

## **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 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 7:30pm.

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

**Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr D Campbell - Holiday

Cllr R Darnell - Holiday

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes

**In Attendance:** Mid Suffolk District Councillors Mike Norris and Steve Phillips, the Town Clerk, a representative from Suffolk Library Service and two members of public.

The Chairman informed Council of an additional item for the agenda: To consider co-option to the vacant seat on Council. Council agreed its inclusion.

**C094/19 To witness Councillors Declarations of Acceptance of Office.**

Cllr C Campbell read out his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and signed it. The Clerk countersigned it, as Proper Officer.

**C095/19 To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019.**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were not available.

**C096/19 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.**

Cllr S Phillips – Accounts for Payment

Cllr M Spurling – Accounts for Payment

**C097/19 To receive a presentation from the Senior Management Team, Suffolk Libraries IPS Ltd, reports from the County Councillor, District Councillors and to take questions from members of the public**

Crystal Vittells (CV), Suffolk Libraries Service, presented an overview of the future strategy of the Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) under which the operation of Suffolk Libraries Service is now managed. One element of the strategy is to raise funding for the service in response to Suffolk County Council's intention to keep its contribution at a fixed rate and therefore, reducing year-on-year in real terms. The IPS continues to believe libraries require professional staff and those staff need to be supported. It will look, when possible, to bring in funding from sponsorships and partnership working. There will be a 'Suffolk Libraries Day' coming along in October.

Cllr Phillips said the Town Council is committed to ensuring Needham Market Library receives the support which will allow it to continue as a vital public service in the town.

Cllr Lea asked if the IPS has any involvement in the decision making process for the future of the library building particularly now Mid Suffolk District Council has abandoned the relocation business case concept it was part of and they now propose to relocate the library in the former Needham Market Middle School 'music room' building. CV replied the IPS is not fully involved in the decision making process but its overall priority is that the town retains its library.

County Councillor Kay Oakes had provided a brief report that gave an update on the proposed HGV signage for Foxglove Avenue/Barking Road.

District Councillor Steve Phillips presented the following District Councillors report which was tabled, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

Following the District Council Elections both Mike Norris and I have been involved in Training and Familiarisation courses at Endeavour House in Ipswich.

We have also been preparing for the Annual District Council Meeting which took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> May.

I am sure you will have read the reports of the outcome of that meeting in the local press and online. I will not go into detail but the outcome of the meeting was that the Conservative Party remain in the overall seat of power within MSDC.

This will mean that all future decisions made by MSDC will be the decisions of the Conservative Party.

Both Mike and I will be looking to put forward the best interests of Needham Market Ward in the coming months and we will attempt to attend as many Parish and Town Meetings as we can, so please approach us with anything that you may think we can help with.

A member of public present, being a member of the Needham Market Skatepark Committee, asked whether the proposal to create a skatepark on Crowley Park required formal planning permission. The Committee were seeking confirmation from the Town Council either way and, should no planning permission be required, the Skatepark Committee were eager to pursue the building of the skatepark as soon as possible. Cllr M Spurling proposed the Town Council look into any planning obligations attached to the building of the skatepark, as a priority. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

The Clerk added he had carried out initial investigation of the relevant Planning Regulations which made reference to Permitted Development Rights, dependent on the scale of the proposed skatepark. If the scale of the skatepark came within thresholds otherwise limiting the application of Permitted Development Rights, then formal planning permission would not be required.

#### **C098/19 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.**

The Mayor reported attending:

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Southwold Civic Service

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June – Meeting to discuss the future of the land r/o Barking Road/Chainhouse Road with local residents, held at the Internet Café.

#### **C099/19 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.**

Cllr Andrews, Neighbourhood Plan Project Manager, presented his report which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

To be inserted.

Cllr Andrews thanked Cllr Stansfield, who has now stood back from the Group, for his input and Cllr Potter for her previous leadership of the Group.

Cllr D Spurling proposed Council adopt the report. Cllr Potter seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

#### **C100/19 To receive an update on the Needham Market Community Centre Outdoor Sports Courts Project.**

Cllr Annis said he was pleased to be able to confirm funding for the project was now in place to commence the proposed works and this will be confirmed with the contractor shortly.

#### **C101/19 To review the provision of a new public toilet facility in Needham Market.**

Cllr Lea referred to her report to Council's previous meeting and proposed Council proceed with a proposal to locate a public toilet facility on Barretts Lane car park. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

#### **C101a/19 To consider co-option to the vacant seat on the Town Council.**

Cllr Stansfield proposed the co-option of Martin O'Shea to the vacant seat. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

## **C102/19 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.**

### *1. Actions from Town Council Meeting 15.05.19*

Budget Review and Public Toilets – Agenda items included

### *2. Issues:*

- Scout Hut Replacement Project – Update
- Gipsy Lane Rail Crossing Closure - Update
- Register of Interests – can be completed manually if preferred

### *3. Correspondence to be noted:*

- Letter received 3<sup>rd</sup> June from Suffolk Wildlife Trust regarding annual membership renewal (£38)

Council agreed to continue its membership.

- Letter received 5<sup>th</sup> June from NxtGen Driving Academy Ltd enquiring about potential use of Crowley Park car park

Council agreed the letter should be dealt with by the Recreation & Sport Section.

The Clerk added, the Police had notified the Town Council Office that the 'secure' former Needham Market Middle School building, owned by Mid Suffolk District Council, was being entered and a large amount of drug paraphernalia was found on the premises.

## **C103/19 SECTIONS**

### **C103/19/1 Finance/General Purposes**

#### **C103/19/1a 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.

#### **C103/19/1b Accounts for Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.**

Cllr Annis referred Councillors to the accounts which were tabled at Council's previous meeting and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. He confirmed no questions had been raised in relation to the accounts in the meantime.

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the Accounts for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Cllr M Spurling seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Annis referred Councillors to the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2018/19, which had been tabled and which would be included on Council's agenda for its 19<sup>th</sup> June meeting, for adoption.

#### **C103/19/1c To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Annis presented Notes from the Finance and General Purposes Section held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

The Notes from the Section meeting held on the 5th February 2019 were adopted by the Town Council at the council meeting held on the 6th February 2019.

Confirmation of the Section membership: The Section membership consisted of the Leaders of the Town Council Sections together with the current Mayor and the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Section. All Town Councillors are invited to attend F and G P meetings.

Review of the Town Council's Financial Management

The annual accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019 were tabled at the council meeting held on the 15th May 2019. To date no questions had been raised, and the accounts will be presented for adoption at the council meeting to be held on the 5th June 2019

The Annual Governance Statement had been prepared and will be tabled at the meeting of Council on the 5th June. The figures included are from the annual accounts, and the Section concluded that the statutory questions asked can all be answered positively.

The Internal Audit to be carried out by SALC will take place on 29th June to be followed by a submission for the statutory National Audit.

Investments: There had been no change to the Town Council's Investments. No questions were raised.

Review of the Budget for the accounting period 2019/20: The chairman pointed out that it was the duty of the F and G P Section to monitor the Town Council expenditure and to relate this to the adopted budget. Already there was evidence that certain Sections were likely to exceed their budgets. It was therefore proposed and agreed that Section Leaders to whom this applied, should apply for and make justification to the full council for an increase in their budget for the coming financial year. The relevant sections included the Sport and Recreation (Playing Field Fencing), the Newsletter and Communication (Web page and upgraded Newsletter) and the Strategic Planning (Neighbourhood Plan Consultant and Administrative assistance). Whilst various figures for possible increases in the budget requirements for these sections were discussed, the final amounts would be submitted to the full Council for their consideration. The Section agreed that there was justification for these increases, and would support the application. The Section further agreed that this should be an agenda item for the next Council meeting, and the relevant Leaders were asked to have their reports and proposals prepared accordingly.

Employment Committee Report The Employment Committee dealt with all matters concerning Town Council employees including their contracts, rates of pay and well-being. The employment of a neighbourhood plan consultant was raised, and it was pointed out that this would be dependent upon whether he or she was directly employed by the Council. The Neighbourhood Plan Leader agreed to consult with the Employment Committee when the use of a Consultant and Administrative Assistant was being considered. The membership of the Employment Committee was confirmed as Cllrs Lea, Stansfield and Annis together with the current Town Mayor.

Frequency of Town Council Meetings The suggestion that Town Council meetings should be held on a monthly basis rather than twice monthly was put forward by Cllr. Andrews. He justified his proposal by pointing out the reductions in administration, Councillors time and a much more relevant and less standardised agenda. The idea would however rely on a more active and positive use of the Sections, and in some cases the reversion to Committees with executive powers. viz.

Planning. It was agreed this was a matter which should of necessity involve the whole Council and be discussed under an agenda item to be included in a full Council meeting in the near future.

Section Leaders Issues

Town Property: The F and G P Section wanted to see the Public Toilet project proceeded with as a priority. The work to erect the Town signs and to update the street lighting columns for the Christmas trees was in hand.

Highways and Lighting: No specific report but the meeting was appreciative of Cllr. Norris's actions in keeping the Council apprised of road closure etc.

Newsletter and Communications: Quotations had been received from the printers for the Newsletter to be produced in full colour, and for the Web Site to be upgraded. The cost of the full colour Newsletter can be met from the budget, subject to advertising revenue being increased, but the Web Site will be an additional cost. (See budget review discussion)

Planning: Following the government relaxation of planning laws, there would probably be a smaller number of household applications which would result in less activity for the Section.

Recreation and Sport: A proposal to erect a fence replacement for the Barratts Lane hedge would result in additional expense (see budget review discussion). There were ongoing discussions regarding the children's play area equipment, adult gym, the skateboard park and the sports pavilion project.

Strategic Planning - Neighbourhood Plan: The financial aspects had been covered by the budget discussions. Cllr Andrews would continue to liaise with AECOM and the use of a consultant to progress the Neighbourhood Plan.

Civic Events Management Group: The membership of the group was confirmed as Cllrs Lea, D Spurling, M Spurling, Stansfield and Annis, together with the current Town Mayor. Cllr. Phillips agreed to call a meeting of the Group as soon as possible because of several up and coming events. Suffolk Day was confirmed 21st June. The Town Council has purchased a new Suffolk Flag. It was agreed to fly the flag several days before and several days after Suffolk Day.

Any Other Business: No matters were raised

Date, location and timing of the next meeting: It was agreed the next two meetings would be held on Tuesday 27th August 2019 and Tuesday 12th November 2019 respectively, both in the Town Council office at 10.00 am.

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the Notes. Cllr Norris seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Annis presented the Minutes from the meeting of the Employment Committee held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

Councillor Annis opened the meeting by reminding the members present of the Finance and General Purposes Section minute which asked the leaders of the Sections which had been identified as being in danger of exceeding the agreed Town Council budget for the financial year 2019 / 2020 to prepare a report and justification for a revision of their budgets for presentation to Council.

The Employment Committee asked that these reports be postponed, pending further discussions with the current Town Council Staff regarding the proposed changes, and that they appear on the Agenda for the Council meeting to be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> June next.

Initial discussions with the Town Clerk indicated that there was concern that not all Section Leaders and indeed some Councillors, were fully appraised of the way the Town Council Administration functions. The Town Clerk, being the Principal Officer of the Council, and the person through which all Town Council correspondence must pass, must at all times be appraised of the actions of the Sections and their Leaders. From these initial discussions with both the Town Clerk and the RFO Assistant Town Clerk, this has not always happened. There must be a closer relationship between the respective Section Leaders and the Council's Administration in order to avoid any misunderstanding, and to put Council business on a firm basis.

The Employment Committee fully appreciates the enthusiasm and positive approach made by the respective Section Leaders, and long may this continue, but it must be done in complete harmony within the Council's accepted administrative arrangements.

In addressing the concerns of the Council's Staff, both the Town Clerk and the Assistant Town Clerk have agreed that they are not interested in increasing the hours they are currently contracted to do. However recent changes to the editorial arrangements for the Newsletter has resulted in changes to the job description of the Assistant Town Clerk which needs to be addressed by consultation with the parties involved.

The Employment Committee asks that in the interim period between Council meetings, constructive talks must take place between Section Leaders and the Council Administration.

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the Minutes, Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

#### **C103/19/1d Review of Council's Budget 2019/20**

This item was postponed (see above).

#### **C103/19/2 Recreation & Sport**

##### **C103/19/2a To receive a report from the Section Leader.**

Cllr Phillips presented his report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

The Recreation and Sport Section has breached its Budget for 2018/19 this is due to the underestimation of the cost of removal of the waste from the removal of the Hedge on the Roadside boundary of Crowley park.

The next phase of replacing the Barrier whether it be Hedge or Fencing will take place in the Summer. The Costing will be addressed and a Section meeting will be called as soon as Quotes for prices have been obtained.

It had been hoped that more information with regards to the Skate Park would be available but at the writing of this report there is a meeting scheduled of the Skate Park Committee in the next few days.

A quote for More temporary fencing has been obtained for £1044.00 + VAT which equates to £36.00 + VAT which will make the Park temporarily fenced all the way from top to bottom to mitigate any children running into the Road, subject to Council confirming the acceptance of the quote they will be Purchased and installed at the earliest convenience.

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

Cllr Annis said, in taking forward the Skatepark proposal at Crowley Park, consideration must be given to the effect on the existing park drainage system, in particular when the 'bowl' was being excavated.

### **C103/19/3 Town Property and Services**

#### **C103/19/3a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Lea reported Mid Suffolk District Council has offered to relocate its flagpole from its soon to be redeveloped Council Office site in Needham Market to elsewhere in the town.

Cllr Lea proposed the offer be accepted with relocation at the public realm area off the High Street (Jubilee Crescent) being the preferred site. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

### **C103/19/4 Newsletter and Communications**

#### **C103/19/4a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr C Campbell presented Notes from the Newsletter and Communications Section meeting held on 28th May 2019, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

- 1) Review of Budget: Further consideration was given to the budget report tabled at the F&GP meeting earlier that day (See F&GP report). To further offset the costs, the possibility of full-page colour advertising in the new newsletter was discussed and Cllr Stansfield suggested contacting larger firms with a local interest, such as the Co-op. The opportunity for firms to advertise on the new website might also be considered as a means of funding the upkeep of the site.
- 2) Front Cover: The layout for the new front cover of the newsletter was finalised after discussion.
- 3) 'Know Your Councillor': Cllr C Campbell will start taking photos for this section of the newsletter at the next council meeting (5th June 2019) and suggested that three councillors are featured in each issue.
- 4) Website Development: Cllr Andrews informed the section that transfer of material from the old website was complete and that Top Cat Media were now beginning to construct the new website. There will be opportunities to review this and suggest changes in due course.

Newsletter and Communications Section Budget Report for F&GP Section For Town Council consideration, Wed 5th June 2019:

Newsletter 2018/19: Production costs £17692 Income from adverts £12708 Net cost of newsletter £4984 Budget £3000 Overspend £1984 2019/20 The newsletter is going to be in full colour from the July edition, but the increase in cost is mostly offset by 'typesetting' being now in-house. Unfortunately, Gipping Press have decided they need to use slightly thicker paper for a full colour edition and have increased their January quote from £1445 to £1652 per issue. Overall cost per issue will therefore increase from current £1608 to £1652 Production costs estimate £18084 Income from adverts est. £12708 Net cost £5376 Budget £5000 Overspend £376 2020/21 I would suggest that advertising rates are reviewed before the next financial year, as usual, and consideration given to a 10% increase in rates. This would increase income to £13979, which would result in a surplus of £895, assuming same budget of £5000. There is also the opportunity now to offer full page colour adverts which will attract a higher rate. Website: As previously discussed, the cost of rebuilding the website is going to be £7000. There is no budget for this as the decision to revamp the website was

made after the budgets were set. It has previously been agreed in full Council that this work should be commissioned. As the website is currently included in the Newsletter and Communications section budget, there will therefore be an overspend of approx. £7000 this financial year.

Cllr Annis proposed the financial position be discussed as part of the broader 2019/20 budget review, at Council's next meeting. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

### **C103/19/5 Planning**

Cllr Stansfield presented Notes from the Planning Section meeting held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book..

### **C103/19/5a Planning Decisions and other Notices received**

Cllr Stansfield reported no Planning Decisions or Notices had been received.

### **C103/19/5b Planning Applications Received**

Cllr Stansfield reported the following planning applications had been received:

#### **DC/19/02375 - 11 Foxglove Avenue - Removal of all external tiles from walls at first floor level and replace with decorated render.**

The Section considered this application and thought the proposed changes were acceptable and formed part of the evolution of the dwelling.

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

#### **DC/19/02456 - 2 Hawks Mill Street - Rebuilding boundary wall.**

The Section was aware that the destruction of the previous Boundary Wall which was of historic stone flint construction was due to a road accident. The reconstruction is replacing 'like for like'.

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

#### **DC/19/02363 - Land, Hill House Lane - Submission of Details for Outline Planning Application 3679/13 and appeal reference APP/W3520/W/15/300479 - Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for a residential development of 38 dwellings.**

Mindful of the protracted Planning Inspectorate Hearing the Section considered its findings, conclusions and Appeal Decisions Annex 1 - Conditions (Pages 25 to 29, Statements 1 to 21). The Section recommends approval. The conditions and planning obligations attached to the development approval (as a result of the Planning Inspectorates agreement on appeal) are documented (as above) and the expectation is the developer will deliver on those conditions and planning obligations in full. The Section also brings to the attention of the Local Planning Authority Statement 72 (page16) Planning Balance/Conditions concerning the number of dwellings.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council support approval of the submission of details. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

### **C103/19/5c Planning Report**

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

### **C103/19/6 Highways, Lighting and Footpaths**

#### **C103/19/6a To receive a report from the Section Leader**

Cllr Norris presented Notes from the Section Meeting held on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May, a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

Councillor S. Phillips was elected as Deputy Leader of the Section, replacing Councillor T. Carter who has moved to Stowmarket.

There was discussion on the planned road closures on the A14 between junctions 49 Tot Hill interchange and junction 50 Cedars Park, details of which were circulated in my email of 28<sup>th</sup> May. Also on the Claimed Public Right of Way Hargrave Avenue to Barking Road on which the Inspector's decision is still awaited. I will be following this up shortly.

**School Entrance markings proposed restriction:**

We have received the following notification from David Stiff, Civil Parking Enforcement Implementation Manager, Suffolk Highways:

**'School Keep Clear Roadmarkings**

Suffolk Highways has applied to the Department of Transport for approval to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) across Suffolk. This will transfer parking enforcement from the Suffolk Constabulary to the local authority. There is some uncertainty about when enforcement action will be taken when somebody stops on a school entrance marking. It is something that the police officer attending decides on. Due to the police resources being targeted at higher priority tasks, little enforcement is able to take place at present. School entrance markings consist of yellow zig zag road markings with the wording SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR that are present outside the entrance to the school. Under CPE, general enforcement action will be initiated by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) issuing a Penalty Charge Notice (PCNs). However, CEOs are unable to issue PCNs on school entrance markings unless there is a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). At present, very few school entrance markings are supported by a TRO. We are planning to introduce TROs for the school entrance markings. These will make it an offence to stop on the school entrance markings. We are proposing that this restriction will be effective on Monday to Fridays and between 08.00am and 4.30pm. We will also provide signs to advise drivers of the restriction. Please can you let me know if you have any comments on this proposal.'

I would be grateful if Council could let me have any comments that they wish me to pass on.

**Gipsy Lane Crossing Diversion Public Inquiry.**

The Public Inquiry commenced yesterday, 4<sup>th</sup> June, at Creeting St Mary Diamond Jubilee Village Hall, which I attended. However, it soon became apparent that not all parties to the inquiry had been copied in to some of the correspondence concerning this matter and in the circumstances the Inspector decided that the inquiry could not proceed and suspended the inquiry to a new date of 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at the same venue.

Subsequent to the suspension of the inquiry I was advised by the Fayers family, the residents of Ravens Farm, that from the records of the Suffolk Local Access Forum, and a copy of correspondence between Network Rail and Suffolk County Council obtained by them from a Freedom of Information Request, which they provided, there is evidence of the County Council's intention to potentially upgrade pedestrian footpaths to allow for cycling. The current Network Rail application to divert the Gipsy Lane Crossing solely mentions a footpath only. Any future intention to revise this to a shared footpath/cycle way would have to be the subject of a further application

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council contact the Planning Inspectorate to point out the Gipsy Lane Rail Crossing is firmly within the boundary of Needham Market and therefore the Public Inquiry, when reconvened, should take place at a venue in the town, not Creeting St Mary Village Hall. Cllr Lea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

**C104/19 Questions under Standing Order 40.**

There were none.

**The Meeting closed at 9pm.**

**Chairman .....**      **Date .....**