

## DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2009 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
		J K Fox
		P E Freeman
		S F Geary
		J Groom
		Mrs S M Nunn
		C Pyatt
		J J Reed
		Mrs P A Roberts
		C T Sampson
		D J Sharman
		A D Stacey
		Mrs V F Starling
		S C Teverson
		W A Wallace
	County Councillor	Mrs S E L Hutson
	Borough Councillors	Mrs K Mellish
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Press Correspondent	Ms S Hewitt
	Guests	Mr S J Collins
		Mr F Daymond
	Members of Public	5

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

#### **1426. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Borough Cllr J R Legg and Borough Cllr A M Lovett.

Cllr Groom would be late to the meeting.

#### **1427. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Fox and Cllr Wallace declared a pecuniary interest in Item 1434, Payment of Bills. Cllr Mrs Roberts declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1444, Report on the Old Fire Station site (confidential item). Borough Cllr Mrs Mellish declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1429, Co-option of new Councillor Downham Market North Ward.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting.

### Police

No representative from Norfolk Constabulary was present at the meeting.

### Public Participation

Mrs K Wiseman, a member of the Heritage Society, circulated a proposed action plan for funding towards refurbishment of the Old Fire Station building (Appendix 1) and then addressed the Council.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that this matter would be discussed in confidentiality under Item 1444, Report on the Old Fire Station site.

### County Councillor

Cllr Mrs Hutson reported that the Boundary Committee had announced on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009, that they would not be making a recommendation regarding Unitary Status until Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2009, as a result of the recommendations made at the East Devon judicial review on their unitary status.

Cllr Mrs Hutson said that having read the minutes of the last meeting regarding flood sirens she would like to make it clear that, in an effort to support the wishes of local people, the NCC had spent a lot of time and money in an effort to save them. However, the Environment Agency and the Police were the authorities who actually operated them and they have refused to continue to do so, not least because they use old analogue technology which is to be switched off in the near future.

Cllr Mrs Hutson had visited the Nordelph Unit (rehabilitation unit) in High Haven and made a report, a copy of which had been given to Cllr Mrs Nunn. The Clerk would obtain a copy of the report for Councillors to view.

Cllr Mrs Nunn requested that a copy of her letter be circulated to all Councillors and be placed on the agenda at the next Full Council meeting. The Clerk would deal with this.

### Borough Councillor

Cllr Mrs Mellish reported that the teen equipment on The Howdale was being well used in the evenings. Electrical work had been completed inside the toilet block and the decorating would commence in a week's time. A non-drying oil based paint, which keeps the surface greasy and slippery, would be placed on the roof of the toilet block.

A meeting to discuss the culvert, adjacent to The Rowans and the Tesco store, would shortly be organised with all interested parties to establish its ownership. If no title-holder is exposed, the culvert will become 'riparian ownership' (any adjacent dwellings will hold responsibility for it).

Cllr Mrs Starling confirmed that NCC had received £1.1m from Central Government for new play equipment and the improvement of existing play facilities. Cllr Mrs Starling would provide the BCKL&WN with details of this grant.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, advised that the toilets on the Town Hall car park required urgent attention; the disabled unit had not been working for four weeks, the end unit had not had washing facilities for over eight weeks and the door was now hanging off its hinges. Cllr Mrs Mellish would investigate these issues with Mr T Porter, BCKL&WN Southern Area Supervisor.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, resumed the meeting.

Cllr Groom arrived at the meeting at 7.47pm.

**1428. To approve the Minutes**

Cllr Mrs Mellish advised the following amendment:

Page 2667, Item 1413, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence should read, '*Full refurbishment should be accomplished by Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009.*'

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009 (pages 2662-2670) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record, with the above amendment made.

**1429. Co-option of new Councillor Downham Market North Ward**

Cllr Mrs Mellish had declared a prejudicial interest in this item and left the Council Chambers at 7.47pm.

Two candidates had applied in writing asking to be considered for co-option in the North Ward; Mr Stephen Collins and Mr Francis Daymond.

Copies of their letters had been circulated to all Councillors. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, advised that no other written applications had been received.

Mr Collins and Mr Daymond introduced themselves to the Councillors.

Councillors completed a secret ballot. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk counted the votes and sealed the ballot papers. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that a majority vote had been received for Mr Collins and he was duly elected as a Town Councillor. Mr Collins joined the meeting, but was advised by the Mayor, Cllr Leach, that he would not be able to debate or vote as he had not yet signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Code of Conduct forms. The Councillors welcomed Mr Collins to the Council.

Cllr Mrs Mellish returned to the Council Chambers at 7.55pm.

Two members of public left the Council Chambers at 7.57pm.

**1430. To receive correspondence**

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

There were no items for discussion.

**1431. To receive Councillors questions**

Q: Could the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee provide a detailed explanation of the budget at the Annual Town Meeting? (KM).

A: Yes.

Q: Could Councillors who are not receiving the Downham News advise the Clerk in order that the postcodes can be reported to the Lynn News? (VFS).

A: Yes.

**1432. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes**

Planning and Environmental Committee

**Proposed – Cllr Reed**

**Seconded – Cllr Geary**

**‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2009 (pages 2659-2661) and Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 (pages 2671-2674) be adopted.**

**All in favour**

Car Parks and Highways

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Stacey**

**‘That the minutes of the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting of Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2009 (pages 2675-2679) be adopted.**

**All in favour**

**1433. To receive the Clerk’s Report**

The Clerk had nothing to report to this meeting.

**1434. To approve the Payment of Bills**

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

Cllr Fox and Cllr Wallace had declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

**Proposed – Cllr Stacey**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

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

**For – 17**

**Against – 0**

**Abstentions – 2 (Declared Interests)**

**1435. To receive reports from representatives from Outside Bodies and Working Parties**

**i) Local Development Framework**

Cllr Clark reported that the draft consultation document had been prepared and would be published on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.

**ii) West Norfolk Sports Council**

Cllr Pyatt provided a report (Appendix 4).

Cllr Ford advised that he had attended a meeting on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 with Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Nockolds to discuss sports matters. Cllr Mrs Nockolds had advised that the BCKL&WN would provide funding of £15,000 towards a multi-use games arena. The Local Action Group may also provide funds towards this project. The next sports meeting would be held on Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

**iii) Joint Burial Committee**

Cllr Fox reported that the next Committee meeting would be held on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Inspections of the three Town cemeteries would be carried out shortly.

Cllr Sharman advised that only 90% of the trees by the Rouses Lane cemetery had been cut back. Cllr Fox would investigate why the other 10% had not been trimmed.

**1436. Town Hall**

**i) Report from Town Hall Management Team**

Cllr Ford reported that the BCKL&WN had responded to the letter which requested the discharge of the contingency funds of £20,000 for the bell tower repair work. The response advised that the whole contingency amount of £20,000 could not be released for this work. The Clerk had sent a subsequent letter asking what the contingency fund could be used for and whether a meeting should take place to discuss this in more detail. A response had not yet been received.

A cinema was planned to be held in the Town Hall. As the films would not be current releases, tickets would be priced at £3.50 each. Each showing would only break even financially if more than ninety people attended. Full publicity was planned to ensure a good turnout.

Cllr Mrs Roberts enquired whether the Town Hall would receive a widespread clean. Cllr Ford confirmed that it would.

**1437. Report on the Howdale Community Centre**

Cllr Pyatt reported that unfortunately the purchase of the Howdale Community Centre had not taken place on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009 because NCC had not provided a building energy certificate. NCC was now pursuing this matter.

**1438. Proposal from the Standing Orders Working Party**

**‘That Standing Orders are amended to show the Model Code of Conduct for Members including paragraph 12(2) as agreed in Full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2007.’**

Cllr Fox reported that two entries within the Standing Orders would require amendment; page 12, Item 23(a) and page 16, Item 36(a).

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Stacey**

**‘That Standing Orders are amended to show the Model Code of Conduct for Members including paragraph 12(2) as agreed in Full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2007.’**

**All in favour**

**1439. Car Park Charging – Report from Cllr S Geary**

Cllr Geary reported that the Working Party would be meeting on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009 to discuss quotations for a car park charging system.

**1440. To discuss taking back the remaining Town’s assets held by the BCKL&WN**

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that he, Cllr Teverson and the Clerk would be meeting with a BCKL&WN Working Party on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2009 to discuss the possibility of taking back the Town’s remaining assets.

**1441. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor**

There were no urgent items to be discussed at this meeting.

**1442. Mayors Announcements**

- Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 2.00pm – Youth Council, Council Offices.
- Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 9.00am – St Winnold’s Breakfast, Town Hall (parade to start at Council offices).
- Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009 in the evening – Dinner and a performance by DADS, Town Hall (tickets £10.00 per person).
- Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 6.00pm – Young Citizens’ Awards, Town Hall.
- Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2009 and Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> April 2009 – St George’s Day events.
- July – Downham in Bloom judging.
- Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2009 – Community Fair, Town Hall
- Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2009 – Halloween Fun Day
- A list of 2009 Councillors’ Surgeries have been circulated to all Members. The forms should be completed and returned to the Trainee Administrator.
- Mr Alan Parker, a market trader in Downham Market for 22 years, had recently died. A condolence card had been sent from the Council to Mrs Parker and the Mayor, Cllr Leach, had represented the Council at his funeral on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009.

**Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 – following the exclusion of the public and press:**

**Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Leach**

**Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**‘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**

The remaining members of public, Mr Daymond and the press left the Council Chambers at 8.32pm.

**1443. Human Resources – to discuss any matters referred from Finance and General Purposes Committee**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

**1444. Report on the Old Fire Station site – Cllr J K Fox to report (confidential item)**

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

See Confidential Report.

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Ford**

**‘That the ‘Proposed Heads of Terms’, with agreed amendments by Hawkins Solicitor, between the Town Council and the Heritage Society are forwarded to the Heritage Society for approval.’**

**For – 18**

**Against – 0**

**Abstentions – 1 (Declared Interest)**

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

Cllr Mrs Hutson wished to note that if residents enquired about having grit bins supplied to their properties, it would be the responsibility of the Town Council to purchase it, not NCC. NCC would only be responsible for filling the grit bin with salt. Cllr Fox raised concern that Downham Market had 4,500 dwellings and the Town Council had not budgeted for, and would not be able to afford that many grit bins. The Clerk would investigate the legislation regarding this matter.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.02pm.

**Chairman**

**Date**