

## DOWNHAM MARKET ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

### **DRAFT** MINUTES OF TOWN MEETING HELD

**Thursday 14 March 2024 at 6pm in the Town Hall**

	<p><b>Present</b> Cllr Doyle, Mayor, Deputy Mayor Pyatt and Members of the Town Council</p> <p>Claire Dornan, Town Clerk Tina Griffin, Deputy Clerk</p> <p>Borough Cllrs Bullen, Ratcliffe</p> <p>Approx. 60 members of the public</p> <p><i>The meeting was recorded and uploaded to YouTube under the Town Council page.</i></p>
Number	Item
1	<p><b>To receive the Chair’s welcome and confirmation of the nature of the meeting</b> The Mayor, Cllr Doyle welcomed everyone present and reminded those present of the emergency evacuation routes and meeting point. He added:</p> <p>“This meeting is not a town council meeting, it’s the annual meeting for all local government electors in the Town of Downham Market.</p> <p>Members of the public and the press are welcome tonight but the only persons entitled to speak or vote at this meeting are people who are registered electors for the town of Downham Market.</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is so that electors can have their say on anything they consider is important to the people or the town of Downham Market.”</p>
2	<p><b>To sign the minutes of the Town Meeting held on 24 May 2023</b></p> <p><b>Proposed:</b> Cllr Incorvaia      <b>Seconded:</b> Cllr Brewer      <b>All Cllrs present in favour</b> ‘The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 24 May 2023 were duly signed’</p>
3	<p><b>To receive a presentation from charities and community groups</b></p> <p><b>Melody Allsorts Downham</b> The group offer the opportunity to anyone with an interest in amateur dramatics to take part in musical and panto productions. They work with people with anxiety, suicidal tendencies and disabilities. They are working towards a show during Festival</p>

week and a musical in October. The Mayor, Town Council and its staff were thanked for their support to the group. The group welcomes new members.

**Royal British Legion**

The Chair of the local RBL branch talked about the work the organisation does ‘beyond the poppy appeal’ eg supporting veterans in debt, in rehabilitation, seeking employment, housing, suffering with dementia, and tackling money issues.

**West Norfolk Deaf Association**

The association currently supports 5000 babies to elders in west Norfolk, with hearing loss. The No8 Bookshop offers not only a retail space but facilities for advice and equipment to those with hearing loss. The Bookshop also organises a Word Fest each year including the popular ‘Bookish Quiz’ nights, a BSL practice club, author visits and venue space to hire.

**Discover Downham**

The group strives to make local history accessible to all, through its museum and venue ‘The Old Firestation’ in Priory Road. There are currently 42 volunteers and are keen to expand this number. They offer a venue to hire, coffee mornings, quizzes, talks, table top sales and antique valuation days. There are local history research facilities and advice as well as family history sessions. The group also run a community outreach programme to schools, scouts and guides.

**Downham Festival Committee**

The volunteers are working on the 2024 week of events. There will be the usual free entertainment for all the family and the traditional carnival parade and arena events. The Festival is self funding with some support from grants. The volunteers put on the week-long Festival for the people of the town and hope that everyone will support the event.

**Downham Market Twinning Club**

The history of the club was outlined and hope was expressed that a new Twinning President would be elected for Civray by the end of the year so that the previously active group can resume their regular visits and continue the civic partnership. The French style café would be open as usual during Festival week.

**Men’s Shed**

The aim of the group is to offer a safe and inclusive place for men and women, regardless of ability to meet and share interests, thus reducing social isolation. Each ‘Men’s Shed’ is run differently with its own area of interest eg woodworking and the Downham shed meets each Monday and Wednesday morning 9 – 12.30pm at their home in the grounds of the Eternity Church, Sovereign Way. All are welcome.

4	<b>To receive any updates from Borough and County Councillors</b> <b>Matters of recent interest include:</b>
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**Borough Councillor Cllr Bullen** encouraged everyone to use the Swan Centre community shop of which he is a trustee.

He highlighted the newly established Downham Market wildlife group and the event they had in the Town Hall recently.

The new administration at the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk is keen to reach out to Downham Market, and has already held a joint Borough and Town Council meeting with local businesses. He hopes there will be a further meeting focussing on tourism.

**Cllr Incorvaia** introduced the work of the newly established Governance Committee which has been working to update the suite of policies and procedures which underpin the Council decision making process.

**Cllr Buxton** gave an overview of the Town Council's achievements during this municipal year. These included:

#### **Properties**

Town Hall Kitchen renovation

Transformation of 6 Market Place into Town Council Offices

Jubilee Community Centre Entrance Road

Jubilee Community Centre Service Road

Memorial Garden Footpath

New recycled bench at Memorial Garden

Upgrade of Town Council owned Street Lighting to LED

Resurfacing and relining of Priory Road Car Park

Creation of Parent & Child Bay & Drop Off Bay on Town Hall Car Park

Installation of Blood Loss Kit which was kindly sponsored by Joan Cribbett in memory of her partner Chris

Installation of heritage signage throughout town – green plaques

Toilet upgrade on Town Hall Car Park due to be completed by BCKLWN in 2024 following liaison through the Town Council

CCTV at JCC

CCTV at Town Hall

Upgrade to heating system in the Town Hall to make the building more environmentally efficient

Upgrade to JCC windows and doors to make building more efficient and accessible.

#### **Downham In Bloom**

Silver Gilt awarded by Anglia in Bloom

Successful Litter Picking Event

Attending Environment Day at Nelson Academy

Seed tray competition with Reception children awarded silver gilt

#### **Local Community**

Working with College of West Anglia to provide a work experience placement

Grants to Men's Shed / Scouts & Guides / Christmas Lights Ltd / Downham Stow

Cricket Club

	<p><b><u>Events</u></b>  Extended Pause &amp; Remember event where 2 local school children read poems  Well attended and successful Christmas Lights Switch On event with free Santa,  Free Halloween Event.  Community Cinema for summer holidays, Halloween and Easter 2023  Communty Fair  Event to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III including best  dressed window and cake competition.  Bingos, quizzes and coffee mornings to raise money for the Mayors Charity ‘the East  Anglian air ambulance’</p>
5	<p><b>Local electors to raise pertinent local topics for debate (equal time allowed for each topic) -</b></p> <p><b>Parking -</b>  Cllr Bet Moyses expressed her opinion that installing pay to park charges in the Council’s car parks would be to the detriment of the businesses and to the market. A group of those present expressed their agreement with her.</p> <p><b>Memorial Field</b> issues with dog mess and collapsed wall -  These were raised as matters of concern and B/Cllr Bullen said he would raise it with the Borough Council to see if something more proactive could be done.</p> <p>DMTC was asked to support the Football Club in their planning application for an extended stand and dug outs.</p> <p><b>No 37 Bus Timetable</b> – Pam Sharp advised that there is a gap of 2 hours 2-4pm where there are no busses, and the later bus route has also been removed.</p> <p><b>Problems with crossing from Morrisons car park to Paradise Rd</b> – Pam Sharp highlighted this as a blind spot which poses danger to people wishing to cross the road. Busses, heavy goods vehicles, speeding cars all make the crossing dangerous especially given the number of facilities in the vicinity – eg Methodist Church, The Willows Surgery and pharmacy, Vets etc.</p> <p><b>Community Speed Watch</b> – B/Cllr Bullen asked if there was an appetite to run this. He asked anyone interested to give contact details to the office at the Town Council.</p>
6	<p><b>Local electors to vote on which pertinent local topics the Town Council should consider during the ensuring municipal year – Not applicable</b></p> <p><b><u>Paid Parking</u></b>  <b>Proposed</b> Cllr Bet Moyses                      <b>Seconded</b> Catherine Seaman  <b>Majority in favour, 1 against</b>  ‘That alternatives to paid parking in the Council’s car parks be considered by the Town Council in the next municipal year.’</p>

