

## **DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 8<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2008 AT 7.30PM**

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr R Leach
	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
		Mrs G S S Purslow
		C Pyatt
		Mrs P A Roberts
		Mrs P B Sharp
		A D Stacey
		Mrs V F Starling
		S C Teverson
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Guest	Mr T Taylor
	Members of the Public	2

#### **1303. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mrs R J Keates (family commitment), Cllr C T Sampson (previous commitment), County Councillor Mrs S E L Hutson, Borough Cllr A M Lovett and Borough Cllr Mrs K Mellish.

The apologies were accepted.

Cllr Mrs S M Nunn would be late to the meeting. Cllr J J Reed did not attend.

#### **1304. Evacuation Procedures**

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

##### Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting and invited Mr Tinker Taylor to accept a commemorative plaque on behalf of the Town Council and the Town's people in recognition for being the 'Founding Father of the Downham Market Festival' and for his long standing commitment with the Town Council, including three occasions as Mayor.

Mr Taylor thanked the Council and he sequentially received a vote of thanks from the Councillors.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, resumed the meeting.

**1305. To receive members Declarations of Interest**

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, Cllr Doyle and Cllr Fox declared a pecuniary interest in Item 1311, to approve the Payment of Bills.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, adjourned the meeting.

Public Participation

Q: The footpath/cycleway at the bottom of Nursery Road needs cleaning, particularly as there is graffiti on the fence. Could the Head of Clackclose School be informed of this?

A: The Mayor, Cllr Leach, as a Governor of Clackclose School, will deal with this matter.

County Councillor

A report regarding the Boundary Committee Proposals for Norfolk had been circulated by Cllr Mrs Hutson (Appendix 1).

A copy of the report would be placed in correspondence.

Borough Councillor

There were no Borough Councillors present at the meeting.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, resumed the meeting.

**1306. To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting**

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (pages 2477-2487) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

**1307. To receive Correspondence**

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

Cllr Fox requested that the email from Reverend Father Mather regarding the Churchyard maintenance be copied to him. The Clerk would organise this.

**1308. Councillor's Questions**

Q: Could an Extraordinary Full Council meeting be held to discuss the Boundary Committee Proposals for Norfolk? (MGF).

A: Yes.

Q: The shrubbery in Old Brewery Lane is very overgrown. Could a letter be sent to the Downham Club and Mrs Sherwood asking them to trim their hedges and trees back? (VFS).

A: Yes.

Q: The Southfields footpath, leading to Priory Road, which belongs to Freebridge Housing Association, has been closed for some time due to construction work. Could the Clerk write to them enquiring when it will be re-opened?

A: Yes.

**1309. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes**

Planning and Environmental Committee

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Sharp**

**Seconded – Cllr Geary**

**‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meeting of Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (pages 2473-2476) be adopted.’**

**All in favour**

Development Committee

The minutes of the Development Committee meeting of Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008 (pages 2461-2465) had been approved at the Full Council meeting of Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Finance and General Purposes

**Proposed – Cllr Teverson**

**Seconded – Cllr Stacey**

**‘That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2008 (pages 2466-2472) be adopted.’**

**All in favour**

**1310. To receive the Clerk’s Report**

The Clerk had nothing to report to this meeting.

**1311. To approve the Payment of Bills**

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

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, Cllr Doyle and Cllr Fox had declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

**Proposed – Cllr Teverson**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

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

**For – 13**

**Against – 0**

**Abstentions – 3 (Declared Interests)**

**1312. To receive reports of Working Parties**

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, enquired whether the following Working Parties had held meetings:

**i) Interim Town Hall Management**

Yes.

**ii) Fire Station**

No.

**iii) Local Development Framework**

No.

**1313. Town Hall Update**

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

Cllr Ford reported that the Town Hall Interim Management Team met on a weekly basis and were continuing to resolve any problems that arose. The Management Team had met with three consultants regarding tenders for a Feasibility Study; Chris Parsons, Jeremy Stacey and Lawrence Cousell. The consultants had until the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008 to submit their tenders.

**1314. Update on the construction of the Fire Station Car Park – Report from Cllr Fox**

Cllr Fox reported that meetings had not taken place as general construction works were ongoing. An order had been placed for the brick weave intended for the rear part of the site. When this had been laid, the front of the site would be resurfaced. The closing date for tenders for the internal works of the building was 5<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

Cllr Teverson enquired whether the project was on budget. Cllr Fox confirmed that it was.

**1315. Report on the purchase of the Howdale Community Centre – Report from Cllr Pyatt**

Cllr Pyatt reported that the legal documents regarding the purchase of the Howdale Community Centre had been received and would require two Councillors and the Clerk's signature to proceed.

Cllr Ford raised concern that a Business Plan had not been provided to Full Council. Cllr Teverson confirmed that the Howdale Community Centre Management Committee had been asked to provide a business plan to the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> August 2008. The plan would include the projected running costs for the coming year, the immediate capital costs and any future potential capital costs.

Cllr Doyle raised concern that if signatories were not confirmed at this meeting and the document was not signed in good time, the purchase could fall through.

**Proposed – Cllr Fox**

**Seconded – Cllr Ford**

**‘That the Town Council appoints two signatories at this stage and providing the figures are satisfactory, reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in order that the purchase document for the Howdale Community Centre can be signed.’**

**For – 7**

**Against – 8**

**Abstentions – 1**

**Proposed – Cllr Doyle**

**Seconded – Cllr Groom**

**‘That the purchase documents regarding the Howdale Community Centre are signed immediately.’**

**For – 8**

**Against – 7**

**Abstentions – 1**

**Proposed – Cllr Stacey**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That the Mayor, Cllr Leach, and Cllr Pyatt are appointed as the two signatories for the transfer of the Howdale Community Centre.’**

**All in favour**

**1316. To approve the Town Council Accounts for 2007/2008**

**Proposed – Cllr Teverson**

**Seconded – Cllr Fox**

**‘That this Council adopts the Town Council Accounts for 2007/2008’.**

**All in favour**

**1317. To discuss the purchase of a portacabin as a staff room**

Cllr Mrs Nunn arrived at the meeting at 8.08pm.

Cllr Doyle reported that an investigation had taken place for a portacabin to be used as a staff room, to be sited in the yard of the Council offices. Three quotes had been obtained from Carter Cabin Hire, S J Stanberry and Sons and Martin Reynolds Construction. Martin Reynolds Construction had failed to attend three separate appointments and no quotation had been received. Following two prompts, S J Stanberry and Sons had visited the premises and quoted approximately £11,500.00, which would include four bases and a canopy standing. Carter Cabin Hire came promptly and quoted £5,725.00 for a 10ft x 15ft cabin, plus £85.00 delivery. Alternatively, the cost to hire would be £38.00 per week. The Council would need to set four bases and build the walkway around the canopy, although the Working Party had agreed that this quote represented the best value for money. The ancillary work would be less than £2,000.00.

**Proposed – Cllr Doyle**

**Seconded – Cllr Stacey**

**‘That the Property Working Party be given a maximum of £7,000 to purchase a portacabin and complete any ancillary work required.’**

**All in favour**

**1318. To discuss CCTV**

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

**1319. To discuss the War Memorial – Cllr Mrs Roberts to report**

Cllr Mrs Roberts reported that the Projects Officer would be submitting funding bids to Awards for All and The War Memorial Fund. The application to The War Memorial Fund had been

completed but the Awards For All application required further information. Confirmation from The War Memorial Fund would take four weeks and Awards for All, around 8 weeks. It was therefore anticipated that any possible funding would be identified by mid/end September.

Cllr Mrs Roberts noted that the Royal British Legion had successfully raised money from coffee mornings and public donations, and their fund had now reached £1,500.

### **1320. To discuss the following proposal**

**‘That the Planning and Environmental Committee recommends to Full Council that the Town Pump is removed from the Town Square.’**

A long discussion took place and the following comments, both positive and negative, were made:

- In its current position the Town Pump obstructs and inhibits certain events and functions held on the Town Square.
- It has never worked since it was put in place and costs money for continual repairs.
- It detracts from the carved stone wall.
- It is not in keeping with the surrounding historic buildings.
- The Town Pump could be moved to another location on the Town Square or to the Hollies Car Park, Cannon Square or The Howdale.
- The Town Council fought hard to have the Town Pump sited where it is and it should therefore not be moved.
- The Town Pump should be repaired without prejudice.
- The Town Pump was a symbol of success following the Town’s regeneration work.
- The original Town Pump was sited on The Howdale.
- It cost a lot of money, some of which came from European funding, and it also won a Paviers award over Trafalgar Square.
- It is an iconic part of Downham Market’s heritage and is one of the main talking points from visitors.
- Professional advice must be sought prior to any movement of the Town Pump.

It was agreed to defer this item to the Full Council meeting on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

### **1321. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor**

There were no urgent items to be discussed.

### **1322. Mayors Announcements**

- Anglia in Bloom – Thursday, 10th July 2008 at the Town Council offices. Councillors and partners were welcome to attend the reception at 4.15pm.
- Water Festival – Sunday, 10th August 2008 at the Thurlow Nunn site. 21 teams would be competing in the dragon boat races. The Mayor, Cllr Leach, wished to congratulate the Events Coordinator for all her hard work in organising this event.
- A document had been circulated to Members (Appendix 4), ‘Support Our Soldiers’. The Mayor, Cllr Leach confirmed that small boxes could be made up and handed in at Dennis Sneezum Court. Additional information could be found at [www.supportoursoldiers.co.uk](http://www.supportoursoldiers.co.uk). Councillors were asked not to put their names and addresses on their donation boxes for security reasons, although messages of support were very welcome.

**1323. Human Resources report (Confidential Item)**

Cllr Mrs Sharp confirmed that there were no confidential items to discuss at this meeting.

Cllr Mrs Sharp reported that she had been elected as Chairman of the Human Recourses Committee (HR) and Cllr Mrs Roberts as Vice Chairman. The other members were Cllr Doyle, Cllr Sampson and the Town Clerk.

Pension Policy Statement

The Norfolk Pension Fund had confirmed the need for this Council to have a Pension Policy Statement and a draft would need to be submitted to the Norfolk Pension Fund by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008. HR members consulted with the Town Clerk and agreed to support the draft and inform the Council at its earliest opportunity. The statement was available in the office should Councillors choose to consult it. However, as it was a legal requirement Councillors would not be able to amend it.

Cllr Fox raised concern that Councillors, other than those on HR, had not read the draft document and it could therefore not be approved at this meeting. After a short discussion the Clerk confirmed that she would attempt to get an extension on the deadline date and would circulate the draft document to all Councillors in order that it could be approved at the next Full Council meeting.

Town Hall Staff Uniforms

Cllr Mrs Sharp confirmed that the Town Hall staff uniforms had been agreed, the cost of which would be taken from the Town Hall budget.

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, suggested that the Town Hall staff had an additional formal uniform for important events. Members agreed that the staff should each have day uniforms and a smart suit for special events, the cost of which would be borne by the Town Hall budget.

Town Council Staff Uniforms

HR has recommended that the office employees of the Town Council had a uniform; a combination of one or two skirts, one or two pairs of trousers, and a jacket (3 items only), together with four tops and possibly a scarf embellished with the Town logo. The uniform would allow for cleaning and adaptability and choice.

**Proposed – Cllr Mrs Sharp**

**Seconded – Cllr Mrs Roberts**

**‘That this Council purchases a uniform for each member of office staff, compromising of a jacket, skirt and trousers and tops, the cost being up to £200.00 per staff member.’**

**All in favour**

Deputy Clerk’s Appraisal

Cllr Mrs Sharp confirmed that the Deputy Clerk’s appraisal had been completed within four weeks of the previous Full Council meeting, and had been satisfactory.

Public Abusive Behaviour

The Mayor, Cllr Leach, suggested that a sign be erected at the Town Council reception window and in the Town Hall to advise that no abusive behaviour will be tolerated by staff. Cllr Mrs Sharp and Cllr Mrs Roberts would prepare a notice.

Cllr Mrs Nunn suggested that, in addition to the sign, the Charter should be displayed in the main foyer for members of the public to see. The Clerk would action this.

Cllr Fox confirmed that HR should prepare a Council policy on how to deal with rude and offensive people. Cllr Mrs Sharp and Cllr Mrs Roberts would prepare a draft document.

#### Civic Clothing

Cllr Clark suggested that in view of the staff uniforms being introduced, uniforms and/or robes should be investigated for the Mayor. This would be explored in the future.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

**Chairman**

**Date**