



Needham Market Town Council

Town Council Meeting

Minutes – 15.05.2024

Present: Cllr J Reardon (In the Chair), Councillors: BE Annis, G Cave, T Cooke, R Darnell, C Goodchild, J Lea, T Lawrence, I Mason, MG Norris, M Ost, M O'Shea, S Phillips, A Reardon and X Stansfield.

In Attendance: Suffolk County Councillor Kay Oakes, Mid Suffolk District Councillor Terry Lawrence, Mid Suffolk District Councillor John Matthissen, Town Clerk Kevin Hunter and 5 members of the public.

C001/24 To elect the Town Mayor/Chairperson of Council for 2024/2025:

Cllr Mason proposed Cllr T Lawrence as Town Mayor/Chairperson for 2024/25. Cllr Ost seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr T Lawrence took the Chair, thanking Councillors for electing him.

C002/24 To witness the Town Mayor/Chairperson's Declaration of Acceptance of Office:

Cllr T Lawrence made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Town Mayor and Chairperson of Council and signed it, the Declaration being witnessed by the Town Clerk, as the Proper Officer.

C003/24 To receive Councillor's Apologies for Absence:

None to receive. All present.

C004/24 To witness the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from co-opted Town Councillor Tina Cooke:

Cllr T Cooke made her Declaration of Acceptance of Office as co-opted Town Councillor and signed it, the Declaration being witnessed by the Town Clerk, as the Proper Officer.

C005/24 To elect the Deputy Town Mayor/Deputy Chairperson of Council for 2024/2025:

Cllr Ost proposed Cllr J Reardon. Cllr Darnell seconded the proposal.

Cllr Lea proposed Cllr Phillips. Cllr Annis seconded the proposal.

On being put to the vote, the proposal for Cllr J Reardon gained the majority support.

C006/24 To witness The Deputy Town Mayor/Deputy Chairperson's Declaration of Acceptance of Office:

Cllr J Reardon made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Deputy Town Mayor/Deputy Chairperson of Council and signed it. The Declaration was countersigned by the Town Clerk, as the Proper Officer.

C007/24 To confirm the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 13th March 2024:

The Minutes of the meeting of 13th March 2024 were accepted as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

C008/24 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest for matters on the Agenda:

The following Declarations of Interest were received and recorded in the Declaration of Interest Register:

Cllr BE Annis – Community Centre Payment

Cllr X Stansfield – Community Centre Payment

C009/24 To receive reports from The County Councillor, District Councillors and to take any questions from members of the public present:

County Councillor's Report:

County Councillor Oakes presented her report, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. Appreciation was noted for the Land Recovery item.

District Councillors' Report:

District Councillor Ross Piper had provided his report, a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book.

District Councillor Terry Lawrence gave his report verbally. This covered locality awards spending, the opening of a new Capital Grant Funding scheme and the continuation of work around parking restrictions in Needham Market High Street.

Questions from members of the public:

1. A member of the public raised concern about the situation at Needham Lake regarding the BBQ area. There have been a number of comments on social media and reports to MSDC regarding the number of people using the area at any one time and anti-social behaviour. Town Council support for the issue was being sought. Cllr T Lawrence reported that he and Mid Suffolk District Councillor Ross Piper are making representation to MSDC regarding the issues raised. These are being taken seriously and the situation is being monitored. Cllr Lea noted that the situation is difficult for local people.
2. Representatives of Needham Market Skatepark Committee asked how Town Council can help relight interest in a skatepark. Cllr Phillips referred to the opportunity of the Annual Town Meeting on 20th May to bring the subject up. Reference was made to the potential of the Middle School Field. The Clerk explained the process of the upcoming public consultation about the development of this field.

C010/24 To receive a report of the activities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on behalf of the Town and, if applicable, the final report from the outgoing Mayor:

The outgoing Mayor's report on activities will be emailed post meeting and a copy appended to the minute book.

The outgoing Deputy Mayor had no activities to report.

C011/24 To appoint Chairpersons of the Council Committees for 2024/2025:

The following Committee Chairperson appointments were agreed by Council:

Governance & Finance Committee: Cllr Annis. Proposed by Cllr Norris and seconded by Cllr Stansfield.

Community & Assets Committee: Cllr Phillips. Proposed by Cllr Lea and seconded by Cllr Annis.

Planning Committee: Cllr O'Shea. Proposed by Cllr Ost and seconded by Cllr Darnell.

C012/24 To agree Members of the Employment Committee for 2024/2025:

Cllr J Reardon proposed that the current committee members remain in place with the addition of Cllr Goodchild. Cllr Ost seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C013/24 To appoint SALC representatives for 2024/2025:

Cllr Phillips proposed that we maintain the position of no official representative. Cllr Mason seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C014/24 To confirm the appointment of the Internal Auditor:

Cllr Annis said that he will advise councillors in due course on this matter.

C015/24 To appoint representatives on the Community Centre Management Committee for 2024/25:

Cllr Annis advised that this item be deferred. There are three councillors who are currently representatives, and the Community Centre Management Committee are working with the Town Council regarding its future. Council agreed.

C016/24 To appoint a representative to liaise with Needham Market Neighbourhood Watch 2024/25:

Cllr Lea proposed the appointment of Cllr Phillips. Cllr Cave seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C017/24 To appoint Emergency Contacts for 2024/25:

Cllr J Reardon proposed the existing contacts remain (Cllrs J Reardon, Annis and Phillips). Cllr Cave seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C018/24 To appoint to the Civic Events Management Group 2024/25:

Cllr Mason proposed Cllrs Lea and Phillips be members of the Civic Events Management Committee the auspices of which fall within the remit of the Community & Assets Committee. Cllr Ost seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C019/24 To confirm arrangements for Council's insurance cover for all insurable risks:

The Clerk advised that a meeting with the Council's Insurance Broker is due to take place on 20th May to initiate the process for renewal of the Council's policy.

C020/24 To review Council's subscriptions to other bodies:

The Clerk confirmed annual subscriptions are paid to the Information Commissioners Office, Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Suffolk Local History Council and The River Gipping Trust. Council agreed to maintain these subscriptions.

C021/24 To review Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972:

This item was deferred.

C022/24 To determine the time and place of Council and Council Committee Meetings up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council:

The Clerk had prepared a schedule of meetings for 2024/25 inclusive of the 2025 Annual Town Council Meeting, which had been provided to Councillors. Council agreed the schedule.

C023/24 Clerk's Report:

The Town Council's report for the Annual Town Meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Ost proposed acceptance of the report. Cllr Annis seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24 Committees

C024/24/a Governance and Finance:

C024/24/a/i Accounts for Payment and Confirmation:

Cllr Annis presented the Accounts for Payment and Confirmation which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. Cllr Lea proposed Council adopt the accounts for payment and Confirmation. Cllr Cave seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24/a/ii To adopt the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024:

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024. Cllr Ost seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24/a/iii Confirmation and signing of the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) for year ending 31st March 2024:

The Clerk had emailed all councillors earlier in the day to advise that the internal audit report had been received by the office and that it contained several comments regarding failures in terms of publishing information. The Clerk advised that Council take on board the comments and recommend assertion 7 on the Annual Governance Statement be completed 'no'.

Cllr Lawrence introduced the Annual Governance Statement, which was tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book. Cllr Lawrence proposed that each question on the statement be read and a very short explanation of what was being asked be given. This was not agreed.

Cllr Lawrence proposed that all questions, excepting number 7, be answered 'yes' and question 7 be answered 'no' with the caveat that the Clerk had assured Councillors that this response would not be contrary to the Internal Audit. Cllr Annis seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Lawrence signed the Statement. The Clerk, as Proper Officer, also signed the Statement.

C024/24/a/iv Confirmation and signing of the Annual Accounting Statements (Section 2) for year ending 31st March 2024:

Cllr Lawrence introduced the Annual Accounting Statements. which were tabled and a copy of which will be appended to the Minute Book and proposed Council adopt the completed Statement. Cllr Norris seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

Cllr Lawrence signed the Statement.

Cllr Lea proposed a vote of appreciation for all the RFO's work. Cllr Cave seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24/a/v To adopt the Town Council Asset Register (31st March 2024):

It was noted that the tabled Asset Register contained an accidental line shift meaning that some figures were misaligned. Cllr Lea proposed Council adopt the Asset Register on the basis that a corrected copy will be appended to the Minute Book. Cllr Goodchild seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24/a/vi To adopt an Internal Control Statement for the period to 31st March 2025:

Cllr Annis proposed Council adopt the Internal Control Statement for the period to 31st March 2025. Cllr A Reardon seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24/a/vii To receive Minutes from the Governance and Finance Committee meeting held 7th May 2024:

Cllr Annis presented Minutes from the 7th May 2024 Committee Meeting, which were tabled.

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

C024/24/a/viii To confirm arrangements for the next meeting of the Governance & Finance Committee:

Cllr Annis confirmed the next meeting of the Governance & Finance Committee will take place on Tuesday 13th August at 7pm in the Community Centre.

C024/24/b Community & Assets Committee:

C024/24/b/i To confirm arrangements for the next meeting of the Committee:

Cllr Phillips confirmed the next meeting of the Community & Assets Committee will take place on Wednesday 12th June at 7pm in the Community Centre.

Cllr Annis reported that question posed in the newsletter regarding continuation of the chiming of the church clock had received a large response with only one response being negative.

Cllr Annis proposed that we retain the tradition of the clock chiming 24 hours a day. Cllr Phillips seconded the proposal. Council agreed the proposal.

C024/24/c Planning Committee:

C024/24/c/i To confirm arrangements for the next meeting of the Committee:

Cllr O'Shea confirmed the next meeting of the Planning Committee will take place on Monday 3rd June at 7pm in the Community Centre.

The Meeting closed at 8.47pm

Signed Date