

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 8TH APRIL 2008 AT 7.30PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr R Leach
	Councillors	S W Blyth
		W A Clark
		M G Ford
		J K Fox
		P E Freeman
		S F Geary
		J Groom
		Mrs G S S Purslow
		C Pyatt
		J J Reed
		Mrs P A Roberts
		C T Sampson
		Mrs P B Sharp
		A D Stacey
		V F Starling
	County Councillor	Mrs S E L Hutson
	Borough Councillors	J R Legg
		A M Lovett
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Press Correspondent	Ms S Hewitt
	Norfolk County Council	Mr P Cudby
		Mr M Stringfellow
	Mott MacDonald	Mr S Barker

1224. To receive members Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mrs S M Nunn (illness), Borough Cllr Mrs K Mellish and Inspector M Bates.

The apologies were accepted.

Cllr R J Keates and Cllr S C Teverson did not attend.

1225. Evacuation Procedures

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, notified those present of the emergency evacuation procedure from the Town Council offices.

1226. To receive members Declarations of Interest

Cllr Sampson declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1233, to approve the Payment of Bills.

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Doyle

‘To invoke Standing Order 17, in order to vary the order of business and allow the item regarding the bus stop in Bridge Street, to be discussed at this time.’

All in favour

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, adjourned the meeting.

1227. To discuss the bus stop in Bridge Street, Cllr A D Stacey

Cllr Stacey reported that he had attended a meeting with Mr Cudby, Mr Stringfellow, Mr Barker and Mr Ben Coulsen from Norfolk Green on Friday, 14th March 2008 to discuss the relocation of the bus stop in Bridge Street.

At the meeting Cllr Stacey had asked Mr Coulsen to consider the possibility of having a bus stop at the end of the Hollies car park in order that buses could pull off the road to drop off and pick up passengers. This however had been refused because it would be impossible for buses coming through the Hollies car park to access that stop. It was also revealed that the public would not wish to be dropped off and picked up that far down Bridge Street.

Mr Barker, an architect for Mott MacDonald, circulated proposed plans to the Councillors. Mr Cudby, Norfolk County Council Transport Passenger Group, confirmed the following:

1. The existing bus stop is not DDA compliant.
2. When buses use the existing stop, major traffic delays are caused.
3. A bus stop is required between the Hollies car park and Barclays Bank to ensure all bus services are able to access it.
4. A bus stop would not be feasible opposite the Reeds store because a delivery lorry and bus stopping at the same time would cause major traffic congestion.
5. At present 3 buses an hour use the Bridge Street route but this is set to increase to 7 an hour.
6. The Town’s population is growing and the current bus stop would not be able to cater for the increase.

A long discussion took place. Concern was raised that the Barclays Bank Securicor van also caused problems when it made its collection.

Mr Cudby confirmed that he would be investigating the following matters:

1. Whether the taxi ranks could be reviewed and relocated by the BCKL&WN – a meeting was being held on Thursday, 10th April 2008 with the BCKL&WN Licensing Committee to discuss this matter. Initial enquiries have established that the taxi ranks could be relocated to Priory Road, although this will not be confirmed until October 2008 when the Cabinet will make a decision.
2. Whether Highways would be prepared to lose two on street parking spaces to make way for the new bus stop and allow buses to manoeuvre adequately.
3. Whether Barclays Bank would be able to implement a new practice for the Securicor van to stop in their car park.

Mr Cudby advised that because the original plans had been amended, a further consultation period would be required in order for neighbouring properties to make any comments.

The formal process would then commence to include a four-week public consultation period. Any objections received within this period would be assessed by the Legal Department. Providing this process ran effortlessly the new bus stop could be installed within six months.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, thanked Mr Cudby, Mr Stringfellow and Mr Barker for their presentation and resumed the meeting.

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Ford

‘That this Council asks Norfolk County Council to investigate this proposal further and to go ahead with the current scheme that has been discussed.’

For – 16

Against – 0

Abstention – 1

Mr Cudby, Mr Stringfellow and Mr Barker left the Council Chambers at 8.01pm.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, adjourned the meeting.

Police Report

A member of Norfolk Constabulary was not present at the meeting.

Public Participation

Cllr Pyatt advised that the width of the bridleway, near Hillcrest, appeared to be shrinking in size whenever Persimmon Homes carried out any work on it. Cllr Lovett confirmed that he would investigate this matter.

Cllr Mrs Sharp wished to note that Holly Landscapes were doing a brilliant job in keeping the Town clean and tidy.

County Councillor

Cllr Mrs Hutson reported that discussions regarding Unitary Status were ongoing.

Borough Councillor

Cllr Legg had nothing to report.

Cllr Lovett reported that he would be attending the meeting on Thursday, 10th April 2008 at 2.00pm to discuss the possible transfer of the taxi ranks and consider Norfolk County Council’s transport issues regarding the relocation of the bus stop in Bridge Street. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, agreed to attend the meeting on behalf of the Town Council.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, resumed the meeting.

1228. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12th February 2008 (pages 2357-2363) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

Cllr Mrs Roberts noted that due to staff sickness and holiday leave the minutes of the Full Council meeting held in March were not yet available.

1229. To receive Correspondence

A list of correspondence had been circulated (Appendix 1).

Cllr Sampson reported that a letter had been received from Mr Firrell regarding Post Office closures. Councillors were asked to read the excellent content of his letter.

1230. Councillor's Questions

Cllr Starling reported that, for a number of reasons, the Music Festival, which had been planned for Saturday, 19th July 2008, would now not be taking place.

1231. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes

Planning and Environmental Committee

Cllr Fox noted that the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 6th February 2008 (pages 2353-2356) had previously been adopted at the Full Council meeting on Tuesday, 11th March 2008.

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Sharp

‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meeting of Tuesday, 19th February 2008 (pages 2364-2372) be adopted.’

All in favour

1232. To receive the Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report had been circulated (Appendix 2).

Not on agenda

The Clerk advised that a meeting was being held on Wednesday, 9th April 2008 at 6.00pm in the Town Hall, King's Lynn, regarding an update on the Local Government Review. The Clerk and Cllr Sampson would be attending. Any other interested Councillors were asked to inform the Clerk whether they also wished to go.

The Clerk informed Councillors that the Community Development Officer had given birth to twins on 15th March 2008; Harry and Olivia. The Clerk would send her a card on behalf of the Council.

1233. To approve the Payment of Bills

A list of bills had been circulated (Appendix 3).

Cllr Sampson had declared a prejudicial interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the bills be paid as per the attached list.’

For – 16

Against – 0

Abstention – 1 (Declared Interest)

1234. Town Hall

a. To discuss funding consultant

Cllr Ford reported that he, the Mayor, Cllr Doyle, Cllr Fox and the Clerk had met with Mr Bob Turner on Friday, 28th March 2008 to negotiate a consultancy arrangement with him. Short, medium and long term projects were discussed, the early priorities being the Water Festival, Town Hall, Howdale Community Centre, Heritage Centre, additional outreach Youth Work time and a youth venue etc.

The meeting resolved that the services of Mr Turner should be on a self employed basis for a minimum period of 6 months initially, with the possibility of an extension if both parties were satisfied with the success of this collaboration. A monthly meeting would be held to ascertain Mr Turner’s progress and more frequently when project developments demanded so.

Mr Turner would require £4,000 for a period of 6 months working a minimum of 10 hours per week. He would be prepared to accept a contract for 3 months but it would be unrealistic to expect anyone to draw down any large sum of money in less than 6-12 months and even longer if negotiating with National Lottery, Heritage Funds, EEDA etc.

Financial Standing Order 11c states, ‘When applications are made to waiver financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.’

The group that met with Mr Turner would like Council to consider agreement to meeting the cost of consultancy for a period of 6 months initially, at a cost of £4,000, plus mileage expenses. Those who met with Mr Turner felt there was good reason not to place this contract out to tender on the following grounds:

- a. The need for additional funds for a variety of projects is becoming evermore urgent.
- b. Such additional funds raised would take pressure off other Council Committee budget heads.
- c. The Council has worked with Mr Turner in the past and his record at drawing down funds is well known.
- d. It would be expected that any funding bids after the initial 6-month period would become self funding, in that a management fee could be built into the larger funding bids.
- e. In the first 6 months any monies raised for projects, for example, the Water Festival, would release Development Committee funds already allocated to such projects.

Proposed – Cllr Ford

Seconded – Cllr Groom

‘That this Council agrees to waive the need to place this consultancy bid out to tender; Financial Standing Order 11c allows for this variation, and that the Council enters into

an initial 6-month agreement with Mr Turner at a cost of £4,000, to be reviewed at 5 months and referred back to Full Council for any additional consultancy work.'

All in favour

b. To discuss future plans for the Town Hall

The Town Hall Working Party established that over the next few months, and until firm decisions have been made regarding the future management structure of the Town Hall, issues may arise that staff would need to refer for urgent resolution. The Working Party therefore respectfully suggested that since its members represent a cross section of all Standing Committees, this group would be best placed to provide the necessary support in the short term.

Proposed – Cllr Ford

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Sharp

'That the current Town Hall Working Party title be changed to that of Interim Town Hall Management Team, with the authority to make decisions in the best interests of promoting both best practice for the staff and of developing the Town Hall functions.'

All in favour

Cllr Ford reported that the Interim Town Hall Management Team would be meeting on a weekly basis.

The Civic Trust document had not yet been received and the Clerk was pursuing this. Once received, a Feasibility Study would be put out to tender. It would be anticipated that Mr Turner could obtain funding to draw down money to pay for the cost of the study.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, congratulated Cllr Ford for managing the Town Hall project and getting it transferred back into the ownership of the Town Council.

Cllr Stacey reported that the Festival Committee had written to request the booking of the Town Hall for its monthly meetings up to and including the 2009 Festival, and for Festival Week from Sunday, 4th May 2008 through to Sunday, 11th May 2008. The BCKL&WN had always permitted the Committee to use the Town Hall free of charge and it was hoped the Town Council would continue this.

Cllr Fox declared a prejudicial interest in this matter. Cllr Fox was invited not to leave the meeting in the case he may be required to answer any questions regarding this matter.

Councillors agreed that because the Town Council had agreed to manage the Town Hall in exactly the same way the BCKL&WN did, this would be acceptable. It was noted that the Town Council provided an annual grant of £5,000 to the Festival Committee and this would be reviewed in 2009 to take into effect the concessionary use of the Town Hall.

1235. Update on the construction of the Fire Station Car Park – Report from Cllr Fox

Cllr Fox reported that the retaining wall in the old fire station site had been built and was of excellent quality. Work had temporarily stopped on site but would recommence on Monday, 21st April 2008.

1236. Report on the Howdale Community Centre – Report from Cllr Pyatt

Cllr Pyatt had nothing to report to this meeting.

1237. To discuss CCTV – Report from Cllr Mrs Sharp

Cllr Mrs Sharp reported that Mr Karl Weeks was currently investigating an alternative site for the hub, which had originally been proposed to be outside the Town Hall. Mr Weeks would be meeting with BT to discuss this matter.

1238. An update on Car Park charging consultations

Cllr Stacey advised that the Car Park Charges Working Party would be meeting to discuss car park charging and would make a recommendation to the Car Parks and Highways Committee.

1239. To discuss matters arising from the Town Meeting

Details of the matters raised at the Annual Town Meeting had been provided in the Clerk's Report.

Concern over some old/listed walls in the town that are not being maintained
The Clerk had reported this item to Mr John Selby, Conservation Officer.

1240. To discuss Town Council policy on current Post Office closures

Cllr Sampson reported that a meeting had been held in the Town Hall on Monday, 7th April 2008 regarding local Post Office closures. Two Post Offices within Downham Market had been nominated for closure; the one at the Railway Station and the one in Lynn Road. Post Offices were part of the community and with increased residential development taking place in Downham Market the need to keep them open was essential. All Councillors were invited to write individual letters but a formal letter from the Town Council would be crucial in the campaign to save any closures.

Cllr Leach noted that when he and Cllr Mrs Sharp had attended the meeting in Aylsham regarding Post Office closures the speaker had been adamant that if a Post Office were saved, another would be closed in its place. At the meeting in the Town Hall yesterday it was confirmed that if a good case was put forward to save a Post Office, another may not need to be closed instead.

Proposed – Cllr Sampson

Seconded – Cllr Leach

‘That the Council supports the retention of the two sub Post Offices and the main Post Office in Downham Market and writes a letter to the Post Office to this effect.’

All in favour

Cllr Fox noted that the Railway Road Post Office would eventually support the proposed large developments taking place in Railway Road and Bennett Street, and the Lynn Road Post Office would sustain the proposed massive development in Downham Market North. If these sub offices were closed it would have a huge impact on the remaining Post Office. It was also

highlighted that both Post Offices were located within a shop and this was a main criteria of the Post Office to sustain them.

It was noted that both Post Masters had expressed their wish to remain open; Cllr Mrs Sharp had spoken to the Railway Road Post Master and Cllr Leach had liaised with the one in Lynn Road.

1241. To discuss Town Council policy on speciality markets being held in the Town

Cllr Leach reported that the French market had been invited to Downham Market approximately 3 years ago; this had been done in consultation with the Chamber of Trade, the usual market traders, and local businesses. Due to its success they have returned each year, and further speciality markets have started to trade, including the Italian market.

The speciality markets make a lot of money, they are extremely popular with the public, and the Town Council receives an income from them of approximately £1,000 per annum.

Both the French and Italian markets have expressed an interest to come to Downham Market twice a year. The French market is very big and the Town Hall car park would need to be closed. Because the Italian market is smaller it is able to stand on half the Town Hall car park, which therefore enables some parking spaces to remain. A German market would be a similar size to the Italian one.

A small discussion took place and it was noted that because the markets come on a Thursday, the loss of parking spaces was not too much of a major concern. It was agreed that as a market town, Downham Market should be seen to encourage speciality markets. As the Town Council now owned the Town Hall, the front and rear doors could be opened as a walkway through to the Town Square, which would warrant the markets to stand on both sides.

Proposed – Cllr Leach

Seconded – Cllr Groom

‘That the Council maintains the use of and encourages speciality markets in the Town, and the Markets Working Party monitors the situation.’

For – 13

Against – 1

Abstention – 3 (Declared Interest)

1242. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor

There were no urgent items to discuss.

1243. Mayor’s Announcements

- a. St George’s Day Events – Wednesday, 23rd April 2008 through to Saturday, 26th April 2008.
- b. Civic Service – St Edmund’s Church, Sunday, 13th April 2008 at 3.00pm.

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Leach

‘To invoke Standing Order 5a, that in the view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest, that the public and/or the press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.’

All in favour

Ms Hewitt left the Council Chambers at 8.52pm.

1244. Human Resources report (confidential item)

See Confidential Report.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, closed confidentiality and resumed the meeting.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.58pm.

Chairman

Date

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 13TH MAY 2008 AT 7.30PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr R Leach
	Councillors	S W Blyth
		W A Clark
		M G Ford
		J K Fox
		P E Freeman
		S F Geary
		J Groom
		Mrs R J Keates
		Mrs S M Nunn
		Mrs G S S Purslow
		J J Reed
		Mrs P A Roberts
		C T Sampson
		Mrs P B Sharp
		A D Stacey
		V F Starling
		S C Teverson
	County Councillor	Mrs S E L Hutson
	Borough Councillors	J R Legg
		A M Lovett
		Mrs K Mellish
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Press Correspondents	Ms S Hewitt
		Mr C Hill
	Members of Public	22

1245. Evacuation Procedures

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, notified those present of the emergency evacuation procedure from the Town Council offices.

1246. Election of Mayor

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, addressed the Councillors:

“Well what a year it has been! I said when I took office that I would use as my watchwords ‘we the people’ and I hope I have been true to that.

“Last year, you, my fellow Councillors, by voting me into office, gave me the opportunity to serve our Town as its Mayor, and it has been a truly wonderful experience for me and a very proud time. I only hope that I have carried out this role in a manner that justifies the confidence you all showed in me at that time. During this past year we have attended in excess of 160 functions on your behalf.

“I would like to thank the Mayoress, my wife Audrey, for supporting me throughout the year and also the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress John and Joyce Leach for their support and company throughout this year. Also can I say a big thank you to Jean and her team for their help and support during this past year?”

“Many things have happened during my year of office. We have taken back ownership of our Town Hall and I look forward to it becoming the hub of our Town. People are already looking upon it as theirs and I think its use and importance is growing day by day.

“Work has begun on the fire station car park and Heritage Centre, both of which will be big assets to the Town.

“This year we have resurrected the gardening competition and had a good response from gardeners in the Town. We also entered the Anglia in Bloom initiative for the first time and achieved a bronze award. Hopefully we can improve on that this year and involve more of the community in the worthwhile scheme.

“The sports survey highlighted our campaign for extra sports and leisure facilities in the Town, especially for the young. Much more needs to be done on this issue but at least we have made a start.

“We have begun the purchase of the Howdale community Centre and the six and a half acres of playing fields around it, mainly to ensure that developers don’t get their hands on it in the future and to keep this irreplaceable asset for the benefit of the Town.

“The Water Festival and St George’s Day were, I feel, a great success and I hope they will go on from year to year.

“This year the school children from both primary schools came to these offices and for the first time we held an official Youth Council meeting. Also, for the first time, our school children were involved in the St Winnold’s procession. I hope both these things can carry on.

“During this year I am pleased to say I have been instrumental in raising £2300 for my nominated charity, the Norfolk Hospice Tapping House. And my sincere thanks go to all those who helped Audrey and I at the various events and to all those who contributed.

“As I said I hope I have justified your confidence in me. This year has been a source of pleasure and pride for both Audrey and I and I hope that I have given the office the necessary drive, dedication and dignity that it so richly deserves. Thank you for allowing me to serve our Town as its Mayor.”

Cllr Stacey addressed the Mayor and Councillors:

“It would be quite wrong and not at all in keeping with the traditions of our Council if we were to continue this meeting without a word or two of thanks and recognition for the way in which Councillor John Doyle, so well supported by Audrey, has carried out the office of Mayor for the past year.

“This time last year, I was privileged to second the proposal that Councillor Doyle should be Mayor for the coming year and in doing so, I reminded the Council that it was not usual to

see a prospective Mayor on his hands and knees, painting white lines in the car park. Surely enough, John has continued in this vein and has proved to be one of the most "Hands On" Mayors in recent years. He has been innovative in his support for initiatives like Downham in Bloom which proved so successful in achieving a Bronze Award at our first attempt in the competition. He was a prime mover in the Water Festival where he was quite literally banging the drum for the town and of course it is now on record that he was at the helm when the Town Hall was transferred back to the ownership of the people of Downham Market.

"It was our Mayor's own idea to celebrate St George's Day in style and this was, perhaps the culminating triumph of a most successful year. His prowess with a sword when pursuing an agile and speedy dragon around the clock in a Town Square filled with children has already become legend and the expression on his face when the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight passed over the town is something I shall never forget.

"There have been a huge number of events which John has enlivened with his presence. Young people have always been a top priority with him and we must remember that as well as being Mayor, he has at the same time been Chairman of the Governors of Hillcrest School. He encouraged entries for this year's successful Young People's Awards. The St Winnold's Parade and Breakfast involving so many children was where many of his hobby horses came home to roost (to mix a metaphor) and nearly disrupted the parade completely.

"I know that the issue probably most important in John Doyle's list of achievements is his work for charity. When he became Mayor he declared that his Mayor's Charity for the year was to be the Tapping House Hospice. His constant efforts have raised a total of more than £2500 to donate to this worthy cause.

"John has never been afraid to get his hands dirty or to get to grips with the day to day running of the Council. His presence and his hard work have been an example to everyone; townspeople, Councillors and staff as well as the many visitors who have commented on what a lively and vital town Downham Market has become. In his opening address John said, and I quote, "The finest three words ever put together are, 'We the people'." In all that he has done over the past year John Doyle has led the people of Downham Market and proved to us that 'We the people' are able to make it a town to be proud of and that he is one of us.

"Thank you John."

Cllr Sampson addressed the Council:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Councillors, All,

"Tonight I have an important though very pleasant task to perform; namely the proposal of a councillor to be the next Mayor of Downham Market.

"I am sure that we all have different reasons for wanting to become a councillor in the first place and certainly each of us brings a range of special qualities to the council chamber. Some come with the express purpose of eventually becoming mayor and some need a little persuasion before they will consider taking that extra step while still others will not contemplate holding higher public office. There is room for all and while I can't remember who coined the phrase and I misquote anyway, in the case of our town, the whole is definitely greater than the sum of the parts.

“The contributions that we all bring to the forum are important, but they give rise to expectations and obligations in return. It is not just a case of turning up for meetings, voicing an opinion and then voting for or against a proposition. There is rather more to it than that. We need to be accessible to the public and to be seen to be backing the council initiatives and most important of all we must support the mayor in all that he or she does. I know we can’t all be at every event every time but we must try to be there most of the time. It was rather embarrassing to be outnumbered 4-3 by our Borough Councillors at the recent Civic Service. That should not happen.

“There is one amongst us who, over the last year, has proved that he can do most of it most of the time and has been accessible to the people within and without the town boundaries. There may be some who don’t know him but there can be few who don’t know of him. I refer of course to our very own “barrow boy”, one Raymond Leach, known to us as John. He has been part of a formidable duo with our outgoing Mayor, Cllr John Doyle and while I have heard of them being referred to as Tweedledum and Tweedledee, there has been precious little twiddling going on while they have been in charge! There is no doubt that John, very ably supported by Joyce, has been a great ambassador for the town during the past year, not least during the recent superb four days of St. George’s Day celebrations.

“I therefore have great pleasure in proposing Councillor John Leach as Mayor of Downham Market for the Civic Year 2008-2009.”

Cllr Mrs Sharp addressed the Council:

“Fellow Councillors, Borough Councillors, County Councillor, Honoured Guests, following on from Cllr Sampson’s proposal, I would like to second Cllr John Leach as Mayor.

“Also, I would like to say that I think he will be a great Mayor and advocate for our Town as amongst many other things over the past year, he has robustly championed several causes and spoken out with a passion to defend threatened services in Downham Market.

“Perhaps next year he can be St George and the Deputy Mayor can be the dragon!”

Proposed – Cllr Sampson

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Sharp

‘That Cllr Leach is elected as Mayor of Downham Market for the ensuing year’.

All in Favour

There were no other nominations.

1247. Mayor making and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Doyle received his past Mayor’s badge.

Cllr Leach and Mrs Leach received their chains of office.

Cllr Leach presented Mrs Leach and Mrs Doyle with a bouquet of flowers.

Cllr Leach made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Mayor.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, addressed the Council:

“Well here we go; last week London got Boris, this week Downham Market gets me, perhaps I should dye my hair!”

“Firstly, I must just add my thanks to those of Cllr Stacey. Cllr Doyle has been a very hard task master and never let up for a minute, my weight loss has been enormous.

“My thanks go to all my fellow Councillors who have extended to me the great honour of being Mayor of our fantastic Town. I am of course following a line of exceptionally good Mayors who for many years have dedicated themselves to the service of the citizens of Downham Market.

“There are many challenges and changes ahead but I am sure we will all be competent to tackle them.

“We have a very dedicated staff here that will all probably have trouble keeping me on the straight and narrow during the coming year, and I thank them in advance for their help.

“One of the jobs that came my way during my Deputy Mayorship, initiated by Cllr Doyle and Cllr Mrs Hutson, was as a Governor of Clackclose Primary School, a position I took on with trepidation, but it has been a very fulfilling year. Thanks to Ronnie Koon and his superb staff Clackclose School came out of Special Needs, and has now established itself as one of the top flight primary schools in the region, and I look forward to a long and happy association with them.

“Our future is in the future if our young people and I will continue to support the initiatives started by previous Mayors to the best of my ability.

“My chosen charity this year will be ‘Break’ for carers, starting with a coffee morning on Friday 16 May. I also intend to raise money to re-start the Silver Threads Christmas Dinner, which hasn’t taken place for four years since an occurrence took place which caused the event to cease.

“In finishing I must of course thank ‘Her-indoors’ for putting up with me for 60 years and promise to be good for the next year.

“Once again, thank you all and thanks for listening.”

1248. To receive members apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr C Pyatt (previous commitment).

The apologies were accepted.

1249. To receive members declarations of interest

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, Cllr Doyle and Cllr Fox declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1257, To approve the payment of bills.

1250. Election of Deputy Mayor

Cllr Mrs Roberts addressed the Council:

“Mr Mayor, fellow Town Councillors, Borough and County Councillors, members of public and other distinguished guests,

“Before I give you a name, I would just like to say a few words why I make this proposal.

“It can be pretty daunting when one is a new Councillor joining this awesome group of dedicated people. There is a lot of talent and professionalism here. Some Councillors have made projects their own piece of work, others diligently scrutinise the plans, write and rewrite papers, investigate solutions, organise Civic events, develop ideas, and the rest support them through the working parties, meeting outside bodies, putting our case, fighting for our fair share of attention... So is it any wonder, that new Councillors think, ‘could I do that?’

“I’d like to remind everyone here this evening that only a year ago fourteen of us were re-elected, but we then had to co-opt six new Councillors to fill our quota. Most of the new Councillors, no doubt, will make excellent Mayors in the future, but it has been a large learning curve to know how our Town Council works this past few months.

“So when it came to finding a Deputy Mayor for the next year, those that seemed able, were reluctant to stand, and others desired more experience of Council matters before feeling confident. It became clear quite early on that we were short of willing, able bodied, capable candidates for the forthcoming year. But I and others hope that in the next few months with new duties and active membership on the newly formed Standing Committees they will grow in knowledge and confidence and feel able to put themselves forward in the future to take on the Mayoral role with its responsibilities.

“But – a solution is needed now and I suggest one for the interim period.

“I understand Cllr Doyle doesn’t wish to be Mayor again, but he is willing to fulfil the role of Deputy Mayor until other candidates emerge. The ‘Mayor Elect’ is not confirmed until next year and anything could happen before then. This would certainly allow time for the newer Councillors to prove to themselves they are ready.

“I have no need to repeat the virtues of my proposed Deputy Mayor. You all know Cllr Doyle has a long history of serving his community wherever he has lived, and he has proved himself again and again this past twelve months to be a tireless worker for the benefit of Downham Market. Cllr Doyle will be an excellent mentor and friend to our new Mayor.”

Cllr Ford addressed the Council:

“Mr Mayor, it gives me great pleasure to respond to Cllr Mrs Roberts’ nomination of Cllr John Doyle for the following reasons:

“Whenever I see the Johns together I think of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Abbott and Costello, Mickey and Minnie Mouse – you guess which is which, and Morecombe and Wise!

“For the past year both Johns have worked so closely together and they clearly complement each other in so many ways.

“They threw themselves into the Water Festival (not quite threw into the water) and St George’s Day, and what a success they were. I do know that Cllr Doyle appreciated the wholehearted support given by Cllr Leach and he in turn would like to do the same for our incoming Mayor.

“So... in true ‘Two Ronnies’ style it will be goodnight from him and goodnight from him and I thoroughly recommend Council accept this truly worthwhile comedic double act for another year.”

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Ford

‘That Cllr Doyle is elected as Deputy Mayor of Downham Market for the ensuing year.’

All in favour

There were no other nominations.

Cllr Doyle and Mrs Doyle received their chains of office.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting. The newly elected Mayor and Mayoress and Deputy Mayor and Mayoress left the meeting room at 7.58pm in order for the press to take photographs.

The Mayor and Mayoress and Deputy Mayor and Mayoress returned to the meeting room at 8.05pm.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, resumed the meeting.

1251. Appointment of representatives to outside bodies

The representatives to the various outside bodies were appointed as follows:

West Norfolk MIND

Cllr Mrs P A Roberts

Joint Burial Committee

Mr R J R Baker MBE, Mr M J Coles, Cllr J K Fox, Mr S W Nunn and Cllr C T Sampson

Southern Area Road Safety Committee

Cllr J W Doyle, Cllr Mrs S M Nunn, Cllr C Pyatt, Cllr C T Sampson and Cllr A D Stacey

Norfolk Association of Parish & Town Council

Cllr J W Doyle and Cllr S C Teverson

Silverdale Centre

Cllr R Leach

Festival Committee

Cllr A D Stacey and Cllr V F Starling

Howdale Community Centre

Mr M J Coles, Cllr P E Freeman, Cllr J Groom and Cllr C Pyatt

West Norfolk Tourism Forum

Cllr Mrs S M Nunn

West Norfolk Sports Council

Cllr C Pyatt

West Norfolk Arts Forum

Cllr J Groom

Downham Market Sports Federation

Cllr C Pyatt

Joint Remembrance Day Committee

Mr R J R Baker MBE

Crime and Disorder Partnership (D2)

Cllr M G Ford and Cllr Mrs P B Sharp

School Governors:

Hillcrest (Crimpleham, Downham Stradsett & Wereham)

Mr Moreton

Clackclose School

Cllr R Leach

Charities:

Batchcroft

Cllr C T Sampson, Mr P Allen and Mrs J Day

100 Acre

Mr P Allen, Mrs J Day and Cllr C T Sampson

Retreat Almshouses

Mr J Haylett and Mrs J Watson

1252. Appointment of Standing Committees

The Standing Committees were appointed as follows:

Finance & General Purposes	Planning & Environment	Car Parks & Highways	Development
Cllr Clark	Cllr Clark	Cllr Blyth	Cllr Blyth
Cllr Fox	Cllr Freeman	Cllr Ford	Cllr Ford
Cllr Mrs Nunn	Cllr Geary	Cllr Fox	Cllr Groom
Cllr Pyatt	Cllr Groom	Cllr Freeman	Cllr Mrs Keates
Cllr Reed	Cllr Mrs Keates	Cllr Geary	Cllr Mrs Nunn
Cllr Sampson	Cllr Mrs Purslow	Cllr Mrs Purslow	Cllr Mrs Roberts

Cllr Stacey
Cllr Starling
Cllr Teverson

Cllr Reed
Cllr Sampson
Cllr Mrs Sharp

Cllr Pyatt
Cllr Mrs Roberts
Cllr Stacey

Cllr Mrs Sharp
Cllr Starling
Cllr Teverson

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, advised that the Chairman of each Standing Committee would be elected at the next Full Council meeting.

1253. To inspect the deeds, leases and agreements held on behalf of the Council

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, reported that a list of all Council properties, together with the deeds, leases and agreements was held in the office for all Councillors to inspect.

1254. To approve the minutes of the Town Council meetings

The minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday, 11th March 2008 (pages 2377-2386) and Tuesday, 8th April 2008 (pages 2412-2420) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

1255. To receive Councillors' questions

Cllr Starling reported that Youth Drop-In events at the Town Hall had been organised for Friday, 23rd May 2008 and Friday, 4th July 2008. Councillors were invited to attend and observe but should note that they would be required to complete a form prior to the event. If interested, forms were available from Cllr Starling.

Q: BT is proposing to remove the telephone kiosks in Lynn Road and Trafalgar Road. Could the Council send a letter of objection?

A: Yes.

1256. To receive Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report had been circulated (Appendix 1).

1257. To approve the payment of bills

A list of bills had been circulated (Appendix 2).

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, Cllr Doyle and Cllr Fox had declared a prejudicial interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Freeman

'That the bills be paid as per the attached schedule.'

For – 16

Against – 0

Abstentions – 3 (Declared interests)

1258. To fix the dates and times of Standing Committee meetings for the coming year

A list of the revised meeting dates had been circulated to members (Appendix 3).

1259. To confirm bank signatories – Cllrs Doyle, Fox, Ford, Stacey, Pyatt, Sampson

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the bank signatories are Cllr Doyle, Cllr Fox, Cllr Ford, Cllr Pyatt, Cllr Sampson and Cllr Stacey.’

All in favour

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.19pm.

Chairman

Date

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 20TH MAY 2008 AT 7.30PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr R Leach
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
	Councillors	S W Blyth
		W A Clark
		M G Ford
		P E Freeman
		J K Fox
		S F Geary
		Mrs R J Keates
		Mrs S M Nunn
		Mrs G S S Purslow
		J J Reed
		Mrs P A Roberts
		C T Sampson
		Mrs P B Sharp
		A D Stacey
		V F Starling
		S C Teverson
	Borough Councillor	Cllr A M Lovett
	Norfolk Constabulary	Sergeant M Rowe
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Administrator	Mrs K J Martin

1260. To receive members Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr J Groom (work commitment), Cllr C Pyatt (work commitment), County Cllr Mrs S E L Hutson, Borough Cllr J R Legg and Borough Cllr Mrs K Mellish.

The apologies were accepted.

1261. Evacuation Procedures

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, notified those present of the emergency evacuation procedure from the Town Council offices.

1262. To receive members Declarations of Interest

Cllr Sharp declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1268, to approve the Payment of Bills.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting.

Public Participation

There were no members of public and the Councillors did not wish to address the meeting.

County Councillor

No County Councillor was present at this meeting.

Borough Councillor

The Borough Councillor had nothing to report.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, resumed the meeting.

1263. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

There were no minutes to approve at this meeting.

1264. To receive Correspondence

A list of correspondence had been circulated (Appendix 1).

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, read out a letter of thanks which had been sent to Cllr Fox from Mr A G Firrell concerning planning application 168 Lynn Road. He also read out a letter which had been sent to Mr Christopher Fraser MP from Mr A G Firrell regarding the same plan.

Sgt M Rowe arrived at the meeting at 7.40pm.

Adjourn meeting for Public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting.

Police Report

Sgt Rowe reported on crimes over the past month:

18 Thefts

13 Criminal Damage

3 Assaults

6 Domestic related incidents

10 Miscellaneous, i.e.drugs, fraud etc

A total of 50 crimes were made last month.

Sgt Rowe reported there had been a rise in crime last weekend over the warm period. There had been a couple of functions in the Town Hall which had caused youths to come out and hang around the Town Square, 4 Police cars were sent out to move the youths on. Some moved on but there was a certain amount of damage found to have been caused in the early hours of the morning.

Sgt Rowe also reported that Cannon Tyres received a visit from the Police regarding vehicles parking outside the workshop. It was suggested that as there have been recent problems with vandalism in the old cinema building a solution to this would be for Cannon Tyres to park their vehicles on the area of land behind the cinema, which would block any unauthorised access to the old building. The agent for the site had been contacted and an agreement was reached.

Cllr John Doyle wished to congratulate the police on this matter as it has not only stopped the vehicles parking in an obstructive manor, but has tidied up a messy area at the same time.

Q: Youths are riding on bikes and skateboards in Wales Court and are becoming a danger to the pedestrians. Could the police please check this?

A: Yes the police will monitor and keep a close eye on the situation.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, thanked Sgt Rowe and resumed the meeting.

Sgt Rowe left the meeting at 8.00pm.

1265. Councillor's Questions

Q: The Norfolk Primary Care Trust has stopped the out of hour's surgery at the Howdale Surgery. This is a service that Downham Market needs, as some people are unable to get to casualty at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Kings Lynn. A letter should be sent to the Norfolk Primary Care Trust expressing the Town Councils concern for its parishioners. (SMN)

A: A letter will be sent.

Q: Could the weekly diary sheets for Councillors be reinstated? This is a valuable sheet to all Councillors. (JFK).

A: Yes this sheet will be reinstated as long as all Councillors understand that this sheet can change.

Q: Could a letter be sent to Pearl & Coutts asking for the no cycling and skateboarding signs to be reinstated again in Wales Court? (JFK).

A: Yes.

1266. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes

Planning and Environmental Committee

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Freeman

'That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Wednesday, 5th March 2008 (pages 2373-2376), Wednesday, 19th March 2008 (pages 2393-2395), Thursday, 3rd April 2008 (pages 2409-2411), Tuesday 15th April 2008 (2421-2429) and Wednesday 30th April 2008 (pages 2430-2433) be adopted.'

All in favour

Development Committee

Proposed – Cllr Ford

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Starling

'That the minutes of the Development Committee meeting of Tuesday, 25th March 2008 (pages 2396-2399) be adopted.'

All in favour

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Proposed – Cllr Sampson

Seconded – Cllr Sharp

‘That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of Tuesday, 1st April 2008 (pages 2400-2403) be adopted.’

All in favour

Car Parks and Highways Committee

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That the minutes of the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting of Tuesday, 18th March 2008 (pages 2387-2392) and Tuesday 6th May 2008 (pages 2434-2435) be adopted.’

All in favour

1267. To receive the Clerk’s Report

The Clerk’s report had been circulated (Appendix 2).

1268. To approve the Payment of Bills

A list of bills had been circulated (Appendix 3).

Cllr Mrs Sharp had declared a prejudicial interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Sampson

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the bills be paid as per the attached list.’

For – 17

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1 (Declared Interests)

1269. To elect Chairman of the Standing Committee

Finance and General Purpose Committee

Proposed – Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Clark

‘That Cllr Teverson is elected as Chairman for the Finance and General Purposes Committee.’

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Nunn

‘That Cllr Sampson is elected as Chairman for the Finance and General Purposes Committee.’

As two nominations had been received Councillors completed a secret ballot. The Clerk counted the votes and sealed the ballot papers. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that an equal

amount of votes had been received for the nominees. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, had the casting vote and agreed to nominate Cllr Teverson as Chairman, and he was duly elected.

Car Parks and Highways Committee

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Leach

Seconded – Cllr Doyle

‘That Cllr Fox is elected as Chairman for the Car Parks and Highways Committee.’

All in favour (Car Parks and Highways Committee members vote only)

Planning and Environmental Committee

Proposed – Cllr Freeman

Seconded – Cllr Geary

‘That Cllr Sampson is elected as Chairman for the Planning and Environmental Committee.’

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Purslow

Seconded – Cllr Doyle

‘That Cllr Sharp is elected as Chairman for the Planning and Environmental Committee.’

As two nominations had been received Councillors completed a secret ballot. The Clerk counted the votes and sealed the ballot papers. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that an equal amount of votes had been received for the nominees. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, had the casting vote and agreed to nominate Cllr Mrs Sharp as Chairman, and she was duly elected.

The Vice Chairmen would be elected at the Committee meetings.

1270. To agree members of the Human Resources Sub Committee

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Sampson

‘That four members be elected for the Human Resources Sub Committee.’

All in favour

As six nominations had been received Councillors completed a secret ballot. The Clerk counted the votes and sealed the ballot papers. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that Cllr Sharp, Cllr Doyle, Cllr Roberts and Cllr Sampson were the appointed members of the Human Resources Sub Committee, and they were duly elected.

The members were agreed as Cllr Mrs Roberts (as Chairman), Cllr Doyle, Cllr Sampson and Cllr Mrs Sharp.

1271. To agree members of Working Parties

i) Interim Town Hall Management

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Ford

‘That Cllrs Ford, Fox, Stacey, Sampson, Doyle and the Mayor Cllr Leach are appointed as the Interim Town Hall Management Working Party members.’

All in favour

ii) Fire Station

Proposed – Cllr Ford

Seconded – Cllr Sampson

‘That Cllrs Fox, Blyth and Doyle are appointed as the Fire Station Working Party members.’

All in favour

iii) Local Development Framework

Members will be decided onto this Working Party after each new Standard Committee has a meeting.

1272. Town Hall Update

Cllr Ford reported that the Civic Trust document had been received too late to report on at this meeting. The final document will be received within the next few days. A meeting had taken place with the Conservation Officers of the Borough Council and ideas had been discussed about possible changes to the Town Hall of which they were fully supportive. The Booking System is running very well.

1273. Update on Construction of the Fire Station Car Park

Cllr Fox reported that phase one of the car park is moving along slowly. Hopefully it will be surfaced and operational before the Wilkinson development starts. Quotes are still to be obtained for the resurfacing of phase two of the car park.

1274. Report on the purchase of the Howdale Community Centre

There was nothing to report at this meeting.

1275. To discuss CCTV

Cllr Mrs Sharp had nothing to report at this meeting.

1276. To discuss Code of Practice for Markets

A document had been circulated to all members regarding the Code of Practice for Markets.

Cllr Doyle reported that he and the Deputy Clerk had attended a training session run by Norfolk County Council Trading Standards and also a NABMA residential course regarding Markets.

[Click here to view the PDF file](#)

Norfolk County Council hopes the Code of Practice is adopted by Councils as it should help with the prevention of the supply of stolen and illegal goods. Cllr Fox noted that there was an error on the document and that this council should not accept it until it reads correctly.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, suggested this be referred to the Markets Working Party for further discussion and that the Clerk contacts Norfolk County Council and asks them to correct the mistake in the document.

Proposed – Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Sampson

‘That the Code of Practice for Markets document be referred to the Markets Working Party for further discussion.’

All in favour

1277. To discuss the siting of Taxi Ranks within the Town Centre

Cllr Doyle reported on recent proposals by County Council to re site the bus stop in Bridge Street. In order that traffic can pass the bus when it is stationary it has been suggested that the taxi ranks be removed and placed elsewhere in the town. One suggestion is that two of the taxi ranks are placed next to the toilets on the Town Hall car park where there are currently disabled car parking spaces. There was a long discussion on where the taxi ranks should be moved to, with concern that they should not be too far from the centre of town for those residents with limited mobility.

It questioned as to what would happen on Market Days and the fact we would be taking away two spaces on the Town Hall car park. It was stated that they could park in the entrances or immediately in front of the toilets as that area is normally kept clear.

Cllr Stacey added that over the last few years the council have spent a lot of time, money and effort on car parking for residents and visitors. Now the Council is being asked to lose two additional spaces and have been told the taxis do not want to park anywhere else but the middle of town. There is space at the top of Priory Road for a taxi rank to sit.

A meeting will be called with the Borough Council and Norfolk County Council to find an alternative.

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That this Council requests the Borough Council and the County Council to find an alternative site for the taxi ranks.’

For – 17

Against – 1

Abstentions – 0

Cllr Ford and Cllr Mrs Nunn left the meeting at 9.03pm.

1278. To discuss the War Memorial

Cllr Mrs Roberts reported that the cost of the improvements to the area surrounding the War Memorial will be £12399 and that at present funding has been secured from the BCKL&WN of £3500. It is hoped that there will be other funding from local organisations.

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Sampson

‘That a sum of up to £10,000 be spend on the improvements to the War Memorial.’

For – 16

Against – 2

Abstentions – 0

1279. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor

There were no urgent items to discuss.

1280. Mayors Announcements

Downham in Bloom will be held on the 10th July 2008. The route has been decided and the horse and cart has been booked.

The Szechwan Inn will be holding a charity evening in aid of the recent Earthquake in China. The date and details will be made available to all Councillors.

1281. Human Resources report (Confidential Item)

There was no report for this meeting.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.16pm.

Chairman

Date