

## DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 13<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 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
		S F Geary
		J Groom
		Mrs S M Nunn
		J J Reed
		Mrs P A Roberts
		C T Sampson
		D J Sharman
		A D Stacey
		Mrs 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
	Norfolk Constabulary	Inspector M Bates
	Press Correspondent	Ms S Hewitt
	Members of Public	7

#### **1402. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr P E Freeman (holiday), Cllr C Pyatt (prior engagement), Cllr S C Teverson (prior engagement), Cllr W A Wallace (illness) and Borough Cllr Mrs K Mellish.

The apologies were accepted.

#### **1403. Evacuation Procedures**

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

#### **1404. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Doyle, Cllr Ford and Cllr Fox declared a pecuniary interest in Item 1410, Payment of Bills. Cllr Sharman declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1413, To discuss the removal of the toilet block on The Howdale. Cllr Mrs Nunn declared a pecuniary interest in Item 1419, To discuss the future development of the land adjacent to the Relief Channel. Cllr Mrs Roberts declared a prejudicial interest in Item 1424, Report on the Old Fire Station site (confidential item).

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting.

### Police

Inspector Bates reported on crimes in the past two months:

- 3 Burglaries to shops.
- 14 Theft from vehicles.
- 4 Handbag and purse thefts.
- 1 Car theft.
- 1 Tractor theft.
- 1 Theft of donation box.
- 1 Theft of mobility scooter.
- 4 Crimes of violence.
- 11 Sheep stolen.

Cllr Groom arrived at the meeting at 7.35pm.

Inspector Bates reported that the Crimestoppers office, based in the Downham Market police station, closed one week ago. Telephone calls would now be directed to an office in London.

Mr Michael Edwards, a Student PC, had been appointed to the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT). The SNT's priorities were Civray Avenue, Railway Road/Bennett Street and Feltwell. The next Community Action Group meeting would be held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2009 in Feltwell.

Q: Is PC Deadman still working? (RL).

A: Due to illness he is working limited hours.

Q: Where will village PC's and PCSO's be based? (SMN).

A: At the King's Lynn office.

Q: The residents at 33 Beech Road recently reported to the police that youths had been consistently banging on their front door. Have the police been able to conclude this? (JRL).

A: This will be investigated.

Q: In the absence of PC Deadman, who is taking over the 'Shopwatch'? (SWB).

A: PC Deadman is still responsible for this scheme.

Inspector Bates left the meeting at 7.42pm.

### County Councillor

Cllr Mrs Hutson reported that construction work on Cannon Square had been delayed due to the carrstone colour being incorrect. The work was expected to be completed within a week. The county flood sirens were due to be abolished because the technology was outdated.

### Borough Councillor

Cllr Lovett reported that the BCKL&WN supported the retention of the flood sirens and had submitted their recommendations to NCC, the Environment Agency and the police.

Cllr Legg reported that the BCKL&WN Enforcement Team had issued an order to the owner of the land adjacent to 3 Nile Road to clear the site up. This had been actioned.

An application by the Guinness Trust had been submitted to the BCKL&WN Planning Department to build affordable housing on the former Jim Russell site.

#### Public Participation

Mr D Flower, Chairman of the Heritage Society, addressed the Council. He had sent a letter expressing the disappointment of the Heritage Society that the Council may not be proceeding to lease the Old Fire Station community building to them.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, confirmed that all Councillors had received a copy of the letter, and this matter would be discussed in confidentiality under Item 1424, Report on the Old Fire Station site.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, resumed the meeting.

#### **1405. To approve the Minutes**

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (pages 2618-2626) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

#### **1406. To receive correspondence**

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

A letter from Cllr Mrs Nunn had been received regarding the poor facilities at the Nordelph Unit in High Haven. The Clerk read the letter.

A short discussion took place and Members agreed that Cllr Mrs Nunn should write to the Primary Care Trust and the Commission for Social Care Inspection. A copy of the letter was given to Cllr Mrs Hutson in order that the matters could be raised with NCC's Social Services. Cllr Mrs Hutson would report back at the next Full Council meeting.

A letter had been received from Mr Jelliman regarding the litter problems in the dyke by the Tesco Store. Cllr Fox had spoken to Mr Jelliman who confirmed that nothing had been done about the problem. Cllr Doyle confirmed that he had already spoken to the BCKL&WN regarding this matter and would pursue it again.

#### **1407. To receive Councillors questions**

Q: Who is responsible for picking up dog excrement? (VFS).

A: Dog wardens, BCKL&WN.

Q: Are Members aware that two pieces of teen equipment have been installed on The Howdale? (VFS).

A: Yes.

#### **1408. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes**

Development Committee

**Proposed – Cllr Ford**

**Seconded – Cllr Groom**

**‘That the minutes of the Development Committee meetings of Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008 (pages 2609-2611) and Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (pages 2634-2639) be adopted.**

**All in favour**

Planning and Environmental Committee

**Proposed – Cllr Reed**

**Seconded – Cllr Geary**

**‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Tuesday, 21st October 2008 (pages 2601-2608), Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (pages 2614-2617), Wednesday, 19th November 2008 (pages 2631-2633), Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008 (pages 2646-2649) and Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (pages 2653-2658) be adopted.**

**All in favour**

Finance and General Purposes

**Proposed – Cllr Sampson**

**Seconded – Cllr Stacey**

**‘That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meetings of Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008 (pages 2640-2645) and Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (pages 2650-2652) be adopted.**

**All in favour**

Car Parks and Highways

Cllr Fox noted that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008 were incorrect; Item 666, page 2613(08) – the Total Budget request for 2009/2010 should read £44,700 (plus £10,500 earmarked reserves).

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Blyth**

**‘That the minutes of the Car Parks and Highways Committee meetings of Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (pages 2612-2613) and Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (pages 2627-2630) be adopted with the above amendment.**

**All in favour**

**1409. To receive the Clerk’s Report**

The Clerk had nothing to report to this meeting.

**1410. To approve the Payment of Bills**

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

Cllr Doyle, Cllr Ford and Cllr Fox had declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**Seconded – Cllr Sampson**

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

**For – 12**

**Against – 0**

**Abstentions – 3 (Declared Interests)**

**1411. Mayor Elect for 2009/2010**

Cllr Fox addressed the Councillors:

“I wish to nominate Cllr John Doyle for the post of Mayor Elect. I am sure that I do not need to highlight the vast amount that he has done throughout the past years for Downham Market and for this Council. He has attended more events that I would care to think about and has waved the flag of Downham Market throughout the district; Downham in Bloom, St George’s Day celebrations, the staff rest room, and even getting the Town Clock working when I wasn’t available, are just a very few of the things that come to mind in Town. Outside his Council duties he is very involved and highly regarded as a governor of Hillcrest School.”

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Clark**

**‘That Cllr Doyle is Mayor Elect of Downham Market for 2009/2010.’**

**All in favour**

There being no other nominations, Cllr Doyle was duly nominated Mayor Elect.

Cllr Mrs Nunn wished to note that in the future she would hope to see other Councillors stand for this position rather than the same Councillor carrying out this role every other year, like some other Town Councils currently do.

Cllr Mrs Roberts wished to note that those Councils tended to be political, whereas this Council was not.

**1412. To discuss and approve the budget for 2009/10**

A copy of the 2009/2010 proposed budget had been circulated (Appendix 3).

Cllr Sampson confirmed that this year’s precept had been kept below that of the 2008/2009 budget and thanked the Committee Chairmen and the Clerk for their consideration of this.

**Proposed – Cllr Sampson**

**Seconded – Cllr Stacey**

**‘That the Town Council precept for the financial year 2009/2010 is £277,060.’**

**All in favour**

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, wished to thank the Committee Chairmen and the Clerk for keeping the budget to an acceptable level.

**1413. To discuss the removal of the toilet block on The Howdale**

Cllr Sharman had declared a prejudicial interest in this item.

The Town Clerk reported that an update regarding the toilet block on the Howdale had been received from Cllr Mrs Mellish.

Cllr Mrs Mellish confirmed that various options for work on the toilet block had been considered and tenders had been sought. The opening of the tenders was planned for Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2009. Cllr Mrs Mellish would be informed of any delays or problems, in order that all parties involved could be kept up to date.

A short discussion took place and it was agreed that this matter, including the opening and closing times of the toilets would be referred to the Development Committee.

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That the Town Council refers the item regarding The Howdale toilet block to the Development Committee.’**

**All in favour**

**1414. To receive reports from representatives from Outside Bodies and Working Parties**

**i) Local Development Framework**

Cllr Clark reported that a draft consultation document had been prepared and was currently going through stages of approval. It was anticipated to be published in February.

**ii) West Norfolk Sports Council**

Cllr Ford advised that he had attended two Sports Federation meetings where the aspirations of Downham Market had been made known. A meeting to discuss sports matters in further detail would be held on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 with Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Nockolds.

**iii) Joint Burial Committee**

Cllr Fox reported that two horses had escaped onto the cemetery on a couple of occasions, and the police had been made aware.

**1415. Town Hall**

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

A new Interim Town Hall Management Team Terms of Reference document had been circulated (Appendix 4).

Cllr Stacey reported that the Terms of Reference would be reviewed on an annual basis.

Cllr Ford reported that financial matters would be dealt with in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Standing Orders and any major issues would always be referred to the Full Council.

**Proposed – Cllr Stacey**

**Seconded – Cllr Ford**

**‘That the Town Council adopts the Interim Town Hall Management Team Terms of Reference.’**

**All in favour**

Cllr Ford reported that the Parsons & Whittle Partnership had submitted a proposal and plans in connection with the Feasibility Study. A meeting would be held with the Parsons & Whittle Partnership on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

M E Curtis had carried out a survey of the bell tower, which was reported to be in a dangerous condition. The cost to repair would be approximately £25,000. A letter has therefore been sent to the BCKL&WN asking that the contingency funds for £20,000 be released for these repairs.

The Interim Town Hall Management Team was currently investigating the cost for digital information screens to be displayed at the Town Hall.

Cllr Mrs Roberts raised concern that Councillors did not receive copies of the weekly Town Hall meetings. Cllr Ford confirmed that the minutes were available for inspection at the Council offices.

**1416. Report on the Howdale Community Centre**

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, reported that the purchase of the Howdale Community Centre would be completed on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

Cllr Doyle thanked Cllr Mrs Hutson for aiding the Town Council in purchasing the Howdale Community Centre.

**1417. Car Park Charging – Report from Cllr S Geary**

Cllr Geary reported that quotations for a car park charging system were currently being sought. Early indications were that the set up charges could be in the region of £27,000.

**1418. To discuss response to the BCKL&WN regarding CCTV in Downham Market**

Cllr Blyth reported that at the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009, a resolution was made to defer CCTV investigations and review them again in 12 months time.

**1419. To discuss the future development of the land adjacent to the Relief Channel**

Cllr Mrs Nunn had declared a pecuniary interest in this item, but was not asked to leave the Council Chambers as the item would not be discussed at this meeting and would be referred to the Development Committee.

**1420. To discuss taking back the remaining Town's assets held by the BCKL&WN**

Councillors had previously agreed that the Town Council should pursue the acquisition of The Willows Nature Reserve, Memorial Playing Fields and The Howdale. Discussions with Cllr Nick Daubney, Leader of the BCKL&WN, were ongoing regarding this matter.

Cllr Doyle confirmed that there would not be any financial implications to the Town Council regarding these sites as the costs to maintain them were incorporated into 'special expenses' within the Council Tax (as was the Town Hall).

Cllr Stacey suggested that the cost implications were investigated prior to any transfers from the BCKL&WN taking place.

**1421. To discuss the removal of the Town Pump from the Town Square**

At a recent Chair's meeting it was agreed that this item be deferred back to the Planning and Environmental Committee to investigate the cost implications of removing the Town Pump from the Town Square.

**1422. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor**

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

**1423. Mayors Announcements**

- Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 2.30pm – Civic Service, St Edmund's Church and proceed to the Town Hall afterwards for refreshments.
- Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 10.30am – Chinese New Year, Town Square.
- Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at 6.00pm – Young Citizens' Awards, Town Hall.
- 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).
- 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

**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 members of public and the press left the Council Chambers at 8.58pm.

Cllr Legg left the Council Chambers at 8.59pm.

See Confidential Report.

**1424. 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.

Cllr Ford left the meeting at 9.22pm.

**1425. Assignment of the lease for the Somerfield Store (confidential item)**

See Confidential Report.

**Proposed – Cllr Sampson**

**Seconded – Cllr Groom**

**‘That the Town Council reassigns the existing lease to William Morrison, as requested by Somerfield Stores.’**

**All in favour**

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

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.26pm.

**Chairman**

**Date**