

13th June 2006 minutes

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 13th JUNE 2006 7.30PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr M G Ford
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
	Councillors	R M Bodle
		J K Fox
		J Groom
		Mrs S M Nunn
		S W Nunn
		C Pyatt
		J J Reed
		Mrs P A Roberts
		C T Sampson
		A D Stacey
		V F Starling
		S C Teverson
	Borough Councillor	J R Legg
	County Councillor	Mrs S E L Hutson

Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
Press Correspondent	Ms S Hewitt
Members of Public	1

844. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs R J R Baker MBE (holiday), K W Beck (previous commitment), Mrs P M Dean (family commitment) and C Russell (out of the country), and Borough Cllrs Mrs K Mellish (previous Borough engagement) and A M Lovett (previous Borough engagement). Cllr Mrs Nunn would be late to the meeting.

The apologies were accepted.

Cllr C D Bond did not attend the meeting.

845. To receive Members Declarations of Interest

Cllr Pyatt declared a pecuniary interest in Item 851, To approve the payment of bills and in Item 855, To discuss planning application 06/00088/F from Vendart c/o Pearl & Coutts Ltd, Land off Priors Road, Construction of retail unit and service yard.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, adjourned the meeting for public participation and reports.

Public Participation

The member of public did not wish to speak at this meeting.

Police Report

Inspector Bates reported the last three months statistics:

House Burglaries – 3 (Court Gardens, Priory Road and Trafalgar Road).

Burglaries other than dwellings (Industrial premises) – 9 (3 times on Abbey Homes in Bennett Street, Cannon Tyres, Johns The Butchers, Special Thoughts, 2 units within the Trafalgar Industrial Estate and the High School).

Other dwellings – 0.

Thefts from Vehicles – 6 (2 from Thurlow Nunn, 2 from the Tesco car park, Priory Road and the 4x4 Centre).

Vehicle Thefts – 3 (Old Town Close, Bennett Street and Nelson Avenue).

Violence – 10 (3 domestics, 4 incidents involving school boys against school boys, 1 incident involving teenage girls, 1 at the Swan public house and 1 incident involving an air gun attack).

Disorder File Progress – In January a group of 13/14 year olds had travelled from King's Lynn to fight with a group from Downham Market. Unfortunately, the group which were waiting for them were in their early 20's, and the brawl got out of control. Some of the children involved with no previous convictions have been reprimanded and those with previous convictions have been charged with a violent disorder public offence. Some of the youth have been given bail which include conditions of not to associate themselves with each other, not to enter Downham Market, and not to break their curfew orders.

Q: Has the PCSO had training to issue traffic offence notices? (JWD).

A: Not yet. The Government is pushing a new Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. The Downham Market sector will be split into 4 neighbourhoods and these will be policed by PCSOs. Within the next 12 to 18 months, the police authority will be recruiting 250 more PCSOs. In view of this it is anticipated that PCSOs will be given more responsibilities.

Inspector Bates advised that good reports have been received regarding Mrs Tracy Millburn, the Downham Market PCSO. He also highlighted that the fair had brought trouble makers into Town and she had been confronted by a couple of them. In the future, more police resources would be scheduled when the fair was in Town.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, thanked Inspector Bates for his report. Inspector Bates left the meeting at 7.40pm.

Borough Councillors Reports and Questions

Cllr Legg reported:

He was no longer the Chair of the Development Control Board Committee.

He had been elected as Vice Chair of The Standards Committee.

He was a member of the Task Force for the Local Development Plan.

He was a principal member of the Licensing and Appeals Board.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, thanked Cllr Legg for his report.

County Councillors Report and Questions

County Cllr Mrs Hutson reported:

She had been elected as a member of the Childrens Services Review Panel.

Highways had produced a schedule of works for 2006/2007 which would be available for viewing from Cllr Mrs Hutson.

She had begun investigations into where Section 106 Agreement money had been allocated within Downham Market and where future funds would go. The investigations so far proved that large sums of money had already been given to Hillcrest and Clackclose schools. The development for Bennett Street had indicated that Section 106 money would go towards cycle paths but this would be something the Government would have to agree to, not

NCC. A schedule of Section 106 monies would be produced when the findings were known.

Highways had concerns about a planning application for a new access into the Leisure Centre on Bexwell Road, but made slight amendments to the plans and were content with the alterations.

The new Faith school had been placed on hold. NCC would be carrying out a review of schools within the county; the West Norfolk sector would be carried out first.

Q: The Town Council has asked NCC that it is kept in the loop regarding the new Faith school, but this has not happened. Could Cllr Mrs Hutson ensure NCC communicates with the Town Council? (JKF).

A: Yes.

Q: Members of the public should be informed by NCC where Section 106 money is allocated. Could Cllr Mrs Hutson enquire whether this can be done? (JKF).

A: This would be investigated.

Q: Has an officer of NCC stood outside the school at peak times to assess the vehicular and pedestrian traffic chaos? (CTS).

A: A NCC officer has confirmed that this was carried out.

Q: 3½ to 4 years ago the allocation of Section 106 money was researched, which highlighted that NCC levied money towards schools, libraries and fire hydrants. It is the case that other town and parish councils receive some Section 106 money to which they can purchase property, land, etc. It is quite within the remit of any town or parish council to ask for Section 106 money. Could this not be investigated? (SCT).

A: Yes.

Q: When the new access to the Leisure Centre is developed, will the school car park be blocked off, as this is currently used as an overflow car park for users of the Leisure Centre? (JG).

A: Yes.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, thanked Cllr Mrs Hutson for her report and resumed the meeting.

846. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 9th May 2006 (pages 1836-1843) and Tuesday 16th May 2006 (pages 1844-1851) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

847. To receive Correspondence

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

There were no questions.

848. Councillor's Questions

Q: Attached to the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting minutes was a report from the Car Park Charges Working Party. Could the Mayor ensure this will be discussed fully by Full Council? (RMB).

A: Yes.

Q: It had been reported in the Lynn News that a new taxi rank would be placed on council controlled land at the railway station. Which Council is this referring to, as the Town, Borough or County Councils do not appear to have control of any land at the railway station? Also, why is this Council not being kept in the loop with the progress of taxi ranks? (JKF).

A: It is assumed that WAGN own the land at the railway. Cllr Fox would report back to the editor suggesting that the article was incorrect.

Q: Is this Council getting value for money from NCP and is any revenue received? (JJR).

A: The NCP operator works in Town approximately 4 times a week and he does issue tickets to offenders. The revenue is small (around £300.00 for 2005/2006).

849. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes

Car Parks and Highways Committee

Proposed – Cllr Pyatt

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That the minutes of the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting of Tuesday 23rd May 2006 (pages 1854-1859) be adopted.’

All in favour

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of Tuesday 25th April 2006 (pages 1824-1827) be adopted.’

All in favour

Planning and Environmental Committee

Proposed – Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Wednesday 3rd May 2006 (pages 1833-1835) and Wednesday 17th May 2006 (pages 1852-1853) be adopted.’

All in favour

850. To receive the Clerk’s Report

The Clerk had nothing to report.

851. To approve the Payment of Bills

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

Cllr Pyatt had declared a pecuniary interest in this item. The Mayor, Cllr Ford, and Cllr Doyle declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

Cllr Pyatt advised that Watlington Drains had not yet completed the drain CCTV survey on the Hollies Car Park and it was agreed this payment should be delayed.

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts

Seconded – Cllr Groom

'That the bills be paid, excluding the Watlington Drains invoice, as per the attached list.'

All in favour

Update on Town Hall

Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford

'To invoke Standing Order 17, in order to vary the order of business and allow this item to be deferred in view of its confidential nature.'

All in favour

852. Update on management of the Howdale Community Centre

Cllr Pyatt reported that the AGM had been held on Wednesday 7th June, 2006. In the past year the Centre had been refurbished and was frequently used by regular groups. In the coming year the Committee would be dedicated to pursuing funding through the Projects Officer and extending the lease from NCC. The Committee would also be producing a short, medium and long term plan for the Centre. The Trustees had been confirmed. The volunteer work from Councillors, including Borough and County Councillors, and other outside bodies had been tremendous and the administration help from the Town Council was appreciated. Mrs Kate Martin would now be dealing with the administration in place of the Deputy Clerk.

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To discuss the Downham Market Charter

Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford

'To invoke Standing Order 17, in order to vary the order of business and allow this item to be deferred until Cllr Mrs Nunn had arrived at the meeting.'

All in favour

853. Update on purchase of the Fire Station site, Priory Road, Downham Market

Cllr Fox reported that the planning application was available for inspection in the office. The application was for change of use and demolition of the three garages, not for the other larger buildings. If the larger buildings are kept, the site could provide approximately 70 car parking spaces. Three quotes had been organised for an A3 asbestos survey, two of which were still being awaited. NPS would need to give permission to keep the large building on site, and this was being investigated by the Working Party and the Clerk.

Cllr Sampson advised that the staff at the old fire station site had now moved premises into the new site. However Anglian Water would not turn the water on at the new site. The Clerk would write to Anglian Water regarding this.

854. To discuss way forward for a Community Interest Company or an appropriate alternative

Cllr Groom reported that the public would need to be involved with the formation of a Community Interest Company, and that the Town Council would need to lead this.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, advised that he had been in communication with the WNVCA, for advice on Community Interest Companies, Companies Limited by Guarantee, and Civic Trusts.

It was agreed that this item would be referred to the Development Committee for further discussion.

855. To discuss planning application 06/00088/F from Vendart c/o Pearl & Coutts Ltd, Land off Priory Road – Construction of retail unit and service yard

Cllr Pyatt had declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

Cllr Doyle advised that the Planning and Environmental Committee members had referred this planning application to Full Council because of its development scale and proximity within the Town Centre.

A long discussion took place and the following recommendations were made:

That a Youth Café building be built/leased by the Wales Court owners, as part of a Section 106 agreement.

The service yard will no longer be a pedestrian access route and the dark, dingy and wet alleyway will be used as a main route into Town; it must be refurbished, lit properly, and made more attractive.

Highways could move the pedestrian crossing towards the alleyway.

The population of Downham Market is growing rapidly and properties are being developed on a fast basis; a large retailer would be good for the residents and also bring more visiting consumers.

Since 70 car parking spaces would be lost to this development, financial support should be sought from the developers towards the anticipated new Town Council car park, particularly as their employees would be likely to use this site.

The Iceland site, although not an official car park, has been used as a car park for 33 years and this may give the public a statutory right to use it as a car park. The Clerk would investigate this.

The Salvation Army building is structurally unsound and must be addressed, as the wall of their building forms part of the alleyway.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, advised that a meeting with the developers had been requested, but they had deferred a meeting at this early stage. The Clerk would keep chasing this.

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Reed

‘That the Town Council writes to the BCKL&WN, and asks that as a condition of planning, a contribution is made to a development elsewhere in Downham Market.’

All in favour

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts

‘That the Town Council writes to the BCKL&WN and asks that they impose a condition that one retail unit and one youth café be handed over on the existing precinct of Wales Court.’

For – 9

Against – 0

Abstention – 4

Cllr Reed suggested that a member of this Council attend the Development Control Board meeting to make representation regarding this application.

Proposed – Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Bodle

‘That the Town Council supports the planning application, in principle, for a major development in Town which a lot of people think will bring a great deal of benefit to the Town.’

For – 11
interests)

Against – 0

Abstention – 2 (declared

This application would be referred back to the Planning and Environmental Committee.

Cllr Mrs Nunn arrived at the meeting at 8.35pm.

856. To discuss the possibility of bringing a Circus into Downham Market in September

Cllr Reed reported that following the success of the fair, he had received seven enquiries from various types of circus to stand on the Howdale in September 2006 and/or March 2007. Enquiries had been started with the BCKL&WN regarding this. Five of the circuses were non-animal, one had horses, ponies, goats and equine zebras, and the other had larger animals. It was approximately fifteen years since a circus had come to the Howdale and it would be nice to bring it back. The circuses would have temporary licenses.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, suspended the meeting.

Borough Cllr Legg advised that Cllr Reed should investigate the BCKL&WN policy on circus animals; whether this included all animals or just wild animals. A letter should be sent to Mr John Gailbraith with a copy to Mr John Dobson.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, resumed the meeting.

Proposed – Cllr Reed

Seconded – Cllr Doyle

‘That the Town Council approves bringing a circus into Town in September this year, on the Howdale, and possibly in March and September 2007, subject to negotiations with the BCKL&WN.’

For – 11

Against – 2

Abstention – 1

857. Downham Market Charter

A report had been circulated (Appendix 3).

Cllrs Bodle and Mrs Roberts declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.

Cllr Mrs Nunn reported that the cost of an A4 frame would be at a discounted price of £5.90. The Working Party had felt that 20 Charters should be produced and the total cost for frames would therefore be £118.00.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, advised that he would be attending a Chamber of Trade business meeting and would bring the Charter to their attention.

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Nunn

Seconded – Cllr Groom

‘That the Town Council accepts the recommendations within the report and proceeds with the Charter.’

For – 12

Against – 1

Abstention – 1

858. Mayor’s Announcements

The plaque for the Town Clock was now in place – thank you to Cllr Fox for working on this.

Enquiries to place the plaque, presented by the Mayor of Civray, would be made to place it in the library. Investigations to present Civray with an English oak tree in October 2006 were taking place.

Sadly David Frost had been admitted to hospital – a card would be sent on behalf of the Town Council.

Congratulations to Cllr Reed who had recently been elected a member of The Standards Board.

Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford

Seconded – Cllr Groom

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

All in favour

Cllrs Mrs Hutson and Legg, Ms Hewitt and the member of public left the meeting room at 8.55pm.

859. To discuss the Town Hall

See Confidential Report (Confidential Appendix).

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Bodle

‘That the Town Council approves, in principle, the acquisition of the Town Hall and authorises the Working Party to continue their negotiations with the BCKL&WN. Final approval will be subject to the ratification of a complete

report to include a business plan, management appraisal and a structural report.'

All in favour

860. Human Resources report (confidential item)

See Confidential Report (Confidential Appendix).

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

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.18pm.