

**Downham Market Town Council
Property Committee Meeting
Thursday 31 August 2023 at 6pm**

This meeting was held at 15 Paradise Road, Downham Market PE38 9HS

Evacuation procedures were advised.
Members were reminded to switch off mobile phones.

	<p>Present</p> <p>Committee Chair – Cllr Jordan</p> <p>Committee Members - Cllrs Doyle, Lane, Leach, Lewis, B Moyses, S Moyses and Sharman (8)</p> <p>Non-Committee Members – Cllrs Brewer, Daymond, Leivers and Wiles (4)</p> <p>Town Clerk – Ms C Dornan</p> <p>There was 3 member of the public present including Mr and Mrs Bilton</p>
1	<p><u>To receive Members’ Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>An apology was received from:</p> <p>Cllr Pyatt – Holiday</p> <p>This apology was accepted.</p>
2	<p><u>To receive Members’ Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Cllr Jordan declared an interest in agenda item 11.1 & 11.2.</p> <p>Cllr Leach declared an interest in agenda item 9.</p>
3	<p><u>Public Participation – 15 minutes allowed</u></p> <p>Cllr Wiles asked when the 3 SAM2 posts would be erected. Cllr Jordan advised that there is currently a shortage of galvanised posts and as soon as they are delivered, the work will be actioned.</p> <p>Cllr Leivers asked that agenda item 9 be referred to Full Council.</p> <p>Cllr Daymond asked how the 3G pitch would be financed and whether drainage would be included. Cllr Daymond was advised that the working party was investigating the 3G</p>

	<p>'That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2023 be approved as a true record.'</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
6	<p><u>To receive Property Inspections</u></p> <p>The Property Inspections from 25 July 2023 & 07 August 2023 were discussed.</p> <p>The uneven curb on the Town Council Office Car Park was discussed. The area is not used by the staff to park and is a gravelled area in front on the bin store area. It was agreed that the area was not deemed to require work at this stage however it will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>The bike rack, which has been damaged in the Paradise Road Car Park, was discussed. The Town Clerk was asked to obtain quotes to reset the post which has since been removed as it was a hazard.</p> <p>The trees and hedging at the bottom of Paradise Car Park were discussed. The owners of the land causing the encroachment have been contacted and a tree inspection has been promised. The Council have been asked to close of the car park whilst any work is undertaken and this has been agreed on the proviso that a week's notice is provided to allow for public notices to be in situ.</p> <p>The abandoned car at the bottom of Paradise Car Park was discussed. The Borough Council have provided support and have written to the owner after completing a DVLA check. It is hoped that it will be removed within 7 days.</p> <p>Cllr Jordan advised that he had removed the fly tipping which had occurred in the Paradise Car Park, at no cost to the Council.</p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that the fences are due to be painted at Priory Road Car Park on 06 September 2023. Notices are in place and barriers will be in place the night before on the entrance to the height barrier to prevent access.</p> <p>It was reported that the work on the metal at the Skate Park had been repaired by the Maintenance Officers.</p> <p>The Town Clerk reminded Cllrs that the fascia work at the Jubilee Community Centre remained outstanding and looked increasingly untidy. The bees are still in place but they cannot be removed whilst the side fascia remains. There was a query whether these were indeed bees and the Town Clerk confirmed that Pest Control had been out and confirmed the same. The were unable to remove them as they are a protected species.</p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that some work had been completed to the manhole cover belonging to Downham Market Football Club however it was still not flush. Contact will once again be made with the Football Club.</p>

	<p>It was reported that rubbish continues to be a problem at the Jubilee Community Centre despite the new bin donated by McDonalds. The Maintenance Team are litter picking once a week.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the containers owned by Downham Market Football Club had not be tidied. Notice may need to be given. This is to be monitored.</p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that the vandalism over the Bank Holiday weekend had been reported to the Police. All Council locks at the Town Council Offices, Town Hall and 6 Market Place, including the noticeboards had been glued and locks had to be replaced and a window had broken to gain access to the Town Council Offices on the morning of Tuesday 29 August 2023.</p> <p>The Town Clerk reported that the wooden base on the fire door to the rear of the Town Hall had broken away at the bottom. Cllr Lewis is to review and make a recommendation to the Committee on how to proceed.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that whilst working at the rear of the Town Hall there had been a near miss on the slope as it was very steep. The Committee asked for quotes to be obtained to smooth out the slope and make it safer moving forward.</p>
8	<p><u>To receive an update on the Community Orchard discussions with the Borough Council</u></p> <p>Further to an email dated 15 August 2023 from Tracy Broker, Property Services Manager at the Borough Council, the Town Clerk informed the Committee that the reply had been:</p> <p>‘Subject to Contract and Council Approval:</p> <p>This land forms part of the Public Open Space and I will need to consult with this department and ward members for Downham Market. I have a meeting already planned for early September in order to discuss this. If approved, the land will need to be advertised for a minimum of 2 weeks in a local paper and the Council will need to take into account any objections raised as a result of the public consultation.’</p> <p>The Town Clerk again raised concerns about the quality of the land due to there being an old swimming pool under the surface.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to debate the Community Orchard once an update was provided in September 2023.</p>
9	<p><u>To discuss the suggestions from the Market Traders meeting</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk asked whether it was worth referring this item to Full Council based on the comments of Cllr Leivers within Public Participation, however the Committee wished to proceed with the discussions.</p>

Advertising

The Town Clerk agreed to reinstate weekly Facebook posts on the understanding that if traders fail to update the office with their planned non - attendance within reasonable time, the office would cease to continue to advertise the weekly stall list. Multiple complaints had been received previously by visitors to the market who had attended based on our published list only to find that they had had a wasted journey because the trader had not turned up at the market.

It was noted that the signage advertising the market at Broomhill will require relocation whilst the building works are completed at Bridle Lane.

It was noted by Cllr Leach that if all the traders attended, as per their agreed licence, the market would be at 90% compacity. He commented that the reason the market looks like it has gaps is because traders are going to fairs during the summer period.

Gazebos

The Town Clerk confirmed that the gazebos purchased via the Borough CIL application were purchased for new traders. The application was not made on the basis that the Town Council could hire them out on a weekly basis to regular traders.

At the market trader meeting, traders said that regular casual traders were being put off coming to the market because they either did not have a gazebo, did not have room in their vehicle for one or needed business insurance to transport one. Traders also felt that branded gazebos were detracting from the market. It was suggested that the Council purchase some gazebos to hire out on a weekly basis.

The Town Clerk raised concern that this purchase was unbudgeted and also how would the allocation of gazebos work. There is a chance that a trader block books a gazebo which would prevent others having the opportunity to use them or during poor weather more than 5 traders request a gazebo to save taking a wet gazebo home with them. There was also a concern over storage space.

Proposed – Cllr Jordan

Seconded –Cllr Lane

It was resolved:

‘That it be recommended to Full Council that 5 non-branded gazebos be purchased with expenditure coming from Reserves.’

4 In Favour

The following Cllrs did not vote as they declared an interest – Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moses & S Moses

Past Traders

At the market trader meeting, traders advised that past traders were unwilling to return to the market due to its reputation. Past traders want to trial the market to see that the atmosphere has changed. Without a trial they would have to sign up to a full market licence immediately or pay more to be a casual trader but have no guarantee of a pitch.

Proposed – Cllr Lane

Seconded –Cllr Doyle

It was resolved:

‘That the Town Clerk write to past traders offering them the trial rate of 8 weeks at a one-off charge of £20.00.’

4 In Favour

The following Cllrs did not vote as they declared an interest – Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moyses & S Moyses

Licence Amendments

The Committee discussed amending the wording on the licence which prevents trading prior to 8am. It was agreed this would be reviewed. The Town Clerk was concerned about attracting visitors to the market whilst the market is being set up. It is a given that members of the public will walk through the market as there are no boundary restrictions however, at present, this is minimal.

Members discussed the current inability to hire a regular trader pitch to a casual trader when there is a known period of absence from the market. One trader is away for a month and therefore there is an empty pitch for this period.

Proposed – Cllr Jordan

Seconded –Cllr Lane

It was resolved:

‘That the Town Clerk write to licence holders and obtain approval to rent the pitch they have been allocated during periods of notified absence.’

4 In Favour

The following Cllrs did not vote as they declared an interest – Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moyses & S Moyses

Parking

Members discussed the request to retain vehicles on the market and the request to barrier off the Hollies Car Park for market trader parking on a Friday and Saturday.

The Committee could not agree to a resolution.

There were concerns about resident complaints due to loss of a fixed area of the car park. There were also concerns about how the market would look with vehicles behind pitches. It was also noted that not all pitches could have a vehicle behind them so the Town Clerk would need direction on how to allocate the pitch and understand which traders would be entitled to a pitch with 'parking' and whether there would be a premium paid for such a pitch.

Proposed – Cllr Jordan

Seconded –Cllr Lane

It was resolved:

'That parking for market traders be referred to Full Council for debate and decision.'

4 In Favour

The following Cllrs did not vote as they declared an interest – Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moses & S Moses

Craft Fair / Indoor Market

The request for ad-hoc indoor markets to be held in the Town Hall was discussed.

Market traders had asked that the phase indoor market rather than craft fair be used, as it widens the opportunities.

The Town Clerk advised that this would need to be on a schedule rather than last minute so that Town Hall functions and staff rotas could be managed. If there were a midnight finish in the Town Hall on a Friday night and then a 6am set-up for the indoor market, cleaning and set-down would need to be managed overnight. With a schedule, the Office could turn away late night bookings on the Friday or indeed a Thursday to prevent a back to back booking situation occurring. A regular schedule would also allow for timely marketing.

There was a query about how set-up would occur. If there is a full market setting up outside, where would indoor market traders park to unload for the Town Hall.

The Town Clerk raised that the Town Hall is VAT applicable so when deciding on a charging structure, this would need to be taken into account.

The Committee felt this needed to be a Full Council decision as it related to strategy and impacted the Community Development Committee and Human Resources Committee.

Proposed – Cllr Jordan

Seconded –Cllr Lane

It was resolved:

‘That the request for indoor markets be referred to Full Council for debate and decision.’

4 In Favour

The following Cllrs did not vote as they declared an interest – Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moses & S Moses

The Town Clerk was asked to contact Crafty Foxes, who attend Brandon Market offering children’s craft sessions, to be contacted to see if they would be willing to attend Downham Market’s market.

Market Trader Meeting

Traders requested a quarterly meeting. It was agreed that a further meeting would be arranged for October 2023 to agree a schedule and also give an update on the requests from the meeting on 03 August 2023.

Market Committee Request

The Committee discussed the request for a Market Committee or Market Working Party to be set-up to allow decisions regarding the market to be made without delay.

The Town Clerk advised that a Working Party would only delay decisions as recommendations would need approval from a Committee or Full Council.

The Town Clerk advised that when she visited Swaffham Town Council, she had learnt that they have a Market and Tourism Committee. This allowed traders to form part of the Committee, similar to the Downham In Bloom set-up.

The Town Clerk at Swaffham had explained that the Committee is formed of 50% of Council and 50% of traders however concern was raised about the Committee being formed of Councillors who were also traders, relatives or suppliers, as this could mean decisions were made that may not be Town focused but based on a perceived pecuniary interest.

Swaffham’s Committee also vote to accept new regular traders rather than it be an administration role within the Town Council. Traders must be a casual for 4-8 weeks before being considered for a regular pitch.

The Town Clerk advised that a new Committee would need agreement from Full Council and an understanding of meeting schedule to staff the meetings.

Proposed – Cllr Jordan

Seconded –Cllr Lane

It was resolved:

	<p>‘That the request for a Market Committee be referred to Full Council for debate and decision.’</p> <p>4 In Favour</p> <p>The following Cllrs did not vote as they declared an interest – Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moses & S Moses</p>
10	<p><u>To discuss block booking incentive for the Jubilee Community Centre</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk requested approval from the Committee to offer a block booking incentive at the Jubilee Community Centre for hirers that make a block booking of more than 2 hours per week to encourage regular bookings rather than ad-hoc hire.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Doyle Seconded –Cllr Lewis</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That the Town Clerk be authorised to offer an hourly rate of £10 per hour to hirers that block book for more than 2 hours per week.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
11	<p><u>To discuss the Jubilee Community Centre site</u></p> <p>11.1 <u>Drainage</u></p> <p>The car park on site continues to flood when it rains due to the blocked soakaway. As the existing soakaway runs under the skate park a new soakaway will be required. Cllr Jordan gave a job specification to the committee and suggested that quotes be obtained on the basis of the document. This was agreed.</p> <p>The Chair requested permission of the Committee to extend the meeting as the time was 7:50pm and the outstanding agenda items were not expected to be completed within 10 minutes.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Lane</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That Standing Order 3x be suspended to allow agenda item 11.2 – 18 to be transacted.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>

11.2	<p><u>Roadway</u></p> <p>CLlr Jordan left the room having declared an interest in agenda item 11.2 as he had quoted for the works required.</p> <p>Due to a misunderstanding during the quoting process geogrid was quoted when the Council had assumed the quote covered Bodpave. The roadway was therefore not as first envisaged. The Council vote was for geogrid and therefore this was not a contractor error in relation to the quality of the job.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Doyle Seconded –Cllr Lane</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That Fen Group be instructed to install flat top kerbs along the edge of the roadway at a cost of £5,434.90 + VAT.</p> <p>That Fen Group be instructed to install drop kerbs joining the tarmac outside the Jubilee Community Centre at a cost of £1,355.85 + VAT.</p> <p>That Fen Group be instructed to install a 40 ton (D400) manhole top and bring the manhole to the top of the roadway and negotiate a cost reduction on the manhole top outside the Jubilee Community Centre. It is requested that a 12.5 ton (B125) be installed instead of a 40 ton manhole top on the grass. The cost to be less than £892.01 + VAT which was quoted for the installation of 2 40 ton, highway specification manhole tops and roadworks. These installations are chosen to preserve the guarantee on the roadway. Should a satisfactory installation cost not be agreed for the 12.5 ton manhole lid, this is to be removed from the job.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
11.3	<p><u>3G Pitch</u></p> <p>Cllr Lewis gave an overview of the investigations completed by the Working Party. The cost of a 3G pitch is in the region of £950,000, if supplied by SIS.</p> <p>The Town Clerk gave an overview of her discussions with the Chair of Aylsham Football Club who had been involved in the 3G pitch and grant process for Aylsham.</p>
11.4	<p><u>No dog signage</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the cost of obtaining a new wooden backed, metal sign was in excess of £250.</p> <p>The Town Clerk had received a donation of 2 old road signs which were no longer required and ask for a budget and permission to wrap them.</p>

	<p>‘That the Council supports the upgrade to the Bus Stop but not the method statement. The Town Clerk is requested to enter into discussion on matters such as the bike rack and amendments required to the car park.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
14	<p><u>To discuss Streetlight service provision</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk received a quote from Pearce & Kemp Ltd - £206.25 plus VAT.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the Council had been paying £99 plus VAT to Westcotec prior to them ending the supply.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Lewis</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That the Council does not enter into a contract for streetlight provision, due to the cost of a contract. This is because that the LED conversion had only occurred in the last year and therefore likelihood of failure was low. Any fault will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
15	<p><u>To discuss SSE contract renewal</u></p> <p>Members reviewed the recommendation by Energisave:</p> <p><u>My recommendation is E-on Next 24 months 100% Renewable Energy</u></p> <p>Given the current market conditions, I strongly recommend renewing the contract now to safeguard against any potential future price increases. I am more than willing to discuss my recommendations further and provide any assistance you may require.</p> <p>According to predictions made by Goldman Sachs, energy prices are expected to rise in the coming years. This projection is supported by various factors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing demand for energy from developing nations • Depletion of fossil fuel reserves • Increasing costs associated with renewable energy sources. <p>In addition to this we are looking at prices in the height of summer which historical trends show is the best time to renew but the winter period kicks in, and the demand goes up dramatically.</p> <p>Additionally, I want to emphasize that if you have any concerns about fixing your supply agreement for a period of 1-3 years, rest assured that it will only remain in effect as long</p>

	<p>as you are responsible for the premises. In the event that you relocate, the contracts become void without incurring any penalties.</p> <p>Proposed – Cllr Leach Seconded –Cllr Lane</p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p>‘That the Council contract with E-on for the next 24 months on a 100% Renewable Energy tariff.’</p> <p>All In Favour</p>
16	<p><u>To receive an update on grant applications</u></p>
16.1	<p><u>Electric Vehicle Charging Point</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that there had been a successful meeting with Norfolk County Council. Although Discover Downham were reluctant to be involved because of concerns about damage to the exterior of the building / lifting flag stone and increasing utility bills, the representative suggested that lamp post charging points could be an option. Although slower to charge a vehicle, they would be able to be installed around the car park and not just restricted to one area.</p>
16.2	<p><u>War Memorial</u></p> <p>The application to the War Memorial Trust has been successful and a grant of circa £400 has been allocated to the Town Council, which requires match funding. The admin team are working through the conditions of the grant and hope work can start soon. The match funding had previously been agreed by the Committee and therefore did not require a vote.</p>
16.3	<p><u>Levelling Up – Sporting Assets</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the application to be included within the Levelling Up fund had been successful and the Council were now being given the opportunity to apply for a grant of up to £10,000 for scoping work. This does not require match funding and allows the project to reach planning stage. The Town Clerk has a meeting scheduled for 20 September 2023 to obtain support in making this application.</p>
17	<p><u>To discuss Click & Collect bay location amendment request</u></p> <p>The Town Clerk explained that the Store Manager at Morrisons had approached her asking if the Council could re-assess the location of the approved Click and Collect bays. The bays had been trialled for 2 weeks and a member of their staff had almost been hit by a driver and therefore the location was high risk.</p>

