

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY 10TH JANUARY 2012 AT 7.00PM

Present:	The Mayor	Cllr V F Starling
	The Deputy Mayor	Cllr R A Pegg
	Councillors	Mrs V I Botham
		F E Daymond
		J W Doyle
		M P Ford
		J K Fox
		J Groom
		P W Neate
		Mrs K A Mellish
		C Pyatt
		J J Reed
		D J Sharman
		Mrs P B Sharp
		A D Stacey
		M D Starreveld
	Borough Councillors	D A Tyler
		A M Lovett
	County Councillor	Mrs S Hutson
	Potential co-optees	Mr S Mackinder
		Mrs M Ross
		Mr D Sutton
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Minute Secretary	Mr S W Nunn
	Member of the Press	Mrs V Fear
	Members of Public	6

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

2073. To receive Members' Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received Cllr Mrs R L Judge (Work commitment), Cllr Mrs S M Nunn, (Illness) and Inspector Bates of the Norfolk Constabulary. Cllr S C Teverson did not attend the meeting.

The apologies were accepted.

2074. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

The Mayor, Cllr Starling, declared a personal interest in Item 2080 (i), to approve the Payment of Bills (Town Council bills), Cllr Mrs Mellish declared an interest in item 2089 (To discuss future education needs in Downham Market), and Cllr Pyatt declared an interest in item 2080 Payment of Bills (Town Hall bills)

2075. To approve the minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8th November 2011 (pages 3710-3716) were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

Adjourn meeting for public participation and reports

The Mayor, Cllr Starling, adjourned the meeting.

Police Report

There was no Police representative present.

County Councillor

Due to an engagement at Norwich City Football Club, County Councillor Mrs Hutson would be late attending the meeting.

Borough Councillors

Borough Councillor Mrs Mellish reported that the moving of the bus stop in Bridge Street should happen on the 20th and 22nd January.

Public Participation

No members of the public or Councillors wished to address the meeting.

The Mayor, Cllr Starling, resumed the meeting.

2076. To receive Correspondence

A list of the correspondence had been circulated (Appendix 1).
It was noted that the walled area within the VI Form Centre had been fenced off.

2077. To receive Councillors' Questions

Q. Cllr Mrs Mellish enquired about relations between Councillors and Staff.
A. This is a matter for the HR Committee; the grievance procedure is currently ongoing.

2078. To Adopt the Standing Committee Minutes

Planning and Environmental Committee

Proposed – Cllr Daymond

Seconded - Cllr Mrs Sharp

‘That the minutes of the Planning and Environmental Committee meetings of Thursday, 3rd November 2011 (pages 3706–3707), Thursday 17th November 2011 pages 3724-3726) and Wednesday 7th December 2011 pages (3736-3741) be adopted.’

All in favour

Finance Committee

The accuracy of the Finance Committee minutes were questioned and will be deferred until the next meeting.

Town Hall Committee

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded - Cllr Stacey

‘That the minutes of the Town Hall Committee meetings of Wednesday 9th November 2011 (pages 3717-3719) and Wednesday 14th December (pages 3745-3748) be adopted.’

All in favour

Property Committee

Proposed – Cllr Doyle

Seconded - Cllr Daymond

‘That the minutes of the Property Committee meetings of Tuesday 15th November 2011 (pages 3720-3723) and Tuesday 20th December (pages 3749-3752) be adopted.’

All in favour

Community Development Committee

Proposed – Cllr Groom

Seconded - Cllr Pegg

‘That the minutes of the Community Development Committee meeting of Tuesday 1st November 2011 pages (3699-3702) be adopted.’

All in favour

2079. To receive the Clerk’s Report

The Clerk had nothing to report to the meeting.

2080. To approve the Payment of Bills

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

i. Town Council

The Mayor, Cllr Starling had declared a personal interest in this item.

Proposed – Cllr Daymond

Seconded – Cllr Ford

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

For – 15

Against – 0

Abstentions – 1

ii. Town Hall

Cllr Pyatt had declared a personal interest in this item.

Proposed - Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the Town Hall bills be paid as per the attached list.

All in favour

iii. Howdale Community Centre

Proposed – Cllr Pyatt

Seconded – Cllr Groom

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

All in favour

2081. Co-option of one Councilor for Downham Market East Ward

The voting procedure was explained by the Mayor, Cllr Starling. Members cast their votes and Mrs. Marion Ross was elected.

The Mayor thanked the other candidates for their interest.

2082. Election of Mayor Elect

Cllr Doyle proposed that Deputy Mayor, Cllr Pegg be elected Mayor Elect and gave an address. (Appendix 3)

Cllr Groom seconded the proposal that Deputy Mayor, Cllr Pegg be elected Mayor Elect and gave an address. (Appendix 4)

For 15

Against 1

Abstentions 0

Cllr Pegg was duly elected Mayor Elect

2083. To agree the precept for the financial year 2012/2013

Cllr Pyatt gave an introduction to the precept document, (Appendix 5) and Cllr Ford explained the document. The proposed precept would increase the amount charged on a band D property from £81.53 to £83.69 a year.

The Mayor, Cllr Starling thanked everyone involved with preparing the precept. Cllr Doyle reminded members that reserves were high when loan payment had been received to build the fire station car park. Cllr Mrs Mellish circulated a visual aid report, with charts to show percentages of Council expenditure. (Appendix 6).

Proposed – Cllr Pyatt

Seconded – Cllr Ford

‘That the Council accepts the proposed precept of £302,951.00 for the financial year 2012/2013’

All in favour

2084. Youth Council

There has not been a meeting since November; there is an upcoming meeting this month.

2085. To Receive report on Norfolk ALC and NALC – Cllr Teverson to report

No report, Councillor Teverson was not at the meeting.

The Mayor, Cllr Starling adjourned the meeting for report from County Councillor Mrs Hutson.

County Councillor Mrs Hutson apologised for arriving late, she had been at a youth awards presentation at Norwich City Football Club.

- Updating the bus stop situation, Mrs Hutson announced that she had advised Highways to not to work in Town on Friday, (Market Day). A discussion took place but Councillors felt that it was best to just get the job done on whichever days were available.
- Paving slabs, replaced by concrete outside the Town Hall, Morrison’s have up to six months to put the situation right.
- Damage to roads in the Fens is thought to be due to the dry weather.
- Libraries, new initiatives are being put in place including, job seeking, volunteering, help for children to read and advice for over 65s with regard to computing.
- There have been lots of faulty electric blankets at the checking stations.
- From April there will be a new local Health authority, NHS Norfolk.

The Mayor resumed the meeting.

2086. Downham Market Festival

Cllr Groom will be attending the next meeting, which is later this week.

2087. To receive report from the working party to look at the current minute taking procedures (Cllr Reed – Chair)

Cllr Reed reported that:

- The taped minutes are an aide memoire for the minute secretary.
 - New Councillors and members of the public should be told where minutes are being recorded.
 - Consideration should be given to not having three members of staff at Council meetings.
 - Thought should be given to putting committee minutes onto the website. A view had been expressed in the group that other methods of minute taking might be available and that a system where the member of staff clerking a meeting could take notes and produce minutes should be considered.
 - Final minutes should be distributed within 14 days of the meeting.
- The Mayor, Cllr Starling suggested that this matter should be discussed at next month’s Council meeting.

2088. Newsletters

Copy for the next Newsletter should be with Cllr Fox by 25th January for distribution on 29th February.

2089. To discuss future education needs within Downham Market

Cllr Mrs Mellish had declared a personal interest in this item.

The subcommittee has met and produced a range of questions for the prospective meeting.

2090. To receive report from the subcommittee for taking forward the recommendation from the Full Audit

A report had been circulated (Appendix 7)

Cllr Judge had commented that Risk Management should be very specific.

2091. To discuss the following proposition which was put on the table at the November 8th 2011 Full Council meeting

Proposed – Cllr Fox Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the recorded minutes are purely an ‘aide memoire’ for the minute secretary’

- It was noted that recorded minutes are available whilst still ‘draft’.
- Recorded minutes have been kept for a great deal of time in the past.
- Once minutes are approved and signed, then they are the official document, not the recorded version.
- Cllr Mrs Mellish asked whether all recorded minutes could be kept while there is a grievance procedure ongoing. It was noted that the signed minutes are the official document; recorded minutes would not be kept once minutes have been agreed and signed.

Proposed – Cllr Fox Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That the recorded minutes are purely an ‘aide memoire’ for the minute secretary’

All in favour

2092. To discuss new appendix to the current policy on use of IT equipment

The new proposed appendix had been circulated (Appendix 8)

A discussion took place.

Cllr Judge had commented that she thought this was a rather weak document.

Cllr Starreveld enquired what constituted acceptable use of the internet by staff. It was thought that lunchtime use was okay as long as sites visited were not inappropriate, social networking sites should not be visited due to virus problems.

It was noted that face to face discussions were preferable to emails, electronic communication is not secure.

This item is to be left on the table, comments to Cllr Groom or the Clerk.

2093. To discuss the following proposition

Proposed – Cllr Reed

Seconded - Cllr Mrs Mellish

‘That a working group of three Councillors investigate staffing costs, (salaries, pensions, sick and holiday pay, TOIL etc) to ensure the Council is getting best value in the current difficult economic climate and report back to Full Council’

During discussion it was suggested that this item should be directed to the HR Committee.

- Cllr Mrs Sharp reported that the TOIL section had been dealt with.
- The Mayor, Cllr Starling thought that salary matters should go to HR not Full Council.

The Mayor, Cllr Starling proposed to invoke standing order 18, in order to change the order of business so this item could be discussed in confidentiality at the end of the meeting.

County Councillor Mrs Hutson made the point that all County Council officer’s salaries are a matter of public knowledge, it was stated that this would be for senior staff only, who earned more than a specified amount.

2094. To discuss any urgent items as agreed by the Mayor

Cllr Groom reported that Mrs Frances Rayner is to be the Council’s representative for sporting and Olympic 2012 matters. Mrs Rayner would like assistance; Cllr Doyle replied that the Events Committee could assist. This is Cllrs Doyle, Daymond and Pegg, Cllr Groom would like to included as well.

County Councillor Mrs Hutson made the Council aware that the term ‘Olympics’ used with the year 2012 is a much protected phrase.

Cllr Neate announced that Masson Seeley had offered to produce a sign for the Howdale with the suggestion that it be called the Jubilee Field there will be no cost to the Council. This will be considered by the Howdale Community Centre committee.

2095. Mayor’s Announcements

Youth Awards ceremony is on February 10th 2012

The Civic Service is at the Methodist Church on February 12th 2012 at 3.00pm.

St Winnolds Fair is on March 16th 2012.

Proposed – The Mayor Cllr Starling

Seconded – Cllr Pegg

‘To invoke Standing Order 6a, 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

Borough, County Councillors, Public and Press left the Council Chamber.

The Mayor resumed the meeting

2093. To discuss the following proposition

Proposed – Cllr Reed

Seconded Cllr Mrs Mellish

‘That a working group of three Councillors investigate staffing costs, (salaries, pensions, sick and holiday pay, TOIL etc) to ensure the Council is getting best value in the current difficult economic climate and report back to The HR Committee and confidentiality rules are adhered to at all times.’

For 7

Against 9

Abstentions 0

This proposition was therefore not carried.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.28pm.

Chairman

Date