Peoples' Fair at the Community Centre on Friday morning. The Town Council is using a Planning Consultant to advise on planning matters concerning the Middle School site planning application. Also investigating a School Street traffic survey.

Date, Time and Location of the next F and G P meeting.

The meeting was arranged for Tuesday 5th February 2019 at 10.00 am. in the Town Council Office.

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt his report. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal Council agreed the proposal.

C225/18/2 Recreation & Sport

C225/18/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips referred Councillors to the Finance & General Purposes report items relating to the Recreation & Sport Section.

C225/18/3 Town Property and Services

C225/18/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea thanked the Councillors who had helped erect the Christmas trees and lights in the High Street and reported the trees will be taken down on Sunday 6th January.

Cllr Lea reported a Section meeting will take place on Tuesday 15th January at 10am in the Town Council Office.

Cllr Annis informed Council the High Street Clock strike mechanism is currently an hour out and he will attend and correct it as soon as possible.

C225/18/4 Newsletter and Communications

C225/18/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr D Campbell presented Notes from the Section Meeting held 22nd November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The Notes included:

ELECTION OF SECTION LEADER: It was unanimously agreed that Councillor Campbell become the Section Leader with immediate effect.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SECTION LEADER: It was agreed that Councillor Andrews become the Deputy Section Leader with immediate effect. Councillor Lea agreed to produce the NOTES of this meeting.

FINANCIAL POSITION: Councillor Lea explained that, due to the decision to include a four page insert each month, the cost had escalated by £251 for each edition of the newsletter. Due to this there will be an overspend of around £1,000. After discussion it was agreed that the revenue budget for 2019/20 be set at £5,000.

ADVERTISING: It was agreed that the advertising charges and the fees for inserts should remain the same for 2019/20.

DISTRIBUTION: Councillor Lea reported that expressions of interest have been received and the post is being advertised in the December newsletter. It should be possible to have a new incumbent in place for the distribution of the February 2019 newsletter.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Terence Carter will return the laptop he has been using to update the website and other media platforms in the next few days. There followed an in-depth discussion on Council's website and it was agreed that the website needs serious attention. Councillors Campbell and Andrews will address the issue. They will also meet with the Assistant Clerk to acquaint themselves with details of the newsletter and social media in general.

FRONT COVERS: Councillor Lea explained that the graphics are controlled by the Town Council Office. Some events have a front cover provided by the hosting organisation. Others have a banner across the front cover.

Cllr D Campbell reported a Section meeting will be held on Thursday 10th January at 7pm in the Town Council Office.

C225/18/5 Planning.

Cllr Stansfield presented his report from the Planning Section Meeting held Monday 3rd December, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book

C225/18/5a To receive Planning Decisions.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following Planning Decision Notice had been received:

DC/18/04214 - 143 High Street - Erection of a detached summerhouse.

Planning Permission has been Granted.

C225/18/5b To consider Planning Applications

Cllr Stansfield reported the following Planning Applications had been received:

Planning Application Ref. DC/18/05252. Proposal and Location: Change of use from martial arts and fitness to class B1 and B2. Unit 29 Lion Barn Industrial Estate, Needham Market.

The Section considered this application and recommend no consultation submission be made.

DC/18/05162 - Land to Rear of 6-16 Chainhouse Road, School Street - Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Removal of 19 (no) Willow trees and clear site.

The Section recommends that MSDC should refer this to their Tree Officer.

NB. The Needham Market Tree Warden has emailed (4th December) her observations on the above application and the Section needs to reconsider its conclusion and recommendation accordingly.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council object to the application including the Tree Warden's observations in its consultee submission. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

DC/18/05104 - Former Mid Suffolk District Council Offices & Associated Land, 131 High Street - Redevelopment for Class C3 Residential (94 Units) & Class A1 Retail Uses, incorporating demolition works and the construction of new buildings, with associated works and infrastructure. See accompanying schedule for full description of development.

The Section immediately identified the vast amount of accompanying documentation. The Section has had only three days in which to consider the schedule/description of this major development and considered it inappropriate to make any informed comments within the time constraints given. Following on from the development of the Middle School Site deliberations and public meeting the Section request an extension of time to make any comments currently closing on the 24th of December 2018.

Cllr Stansfield encouraged Councillors to view the documentation as thoroughly as possible and to report any comments/observations to the next Planning Section meeting (Monday 17th December).

Cllr Stansfield proposed, in view of the scope and complexity of this application and that for planning application DC/18/05254 (below), a request is sent to Mid Suffolk District Council seeking an extension of the time period in which its and members of public comments can be submitted (currently 20th December). Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

DC/18/05254 - Former Mid Suffolk District Council Offices 131 High Street - Application for Listed Building Consent. Partial demolition works, internal and external alterations. Conservation and extension to form 12 (no) apartments, partial demolition and repair works to boundary walls, including formation of a new pedestrian access to Barrett's Lane.

The Section proposes this application is approached and processed in conjunction with the application above (DC/18/05104).

Cllr Stansfield reported, in relation to Mid Suffolk District Council's proposed redevelopment of the former Needham Market Middle School site (DC/18/04811), the Clerk contacted 3 Traffic Engineer Consultancy's before a fourth was identified that is not subject to a conflict of interest attached to having or currently working for Mid Suffolk District Council. A quotation has been received, for completing a traffic audit on the access to the former Needham Market Middle School site, in the sum of £1,995. Cllr Stansfield further explained the scope of work and the purpose for which it would be undertaken.

Cllr Stansfield proposed, in view of the tight timescales and the difficulty in engaging a Traffic Engineer Consultant, the quotation received be accepted. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C225/18/5c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 17th December in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C225/18/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C225/18/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris presented Notes from the Section Meeting held 26th November, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed Section Budget for 2019/20.

Cllr. Norris provided copies of a spreadsheet showing actual expenditure for last year 2017/18, estimated total expenditure for the current year 2018/19, and proposed budgeted costs for 2019/20. Provision has been made for outstanding Highways items, including moving the 'Weight Limit Ahead' sign further back in Barking Road away from the junction with Foxglove Avenue, installing 'No Lorry Route / Unsuitable for HGVs' signs at the bottom of Foxglove Avenue, and installing tourist type information signs at each end of the town indicating areas of interest.

A contingency has been included for additional/replacement grit bins and for unforeseen incidental expenses/repairs.

Streetlighting costs recharged by SCC (Suffolk County Council): SCC is one of a number of Councils who come together to buy their energy under a single contract which is not now based, as it used to be up to a few years ago, on a fixed rate approach. Instead the rate can now vary month by month, and it appears that the energy suppliers are having to pass on increased costs associated with higher wholesale charges and environmental protection measures. A 5% increase has been allowed for in estimated charges for the current year, with a similar rate of increase in 2019/20.

Following discussion, it was agreed to recommend a proposed Section Budget for 2019/20 of £13,500, of which £10,800 relates to revenue expenditure and £2,700 to capital items.

The Balance Sheet Reserve for streetlighting costs capital expenditure remains at £10,000.

Cllr Norris proposed Council adopt the Section Notes. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C226/18 Questions under Standing Order 40.

Cllr Potter asked if Councillors are aware, they could, if they wish, co-opt to the remaining vacant seat on Council. Councillors agreed this matter be the subject of an agenda item for the 19th December Town Council meeting.

The Meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Chairman **Date**