

16th May 2006 minutes

## **DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2006 7.30PM**

Present:

The Deputy Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
Councillors	R J R Baker MBE
	K W Beck
	R M Bodle
	J K Fox
	Mrs S M Nunn
	S W Nunn
	J J Reed
	Mrs P A Roberts
	A D Stacey
	S C Teverson
County Councillor	Mrs S Hutson
Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
Projects Officer	Mrs D Charlesworth-Smith
Press Correspondent	Ms S Hewitt

**827. To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs P M Dean (family commitment), J Groom (work commitment), C Pyatt (holiday), C Russell (out of the country), C T Sampson (previous commitment), Mrs V F Starling (family commitment), Borough Cllr Mrs K Mellish (previous Borough engagement) and Inspector Bates (previous engagement).

The apologies were accepted.

Cllr C D Bond did not attend the meeting.

**828. To receive Members Declarations of Interest**

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, declared a pecuniary interest in Item 842, To discuss the extension of the lease for the garage premises (confidential item).

**Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford**

**‘To invoke Standing Order 17, in order to vary the order of business and allow reports to be received from the County and Borough Councillors.’**

**All in favour**

The meeting was adjourned.

County Cllr Mrs Hutson had nothing to report.

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, resumed the meeting.

**829. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting**

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The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006 (pages 1808-1814) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

**830. To receive Correspondence**

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

The Clerk read a letter received from the BCKL&WN regarding the footpath between Victory Road and Tesco Store, which advised that Tesco had not sought permission to connect the footpath.

**831. Councillor's Questions**

Q: Why did this Council have to read in the press comments made by the Leader of the Borough Council concerning Downham Market? (PAR).

A: The Mayor would comment on this later in the meeting.

Q: Was ownership of the fence adjacent to the War Memorial Playing Field known? (KWB).

A: This fence was to be replaced by one of the adjacent land owners, as it was not on the boundary.

Q: Had the gates been put in between Short Drove and the playing field? (MGF).

A: There is current correspondence with the BCKL&WN regarding this.

Q: At a recent Borough Council Development Control Board meeting the plan for building in the Barkers yard was passed, despite the Planning and Environmental Committee's recommendation to refuse. NCC is under pressure to build yet more houses. This is why the housing development opposite Lawnboy, which this Council refused, was approved. Is this Council seriously concerned that its views are not being taken into account by the Borough Planning Department? (JJR).

A: This would be referred to the Planning and Environmental Committee.

Q: Had a response been received from Borough Planning Department regarding the 'special measures'? (SMN).

A: Not yet.

Cllr Doyle noted that Downham Market had received a design award from the Borough Mayor's Design in the Environment Awards.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of public were present at the meeting.

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

#### **Planning and Environmental Committee**

**Proposed – Cllr Doyle**

**Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2006 (pages 1806-1807) and Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2006 (pages 1815-1823) be adopted.’**

**All in favour**

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

The Clerk had nothing to report.

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

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

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts Seconded – Cllr Baker**

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

**All in favour**

**To discuss the 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**

**835. Update on management of the Howdale Community Centre**

Cllr Bodle reported that the AGM was to be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2006 at 7.00pm in the Town Council Offices.

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

Cllr Fox reported that permission had been gained from NPS for Town Council officials to visit the Old Fire Station site. Those attending were Cllrs Doyle, Fox and Ford, the Town Clerk, Mr John Stephenson (Design), Mr Mike Mulready (Health and Safety), Mr Peter Burgess and his colleague (Demolition).

A full inspection was made of the site, which consists of the area seen from the road and a grass wilderness area behind the sheds.

The area is much larger than originally contemplated and could possibly provide between 120 - 150 car parking spaces if the whole site was to be cleared. The building, which is currently used, could be utilised for other uses which could generate income.

Due to the quantity of asbestos, it has been advised that an A3 asbestos survey is required and this would cost in the region of £900. The approximate demolition figures are:

- Whole site to ground level - £14,000.
- Keeping main fire engine building and demolishing the rest - £12,000.

- Shed at back of site - £6,000.

The loan authority from the ODPM has been received for the sum of £200,000 + £75,000 for CCTV.

Planning permission is required immediately, as without it the purchase will not go ahead. The costs are:

- Change of Use application £265.00 (the Council pays 50%, £132.50).
- Demolition application £50.00 (the Council pays 50%, £25.00).

The Town Council can apply for permission for change of use for the land, without incorporating the demolition of the buildings. This would give time for discussion with NCC to see if the buildings could be utilised rather than demolished. Specific proposals for the site have not yet been discussed by the Working Group. If, however, the site were developed into something other than a car park, NCC would impose a 75% overage clause to the Town Council.

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That this Council applies for planning permission for the Change of Use of the old fire station site and for Demolition of some of the buildings, and spends up to £1,000.00 on the appropriate planning permission.’**

**All in favour**

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Doyle**

**‘That this Council carries out an A3 asbestos survey for the buildings on the old fire station site at a cost of approximately £900.00.’**

**For – 11 Against – 0**

**Abstention – 1**

The funding for this will initially come from the Reserves Account, to be repaid when the loan is drawn down.

**837. To discuss the Downham Market Charter**

A copy of the Charter had been circulated to all members.

A long debate on the content took place and it was agreed that two of the points should be amended, and that the document should display the Town Council's name at the bottom of the page.

The Working Party would amend the document and investigate the final size, amount and cost for framing, the places to display them, and how and when they should be presented. Their recommendations would be referred to the Development Committee.

**838. To discuss the Town Meeting on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2006**

Cllr Ford advised that the format of the Annual Town Meeting had been different to that of past years. Each Committee Chair had overseen a stall and other displays had included the Howdale Community Centre, the Community Interest Company, the Town Hall, the Town Design Statement and CCTV.

Cllr Ford was congratulated on the new, improved format. The members of public had felt more at ease with the Council with the informal session which took place prior to the official meeting.

It was agreed that the format would need to be slightly more structured next year, and each table should be formally manned. It was established that Councillor attendance should increase, a wandering microphone for the top

table and for the public would be ideal, and a spokesman for the police could be invited next year.

**839. To discuss the St Winnolds Fair**

Cllr Doyle declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item.

Cllr Mrs Roberts provided a review of the 2006 St Winnold's Fair event.

The parade and breakfast had received many compliments and the occasion had gone relatively smoothly. The small hiccups were only noticed by a few, and can be remedied next year. Our recent Mayor enjoyed the opportunity to show off the Town to his fellow dignitaries shortly before his term of office came to an end. The market traders were happy. Radio Norfolk was particularly complimentary and had broadcasted a three-hour coverage that morning. Downham Market was mentioned again the next day and on the following Monday and both broadcasters, when interviewed, remarked on the great time they had had.

One disappointment was the small numbers of public present, and this should be put down to the lack of posters on display. The Town Council would use the Town Council notice board to better effect. The school children were not present as the Easter holidays were early this year. Another year might be more agreeable. All data and templates have been stored on computer and each event becomes easier to organise, though it remains time consuming, and last minute decisions have to be made. Planning needs to start early and in anticipation, the Town Hall, the caterers and the shire horse have all been booked again for 2007.

If it was the intention of the Council to pursue this event, a new Working Party would need to be formed and an estimated budget accounted for.

Cllr Reed reported that the fair on the Hollies Car Park had proved very successful, with the cooperation of Mr Michael Gray, Chairman of the Eastern Counties Section of the Showmen's Guild, and Mr Perry Day, the Fair Steward. The rides were the same as last year, with a good selection of children's rides and side stalls. The living vans and lorries parked on the Howdale worked very

well and no complaints were received. Both the Howdale and the Hollies were left in excellent condition, with no rubbish and no damage. The Guild secretary will investigate at their next meeting whether next year's fair could be held on the Howdale.

Cllr Reed advised that aside from this, the Association of Circus Proprietors (ACP) has been asked whether any circus would like to visit Downham Market, and stand on the Howdale, this year or next.

Cllr Beck pointed out that that fair had taken up more than 2/3rds of the Hollies Car Park and had been set up 3 days prior to its opening. He also advised that a resident's drive in Howdale Road had been blocked by a lorry and the resident had not been able to exit her property. This was noted. Cllr Reed advised that fairs have to be set up 2 days prior to their opening in order for the rides to be inspected.

Cllr Reed confirmed that the Town Council had received £500.00 rent from the fair.

It was agreed that the fair is enjoyed by the youth and should be supported for their sake.

It was noted that a letter of complaint had been received from the Chamber of Trade members and this would be reviewed and responded to by Cllr Reed.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts Seconded – Cllr Baker**

**‘That this Council holds the St Winnold’s Fair event in 2007.’**

**For – 10 Against – 0**

**Abstention – 2 (1 Declared Interest)**

The current Working Party (consisting Cllr Mrs Roberts as Chair and Cllrs Mrs Nunn and Reed) would maintain the work for the 2007 event, with the addition of Cllr Teverson. It was agreed that the Mayor in post would be part of this Working Party each year.

**To discuss the extension of the lease for the garage premises (confidential item)**

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**Human Resources report (confidential item)**

**Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford**

**‘To invoke Standing Order 17, in order to vary the order of business and allow these items to be deferred in view of their confidential nature.’**

**All in favour**

**840. Mayor’s Announcements**

- Meeting with the Leader of the BCKL&WN, Mr John Dobson, and Mr Nick Daubney – Town Council Offices, Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2006 at 9.00am. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Town Clerk and the Chairs of each Committee are invited to attend.
- Twinning Reception and finger buffet – Town Hall, Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at 11.00am. Children from Hillcrest Primary School will be singing in French.
- Twinning Club Dinner – Town Hall, Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2006 at 7.30pm.
- Howdale Community Centre AGM – Town Council offices, Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2006 at 7.00pm.

**Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford**

**Seconded – Cllr Beck**

**‘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**

Cllr Mrs Hutson and Ms Hewitt left the meeting room at 8.47pm.

**841. To discuss the Town Hall**

See Confidential Report (Confidential Appendix).

**Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford**

**Seconded – Cllr Bodle**

**‘That the Town Council agrees to allocate up to £2,500 for a full internal and external survey of the Downham Market Town Hall, this money to come from the Development Committee’s budget.’**

**All in favour**

**Proposed – Mayor Cllr Ford**

**Seconded – Cllr Reed**

**‘That this Council agrees to the Clerk, together with Denise Charlesworth-Smith, the Projects Officer, and the Town Hall Working Party to identify possible funding for a feasibility study and Architect fees to develop The Town Hall as a community facility owned and managed by the Town Council and/or other body nominated by the Town Council.’**

**All in favour**

**842. To discuss the extension of the lease for the garage premises (confidential item)**

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, had declared a pecuniary interest in this item and left the meeting room at 9.00pm. The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Doyle, assumed the position of Chair.

See Confidential Report (Confidential Appendix).

**Proposed – Cllr Stacey**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That this Council recommends to the garage tenant that the current lease, which expires in two years time, be replaced with a new ten-year lease, effective immediately, with a break clause at five years, and that the rent be increased to £12,000 per annum.’**

**All in favour**

The Mayor, Cllr Ford, returned to the meeting room at 9.03pm and resumed the position of Chair.

**843. Human Resources report (confidential item)**

See Confidential Report (Confidential Appendix).

**Proposed – Cllr Reed**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That this Council confirms the appointment of a Community Development Officer at a salary scale of Spinal Point 21, to commence on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2006.’**

**For – 11 Against – 1**

**Abstention – 0**

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

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.10pm.