

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 6th March 2019 at 7:30pm.

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

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr C Campbell – University Studies

Cllr I Mason – Holiday

Cllr P Potter - Holiday

Cllr D Spurling - Unwell

Cllr AL Ward – Family Commitment

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes (attending Somersham PC)

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

C026/19 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 20th February 2019.

The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 20th February 2019 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

C027/19 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

None

C028/19 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

County Councillor Kay Oakes had provided a report which was tabled, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report included information on:

Suffolk County Council 2019/20 budget approved

On 14 February, Suffolk County Council concluded its budget setting process for this coming financial year (2019/2020).

From 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, Suffolk County Council will spend almost £10 million a week across all its services following approval of this budget of £519.3 million.

Funding agreed for Citizens Advice in Suffolk

On 11 February, it was reported that Citizens Advice in Suffolk will no longer see any difference in their funding for 2019/20. This is due to a collaboration between Suffolk County Council, NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group,

Suffolk County Council proposes to reduce the funding given to Citizens Advice by 50% (£187k), in 2019/20. Under the joint agreement now in place with the CCGs, a total of £187k will be provided by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk and NHS West Suffolk CCGs. So, funding for Citizens Advice in 2019/20 will remain the same as the previous year (£374k).

Important Information: Suffolk School Travel Changes from September 2019

Suffolk County Council (SCC) is implementing changes to its School Travel Policy from September 2019. The Council has already written to all schools and Town and Parish Councils with information about the policy changes and how they may affect families in their area.

Statutory School Age School Travel Policy

Children living in Suffolk who will be starting at a new school in September 2019 will be eligible for SCC funded school travel when they are over 2 miles (under 8 years old) or 3 miles (aged 8 or over) walking distance from their nearest suitable school that would have had a place available for them. This would be whether or not an application was made for a place at that school. Full details about SCC funded school travel, including additional arrangements for low income families and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), can be found at www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel

New pupils

In the first year of change the new school travel policy will only impact on those starting or moving school with effect from September 2019.

- For those starting at secondary/upper schools, parents will be informed if their child is eligible by 30 April 2019.
- For those starting at primary/middle schools in September 2019, parents will be informed if their child is eligible for SCC funded travel by 14 May 2019.
- If parents do not hear from the Council by the date shown above and believe their child is eligible for SCC funded school travel, they should contact the Customer Service Team on 0345 606 6173 or email them at customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk. Information about those who are eligible to SCC funded travel will be provided to the child's current and receiving school.

Returning pupils

The new policy is being phased in. This means that children who receive SCC funded school travel in the 2018/2019 school year will continue to receive this whilst they continue to attend the same school, unless they turn 8 years of age and live between 2 and 3 miles from their current school, or move house - at which time eligibility would be reassessed.

To opt-in (apply) for SCC funded school travel

For transport in September 2019 and all future years, families whose child/ren are eligible for SCC funded school travel will need to opt-in to receive their transport. This is a change from previous years.

The opt-in process for those pupils who are eligible for SCC funded school travel for the 2019/2020 school year opens on **1 March 2019** with a deadline of **31 May 2019**. SCC will be using various communications channels to cascade the opt-in message to parents/families.

This important change means that parents whose children are eligible will have to opt-in by 31 May **each year** for school travel to be provided in the following school year as this will no longer be provided automatically.

This includes:

- Those currently eligible and who have SCC funded school travel under the old policy arrangements because they will be in Year 1 to Year 6, or Year 8 to Year 11 in September 2019 (and have not moved address) or
- are eligible under the new travel policy.

Recent research has shown that some families, although eligible to SCC funded school travel, do not use their seat(s). Suffolk County Council consequently is funding seats which are unused and therefore, SCC are asking families to opt-in.

Post-16 Travel Policy Statement for September 2019:

The Post-16 Policy has not changed other than agreed increases to the cost of a seat until the charge equals the average cost. For September 2019/2020 school year the charge will be £750 per annum.

The financial contribution for students with SEND for 2019/2020 school year will be £690.

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:

NEEDHAM MARKET MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE PLANNING APPLICATION came up at last Wednesday's Mid Suffolk Planning Referrals Committee. In spite of numerous letters from local residents and organisations, the Town Council's comments, and one of the Town Councillors, Pat Potter, spoke at the meeting of the difficulty now for pedestrians walking along School Street with a wheel chair, where there is a pavement which is too narrow at one side and no pavement at all on the other. Mike and Wendy as the local District Councillors tried to incorporate all that local people and the Town Council had said were their concerns, in their statements to the committee, but nevertheless the committee voted by 9 to 4 to approve the application. This is a big disappointment – the road is too narrow to take more pedestrians and vehicles, it will affect the viability of the Community Centre, and local people and the Town Council felt there hadn't been enough public consultation. The only small concession that was made is that the pedestrian link from the bus lay-by at the bottom of The Causeway that the schoolchildren used is going to be explored further.

NEEDHAM LAKE VISITOR CENTRE A proposal to build a new visitor's centre, café, and toilet facilities at Needham Lake was on the agenda of Mid Suffolk's Cabinet Meeting on Monday. Since before Mike and Wendy were elected a 'Needham Lake Visitors Centre' has been on the council's forward plan. We have been waiting for a long time, and at last it looks like it is finally going to happen. We very much welcome this.

At the time when Mid Suffolk introduced car parking charges at Needham Lake, which cost a lot of money, for lights, hard standing, and meters, etc. Mike and Wendy said the money would have been better spent on a Visitors' Centre, which when costed out, at that time, a modest log cabin type of building would have cost no more than what had been spent on the car park charging facilities, which were a big flop with visitors numbers to Needham Lake drastically falling and the meters being repeatedly vandalised at night when there aren't many people about, and the cost of taking them all out. So, the whole idea was abandoned of charging for car parking at Needham Lake after a lot of money had been spent on it.

We welcome the present proposal, which is better than what we might have visualised. Needham Lake attracts in excess of 300,000 visitors per annum and is purported to be the second most visited free attraction in the East of England, and this is a facility which is very much needed – a pleasant café, area for school children who come to Needham Lake for nature study, and toilet facilities etc. This is just what Needham Lake needs. The Sunday morning runners will appreciate these facilities, also the fishermen, and model boat club, and of course the masses of families who come to enjoy Needham Lake. It will be an asset to Needham Market - the icing on the cake.

CO-OP SHOPS IN NEEDHAM MARKET EXTENDING LICENSING HOURS The two Needham Market Co-op Shops in Needham Market are applying to extend their licensing hours.

THE LIMES HOTEL, NEEDHAM MARKET It is understood that Ruth Watson and her husband (the Ruth Watson of television fame, it is believed) who turned around Hintlesham Hotel, are interested in purchasing The Limes Hotel in Needham Market, to make it into what they describe as a 'Boutique Hotel' rather than it be converted into flats. To convert it into flats would need planning permission and listed building consent. The Limes is a beautiful building and an asset to Needham Market, where there are few places to stay overnight.

Cllr Darnell asked whether the creation of a visitor amenity at Needham Lake could lead to less people using businesses located in the town centre. District Councillor Marchant said that there is signage at Needham Lake encouraging visitors to venture into the town centre.

The member of public present had no questions.

C029/19 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor had provided a report confirming her attendance at:

Sunday 3rd March – Diss Civic Service

The Deputy Mayor had nothing to report.

C030/19 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.

Cllr Phillips referred Councillors to a report provided by Cllr Potter which was tabled, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report is as follows:

Both the 'hub' and 'spokes' groups of Needham Market Town Council have met since the last Town Council meeting and councillors are working hard to progress the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan (NMNP).

Planning and preparatory activities for the Community Engagement Event on 30th March at the Community Centre are underway, with several councillors taking responsibility for one or more information boards at the event.

At the next 'spokes' (the wider group, consisting of the majority of Town councillors) meeting, we will begin the process of reviewing the draft NMNP and bringing the strategic and local plans together.

Future work and meetings with AECOM, as they work with us on refining and drilling down into their high-level strategic plan, are envisaged, to create a vital and realistic plan for the development of our town, over the next fifteen years.

We are seeking to appoint a more local consultant to assist the group in the process of compiling the revised NMNP and members of the 'hub' group are sourcing recommendations for an appropriate consultant.

Over the coming months we will be planning a series of meetings to take the work forward with AECOM, Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC), and Suffolk County Council (SCC).

Cllr D Campbell asked if Councillors could provide their input towards the 30th March open public consultation event, by Monday 11th March.

C031/19 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 20.02.19

None

2. Issues:

- Crime & Cyber Insurance Cover – Council's insurance broker WPS, has provided details and cost of stand-alone indemnity cover for data breaches, hacking, ransomware, phishing, fraud, embezzlement and forgery

3. Correspondence to be noted:

- Email dated 21st February from Passenger Service Unit, Suffolk Board regarding Connecting Communities services that operate in all Suffolk Districts

C032/19 SECTIONS

C032/19/1 Finance/General Purposes

C032/19/1a 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 Annis proposed adoption of the accounts for payment. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Phillips referred to costs in the Accounts for Payment that related to the removal of the Crowley Park Barretts Lane boundary hedge and explained the decision had been taken to 'bite the bullet' and remove the entire hedge including the residual and original chain link fencing, once their condition was exposed during the first stage of the project.

C032/19/1b To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was no report.

C032/19/2 Recreation & Sport

C032/19/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.

There was no report.

C032/19/3 Town Property and Services

C032/19/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr Lea reported the repair of the bus shelter located opposite The Swan public house has been completed.

Cllr Lea reported the Clerk has completed the necessary applications to receive quotations for connection of utility services to the area of the High Street car park where the location of a new temporary public toilet building is intended and, enquiries are being made to Mid Suffolk District Council for the process for the release of Section 106 (Developer Contribution) funding that will partly pay for the building and its installation.

Cllr Lea reported the Clerk is liaising with Suffolk County Council regarding the installation of the original town signs, which are relatively large scale and will not conform to the specification required under the basic conditions of their installation licence.

C032/19/4 Newsletter and Communications

C032/19/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader

Cllr D Campbell reported the Website Designer, engaged to create a new Town Council website, is due to visit the town on 22nd March.

Cllr D Campbell reported changes to the production of the Town Council's monthly newsletter are being taken forward. Also, it is the time of the year when newsletter advertisers are asked whether they wish to continue with their adverts and, disappointingly, several have withdrawn their interest in doing so.

Cllr D Campbell reported the next meeting of the Newsletter and Communications Section will be held on Thursday 21st March at 7pm in the Town Council Office.

C032/19/5 Planning

Cllr Stansfield presented Notes from the Planning Section meeting held on 4th March, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

C032/19/5a Planning Decisions and other Notices received

Cllr Stansfield reported the following:

A Notice has been received from the Planning Inspectorate relating to the advertising of a modification to: Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981- Section 53. Order Making Authority: Suffolk County Council. Title of Order: (Gipping Rural District Definitive Map and Statement)(Parish of Needham Market) Modification Order 2017. The Inspectorate will inform the Town Council in due course if a Public Local Inquiry is to be held concerning its proposed modifications.

SCC/0111/18MS - Bosmere Primary School, Quinton Road - Extension to the School Building to include two new classbases, two group rooms, staff work room, senior office and office. Two existing classrooms to be converted into one large studio with divider.

Planning Permission has been granted (Subject to 11 conditions).

DC/19/00128 - 2 The Courtyard, High Street - Erection of front elevation dormer roof and conversion of loft space to create second floor accommodation.

Planning Permission has been granted.

DC/19/00081 - 13 Rose Walk - Erection of first floor side extension and single storey front extension.

Planning Permission has been granted.

DC/19/00285 - 25 Bluebell Grove - Erection of a single-story porch to the front of the dwelling and the erection of a single story rear extension.

Planning Permission has been granted.

C032/19/5b Planning Applications Received

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning applications had been received:

DC/19/00860 - 17 Bluebell Grove - Erection of a single storey front extension and proposed alterations.

The Town Council recommended approval.

DC/19/00887 (LB DC/19/00888) - The Swan, 9 High Street - Installation of new patio doors to rear elevation. Installation of new patio area with jumbrellas. Installation of play equipment and picket fence.

The Town Council recommended approval.

DC/19/00876 (LB DC/19/00912) - The Swan, 9 High Street - Installation of replacement illuminated and non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building.

The Town Council recommended approval.

DC/19/00879 - 74 High Street - Notification of works to Trees in a Conservation Area - T1 (Beech) Reduce crown by 40% and reduce canopy.

The Town Council recommended approval on condition the District Council's Tree Officer agrees with the works to be undertaken.

DC/19/00859 - Hallgarth House, 137 High Street - Installation of pargetted render in existing rendered wall.

The Town Council recommended approval on condition the District Council's Conservation Officer agrees with the works to be undertaken.

C032/19/5c Planning Report

Cllr Stansfield reported:

The Town Council Minutes (Minute C007/19/5c) included a resolution to write to SCC regarding Highways issues connected with the approved expansion of Bosmere Primary School. Action on the resolution has been delayed and is now overtaken by our Ward County Councillor's offer to facilitate the Town Council's direct input to the Primary School's Travel Plan. It was also noted at the Section meeting that Condition 11 was an attempt to mitigate some of the current traffic problems experienced by local residents.

Cllr Stansfield confirmed the two Mid Suffolk District Council planning applications (DC/18/04811 Site at Needham Market Middle School, School Street and DC/18/05104 Former Mid Suffolk District Council Offices & Associated Land, 131 High Street) had gone before the District Council's Planning Referrals Committee, for determination, on Wednesday 27th February and, both have been granted Planning Approval.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Town Council's Planning Consultants had been asked whether it was possible if a Judicial Review of the decision made by the District Council to grant itself approval for the former Needham Market Middle School site planning application could be initiated and, if so, whether a Review might prove successful. The Consultants response is that despite all the shortcomings of the planning process and the clear and unsatisfactory way in which particularly, the former Needham Market Middle School site road access issues were assessed by Suffolk County Council, they would not advise the Town Council to pursue a Review.

Cllr Stansfield proposed, with reluctance, the Town Council accept the recommendation of its Consultants. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Stansfield requested the Clerk email the Planning Consultants to thank them for their diligence in preparing and submitting the Town Council objections to the District Council's planning application for the former Needham Market Middle School site.

Cllr Annis reported, on 13th March Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Referrals Committee is to determine the application for Reserved Matters made in respect of the proposed SnOasis development, Great Blakenham. He added the District Council had failed to engage meaningfully with the SnOasis Parish Alliance (SPA) and the SPA will be sending representation to the Planning Referrals Committee to reiterate a raft of issues to which no response, or no satisfactory response, has been received.

Cllr Stansfield reported the Planning Section will next meet on Monday 18th March in the Town Council Office at 7pm. Unless Section Members are informed by email of a cancellation.

C032/19/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths

C032/19/6a 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. The report referred to:

Fence, Barking Road – Claimed Public Right of Way from Hargrave Avenue to Barking Road.

You will no doubt recall from previous reports that subsequent to the public inquiry on 18th September 2018 the Inspector recommended that an amended Order be issued, covering only that part of the route, from the cul-de-sac in Hargrave Avenue to a point where users of the route would turn left to access the Co-op Store entrance, as he considered that there were insufficient grounds to evidence regular use of the rest of the route down to Barking Road.

Two objections to the amended Order were received, and the following update was received from the SCC Rights of Way Officer on Monday of this week:

'The planning Inspector has decided that, at least one of the objections to his proposed modification of the order has merit and must afford all parties an opportunity to be heard, which the Inspector suggests is dealt with by written representation.

As this is to consider the modification to the order only, and not all the evidence which was available at the public inquiry, we will agree to this method of proceeding.

We have received with the letter copies of the two objections to the modification suggested by the inspector. Copies of these objections are attached.

The first from a Mr (name supplied) in Derbyshire, is incomprehensible, but the second from Birketts, clearly warrants consideration. As expected, it questions the creation of a public cul-de-sac. The case quoted in 1.2 of Birketts letter does not in my opinion rule out a cul-de-sac to private land but, suggests that common sense should prevail treating each case on its merits. In this instance I think it is unlikely that the owners of the shops would wish to prevent access. Should the shops be redeveloped, for non-retail use we could extinguish this path as being no longer required by the public if that is the case or try and secure a through route to the Barking Road.' (End)

I have asked to be kept updated as it appears that this case has still some time to run, and I will continue to follow this up.

