

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Governance Section of the Needham Market Town Council held on Tuesday 11th May 2021 via Zoom.

Apologies Councillors Phillips (Town Mayor), Rix, Wright, Reardon and Kett

Present Councillors B. Annis (Chairman), I. Mason, M. O'Shea, M. Ost, M. Norris, J. Lea and X. Stansfield.

In attendance Mr. K. Hunter (Town Clerk)

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Governance Section of the Town Council held on the 9th March 2021 were adopted by the Town Council at the Council meeting on the 17th March 2021

Grants and Donations The grants and donations recommend by this Section had been agreed by Council and it was noted that from the budget of £7,210 there remained a sum of £2,710 to be allocated as and when further grant applications were received.

Review of the Town Council's Financial Management. The Town Clerk had no matters he wished to raise. It was reported that the arrangements for on-line banking of the Town Council's 4 accounts were being progressed. The 5 on-line signatories would be the same as the existing signatories. The personal arrangements for each signatory will be made appropriately. It was reported that the end of year accounts are now ready for internal audit and copies should be available at the next Town Council meeting.

Town Council Risk Assessment. The Risk Assessment is currently up to date and adequate, but it was agreed to carry this agenda item forward for the next meeting.

Employment Committee Report. The Employment Committee had met on the afternoon of the 10th May. The Chairman gave a brief report on the purpose of the meeting and the discussion that had taken place, which will be further reported on to the next full Town Council Meeting (In Camera). It was emphasised that the content of the report should be treated as confidential.

Consideration of any Financial Matters raised by Section Leaders.

a) **Town Property** The refurbished Town Signs were ready for erection by Suffolk County Council. Councillor Lea outlined the activity being carried out by her and fellow Councillors J. Kett, L. Rix and M. O'Shea to meet with Mid Suffolk District Council to make the best use of the available £7.500 "Welcome Back" fund which is designed to help the re-opening of High Street commercial premises after the enforced lock down. The meeting agreed to recommend support. They further agreed to support Suffolk Day and to this end agreed to purchase two Suffolk flags to be flown appropriately and a banner to be displayed on St John's Church garden. The Council was asked to support an advertising insert in the next issue of the Newsletter. The flag pole at Jubilee Crescent is being modified to reduce the possibility of further vandalism. The readying of the new Barretts Lane public toilets for operational use is nearing completion.

b) Recreation and Sport. There was no report, but it was stressed proposal for the use of the S.106 money held by Mid Suffolk District Council, which are allocated to improvements at Crowley Park must come forward as soon as possible. The repairs to the Crowley Park car park are due to be carried out before the end of the month. It was noted that the closure of Crowley Park to the footballers as a result of the start of the Cricket season had resulted in an increase in the use of the old Middle School playing field by footballers and a consequential unauthorised use of the Community Centre car park by them.

c) Highways and Lighting. Councillor Norris confirmed that the refurbishment of the bridge railings on the Stowmarket Road was in hand thanks to County Councillor Oakes.

d) Newsletter and Communications. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Newsletter was being edited and produced by the Council's printing contractor. The continued additional involvement (editing) by the printing contractor incurs an extra cost.

e) Planning. The Clerk reported notification had been received regarding the forthcoming Babergh/Mid Suffolk Local Plan Examination Hearing, which is to be held at Ipswich Town Football Club. Councillor Norris explained the venue was selected due to there being a lack of an alternative suitably sized social distancing venue. Councillor O'Shea went on to report that the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan was undergoing formal independent examination a report on which is imminent. He was complimented upon his Needham Market flood report, and he hoped it might involve young people at some stage.

Civic Events Working Group This item would be carried forward to the next meeting.

Any Other Business None raised.

Date, Location and Timing of the Next Meeting The next meeting will be held in accordance with the published Council Meeting Schedule on the 10th August. The location and timing will be subject to the will of the elected Chairman of the new Committee after the Annual Town Council meeting.

If it becomes necessary to call an extraordinary meeting at any time, this can be arranged.