

## DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 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
		P E Freeman
		J K Fox
		S F Geary
		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
		S C Teverson
	County Councillor	Mrs S E L Hutson
	Norfolk Constabulary	Inspector M Bates
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Administrator	Mrs Kate Martin
	Press Correspondent	Ms S Hewitt

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, asked members to stand in silence for one minute in memory of Cllr Mrs Nunn's husband, Bill, who had sadly passed away the day before.

#### **1206. To receive members Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr J Groom (work commitment), Cllr Mrs S M Nunn (bereavement), Borough Cllr J R Legg, Borough Cllr A M Lovett and Borough Cllr Mrs K Mellish. Cllr R J Keates did not attend.

The apologies were accepted.

#### **1207. Evacuation Procedures**

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

Cllr S C Teverson arrived at the meeting at 7.32pm.

#### **1208. To receive members Declarations of Interest**

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, and Cllr Starling declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1214, to approve the Payment of Bills.

## Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, adjourned the meeting.

### Police Report

Inspector Bates reported on crimes since February 2008:

- 0 Burglaries to dwellings.
- 0 Thefts of motor vehicles.
- 0 Sexual offences.
- 2 Thefts from premises other than dwellings.
- 6 Thefts from motor vehicles.
- 4 Domestic crimes of violence.
- 9 Criminal damage offences.
- 5 Drug offences.
- 9 Other thefts (shop lifting, etc).

It was noted that 7 arrests had been made for outstanding crimes.

Police Officers would shortly be patrolling the Town Centre on bike.

A previous report from this Council, concerning a vehicle being parked in Bexwell Road, had been investigated. The neighbour has confirmed that they have spoken to the culprit and this appears to have solved the problem.

The safety camera unit has been situated in London Road for two months. On average, 10 drivers per hour have been caught speeding, the fastest being 59 mph. The safety camera unit will continue to be sited in London Road because it has been very successful. Unfortunately the exact figures are not available for public knowledge.

Q: How are speeding motorbikes detected by the safety camera unit? (ADS).

A: This will be investigated.

Q: Why are the public not entitled to see the figures? (RL).

A: This will be investigated.

Q: Could the News Correspondent ensure an article is placed in the Lynn News regarding the success of the safety camera unit? (PAR).

A: This was noted.

Q: The next Community Action Group meeting is being held in Feltwell tomorrow. Is Tesco a priority area? (PBS).

A: Yes.

### Public Participation

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

### County Councillor

Cllr Mrs Hutson had nothing to report to this meeting.

## Borough Councillor

No Borough Councillors were present at the meeting.

Cllr Sharp wished to note her discontent regarding an emotive speech that Cllr Lovett had made at the Development Control Board (DCB) meeting on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008 regarding the planning application from Persimmon Homes for the construction of 69 affordable dwellings at Land at Landseer Drive, Linseed Walk, Coriander Way, Nutmeg Walk and Basil Drive. The Town Council had recommended refusal for this planning application but Cllr Lovett had been in favour and this had been a disappointment to his ward members and herself.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, resumed the meeting.

### **1209. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008 had not been circulated to Councillors and could not be approved at this meeting.

### **1210. To receive Correspondence**

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

Cllr Sampson reported that a letter and plans had been received from Mott MacDonald for proposed improvements on the Lynn Road/A10 junction. Although the enhancement would be a short term measure, it will be an improvement. It was noted that EDF had been encouraged to place street lights in that area but this had been declined for various reasons.

### **1211. Councillor's Questions**

Q: The Rev Matt Finch and Mrs Yazmin Finch approached Cllr Teverson regarding the Mosquito device outside the Tesco store. It is the view of the Methodist Church that the excellent work carried out for the Mayor's Awards for Citizenship and the involvement in the youth workers' own work would be in every way undermined if the Town Council fails to speak out clearly and authoritatively against this. They feel it is extremely exclusive, and point out that if residents over 65 were deterred by that particular noise there would be uproar in Downham Market. They also point out that at a time of great pain in the Town, with the tragic death of a young man, 50 young people have been counselled by officers of the Methodist Church and when they all went to Tesco to buy flowers the device was switched on.

They ask further that as the joint corporative project between the Town Council and the Methodist Church looks set to be, perhaps, considered for National recognition, the Methodist Church has now secured sufficient funding to point out that the Town Council's role is being regarded as increasingly peripheral. They are asking for a swift clarification of the Town Council views of the Mosquito device, as they will find it very difficult to work with a partner who is not, with absolute clarity, opposed to the Mosquito device. (SCT).

A: This statement sounds like blackmail. The issue of the Mosquito has been raised by Mrs Finch on many occasions and it has been brought to the attention of the Working Party. The device is privately owned by Tesco, and is operated by the BCKL&WN. The Town Council has no authority over its use, although it has supported recent requests from the youths to turn the device off during the bereavement period. It is unfair to say that the Town Council has

undermined the Methodist Church, when it appears that they are the party damaging the partnership. The Town Council does sympathise with the youth but because gangs hang around the Tesco store, its customers and staff and users of the college do feel intimidated by them. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, would respond to the Methodist Church on behalf of the Town Council.

Q: Members are annually elected to represent the Council on committees for 'Outside Bodies'. Could the serving members provide an infrequent report to Council? (ADS).

A: Yes.

Q: There appears to be a conflict between the Council and the Chamber of Trade; the Council is investigating CCTV and on street parking, and the Chamber of Trade have organised meetings with the organisations involved with these matters without prior consultation with the Council. As a member of the Chamber of Trade could this Council ensure that the Chamber of Trade is aware that the Council should, in the first instance, be dealing with these type matters? (JKF).

A: The Community Development Officer (CDO) is the link between the Council and the Chamber of Trade. The Temporary CDO would write to the Chamber of Trade.

## **1212. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes**

### Planning and Environmental Committee

Cllr Mrs Sharp advised that the minutes of Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008 were incorrect. Page 2356, item 904, first sentence, should read as follows:

*Cllr Mrs Sharp enquired about the burnt out litter bin outside the Somerfield store and the removal of the litter bin next to the seat nearest the Methodist Church on the Hollies Car Park.*

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Sharp**

**Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008 (pages 2343-2347) and Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (pages 2353-2356) be adopted with the above amendment.’**

**All in favour**

### Development Committee

**Proposed – Cllr Ford**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That the minutes of the Development Committee meeting of Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 (pages 2339-2342) be adopted.’**

**All in favour**

### Finance and General Purposes Committee

**Proposed – Cllr Sampson**

**Seconded – Cllr Pyatt**

**‘That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (pages 2348-2352) be adopted.’**

**All in favour**

**1213. To receive the Clerk's Report**

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

*Not on agenda*

The Festival Committee had requested permission to use the Town Square during Festival Week (see Clerk's Report). Councillors were in agreement to this.

**1214. To approve the Payment of Bills**

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

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

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Sampson**

**'That the bills be paid as per the attached list.'**

**For – 15**

**Against – 0**

**Abstention – 2 (Declared Interests)**

**1215. Update on the acquisition of the Town Hall – Report from Cllr Ford**

Cllr Ford reported that the events held in the Town Hall on Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008 had gone very well. The Civic Trust had confirmed that 55 questionnaires were completed – these established that 98% of people had a clear preference for the Town Hall to be a centre for arts, a cinema and performances, 95% would wish to see it as a community meeting place, 50% would oppose supporting activities for youth events and 50% would oppose informal eating and drinking.

80% of people would wish to see the Town Hall adapted by opening up the entrances from both sides, taking out the toilets, taking out the office and converting that space to a reception/tourist information area, having al fresco eating during the day and evening and having an external double storey lift to the balcony (if this were also modified).

Cllr Ford thanked the Councillors who helped out on both occasions.

At 3.00pm today the Town Council's solicitor had sent a document which stated that there should be no reason why the transfer of the Town Hall could not take place by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.

**1216. Update on the construction of the Fire Station Car Park – Report from Cllr Fox**

Cllr Fox reported that following ongoing difficulties concerning Anglia Water and the drainage of the site it had been agreed that the car park area would be considered in two phases. The work on the fencing of the rear section of the site began yesterday and this would also include the resurfacing of the area of car parking nearest to Priory Road. There would be a small wall built to delineate the front and rear portions of the car park which may be used for the possible installation of a goal post type barrier between the two sections.

Quotations were being sought for the surfacing of the rear section of the car park as this would need to be block style to allow for drainage. The percolation quality of the land was not good enough for a large soak away tank and there was also running sand at a depth of about 800mm.

Discussions had taken place between the Council and the Heritage Society concerning how the building on the site may best be used for a Heritage Centre and how the running costs would be shared. These were currently being considered by the Heritage Society and the Town Council's solicitor. As soon as the car park areas were under construction finalised drawing and quotations for the development of the Fire Station to a Heritage Centre would be sought.

**1217. Report on the Howdale Community Centre – Report from Cllr Pyatt**

Cllr Pyatt had nothing to report to this meeting.

**1218. To discuss CCTV – Report from Cllr Mrs Sharp**

Cllr Mrs Sharp reported that a quotation had been received from MHB Services regarding the electrical installation of the CCTV cameras. Cllr Mrs Sharp and the Mayor, Cllr Doyle, had attended a site visit with Mrs Pam Lynn, Conservation Officer, and her assistant, Ms Jane Forder, which had raised the following queries:

1. The Swan Hotel – this would not require formal planning permission as it is not a listed building. It would however require the landlord's permission.
2. Outside Kenneth Bush solicitors – this may need planning permission depending on the height of the pole (if it's higher than 4 metres, planning permission will be required), the precise dimensions of the camera, & exactly where the pole will be fixed (there is a drain in that area which has to be taken into consideration).
3. Outside Town Hall – this would require the same confirmation as above. The officers were not entirely happy with placing a pole outside the Town Hall as it would encroach onto the footpath. They felt it would be better placed on the other side of the Town Hall car park (by the wall adjacent to the seat). The Councillors also agreed with this idea because the camera would be able to capture Wales Court (in particular Boots Pharmacy) & this would satisfy the Chamber of Trade's concerns.

The Deputy Clerk had today emailed Mr Karl Weeks to investigate these matters.

Cllr Ford advised that as the Chamber of Trade had been involved in discussions and meetings with the BCKL&WN that they be formally written to asking whether they would be contributing to CCTV. The Clerk would write to the Secretary.

Cllr Sampson confirmed that the Town Council had set aside money for this project. Cllr Mrs Sharp added that the Local Action Group had earmarked £15,000 funding towards this project.

**1219. An update on Car Park charging consultations**

Details of the car park charging consultations had been provided in the Clerk's Report.

Cllr Mrs Roberts wished to note her disappointment that the Chamber of Trade had not yet responded with their views.

Cllr Pyatt reported that as part of the consultation process, he, Cllr Fox and Cllr Freeman would be holding a meeting with Mr Chris Bamfield & Mr Martin Chisholm from the BCKL&WN to discuss the pay & display meters owned by the BCKL&WN. It was anticipated that the officers

would be able to provide costs for the equipment, the installation and the running costs of the machines.

**1220. To discuss the format of the Town Meeting**

Details of the format of the Annual Town Meeting had been provided in the Clerk's Report.

Councillors agreed that the format should be the same as in 2007. Cllr Ford added that the Civic Trust had produced large display boards which provided details of the Town Hall, and these would be exhibited at the meeting. The Civic Trust survey results may also be available on the night.

Cllr Fox suggested that the Town Council may wish to project a presentation of Town photographs onto the screen during the informal session of the meeting. This was noted.

**Proposed – The Mayor, Cllr Doyle**

**'To invoke Standing Order 17, in order to vary the order of business and allow the Human Resources item to be discussed at the end of the meeting.'**

**All in favour**

**1221. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor**

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, reported that the BCKL&WN had completed the Sports Survey. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, Cllr Pyatt and Cllr Sampson had attended a meeting with officers and Councillors from the BCKL&WN. The survey had established that, for the size of the Town, the sports facilities in Downham Market were good. It did emphasise the need for more football pitches, indoor bowls, and sports events generally. The Sports Development Council at Lynnsport, King's Lynn, had not received many responses for the sports directory. A copy of the Sports Survey would be available in the Town Council offices for Councillors to view.

Cllr Sampson confirmed that this report was the first edition, not the final report. There had been minor errors within the report and the BCKL&WN would be addressing those.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, felt that the BCKL&WN officers' attitudes were that people could easily travel to King's Lynn for sports facilities which were not available in Downham Market. When Cllr Sampson had pointed out that some of those facilities could be transferred to Downham Market and people could travel to Downham Market, the suggestion was dismissed. Cllr Sampson had also suggested that a site in Ryston could be used for cricket in order to free up the Memorial Playing Fields for football. It was disappointing that no mention had been made in the survey about the lack of athletics and/or gymnastics facilities. Discussions would continue.

Cllr Ford was concerned that the aspirations of people were not highlighted within the survey.

Cllr Leach reported that one school within the cluster of Downham Market was unable to use the swimming pool, which should be a particular concern as no school children should be deprived of these type facilities.

Cllr Fox raised concern that not only had the BCKL&WN published incorrect facts and figures within the Sports Survey, but it had also advertised posters inviting people to attend a Local Development Framework Core Strategy meeting in the 'Downham Market Village Hall'. It is a disgrace that the BCKL&WN officers keep getting their information wrong.

Cllr Sampson reported that a press release had been issued by the BCKL&WN today advising that the extension work to the fitness suite in the Leisure Centre would begin imminently. The suite would be closed during the works.

County Cllr Mrs Hutson reported that she would be attending a meeting at the BCKL&WN offices on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008 regarding a 'Quality of Life' survey in which Downham Market had not fared very well. Cllr Stacey suggested that this be raised with Cllr Nick Daubney, Leader of the BCKL&WN, at the next meeting. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, would ensure it was part of the agenda.

#### **1222. Mayor's Announcements**

- St Winnold's Breakfast – Procession Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 9.00am. Councillors were asked to arrive at the Council offices at 8.15am. A hobby horse competition will be judged by Cllr Mrs Hutson; three children will each receive a trophy for the first, second and third places. A main trophy will be engraved and given to the school at which the main prize winner attends. This trophy will be conceded on an annual basis.
- Mayor's At Home – Town Hall, Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 7.30pm.
- Town Meeting – Town Hall, Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 at 7.00pm.
- Civic Service – St Edmund's Church, Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> 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**

Inspector Bates and Ms Hewitt left the Council Chambers at 8.50pm.

#### **1223. Human Resources report (confidential item)**

See Confidential Report.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Sharp**

**'That Mrs Joanna Jones is employed by the Town Council as Trainee Administrator/Receptionist with effect from 1st April 2008 on Spinal point 4, subject to suitable references.'**

**All in favour**

The Administrator left the meeting at 8.54pm.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Blyth**

**‘That Mrs Kate Martin is employed by the Town Council as Administrator with effect from 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008 on Spinal point 10.’**

**All in favour**

The Administrator returned to the meeting at 8.56pm.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Sampson**

**‘That Mrs Kerry Heffernan’s job title is changed to Events Coordinator with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.’**

**All in favour**

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Purslow**

**‘That Mrs Kerry Heffernans’ hours are increased to 27½ per week and she becomes a permanent member of staff with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.’**

**All in favour**

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**‘That Mrs Jean Markwell is paid two weeks annual leave, cancels all owed lieu hours, and carries over one week’s annual leave into the new financial year.’**

**All in favour**

The Deputy Clerk left the meeting at 9.14pm.

Cllr Ford left the meeting at 9.15pm.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Sampson**

**‘That the Town Council pays Mrs Sara Porter her lieu hours accrued.’**

**All in favour**

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Blyth**

**‘That the present arrangement for Mrs Sara Porter to work up to five hours per week overtime should continue through March, April and May 2008.’**

**All in favour**

The Deputy Clerk returned to the meeting at 8.56pm.

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

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.17pm.

**Chairman**

**Date**