

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 12TH JANUARY 2010 AT 7.30PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr J K Fox
	Councillors	H M Cross
		F E Daymond
		S F Geary
		J Groom
		R Leach
		Mrs K Mellish
		Mrs S M Nunn
		C Pyatt
		J J Reed
		C T Sampson
		D J Sharman
		A D Stacey
		Mrs V F Starling
		S C Teverson
		W A Wallace
	Norfolk Constabulary	Sgt S Hemeter
		PC A Deadman
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Members of Public	4

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

1630. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr S W Blyth (illness), Cllr S J Collins (illness) and Borough Cllr J R Legg.

The apologies were accepted.

1631. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

Cllr Daymond, Cllr Fox, Cllr Pyatt and Cllr Wallace declared a pecuniary interest in Item 1637, To Approve the Payment of Bills.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, adjourned the meeting.

Police

PC Deadman gave the following report on crime in Downham Market since 1st November 2009:

- 3 burglaries to dwellings (2 of which were a showhouse)
- 2 burglaries other than dwellings (sheds/garages)
- 22 criminal damage (12 of which were random damage to parked cars)
- 2 drug related offences (arrests have been made)
- 1 fraud
- 4 car thefts
- 23 other thefts (8 of which were shoplifting incidents). It was felt that 'Shopwatch' had helped significantly with the decrease in shoplifting incidents over the Christmas period.
- 11 violence against the person (7 domestic, 4 in the street)

The dispersal order had been well received in the area adjacent to Tesco and the Priory Centre. PC Bodley and PC Deadman would be alternating the policing in Downham Market.

Q: Could the police please look into the parking in Park Lane, as pedestrians have to walk in the road because cars are parking on the pavement? (RL).

A: This would be investigated.

Q: Could thanks be given to PC Deadman for all his work in reducing crime within the town? (JG).

A: Yes.

Q: When would the posters be in place for the control of alcohol consumption in the town centre? (JWD).

A: Cllr Mrs Mellish advised that the order would be discussed at the next BCKL&WN Cabinet meeting on 26th January 2010. There has been a budget set for posters, signage and advertising.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, thanked Sgt Hemeter and PC Deadman for attending the meeting and they left the Council Chambers at 7.45pm.

County Councillor

Cllr Mrs Hutson was not present at the meeting.

Borough Councillors

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

Public Participation

A member of public reported that the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document was now available for consultation. Downham Market by Design would be holding a meeting on the 15th February 2010 to discuss this document and Councillors were invited to attend.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, resumed the meeting.

1632. To approve the Minutes

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday, 10th November 2009 (pages 2947-2954) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

1633. To receive correspondence

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

There were no questions.

1634. To receive Councillors questions

Q: The flood warning sirens have gone and the system now relies on contact by mobile and landline phones. During the current bad weather, both means of contact have been severely disrupted, and should there have been an incident, residents could not have been contacted. Could Norfolk County Council and the Environment Agency be contacted regarding this? (RL).

A: Yes.

Clerk

Q: Could Councillors receive agenda reports and confidential reports by email, to designated Councillor email addresses? (KM).

A: It was not the policy of this Council to send confidential items by email. Councillor email addresses would be investigated.

Clerk

Q: When agreeing minutes for the Standing Committees is the Full Council ratifying the work of the Committee, as it is difficult to agree the minutes if Councillors are not present at those meetings? (KM).

A: The minutes of the Full Council are ratified and signed as a true record. The minutes of the Standing Committees are accepted as agreeing the work of the Committee.

Q: Some residents of Greenwich Close are concerned that it has not been gritted during the recent bad weather. Could NCC be contacted regarding this matter, particularly as it is a bus route? (SCT).

A: This matter was being raised at the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting on Tuesday, 19th January 2010.

Clerk

1635. 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, 4th November 2009 (pages 2944-2946) and Wednesday, 2nd December 2009 (pages 2969-2973) be adopted.’

All in favour

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Geary

‘That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of Tuesday, 1st December 2009 (pages 2963-2968) be adopted.’

All in favour

Development Committee

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Starling

Seconded – Cllr Sharman

‘That the minutes of the Development Committee meeting of Tuesday, 24th November 2009 (pages 2959-2962) be adopted.’

All in favour

Car Parks and Highways Committee

Proposed – Cllr Cross

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the minutes of the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting of Tuesday, 17th November 2009 (pages 2955-2958) be adopted.’

All in favour

1636. To receive the Clerk’s Report

The Clerk’s Report had been circulated (Appendix 2).

Not on Agenda

Denver Windmill (see Clerk’s Report)

It was noted that although Denver Windmill was not in the parish of Downham Market, it’s attraction to tourists did affect Downham Market. This matter would be discussed by Denver Windmill Trust at a meeting taking place on Wednesday, 13th January 2010, and Denver Parish Council’s meeting was being held on Thursday, 14th January 2010. Following the decisions made at these meetings, this item would be referred to the Development Committee for consideration.

Clerk

1637. To approve the Payment of Bills

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

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

Proposed – Cllr Sampson

Seconded – Cllr Teverson

‘That the bills be paid as per the attached lists.’

For – 13

Against – 0

Abstentions – 4 (Declared Interests)

1638. Co-option of new ward member for Downham Market South Ward (Letter attached)

One candidate had applied in writing asking to be considered for co-option in the South Ward; Mrs Vera Botham. A copy of the letter had been circulated to Councillors. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, advised that no other written applications had been received.

Proposed – Cllr Cross

Seconded – Cllr Teverson

‘That Mrs Vera Botham is co-opted onto Downham Market Town Council.’

All in favour

1639. To receive reports from the Working Parties

i. Local Development Framework – Cllr Geary reported that the Local Development Framework Core Strategy document had been published and comments would need to be received by the BCKL&WN by Wednesday, 24th February 2010. All Councillors should read the document and submit their comments to the Working Party. This item would be placed on the next Full Council agenda.

Clerk

ii. Old Fire Station Site – Heritage Centre – Cllr Fox reported that the Solicitors were now communicating regarding the Heads of Terms.

Concern was raised that this matter had not yet been finalised and it was suggested that a deadline be given to the Heritage Society.

1640. Election of Mayor Elect

Cllr Leach addressed the Council:

“Mr Mayor, fellow Councillors, the person I am nominating here tonight has in fact been a Councillor, albeit with a short break, since dinosaurs walked the earth. He has been single handedly responsible for more points of order than any other Councillor anywhere, as far as I am aware. He is, of course, probably also the tallest!”

“He has served this Council for a long time and managed to avoid the ‘big chair’ but I feel his time has finally come.

“He has spent the majority of his working life teaching most of the population of Downham Market but he finally saw the error of his ways and became an undertaker. Now, of course, bearing in mind the combined ages of half this Council it is probably a good idea to have an undertaker on our side. I think perhaps a resident nurse may be a good idea too!”

“His knowledge of the Town Hall is priceless as he knows where all the skeletons are buried, and his knowledge of ‘electrickery’ is absolutely mind blowing.

“His work with Cllr Stacey on Standing Orders over the years has been inspiring and mind boggling complicated, especially for someone like me.

“Mr Mayor, fellow Councillors, I wish to nominate Cllr John Fox for the position of Mayor Elect.”

Cllr Stacey addressed the Council:

“I am very happy to second the proposal that Cllr Fox be Mayor Elect for the years 2010/2011.

“What can I say after Cllr Leach’s eloquent proposal? I proposed Cllr Fox as Deputy Mayor last year and I suggest that you consult the minutes of the last Mayor Making to see what I said on that occasion! I can only repeat the list of Cllr Fox’s attributes. He is a local man, he knows everyone, he speaks and writes well, he is a man of character and in short has proved that he has all the qualities he needs to lead the Council successfully in the coming year.

“I therefore have no hesitation in seconding Cllr Leach’s proposal.”

Proposed – Cllr Leach

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That Cllr Fox is Mayor Elect of Downham Market for 2010/2011.’

All in favour

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

1641. To agree the precept for the Financial Year 2010/2011

A copy of the precept 2010/2011 had been circulated (Appendix 4).

Cllr Teverson reported that the 2010/2011 precept was a 1.26% increase on the 2009/2010 precept, which included finances for a considerable number of projects, events and development initiatives for the community and town. The provision for additional external staff and a part time financial staff member to join the team had also been incorporated.

Cllr Mrs Mellish advised that she had spent a considerable amount of time discussing the proposed precept with the Clerk and Cllr Teverson, Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, and wished to note her reservations regarding the current and proposed staffing and associated salary levels.

Cllr Teverson confirmed that new staff would not be employed without the ratification of the Full Council. Cllr Stacey added that the precept was a budget, not a commitment to spend, as any under spend would be carried forward to the next financial year.

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Geary

Cllr Mrs Mellish requested a named vote.

‘That the Town Council precept for the financial year 2010/2011 is £280,570.’

For

Cllr H M Cross

Cllr F E Daymond

Cllr J W Doyle

Cllr J K Fox

Cllr S F Geary

Cllr J Groom

Cllr R Leach

Cllr Mrs S M Nunn

Cllr C Pyatt

Cllr J J Reed

Cllr C T Sampson

Cllr D J Sharman

Cllr A D Stacey

Cllr Mrs V F Starling

Cllr S C Teverson

Cllr W A Wallace

Against

Abstention

Cllr Mrs Mellish

1642. Report from Youth Council

There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1643. Report from Cllr S C Teverson – NorfolkALC and NALC

Cllr Teverson reported that NorfolkALC would be hosting training sessions for new Councillors and for Chairmanship skills. NALC would continue to provide guidance on social cohesion including sessions on gypsies and traveller sites, business support and how Town Councils can get involved, and green/eco friendly issues.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, congratulated Cllr Teverson for being elected onto the Executive Council of NALC.

1644. To approve the amended Town Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (all Members have received draft copies)

Draft copies of the updated Standing Orders and revised Financial Regulations had been circulated. The Working Party reported that the Standing Orders included a new Annex regarding the Town Council restructure.

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That this Council adopts the Standing Orders as amended including the Annexe for the restructure of the Town Council and the revision for the Financial Standing Orders.’

For – 15

Against – 1

Abstentions – 1

1645. To receive reports from representatives of Outside Bodies

i. Joint Burial Committee – There was nothing to report to this meeting.

ii. West Norfolk Sports Forum – There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1646. Town Hall

i. Report from Town Hall Interim Management Team – The Chairman reported that 65% of the budget had been spent in the first six months of the current financial year. The last cinema showing had coincided with the heavy snow showers and was therefore poorly attended. However, since the cinema showings began, the Town Hall had broken even financially. Three weddings had been booked for 2010 and reservations for other events were increasing. Three large craft fairs would be held throughout 2010 to raise money for charity and the Mayor would continue to host tea dances. Funding for the cupola had been made available by the BCKL&WN; an inspection by Mr John Stephenson confirmed that the majority of work could be carried out from the inside. Tenders for the work would be sought from accredited builders. A local business has paid to promote their restaurant, and this will be screened at the cinema showing in February 2010. It is anticipated that more businesses will apply to advertise, generating further income for the Town Hall.

1647. Report on the Howdale Community Centre

The Chairman of the Howdale Community Centre Management Committee read a report (Appendix 5).

The Chairman and the Clerk would continue to investigate the possibility of the Town Council becoming a Corporate Trustee of the Howdale Community Centre. This item would be deferred to the Full Council meeting in February 2010.

CP/
Clerk

1648. To discuss taking back the Town’s remaining assets held by the BCKL&WN

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, reported that a meeting had been held today with the Leader of the BCKL&WN, Cllr Nick Daubney, who was of the opinion that the Council should only consider taking ownership of The Howdale at this time. The Willows Nature Reserve and the Memorial Playing Field would be placed on hold at this time.

It was noted that The Howdale should be inspected legally, prior to any decision made by this Council to acquire it.

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That the Clerk, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor investigate any possible issues regarding The Howdale, explore the covenants regarding village greens, and arrange for a legal inspection to be carried out.’

All in favour

1649. To discuss the Town’s boundaries in relation to proposed future developments

The Parish Council Clerks at Wimbotsham and Downham West had been contacted to ascertain whether they would be prepared to discuss a possible boundary change for Downham Market. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, would be meeting with the Clerks and their Chairmen to consider their views. A report would follow at the Full Council meeting in February 2010.

JWD

1650. To form a working party to take forward ‘Party on The Howdale’ 2010

Details had been provided in the Clerk’s Report.

The Chairman of the Development Committee reported that a new event, Party on The Howdale, would be taking place on Saturday, 5th June 2010 during Festival Week. A Working Party was formed, the members being Cllr Mrs Botham, Cllr Cross, Cllr Sharman (as Chairman), Cllr Mrs Starling and the Events Coordinator.

Clerk

1651. To discuss Council’s Policy on Fairs/Circuses

Cllr Reed had held a meeting with the Showman’s Guild to ascertain whether they would be prepared to hold a funfair on The Howdale, and they had confirmed they would consider it. Circuses had been held on The Howdale in the past and the soft ground did therefore not appear to be a problem for them.

It was noted that because The Howdale was a village green, if a fair was set up and a member of public complained about it, the BCKL&WN would be duty bound to investigate it, in which case the fair could be evicted. Cllr Reed would continue to investigate suitable sites for fairs and circuses to stand.

JJR

1652. To discuss allotments

A confidential report had been circulated (Confidential Appendix 1).

The Chairman of the Allotments Working Party reported that the Town Council had negotiated the lease of land adjacent to Rouses Lane cemetery, from the Joint Burial Committee, for allotment purposes. The site would accommodate approximately 35-40 plots.

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Nunn

‘That this Council signs the lease from the Joint Burial Committee for the land adjacent to Rouses Lane Cemetery for allotment purposes.’

All in favour

1653. To discuss the disposal of the remaining stone from the enhancement scheme

Details had been provided in the Clerk's Report.

The Clerk confirmed that the stone being stored in the unit on the Trafalgar Industrial Estate was remnants from the enhancement scheme and the BCKL&WN were storing quality stone for the future completion of the enhancement scheme. The BCKL&WN required one months notice for the termination of the unit, which would need to be emptied by the end of March 2010.

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Sharman

‘That the Clerk, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor explore various options to dispose of the stone in a timely fashion to the best advantage to the Town Council.’

All in favour

1654. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor

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

1655. Mayor's Announcements

- Friday, 15th January 2010 – Mayoress' Coffee Morning, Town Hall, in aid of Rebecca's Wishes.
- Sunday, 24th January 2010 – Civic Service, Methodist Church (combined service with the Service of Unity).
- Wednesday, 27th January 2010 – Mayor's Tea Dance (2.30pm-4.30pm), Town Hall, in aid of Rebecca's Wishes.
- Tuesday, 26th January 2010 – School Youth Council, Council offices (1.30pm).
- Saturday, 6th February 2010 – Mayoress' Coffee Morning, Town Hall, in aid of Rebecca's Wishes.
- Saturday, 6th March 2010 – Craft Fair, Town Hall.
- Friday, 19th March 2010 – St Winnold's Breakfast.
- Thursday, 15th April 2010 – Mayor's At Home, Town Hall.
- Friday, 23rd April 2010 – St George's Day Events, Town Square.
- Wednesday, 23rd June 2010 – School Cluster Day events to coincide with International Day, Town Square, Town Hall, Town Hall car park

1656. Report from Human Resources Working Party, discussion and recommendations to Full Council

- a) **To discuss Human Resources report** – All items within the report were confidential and would be discussed under Item 1657, Confidential items.

1657. Confidential items

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

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Mellish

‘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 Cllr Mrs Botham left the Council Chambers at 9.03pm.

a) To discuss any Human Resource confidential items

See Confidential Report.

b) To discuss recommendation from Car Parks and Highways Committee

‘That this Committee recommend to Full Council to reject both options put forward by Cannon Developments regarding access via the Paradise Road car park.’

See Confidential Report.

Proposed – Cllr Pyatt

Seconded – Cllr Sharman

‘That this Council rejects both options put forward by Cannon Developments regarding access via the Paradise Road car park.’

All in favour

c) To discuss report from the Car Park Charges Working Party

See Confidential Report.

d) To inform Members of a written complaint concerning a Councillor and to appoint a Complaints Panel to investigate it (Complaints Policy is available at the office)

See Confidential Report.

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

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

Chairman

Date