

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 9TH MARCH 2010 AT 7.30PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr J W Doyle
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr J K Fox
	Councillors	Mrs V I Botham
		H M Cross
		F E Daymond
		J Groom
		R Leach
		Mrs K Mellish
		Mrs S M Nunn
		C Pyatt
		J J Reed
		D J Sharman
		A D Stacey
		V F Starling
		S C Teverson
		W A Wallace
	County Councillor	Mrs S E L Hutson
	Borough Councillors	A M Lovett
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Press	Ms R M Bodle
	Members of Public	14

Those in attendance at the meeting were notified of the emergency evacuation procedure from the Town Council offices.

1686. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr C T Sampson (prior engagement), Borough Cllr J R Legg and Inspector M Bates.

The apologies were accepted.

1687. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

Cllr Daymond, Cllr Leach and Cllr Wallace declared a pecuniary interest in Item 1693, To Approve the Payment of Bills.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, adjourned the meeting.

Police

There were no members of the police present at the meeting.

County Councillor

Cllr Mrs Hutson reported that the Local Government Review was ongoing and Norfolk County Council was opposed to the idea of Norwich City Council obtaining Unitary Status. A debate regarding this matter was taking place in the House of Lords this evening and it was hoped the Unitary Status would be prevented. If it were to take place the cost to ratepayers in the County would be astronomical.

A parking fine had recently been imposed on a vehicle parked in Cannon Square to one of its residents. It had been understood that parking fines would not be effected on Cannon Square for a while yet; Cllr Mrs Hutson would investigate this.

SELH

Borough Councillors

The Borough Councillors had nothing to report to this meeting.

Public Participation

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, wished to advise that the Lynn News had stated that the Town Council would, tonight, be proposing to implement car park charging, but this was incorrect; the Town Council would be discussing what level of charging should be introduced if, after extensive public consultation, car park charging was established in Downham Market.

Four members of public addressed the Council regarding car park charging. Their comments were as follows:

Philip Plant, Chamber of Trade:

- Car park charging could be detrimental to the businesses in the Town.
- It would be very costly for people that work in the Town to pay for parking.
- People would need to pay to visit their GP or dentist.

Mike Howland, Keystones:

- The country is in a recession and struggling for business and this is a bad time to introduce car park charging.

Maureen Hibling, Sew Inn:

- If car park charging were introduced at least two hours free parking should be given before charges are applied, particularly when stores such as Morrisons would be put out of business as people would prefer to get free parking at Tesco.
- If the system ends up being cost-neutral to the Town Council, the local businesses will be the ones paying for the scheme.
- The local newspapers are not delivered to every household in Downham Market; the Town Council must ensure that the public consultation process will include all residents' views.

Gerald Beckett, Mobility Plus:

- Mobility Plus relies on customers travelling from outside the Town. Ely, Fakenham, Wisbech, Swaffham and Dereham all have free parking and customers will travel to those Towns instead if car parking is introduced in Downham Market.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, read two letters of objection regarding car park charging, one from Peter Smith, Parliamentary Candidate for the Labour Party and the other from Ms Eleanor Smith, a High Street resident with no parking facilities.

The letters were noted.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, resumed the meeting.

1688. To approve the Minutes

Cllr Stacey identified that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 27th January 2010 (pages 3019-3020) should read 'Wednesday' and not 'Tuesday'.

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Wednesday, 27th January 2010 (pages 3019-3020) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record, with the above amendment made.

It was felt that Item 1681 in the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday, 9th February 2010 (pages 3033-3041) was inaccurate. The Clerk would type the discussion held for this item verbatim and provide a copy to Cllr Reed.

Clerk

1689. To receive correspondence

A list of correspondence had been circulated (Appendix 1). There were no questions.

1690. To receive Councillors questions

Q: Has an advert in the World's Fair for The Howdale site been generated by a member of this Council and if so, would they be kind enough to identify themselves so that the office can divert queries and concerns directly onto them as it should be minuted that this advert has not been driven by the Town Council in any official capacity whatsoever? (KM).

Cllr Mrs Mellish wished to note that as the Ward Member for the area which includes The Howdale she had had no input into the advert or any discussions with third parties regarding it apart from those conducted with other Councillors or those held in this Council Chamber.

A: The Showman's Guild placed the advert in the World's Fair of their own accord and no member of this Council had endorsed it.

Q: Skimming devices are being placed in local ATMs. A gentleman recently removed one from Lloyds TSB and took it to the police station where he was asked to take it to the King's Lynn police station and make a statement. Could a letter be sent to the police advising that this is unacceptable? (RL).

A: Yes.

Clerk

1691. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes

Planning and Environmental Committee

Proposed – Cllr Reed

Seconded – Cllr Daymond

‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Wednesday, 20th January 2010 (pages 3005-3012) and Wednesday, 3rd February 2010 (pages 3028-3032) be adopted.’

All in favour

Finance and General Purposes Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 2nd February 2010 (pages 3021-3027) had not yet been circulated.

Development Committee

Proposed – Cllr Starling

Seconded – Cllr Cross

‘That the minutes of the Development Committee meeting of Tuesday, 26th January 2010 (pages 3013-3018) be adopted.’

All in favour

1692. To receive the Clerk’s Report

The Clerk had nothing to report to this meeting.

1693. To approve the Payment of Bills

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

Town Council

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

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

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

For – 13

Against – 0

Abstentions – 3 (Declared Interests)

Town Hall

Cllr Leach had declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Botham

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

For – 15

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1 (Declared Interest)

Howdale Community Centre

Cllr Wallace had declared a pecuniary interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Pyatt

Seconded – Cllr Groom

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

For – 15

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1 (Declared Interest)

1694. To receive reports from the Working Parties

- i. Local Development Framework** – Cllr Groom reported that she and the Clerk had sent a response to the BCKL&WN regarding the draft Core Strategy Document.
- ii. Old Fire Station Site – Heritage Centre** – The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk would be meeting with the Council’s Solicitor on Wednesday, 10th March 2010 to discuss the queries raised by the Heritage Society regarding the Terms of Agreement.
- iii. Party on The Howdale** – There was nothing to report to this meeting.

1695. Report from Youth Council

Cllr Teverson reported that the next Youth Council meeting would be held in the Town Hall Assembly Room where Members would be offering free pizza slices and drinks to anyone interested in joining the Youth Council.

The Youth Council had wished to convey their keen interest in having a fair in the Town. The Youth Council had set money aside for the Party on The Howdale event, was eager to establish the ATC Hut as a centre point for the youth, and was considering having a float in the carnival and a teen disco for 13-16 year olds during Festival Week in the Town Hall.

Cllr Mrs Nunn reported that Tom Williams, a boy who helped with youth projects in the Town, had unfortunately been killed at the weekend in a car accident. The Council expressed their condolences to his family.

1696. Report from Cllr S C Teverson – NorfolkALC and NALC

Cllr Teverson advised that if there were a hung Parliament, following the General Elections this year, the Liberal Democrats have indicated that they may replace the rate system with a local income tax.

Cllr Fox and the Clerk had, today, attended a Larger Council's Meeting in Aylsham.

A gypsies and travellers day would be held in Narborough on Saturday, 20th March 2010. A café cluster session (networking for Parish and Town Councils) would be taking place in Welney. A Chairmanship and Engagement course was currently being held in the Town Council offices.

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, wished to note that Cllr Blyth and Cllr Geary had resigned from the Council and expressed his thanks for the work they had both achieved during their term with the Council.

1697. To receive reports from representatives of Outside Bodies

i. Joint Burial Committee – Cllr Fox reported that the Joint Burial Committee had inspected the access track and land adjacent to the Rouses Lane Cemetery, to be used for allotment purposes. Following the inspection the Lease Agreement between the Joint Burial Committee and the Town Council had been signed by both parties.

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

1698. Town Hall

a) Report from Town Hall Interim Management Team

The Chairman of the Town Hall Management Committee reported that the building works were ongoing and on target. The BCKL&WN Conservation Officer, Mrs Pam Lynn, had conveyed her satisfaction with the works which had been carried out to the cupola. The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, regularly inspected the works and confirmed that the contractors were doing an admirable job.

A craft fair had been held on Saturday, 6th March 2010, and the raffle had raised £124.00 for local charities.

Cllr Fox reported that the next cinema showing, Star Trek, would be held on Saturday, 20th March 2010. A village screen study had concluded that the Town Council's cinema was one of the most successful cinemas in the county as far as attendance was concerned.

1699. Report on the Howdale Community Centre

The Chairman of the Howdale Community Centre (HCC) Management Committee reported that three tenders had been received for the works on the toilet blocks and improvement to the storage rooms. Tenders had been requested for perimeter fencing around the whole site. A contractor would be eliminating the flooding on the car park this week.

An Extraordinary General Meeting would be held on Wednesday, 24th March 2010 at 8.00pm in the Council offices at which all Councillors, user groups and the general public were invited to attend.

The Clerk had written to the Charity Commission requesting approval that the Council be the sole trustee of the HCC.

Mrs Pam Sharp had been investigating funding from the Home Office which could be used to purchase equipment for the HCC.

1700. To discuss taking back the Town's remaining assets held by the BCKL&WN

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, reported that research was currently being undertaken regarding legal historical documents for The Howdale.

1701. To discuss the Town's boundaries in relation to proposed future developments

The Mayor, Cllr Doyle, two other Councillors and the Clerk had met with the Clerks and Chairmen of Wimbotsham and Downham West Parish Councils on Monday, 15th February 2010 to discuss a possible boundary change for Downham Market. The Parish Councils would discuss this at their next Parish Council meetings and the Clerks would report back to this Council.

1702. To receive an update on the new allotment land

An agreement with the Allotment Association had been drawn up and the Council's Solicitor was currently examining it.

The Allotments Association had held a meeting on Monday, 8th March 2010, where most of the 50 plots were signed and paid for at that meeting.

The site would be ploughed within the next few days ready for allotment holders to use.

1703. To discuss Council's Policy on Fairs/Circuses

The Working Party had not yet held a meeting to discuss a draft policy for fairs and circuses.

1704. Recommendation from the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting:

'That this Committee recommends to Full Council that 1. the Town Hall car park is free with a parking limit of 30 minutes, 2. the Hollies No. 1 and No. 2 car parks and the upper Paradise Road car park have a charge of 20p per hour for a maximum of 3 hours, 3. the Old Fire Station car park and lower Paradise Road car park are all day parking with a charge of £2.00, and 4. all disabled parking spaces are free of charge providing only that valid disabled badges are displayed.'

A long discussion took place. Councillors' comments were as follows:

- There should be an initial period of one hour free parking.
- There should be an initial period of two hours free parking.
- Parking should remain free or the nearby roads will be clogged with vehicles.
- It will be a financial disadvantage to people visiting their GP, dentist or post office if they have to pay for parking after a 30-minute stay.
- Disabled drivers should not be entitled to park free of charge all day.
- The case must be evidenced clearly; research must be carried out on the impact it may have on businesses, shoppers, town users, services and how it would affect employment. Other towns which have introduced car parking charges must be contacted to establish the advantages and disadvantages they have been faced with. Expert legal advice must be sought. An indication of what the Town Council will spend the projected income on must be identified.

A member of public left the Council Chambers at 8.37pm.

Vote to amend proposal

Proposed – Cllr Mrs Nunn

Seconded – Cllr Daymond

‘That this Council proceeds with a full public consultation using these figures as a starting point: 1. the Town Hall car park is free with a parking limit of 30 minutes, 2. the Hollies No. 1 and No. 2 car parks and the upper Paradise Road car park have a charge of 20p per hour for a maximum of 3 hours, 3. the Old Fire Station car park and lower Paradise Road car park are all day parking with a charge of £2.00, and 4. all disabled parking spaces are free of charge providing only that valid disabled badges are displayed.’

For – 15

Against – 1

Abstentions – 0

Vote on finalised proposal

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Nunn

‘That this Council proceeds with a full public consultation using these figures as a starting point: 1. the Town Hall car park is free with a parking limit of 30 minutes, 2. the Hollies No. 1 and No. 2 car parks and the upper Paradise Road car park have a charge of 20p per hour for a maximum of 3 hours, 3. the Old Fire Station car park and lower Paradise Road car park are all day parking with a charge of £2.00, and 4. all disabled parking spaces are free of charge providing only that valid disabled badges are displayed.’

For – 11

Against – 5

Abstentions – 0

This matter would be referred back to the Car Parks and Highways Committee.

Clerk

1705. Recommendation from the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting:

‘That this Committee recommends to Full Council that it supports, in principal, fairs, but on sites other than Town Council car parks.’

Cllr Reed read a letter which the Clerk had written to The Showman’s Guild in 2006 which advised that the Council may consider their return to the Town in 2007 for the St Winnold’s event. However, at that time, the Council had rejected the fair revisiting and it had not returned since.

A short discussion took place and it was suggested that the Working Party draft a policy on fairs and circuses prior to this item being discussed.

Proposed – Cllr Teverson

Seconded – Cllr Groom

‘That this item is deferred.’

For – 3

Against – 11

Abstentions – 2

Proposed – Cllr Leach

Seconded – Cllr Pyatt

‘That this Committee recommends to Full Council that it supports, in principal, fairs, but on sites other than Town Council car parks.’

For – 11

Against – 5

Abstentions – 0

1706. Recommendation from the Car Parks and Highways Committee meeting:

‘That this Committee recommends to Full Council that it proceeds with the Hollies entrance redesign project claiming Miss Coe’s bequest to proceed.’

Cllr Pyatt reported that two companies had submitted a quotation and design drawing for the renovation of the Hollies car park entrance garden (these were displayed for Members to view). A third quotation had not yet been received. It was noted that the companies had been asked to constitute their own design of the garden and each quotation would therefore not be on a like-for-like basis.

Cllr Stacey gave brief details on the history of Miss Coe’s bequest and confirmed that the money, which is currently held by the BCKL&WN, must be used for the benefit of the community.

A suggestion for the incorporation of a shelter was made. It was noted that this had not been part of the design because of the acquisition of the ATC Hut.

Proposed – Cllr Pyatt

Seconded – Cllr Cross

‘That the Car Parks and Highways Committee proceeds with the Hollies entrance redesign project claiming Miss Coe’s bequest to proceed.’

For – 15

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1

1707. To consider Health and Safety Policy Statement

A copy of the Health and Safety Policy Statement, produced by Mr Terry Wilshin, had been circulated. The Clerk reported that this document was a legal requirement.

It was noted that acronyms had been used in the policy and a glossary should therefore accompany the document. The Clerk would advise Mr Wilshin.

Clerk

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Mellish

‘That the Health and Safety Policy Statement is adopted with the proviso that a glossary for the acronyms within the document is produced.’

All in favour

1708. Update on status of Unit 5, Trafalgar Industrial Estate

Cllr Teverson confirmed that every effort would be made to ensure that the stone would be removed from the unit by the following Tuesday/Wednesday.

Cllr Leach advised that some of the market stalls had been moved from the unit to the shed behind the Town Hall, and the rest of the market equipment would be transferred there within the next two weeks.

1709. Recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the requirement of a three year budget for Standing Committees

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee advised that when the new Committees were formed in May 2010, the business of their first meetings should include the prerequisite for a three year budget.

1710. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor

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

1711. Mayor’s Announcements

- Thursday, 18th March 2010 – Business Forum (Simply Outstanding), Searles Leisure Resort, Hunstanton – contact Cllr Mrs Nunn.
- Friday, 19th March 2010 – St Winnold’s Breakfast.
- Friday, 19th March 2010 – Mayor’s St Winnold’s Dance in aid of Rebecca’s Wishes, Town Hall, 7.30pm, £5.00 per ticket, bring your own food and drink.
- 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.

1712. Report from Human Resources Working Party, discussion and recommendations to Full Council

a) **To discuss Human Resources report** – there was nothing to report to this meeting.

1713. Confidential items

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

a) **To discuss any Human Resource confidential items**

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘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

Cllr Mrs Hutson, Cllr Lovett and the members of public left the Council Chambers at 9.16pm.

See Confidential Report.

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

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.18pm.

Chairman

Date