

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 16th January 2019 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr C Campbell – Business Commitment

Cllr I Mason – Holiday

Cllr MG Norris – MSDC Briefing

District Councillor Wendy Marchant – MSDC Briefing

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes, four members of public and the Town Clerk.

C001/19 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 19th December 2018.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 19th December 2018 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C002/19 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis - Accounts for Payment

Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)

Cllr X Stansfield - Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)

C003/19 To receive a report from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

County Councillor Kay Oakes gave a verbal report that included:

- Statement from Suffolk County Council Highways regarding road traffic signage aimed at deterring heavy goods vehicles from using Foxglove Avenue as a route to avoid the town centre vehicle weight limit – County Councillor Oakes will fund the signs from her locality budget if the County Council will source them
- Suffolk County Council proposed Community Self-Help Scheme – modelled on a scheme used in Devon and provides for the training, equipping and insuring of Community Road Wardens – to be launched in April 2019
- Central Government has provided £9.67m (from its Autumn Budget) to Suffolk County Council to be used by 31st March on road patching, cleaning filtration tanks to ease flood risk and repairs to town centre pavements

Cllr Lea said the traffic light sequencing at the Cedars Link (B1113) junction is causing very dangerous situations with vehicles 'double banking' and being left stranded across routes being taken by other vehicles. County Councillor Oakes agreed to raise the problem with Suffolk County Highways.

Cllr Andrews added the filters on the traffic lights at the Cedars Link junction do not allow motorists to readily see where they are in their sequence and consequently the filters should be removed. County Councillor Oakes again agreed to raise the problem with Suffolk County Highways.

A District Councillors report was tabled, a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included:

LOCALITY BUDGET Mike and Wendy will be allocating their Locality Budget this year to:

Needham Market Community Centre – projector and screen

Needham Market Skate Park Committee

Needham Market Internet Café

St. John's Parish Church, Needham Market,

Finborough Ladies Netball Club (who play at Needham Market Community Centre)

Contribution towards replacement of stolen catering caravan at The Mix.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO DEVELOP THE MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE AND MSDC COUNCIL OFFICE SITE, NEEDHAM MARKET.

Are programmed to go to Planning Committee B on Wednesday 30th January 2019, 9.30 a.m. at Endeavour House, Ipswich.

BOSMERE SCHOOL. A planning application has come in from SCC to extend Bosmere School, Needham Market. Extension to new building to include 2 new classrooms, 2 Group rooms, staff work room, senior office, and office. 2 existing class rooms to be converted into one large studio with divider.

ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR MID SUFFOLK AND BABERGH COUNCILS. As detailed in our report of 5.12.18, Mid Suffolk have decided to appoint consultants "Shared Intelligence" at a cost of between £10,000 and £15,000. They will possibly be using items based on a Cambridge Council's Environment Strategy. As already commented we are not happy about this not being done by Mid Suffolk or Babergh Officers themselves.

MID SUFFOLK'S BUDGET Mid Suffolk Cabinet agreed to a 2% increase in Council Tax; and a further £25m borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board, to be invested in CIFCO commercial investments, which the opposition consider to be risky. However, Mid Suffolk are going to transfer £1.6 million to a new commercial risk management reserve to mitigate against future risks associated with the level of commercial investment and development that the council has or will be investing in. Cllr. Penny Otton, Leader of the Liberal Democrats on Mid Suffolk, said: "Year on year we are being told that the government grant is to reduce and this is the case, but this constant reduction in services to the community when money is being put aside to offset any lack of income from the investments in retail premises, outside of the District, is of concern. We have argued all along that these investments are not what public money should be used for."

NOTIFICATION OF WORKS TO TREES IN A CONSERVATION AREA, rear of 6 – 16 Chainhouse Road, Needham Market.

This has been withdrawn due to wildlife issues. Mid Suffolk's Trees Officer has stated that he can't say that the issue of wildlife would prevent development altogether, but it would certainly be a constraint. This would be something for the Planners to decide.

A member of public present said she (and two neighbours) were attending the meeting to ask whether the Town Council are able to help them in resolving the future of the area of land located to the rear of 6 to 16 Chainhouse Road, which has recently been subject to a planning proposal for clearance of the site in preparation for housing development. The planning proposal has been withdrawn but the surrounding residents wish to see long-term preservation of the site as a wildlife and environmental protection area. In reply, Councillors made numerous references to the history of the site, including its value as natural flood risk mitigation. Past efforts to attract wildlife protection organisations to take ownership of the site had unfortunately failed and although the site has many trees, they are of insufficient quality to be covered by Tree Preservation Orders. The member of public said she had sought legal advice on taking on private ownership, but this was not a practical option for either her individually, or jointly with other residents. Cllr Lea agreed to discuss the matter further with Councillors at the next Town Property Section meeting and would inform the residents whether there are any options available that might protect the future of the site.

C004/19 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

Friday 21st December – Carol Singing around the town (raising £195.60 for the Mayor's charities)

The Deputy Mayor reported attending:

Friday 21st December – Carol Singing around the town

C005/19 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Norris had provided a report which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included:

AECOM Needham Market Neighbourhood Planning Masterplanning Feasibility Study, relating to the concept of a new southern town boundary which would include a through road from Barking Road to Stowmarket Road.

The following email has recently been received from Patrick Clarke, AECOM:

' I'm sorry not to have been in touch before Christmas with an up-date on the next phase of work. We are now starting to develop material and analysis that will enable us to turn the feasibility work into more of a masterplan along the lines of the example you provided from Bury St Edmunds. We should be able to share some of the initial work early next week and it would be good to have a discussion with you after that.

I'm keen to ensure that we use your funding to best effect and tie into the on-going programme of stakeholder consultation that you are undertaking. I'm conscious that the Countryside Masterplan you shared will have benefited from more detailed technical analysis of their site that we won't be able to undertake within the budget we have and that we want to present a range of ideas and opportunities for people to engage with rather than a definite scheme. I hope this is along the lines you were thinking but we can discuss further once we have circulated our initial work.

I would also like to arrange a time for Simona and I to come up to Needham Market over the next couple of weeks. Simona hasn't had the opportunity of seeing the site and the wider context and that would be very helpful for this next stage of work. If there is a time that is also good for you then perhaps we could combine the site visit with a project meeting to agree the content of the masterplan document and also to allow you to share further feedback from your stakeholder and community engagement.' (End)

The Town Clerk is currently arranging a mutually agreeable date for AECOM'S next visit.

MSDC/Babergh Joint Local Plan

Mid Suffolk and Babergh district councils have been developing a joint plan for the two districts, with the matter set to go before full council meetings this month. However, a decision has now been made to delay progress on the plan until after the elections in May. Cabinet members have said they did not want the matter to become a secondary issue during public consultation to the election canvassing, and by holding it after the election only one issue would be presented at a time. Wendy and I are attending a Members Briefing on the current status of the Joint Local Plan this evening at Endeavour House.

Cllr Lea said the Mid Suffolk District Council announcement is adding further delay to progress on its production of a Local Plan, making it more than ever imperative the Town Council acknowledges progress on, and completion of the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan, is the topmost priority. The Clerk explained the purpose of the forthcoming AECOM visit and the anticipated next steps in the project.

C006/19 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 19.12.18

None

2. Issues:

- Buckingham Palace Garden Party – Nominations invited by SALC for selection for attendance at the Tuesday 21st May Garden Party.

Councillors agreed the usual protocol should be applied and therefore current Town Mayor and Chairman of Council, Cllr Dawn Spurling shall be nominated.

3. *Correspondence to be noted:*

- Email dated 4th January from the Executive Assistant to the Chief Executive, Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils inviting Town Clerks to a meeting with Mid Suffolk and Babergh Directors at Endeavour House, Ipswich on 1st April

C007/19 SECTIONS.

C007/19/1 Finance/General Purposes

C007/19/1a 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 Phillips proposed adoption of the accounts for payment. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C007/19/1b To receive and adopt the Council's Risk Assessment 2018/19.

The Clerk reported the Annual Safety Report on the play areas and playing field at Crowley Park had been received and this has allowed for completion of the Risk Assessment. He suggested the Finance & General Purposes Section meeting scheduled for 5th February consider the completed Risk Assessment and make its recommendation subsequently to the Town Council meeting scheduled for 6th February. Council agreed.

C007/19/1c To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was no report.

C007/19/2 Recreation & Sport

C007/19/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

Cllr Phillips gave a verbal report in which he confirmed the Section will meet on Friday 18th January to discuss and agree a preference from the options for refurbishment/redevelopment of Crowley Park Pavilion and adjacent former football club building.

Cllr Phillips informed Council Needham Market Cricket Club is to host an event on Crowley Park on 9th June 2019, which has been designated Cricket World Cup Day.

Cllr Phillips said he has arranged a meeting with the Chairman of the Needham Market Skatepark Committee with a view to continuing progress on the skatepark project, in particular the proposal to relocate existing facilities on the park to accommodate a new skatepark.

C007/19/3 Town Property and Services

C007/19/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea presented the following notes from the meeting of the Town Property and Services Section held on Tuesday 15th January, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

01/19 ERECTION OF NEW PUBLIC TOILETS: Planning permission had now been received for these to be erected in the High Street car park for an initial period of three years. The Clerk confirmed that the quotation received in 2016 was £12,000 which did not include the required foundations and cost of utilities. The Section agreed to recommend that the facility be installed as soon as possible. And an appropriate company be engaged to site the utilities. The company would be asked to pinpoint utilities at Barretts Lane adjacent to Crowley Park at the same time with the cost being met by the Recreation and Sport budget. Councillor Norris agreed to investigate the company used by Mid Suffolk District Council in the area around Hurstlea Road.

02/19 HIGH STREET CHRISTMAS TREES: There was some discussion regarding Council's method of erection and removal of the Christmas trees. It was agreed that Stowmarket and Sudbury Town Councils be asked to quote for carrying out the work in future years. The company

that supplied the trees and lighting will be asked to send a representative to discuss all aspects of the Christmas tree display with Councillor Annis and Mr Chilvers. It was also agreed that Suffolk County Council be pressed to assist with improvements to the power supply to the trees.

03/19 TOWN SIGNS: The Clerk reported that it had been impossible to speak to anyone at Suffolk County Council who could advise of location, licence etc. for re-erecting the town signs. The Clerk agreed to follow this up.

04/19 WORK AT THE WAR MEMORIAL: Mr Chilvers was warmly complimented on the extensive work he had undertaken at the memorial. More work needs to be carried out in the area adjacent to the memorial where at present there are bollards and chains. Mr Chilvers described how he would wish to proceed and this was agreed. It was also agreed to recommend the purchase of two suitable benches to be located close to the memorial as there is no seating at the Burial Ground apart from that at the Lychgate. Councillor Lea said she would investigate.

05/19 NOTICE BOARDS: Due to the difficulty in distributing posters it was agreed to recommend that the boards be lined with cork, as soon as possible, so that drawing pins can be used and that the boards be left unlocked so that they can be accessed by authorised users. Mr Chilvers agreed to source suitable fasteners for the doors.

05/19 PUBLIC BENCHES: The bench at the bus stop on Barking Road is in need of repair and Mr Chilvers will carry this out.

06/19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. Councillor Lea reported that the damaged bus shelter in the High Street will be repaired as soon as authority is received from the insurance company.
- b. New signs are required for the litter bins advising that they can be used for the disposal of bagged dog faeces. Councillor Phillips agreed to investigate the signs.

Cllr Lea proposed the adoption of the Section notes. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C007/19/4 Newsletter and Communications

C007/19/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Andrews presented the following notes from the meeting of the Newsletter and Communications Section held on 10th January, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Website update

The section unanimously agreed that the website should function as a bridge between the Town Council and the residents whilst also showcasing the town and its history, amenities and activities. It should serve as a first port of call for visitors and new residents, and also to be an information portal. We felt the present Town Council website was limited in its appeal and content. In assessing any changes to the website we were mindful that this should cause *no extra work* to the Clerk or Assistant Clerk and should, ideally, reduce their current website workload.

Cllr Andrews then presented his research into various council websites.

The Section unanimously agreed that we were committed to establishing a professionally constructed website rather than a 'home-spun'.

Newsletter delivery

A new Newsletter Delivery Administrator has now been appointed and will be able to start this month. There are now nearly 50 houses occupied on 'St George's Park' and a newsletter deliverer should be sought. Cllr Lea volunteered to carry out the delivery in the short term.

Newsletter layout/content

The Section unanimously agreed that the Newsletter would benefit from a revamp. The current format had been a great improvement on the previous but was now looking tired. Cllr Andrews reported that a straw poll of his neighbours suggested that 2 out of 3 people discarded the newsletter without reading it and the remainder flicked through it. We felt it had much greater potential than that as a medium for communication.

We agreed that it needs to be attractive and professional-looking as it is a vehicle for important Town Council news, especially so with the upcoming Neighbourhood Plan and critical Planning Applications. It also reflects who we are as a town.

Cllr D Campbell reported that he had had a very useful meeting that day with Jonathan Steed, MD of Gipping Press and Joe, who compiles the newsletter. Various options were discussed including more colour content, more pages to allow a less cramped layout, and a refashioned front page. An

estimate of costs will be forwarded.

The Section agreed that the Assistant Clerk does an excellent job of collating the articles for the newsletter but has limited time for proper editing. It was therefore agreed that an editorial board of perhaps three section members should be established.

Cllr D Campbell relayed the Clerk's concerns about previous well-meaning attempts to change the website or newsletter that had failed to be followed through. The Section members were unanimous in voicing their commitment to a carefully thought-out strategy that delivered change where change was due but didn't detract from the basic *raison d'être*: communicating effectively with the community. Cllr Andrews emphasised that the Section is now comprised of people with the relevant skill sets and experience to deliver an outcome sustainable in the long-term, rather than just being a fleeting burst of enthusiasm.

Cllr D Campbell proposed the adoption of the Section notes and Council to approve the Section taking forward its intention to consider its options for providing the best website possible, inclusive of its need to support the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan project. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Darnell commented the Town Council's website has always fallen down on updating.

Cllr Andrews confirmed the Section will next meet on Thursday, 21st March 2019 at 7pm in the Town Council office.

C007/19/5 Planning.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section Meeting scheduled for Monday 14th January had been cancelled due to lack of relevant business.

C007/19/5a Planning Decisions and other Notices received.

Cllr Stansfield reported the following:

Notice Received.

A notice was received from SCC regarding its submission on the 21 December 2018 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government of the Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The submission is NOT a notice advertising a round of Public Consultation only in regard that the plan has been submitted for independent examination.

Application for reserved matters.

DC/18/05612: Proposal and Location - Submission of details under Application 4188/15 relating to Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for hybrid application of 52 dwellings and new training facility, workshop and parking areas (housing only). Location: J Breheny Contractors Ltd., Flordon Road, Creeting St. Mary, IP6 8NH.

Discharge of Conditions.

DC/18/05070: Proposal and Location - Discharge of conditions application for DC/18/03292 - Condition 3 (Fenestration). 133 High Street, Needham Market, IP6 8DH.

Planning Decision

DC/18/04541: Proposal and Location - Householder Planning Application - Erection of a two story rear extension and first floor side extension with ground floor carport (following demolition of existing conservatory)(re-submission of refused Application DC/18/02307). 4 Ranson Road, Needham Market, IP6 8BU

C007/19/5b Planning Applications Received

Cllr Stansfield reported the following:

DC/19/00081: Proposal and Location - Householder Planning Application - Erection of first floor side extension and single-story front extension. 13 Rose Walk, Needham Market, IP6 8HD.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr Ward seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

DC/19/00128: Proposal and Location: Householder Planning Application -, Erection of front elevation dormer roof and conversion of loft space to create second floor accommodation. 2 Courtyard, High Street, Needham Market, IP6 8AP.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

SCC/0111/18MS: Proposal and Location - Extension to the school building to include two new classbases, two group rooms, staff work room, senior office and office. To existing classrooms to be converted into one large studio with divider. Bosmere Primary School, Quinton Road, Needham Market, IP6 8BP.

Cllr Stansfield commented he is aware the School's Head Teacher and the School Governors are satisfied with the additional space as proposed to accommodate increased pupil numbers. He advised Councillors that unless a flaw or some other intrinsic issue concerning the plans or how they will function is identified, he suggested Council recommend approval. The only contentious issue might be the increase in the vehicular pick-up/ drop-off of pupils (see paragraph 3.2 of the Concertus Design and Access statement).

Cllr M Spurling expressed his view that the development proposal is insufficient and takes no account of current housing development in the town and undoubtedly that which will take place in the foreseeable future. He described it as yet another example of Suffolk County Council's Education Service acting reactively with a minimum response whereas a proactive forward-looking approach is needed.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council support approval of the application. Cllr D Campbell seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Stansfield further proposed that he (and the Town Clerk) be authorised to work up and submit appropriate comments on the Highways problems on Town Council's behalf. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C007/19/5c Planning Report

DC/18/04811 – Site at Needham Market Middle School, School Street – Erection of 41 dwelling (Class C3) (following demolition of existing buildings). Conversion of Victorian building to library (Class D1) and associated works including parking, highways and landscaping

Cllr Stansfield confirmed the Town Council's objection had been submitted to Mid Suffolk District Council. The District Council intended to include the planning application on the agenda for its 30th January Planning Committee, but no papers are yet available on the Mid Suffolk District Council website to confirm that. He described various options the Town Council could consider taking action on prior to the District Council's Planning Committee taking place.

Cllr Annis gave an update on the latest position regarding the SnOasis planning proposal. He said Mid Suffolk District Council had failed over a long period to respond to comments submitted by the SnOasis Parish Alliance (SPA) despite being chased up. The response was eventually received dated 24th December.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 4th February in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C007/19/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C007/19/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Norris had provided a report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report referred to:

‘Unsuitable for HGVs’ signs at the bottom of Foxglove Avenue / Moving the ‘Weight limit ahead’ sign further back along Barking Road.

With reference to the item recorded in the minutes of the 19th December Town Council Meeting regarding County Cllr. Kay Oakes report in respect of the above: ‘The County Council’s Highways Service is not interested in implementing a solution and have recently corresponded with Cllr Norris setting out their reason why’.

Unfortunately it appears that a misunderstanding occurred, as County Cllr. Oakes may have already mentioned in her report this evening – no correspondence has been received directly from SCC Highways on these issues, and County Cllr. Oakes has said that she will follow this up.

Fence, Barking Road.

An enquiry was made to the SCC Rights of Way Officer dealing with this case as to whether he had received any indication of an appeal being lodged at this stage against the Inspector’s decision to issue a modification to the Definitive Map Order, and the following reply was received today:

‘I enquired with Jean the administrator at the Planning inspectorate on the 9 January if any objections had been received to the Inspectors modifications as set out in his interim decision.

Below is the response:

2 objections were received which have been sent to the Inspector for consideration.

We will be in touch after we have heard back from the Inspector.

Regards, Jean

I then enquired if it was possible to see the objections to which I received the following reply:-

I’m afraid not Andrew.

We don’t send the objections to the Council until the Inspector considers that they are relevant.

Sorry, Jean.

My understanding is that the Inspector had arrived at a conclusion that the evidence given in the user evidence forms and at the inquiry indicated that the public had used the route but only to gain access to the front of the shops which was reflected by his amendment to the order.

The latest objections should only be in relation to the inspectors’ amendment and should not go over old or raise new objections to the original claim. I do not know who has raised the objections. It could have been the resident involved and or third parties. It is down to the Inspector to decide if the objections are relevant or not.

I had hoped we would have had a definitive answer from the inspectorate by now which is why I had not flagged it up to you. I will let you know once I hear more.’ (End)

C008/19 Questions under Standing Order 40.

None.

The Meeting closed at 8:50pm.

Chairman **Date**