

NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the NEEDHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL held in Needham Market Community Centre on Wednesday 15th September 2021 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr J Lea (In the Chair), Councillors: BE Annis, I Mason, MG Norris, M O'Shea and X Stansfield.

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr R Darnell – Holiday
Cllr J Kett – Unwell
Cllr M Ost - Holiday
Cllr S Phillips – Work Commitment
Cllr J Reardon – Work Commitment
Cllr P Wright – Work Commitment

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes

In Attendance: Mid Suffolk District Councillor Mike Norris and the Town Clerk.

Cllr Lea confirmed Cllr Rix had tendered her resignation. The resignation created a further Casual Vacancy on Council.

C084/21 To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held 21st July 2021.

The Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held Wednesday 21st July 2021 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

C085/21 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda.

Cllr BE Annis – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)
Cllr MG Norris – Planning Matters
Cllr X Stansfield – Accounts for Payment (Community Centre)

C086/21 To receive reports from the County Councillor, District Councillors and, to take questions from members of the public.

Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes had provided a report, which was circulated to Councillors, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. The report headlines were:

- Statement on behalf of all Suffolk councils regarding Afghan refugees
- Make one simple change today in a bid to tackle climate change
- Suffolk targets devolution talks with Government
- Suffolk homeowners can cut carbon emissions as successful solar panel buying scheme returns

District Councillor Mike Norris referred to the following District Councillors' report which had been circulated to Councillors, and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book:

Redevelopment of former MSDC Needham Market headquarters site: Five houses on the new Chambers Green development are now open for viewing by appointment. The development is being delivered by Mid Suffolk Growth – a joint venture between Mid Suffolk District Council and Norse Group set up to deliver housing and promote sustainable growth across the district. The first phase is a combination of two and three bedroom detached and semi-detached houses, as well as one and two bedroom apartments and a retail unit. Ten of these properties will be affordable homes, helping to support those on lower incomes.

A further update on Covid-19 in Suffolk: August was the end of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown, however Mid Suffolk's work to support the district's recovery continues. Also, regular bulletins continue to be produced to give a snapshot of the current Covid-19 situation in Suffolk - along with updates on the work being carried out as part of Suffolk's Local Outbreak Control Plan. There are no signs that the Government will renew the legislation to enable virtual or hybrid

meetings. MSDC Committee Meetings are being held in the Council Chamber and it is anticipated that the full Council meeting on 23rd September will be held in the Chamber.

Mid Suffolk and Babergh join calls for devolution talks with the Government: Together with other public sector leaders in Suffolk, MSDC has written to the Secretary of State responsible for local government, to say that the council welcomes early discussions with Ministers about a possible devolution deal for Suffolk. It is important that any deal should avoid an extra tier of government.

Gateway 14: The Outline Planning Application, with extensive conditions, was approved on 18th August by a majority vote, for Gateway 14 – Stowmarket's 2.45 million square foot, innovation, business and logistics park.

Green oasis set to strengthen Mid Suffolk's biodiversity: Almost three acres of land at Wash Lane, Great Finborough near Stowmarket, being wetland alongside the River Rat, has been bought by Mid Suffolk District Council to provide a green oasis for the town – as part of the council's biodiversity plans.

Afghan refugees: Following the Government announcement of its new resettlement scheme for Afghan refugees, councils in Suffolk including MSDC, have expressed their commitment to assist. MSDC has already helped a small number of Afghan interpreters and their families to resettle in Suffolk. There will be ongoing work to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and other refugees entering the UK.

Taxi Licensing: No encouragement given to switch to electric vehicles - the current administration at MSDC missed the opportunity to improve Mid Suffolk's environmental credentials when they put forward a new taxi licensing policy at the Council's recent Licensing Committee meeting. Despite the fact that no new diesel or petrol cars can be purchased after 2030, the ten year policy included no provisions to encourage cab drivers to move to electric vehicles and contained none of the incentives other councils use. The policy, without mention of any efforts to reduce emissions, was approved by the Chair's casting vote.

Compost giveaway: The date for collection of free compost from Mill Meadow, Needham Lake, has been changed and will now be Sunday 19th September from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon.

MSDC Locality Awards: The 2021/22 scheme is open for applications. Amounts of £250 or more are available to properly constituted local community groups and organisations that have a bank account and a treasurer. Please contact us for an application form or for further information and assistance in applying.

District Councillor Norris added Babergh/Mid Suffolk District Councils have launched a Business Innovation Support Scheme. The Clerk confirmed the relevant circular had been received and details would be included in the October edition of the Needham Market Newsletter.

Cllr Stansfield said he thought a Mid Suffolk District Council decision to not promote Electric Vehicles, was regrettable, in particular as it relied on the Chairman's casting vote.

C087/21 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town.

The Mayor reported attending:

29th July – Suffolk High Sheriff's Reception

7th August – Needham Market Bounce Back event at the Camping Land

1st September – the Launch of Chinwag and cut the commemoration cake

8th September – chaired the initial meeting of the working group to plan events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022

14th September – the Induction of the new Parish Priest at Stowmarket Catholic Church along with the Mayor of Stowmarket

The Deputy Mayor reported attending:

7th August – Needham Market Bounce Back event at the Camping Land

C088/21 To receive a report from the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The Clerk reported the Neighbourhood Plan document is being updated by Gipping Press, in accordance with the changes requested by the Independent Examiner, in her recent report.

C089/21 To consider appointing to a casual vacancy on the Council.

The Clerk reported a request has been received from a local resident requesting he be considered for co-option to one of the vacant Town Council seats. The resident, Mr Graham Cave, had attended a meeting in the Town Council office and had discussed the role of Town Councillors, with the Clerk. Following the meeting Mr Cave had confirmed his request to be considered for co-option.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council co-opt Mr Graham Cave to one of its vacant seats. Cllr Norris seconded the proposal. Council unanimously agreed the proposal.

C090/21 To consider a response to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Parking Strategy Consultation.

Cllr Norris commented the consultation has been designed for and is aimed at gathering individual people's views on vehicle parking. The questionnaire in use for the consultation is not appropriate for completion by a corporate body such as the Town Council. Council agreed, in the circumstances, that they each could, if they so wished, complete the online questionnaire. As well as and/or alternatively, Councillors could provide comments to the Clerk who could collate them and also raise the point regarding whether the consultation methodology had been thoroughly thought through.

Cllr Norris also referred Councillors to his email to them dated 14th September on the separate matter of the Proposals for Revision of the Mid Suffolk District Council Civil Parking Enforcement Order. Following discussion Councillors agreed the inclusion of the Barretts Lane parking facility, owned by the Town Council and, the new public parking facility included in the redevelopment of the former Mid Suffolk District Council Offices site, should be excluded from the Order. Council agreed it has no desire to see excess time penalty tickets being issued in either location.

C091/21 To receive a report from the Civic Events Working Group.

Cllr Lea reported the arrangements for the Remembrance Service 2021 are agreed and will be the subject of a public notice in the October edition of the Needham Market Newsletter.

Cllr Annis said it was usual for the Town Council to fund light refreshments for the uniformed personnel who attend the Remembrance Service and others who wish to join them at the Community Centre following the Service. Cllr Mason proposed Council fund up to £200 in respect of those light refreshments. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

The Events Working Group, inclusive of representatives from community organisations and businesses in the town, had met to carry out an initial discussion on plans for the Queens' Platinum Jubilee Celebrations which will take place over an extended bank holiday weekend in June next year. A plan for events in the town is being worked up.

C092/21 Clerk's Report and Correspondence to be noted.

1. Issues:

- Remembrance 2021 Arrangements – Sunday 14th November, scaled down event with maximum congregation of 100
- Request for contribution to soil condition report costs relating to the Scout Hut Replacement Project – RSA Geotechnics Ltd Report (£480)

Cllr Mason proposed, as the requirement for the RSA Geotechnics Ltd Report emanated from the condition of the soil beneath the Town Council's adjacent former Gasworks site in Crown Street, Council reimburse the 1st Needham Market Scouts with the full £480 cost. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

2. Correspondence to be noted:

- Notice received from 1st Needham Market Scouts regarding its AGM which is being held on Wednesday 29th September at the Scout Hut.

C093/21 Committees

Governance & Finance Committee.

C093/21/1a 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 Mason proposed adoption of the accounts for payment. Cllr O'Shea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Annis referred Councillors to an Income & Expenditure (up to 13th September) document which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book and, provided an update on progress on the adoption of internet banking and the authorisation processes that will be introduced alongside its adoption.

C093/21/1b To receive a report on progress on matters raised in the Internal Audit Report 2020/21.

The Clerk informed Council the annual Internal Audit Report 2020/21 had been submitted, along with the appropriate documents, to Council's External Auditor. The recommendations in the Internal Audit Report continued to be worked through.

C093/21/1c To confirm allocation of £12,000 of CIL (Developer Contributions) funding towards refurbishment/renewal of street furniture.

Cllr Lea reported the Town Property Working Group had met on 8th September and carried out a thorough review of street furniture in the town. Subsequently the Group had produced a list of costed recommendations for replacement and new items including notice boards, public seating, litter bins, grit bins and cycle racks. A budget of £12,000 has been estimated as necessary to deliver the recommendations, which can be allocated to funds received by Council, from the Community Infrastructure Levy (developer contributions).

Cllr Mason proposed Council confirm the allocation of £12,000 of CIL funding, for the purpose of replacing and delivery of new items of street furniture, as recommended. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C093/21/1d To receive a report from the Committee Chairperson.

Cllr Annis confirmed a meeting of the Governance & Finance Committee will be held on Tuesday 9th November starting at 7pm in the Green Room, Needham Market Community Centre.

C093/21/2 Community & Assets Committee.

C093/21/2a To receive a report from the Committee Chairperson.

The Clerk reported the proposal to improve Crowley Park Pavilion and the adjacent Old Clubhouse building has been discussed with a local Planning Agent. The agent has produced a specification for the work necessary to produce a Planning Application and for Building Control purposes. The agent has quoted a total of £2,650 to carry out the work. Councillors discussed the merits of the proposal which will produce space for accommodating a young peoples' facility in an extension to the existing buildings.

Cllr Stansfield proposed Council accept the Planning Agent's quotation. Cllr O'Shea seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Lea referred to the Minutes from the Community & Assets Committee meeting held on 18th August, which had been circulated to Councillors and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the Minutes. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C093/21/3 Planning Committee.

C093/21/3a To receive a report from the Committee Chairperson.

Cllr O'Shea confirmed the Planning Committee meeting scheduled to take place on Monday 13th September had been cancelled due to lack of relevant business.

Cllr O'Shea updated Council on planning applications the Committee has responded to:

DC/21/04579 - Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a building for Agricultural or Forestry Use. Town and Country Planning. (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) Schedule 2, Part 6 - Erection of agricultural store and concrete pad. Land At Hill House Lane Needham Market. The application had a response deadline of **7 days**.

Having considered the application, the Town Council Planning Committee submitted the following comment to the Planning Authority:

Bearing in mind the Local Plan paragraph 2.4.26 and POLICY CL13 SITING AND DESIGN OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS and taking into account the extent of the land owned by the applicant, it appears quite unnecessary to re-site the existing agricultural building adjacent to the narrow site reserved as a landscape barrier to the recently approved residential site. Policy CL13 clearly states that it should be within or adjacent to existing farm buildings and avoid intrusion into the existing open skyline and that a material consideration would include loss of light and loss of privacy. The proposed relocated building with a ridge height of some 7.3m clearly does not comply with these policy requirements.

DC/21/04612 - Application for works to a tree in a Conservation Area - Crown reduce height and spread of 1 No Magnolia Tree in rear garden by approx. 2-2.5m and balance. 133 High Street Needham Market

The application had a response deadline **of 21 days, to 8th September.**

Having considered the application, the Town Council Planning Committee submitted the following comment to the Planning Authority:

Needham Market Town Council supports approval of the application on condition the District Council's Tree Officer agrees with the proposed works.

New Applications Requiring a Decision.

DC/21/04768 - Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/20/00354 dated 26/03/2020. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Condition 2 Approved Plans and Documents) - Amended Block Layout Plan as per drawing PLNG 3-20-D removal of electric vehicle charging points. Shell Needham Market Norwich Road Coddensham Suffolk IP6 8LP

The application had a response deadline of 21 days, to **21st September.**

Having considered the application, the Town Council Planning Committee recommends that the following comment to be sent to the Planning Authority:

Although this variation is inevitable due to the low power supply, this is surely a retrograde step in light of the pressure from HMG promoting electric vehicles. This application has been live for some time now and adequate time for someone like Shell to organise a higher capacity feed to the site. I would suggest that the planning authority delay this redevelopment until such time as the higher capacity feed is available.

Cllr O'Shea proposed the Committee's recommended response be submitted to the Planning Authority. Cllr Stansfield seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

DC/21/05045 - Notification for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Fell T1 Silver Birch (Due to size and proximity to house and retaining wall adjacent to highway) Reduce crown of T5 Leylandii by 50% and cut overhang to neighbours' roof (Due to risk of damage to neighbours' property) - 10 Hawks Mill Street Needham Market

Cllr O'Shea proposed Council support approval of the application so long as the District Council's Tree Officer agrees with the proposed works and how they are to be carried out also, a comment to be added relating to the potential of a 'heave' effect on the property's boundary wall at the time when the Silver Birch is felled. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr O'Shea referred to the Minutes from the Planning Committee meeting held on 16th August, which had been circulated to Councillors.

Cllr O'Shea proposed Council adopt the Minutes. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

The Meeting closed at 8:53pm.

Chairman **Date**