

DOWNHAM MARKET TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 8TH MAY 2012 AT 7.30PM

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
		P W Neate
		Mrs S M Nunn
		M C Ross
		D J Sharman
		Mrs P B Sharp
		A D Stacey
		M D Starreveld
	Borough Councillor	A M Lovett
	Town Clerk	Mrs J M Markwell
	Deputy Clerk	Mrs S D Porter
	Press Photographers	Eastern Daily Press
		Lynn News
	Members of Public	14

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

The Mayor advised that the meeting would be electronically recorded as an aide memoire for minute taking. Councillors were advised that due to the nature of this meeting a video recording and photographs would be taken.

2167. Election of Mayor

The Mayor, Cllr Starling, addressed the Council:

“Well a year has passed since I became Mayor and for the new members elected last year, you have completed your 1st year as Councillors. I am very pleased to see you are still here and we welcomed Marion during the year and thank you for your valued contributions and the support you have shown me and the Council.

“It has not been an easy year in some ways, and the behaviour of 2 or 3 Councillors has been disappointing. But like me, you other 16 or 17 Councillors have stuck with it because we came on this Council not for our own egos or to bicker and find fault with others but to genuinely help and give something back to the Town we live in and I sincerely thank you for not losing sight of that.

“This year we have introduced an Environmental Sub Committee, and formed a Sustainability Working Party to help us deal with ever important issues. The Finance team under the new leadership of Cllrs Pyatt and Pegg rose to the challenge of updating our procedures, addressing forward planning and producing clear and precise figures, not only during Council meetings but to our residents the council tax payers at the Annual Town Meeting.

“I would like to thank all the Chairmen of the Standing Committees for all their hard work, and commitment during the year and urge them to carry on doing their good work and encourage and support others who take on new rolls.

“Thank you to staff and Councillors who have organised events and attended them throughout the year. Again the Water Festival and St Winnold’s Breakfast Parade were a huge success enjoyed by many and are self-financing. Cllrs Doyle, Daymond and the Events team – where would we be without you?

“Ray and I have attended many Civic events throughout the County, and Borough as well as representing the Council at the invitation of many of our own Town’s clubs, societies and organisations; it has been a privilege and pleasure. We have met so many lovely people. It has been especially enjoyable interacting with our schools, at award evenings, sporting events, schools visits and their attendance at Council Events such as Carol singing, St Winnold’s Parade and St Georges Day.

“There have been many memorable occasions throughout the year and I have treasured them, riding through the streets lined with people in an open topped vintage car during the Carnival Parade, Friends and Family Day at RAF Marham with the Red Arrows and of course attending a reception for the Queen at Kings Lynn Town Hall to name but a few.

“We have many events to look forward to in the coming months with The Queens Diamond Jubilee and Olympic Celebrations and ask you to give your support to the running of these for the enjoyment of our residents.

“Robin and Jill thank you very much for your friendship and support during the year. Robin you have been an excellent Deputy Mayor and we have worked extremely well together discussing issues and presenting a united front. You will make an excellent Mayor with your clear thinking and work commitment, thank you.

“All the office staff have been professional and a pleasure to work with, you have been extremely helpful and supportive and have served me and the Council well.

“Jean and Sara as Clerk and Deputy Clerk here is a small gesture of my appreciation.

Cllr Starling presented the Clerk and Deputy Clerk with a card and gift voucher.

“There is however one person who has put their life on hold for me this year and has been constantly at my side wherever I have been to represent the Town and Council. Even attending Full Council Meetings to keep abreast of current issues to help him in his roll, one he took on slightly reluctantly, that of Mayor’s Consort. But ‘if a job’s worth doing it’s

worth doing well', could well be your motto Ray, you as always have been brilliant. You know and I know what we have coped with this year and at times it has not been easy, but your love and support has been unstinting."

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Cllr Starling presented her Consort, Mr Starling, with a bottle of whiskey as a gift of thanks. Mr Starling then proceeded to offer Cllr Starling a framed photograph of her at this year's St Winnold's Event as a token of his appreciation to her.

"As I said before it has been a privilege being Mayor of Downham Market and it's a year I will never forget."

The Mayor, Cllr Starling, asked for nominations for Mayor.

Cllr Doyle addressed the Council:

"Madam Mayor, I am sure you will agree Councillor Robin Pegg your Deputy and our Mayor Elect has been a great support to you and your Consort during your Mayoral year. He has on those occasions when you have asked him to deputise for you represented the Town with dignity and earned the respect of both members of the public and the civic leaders he has come into contact with on yours and our behalf.

"Robin has served the public in one way or another most of his adult life, for many years this was with the police and during this time he has acquired a presence and an easy manor that commands respect from all who meet him and this helps him to mix with all kinds of people on their own level, a skill you will know Madam Mayor that is needed to truly represent our Town and this Council.

"During his time on this Council Robin has taken on the task of mentoring the Youth Council and has guided them through meetings and events they have organised – sadly their numbers are down at the moment but this doesn't diminish the commitment or enthusiasm Robin gives to the Youth Council on our behalf. He is also a valued member of the Events Sub Committee and has played a role in every event organised during the year including the use of his computer skills which have become invaluable to us.

"I believe Robin has the dedication, ability and commitment needed to lead us through the coming year and therefore I have no hesitation in proposing Councillor Robin Pegg as the Mayor of Downham Market for the Mayoral year 2012/2013."

Cllr Mrs Nunn addressed the Council:

"I am happy to second the proposition that Councillor Pegg is elected as Mayor for this new Council year.

"I have known Councillor Pegg for some years now having served with him on the Southern Area Road Safety Committee. In that time I have come to appreciate his depth of knowledge on many subjects but, especially, in the field of law. His training and experience as a police officer have prepared him well for the position of Mayor.

“Also, during his relatively short time on this council, he has been very conscientious in his duties, particularly during this last year as deputy mayor. If there has been anything on Robin has been there.

“Jill, too, will be behind him all the way. Even if she isn’t able to accompany him on all occasions, she will be there in spirit offering her encouragement.

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“I feel confident that the office will be in good hands for another year and, despite the fact that they have a hard act to follow, we shall eventually look back on another good year.”

Proposed – Cllr Doyle

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Nunn

‘That Cllr Pegg is elected Mayor of Downham Market for the ensuing year.’

All in favour

There being no other nominations, Cllr Pegg was duly elected.

2168. Mayor Making and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Pegg and Mrs Pegg received their chains of office.

Cllr Pegg made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Mayor.

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, addressed the Council:

“Thank you. My thanks to all who voted for me this evening. Thank you to Councillors Doyle and Nunn for their proposal words. I am extremely proud to hold the office of Town Mayor and I want to assure the Councillors, Staff, residents and electorate of Downham Market that I will work tirelessly for the benefit of this Council and the Town.

“This will be a very busy year with the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic Games, the Downham Market Festival, and so many other events that are already being planned. I know I don’t have to ask for your support. I know that the majority of you will give of your time to make this a very successful year for the Town. As Deputy Mayor I became involved with many events and met many people. I hope that the enthusiasm that I have shown and given to these projects will continue and that I am worthy of the office of Mayor. I give you all my assurance that I will work relentlessly for the benefit of Downham Market. Jill and I had a Baptism of Fire as soon as I became Deputy Mayor and we were thrown in at the deep end of Festival week. Jill and I enjoyed every minute of it. I never dreamt that I would be hauled up on to the stage of the Town Hall to become part of a double act monkeying about on stage...!!! My thanks for that go to the WI for the splendid evening that I took part in. May I say here thank you to Jill for playing her part as Deputy Mayoress. She has bravely taken on her duties and has supported me and the Council during the past year.

“Now to the more serious part. I want to thank Councillor Starling, Val, for the way she has upheld the Office of Mayor. Val has given her all in what has been a very difficult year for her and the council. She has been devoted and dedicated to the Mayoral duties. Val has had to deal with some extremely difficult situations and problems over the past 12 months. Contrary to what some have expressed, I know Val has dealt with matters in a very

professional and business like way. I do not believe that she has let the Council down in any way. Far from it. Val has given all to promoting our town and to carry out her duties. She has finally seen her major project come to fruition. The skate board park, which, although not fully complete is a credit to her determination and hard work. Well done Val.

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I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to her for being a dedicated and selfless Mayor who had nothing but the good of the Town in all her dealings, whether it was at Council meetings or when she was representing the Town Council at events or Civic functions. I think you deserve that holiday that some thought you shouldn't have had.

“On behalf of Council members and all your well-wishers, thank you for being a quality Mayor for a Quality Council. Thank you for your help, advice and support that you have given me over the past twelve months. If I could, I would raise a glass to you here and now – in fact I will – only water – Val, Thank you. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ray for doing such a splendid job as Consort. I know that he has been left holding the baby on more than one occasion. I think Ray deserves an Oscar! Can I also take this opportunity to thank our Clerk and Deputy Clerk, administrators and events co-ordinators, past and present for all their hard work? Again, contrary to what some feel, without them working so hard we wouldn't get much done and the support that they give is second to none. I raise my glass to you all and pledge my support to you for the coming year.

“As I said last year, the Foxes left the den, and now the Starlings are fleeing the nest. However, the Robin has taken up residence and if you know anything about birds, the feathered variety, you will know that the Robin will defend its territory with much vigour. This means that my pledge will be to support all councillors and staff and to build on previous good work to make this council live up to its good name.

“I know that there will be some difficult times ahead during the coming year, but I am not fazed by this at all and I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead. I can assure councillors and staff that I will support you in all your efforts to continue to make this a successful town in these difficult economic times. Our finances which have been the subject of much debate and turmoil during the past 12 months are now in a much better situation. This is due to the hard work, tenacity and due diligence of the finance team. Thank you all for your dedication. One of the most difficult jobs ahead as I and others see it is to bring the council back together. To start working together to achieve our goals. To work together in a more harmonious way. To put behind us the problems of recent times and look forward. There are still some problems that need working on but I am sure that these can all be overcome. However, this will need the cooperation and commitment of all concerned. There is much to be done and we must work together to achieve our goals. One of our biggest challenges is the Town Hall. This is, apart from the town clock, the centre piece of our town. As you probably know by now, I am passionate about this building. We must work hard to get things done and make the whole place a pleasant experience for all those who use it. It is a fantastic asset and we must endeavour to raise not only its profile but the general appearance of it. This will take time, effort and money. Time we don't have a lot of, money we don't have a lot of. However, effort is something that we can all give. There is a small band of councillors, their wives and partners who put in a lot of effort to raise funds for the Town

Hall. Surely we can all give a little time and a lot of effort to help make the Town Hall a place to be proud of. Thank you to all who give of their time. You make a good cup of coffee.

“The assets that this Town Council hold are second to none, and they belong to the residents. Therefore, we must ensure that that they are fit for purpose, attractive, and above all used to capacity by the residents. I could continue along this vein but perhaps the word ‘verbose’ that has been used a few times during the past year will raise its ugly head again. I make no apologies for my ramblings and my passion over certain things, especially when there is a positive message to get across.

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“I therefore look forward to the year ahead with confidence. With co-operation of all councillors we can continue building a successful, Quality Town Council upon the efforts of all who have gone before us and make for a bright future. May I wish you all a very successful year ahead. Thank you.”

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, presented Cllr Starling with a badge commemorating her past year as Mayor.

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, presented Mrs Pegg with a bouquet of flowers.

2169. To receive Members’ Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr C Pyatt (work commitment), Cllr J Groom (work commitment), Cllr R L Judge (work commitment), Cllr Mrs K A Mellish (work commitment), Cllr J J Reed (work commitment) and County Cllr Mrs S E L Hutson (prior County Council engagement).

The apologies were accepted.

Cllr S C Teverson did not attend the meeting.

2170. To receive Members’ Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Public Participation

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, adjourned the meeting for public participation.

Members of the public and Councillors did not wish to address the Council at this time.

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, resumed the meeting.

2171. Election of Deputy Mayor

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, asked for nominations for Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Stacey addressed the Council:

“David Sharman moved to Downham Market 9 years ago having moved here in preference to Cyprus on his retirement. Of course there was really no contest! Once he had settled in the

town, like so many of us who are retired, he looked around for something useful to do with the result that four years ago in 2008 he looked for a niche in local government and eventually applied to fill a vacancy on the Town Council; on the 14th October of that year I was privileged to second the proposal to co-opt him as a Councillor.

“In the 3½ years he has served on the Council, he has not been idle. His background is that of a professional builder and property developer and he has been determined to put his skills to good use for the benefit of the town which has adopted him.

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“In this time he has served on the Car Parks and Highways Committee, subsequently absorbed by the Property Committee first as a member and then as Chairman; he was a member of the Development Committee, the Town Hall Committee and the Human Resources Committee of which he also eventually became Chairman. This is quite a record for a Councillor who has served for just 3½ years on the Council!

“David Sharman is a doer. He has been much involved in the research on car park charging which is still an on-going topic and he has also taken a great interest in our staff members’ welfare and in staff and councillor relations in his capacity as Chairman of the Human Resources Committee. However it is on the Town Hall Committee that he has really proved his worth with his background of building and development and he has helped to steer the committee through a very difficult period in carrying out the outstanding remedial work we inherited from the Borough Council when we took over the Town Hall. I believe that his expertise together with that of John Doyle saved the Council a great deal of money.

“I have learnt, in talking to him and listening to him that whilst he does a great deal, he is very reluctant to blow his own trumpet and unless you dig deeply you might miss the real David Sharman who is an intelligent, very useful and dedicated councillor and I suspect that in this short address I may still have missed a number of important issues he has been involved in. I supported his adoption in 2008 and I now have great pleasure in proposing that he should represent this town as its Deputy Mayor for the coming year.”

Cllr Mrs Sharp addressed the Council:

“I would like to second Cllr David Sharman as Deputy Mayor. He is one of Downham Market’s unsung heroes in that whenever a job needs doing for the Town Council he is always amongst the first to volunteer.”

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Mrs Sharp

‘That Cllr Sharman is elected Deputy Mayor of Downham Market for the ensuing year.’

All in favour

There being no other nominations, Cllr Sharman was duly elected.

Cllr Sharman received his chains of office.

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, adjourned the meeting at 7.30pm. The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Sharman, and Cllr Starling left the Council Chambers in order for the press to take photographs and returned to the Council Chambers at 7.40pm.

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, resumed the meeting.

Cllr Mrs Nunn addressed the Council:

“I am glad to have the opportunity to express my appreciation of our outgoing Mayor and, I hope I can speak for you all. I think I can say for all of us that she has done us proud.

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“Having been in this position myself 28 years ago, I have been reflecting on the differences between then and now! Then we had one clerk in the little office beside the Town Hall and he only did 30 hours a week. Now we have a lot more staff, a well-equipped office, and a lot heavier work-load, largely dictated by the many rules and regulations put in place by successive governments, over which we have absolutely no control. Then, I remember, the Mayor’s allowance just about paid for the Mayor’s ‘At Home’ and no more. Again things are very different now, and rightly so. Nobody should be deterred from serving the town on grounds of expense.

“However, this is about Val, not me. I thought I worked hard (I was rather younger and more agile then) but Val has done over and above the call of duty. Despite cycling around the town in all weathers, delivering the post, she is in the office afterwards attending to council business before getting ready often to be out in the evening.

“She has always been a credit to our town and performed her duties in a manner that has made us feel proud. Ray too has been an enormous asset to her and to us. It is not always an enviable position playing second fiddle but he has risen to the task with good grace and managed to look as if he was enjoying himself.

“A lasting memorial to Val’s year will be the Skate Board Park which she has worked tirelessly for a long time. Our young folk will be grateful to her, but she has worked equally hard for those of us that have other needs

“Thank you Val and Ray for a splendid year. You will be able to look back with quiet satisfaction. It hasn’t always been easy; in fact that is probably a gross understatement. You gave of your best and we are very grateful. WELL DONE! It’s time you had a good holiday!”

2172. Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies

The representatives to the various outside bodies were appointed as follows:

Downham Market & District Chamber of Trade

Cllr J Groom

Downham Market and Villages in Transition

Cllr M D Starreveld

Downham Market Sports Federation / West Norfolk Sports Forum

Vacant

Festival Committee

Cllr V I Botham

Howdale Community Centre

Cllr J W Doyle, Cllr J Groom, Cllr C Pyatt, Cllr D J Sharman and Cllr Mrs P B Sharp

Joint Burial Committee

Mr R J R Baker MBE, Mr M J Coles, Cllr J K Fox, Mr S W Nunn and Cllr C T Sampson

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Joint Remembrance Day Committee

Mr R J R Baker MBE, Cllr J W Doyle and Mr P Mouncer

Norfolk Association of Local Councils

Cllr J W Doyle and Cllr V F Starling

Safer Neighbourhood Area Partnership

Cllr D J Sharman and Cllr Mrs P B Sharp

Silverdale Centre

Cllr J W Doyle and Cllr J Groom

Southern Area Neighbourhood Partnership

Cllr Mrs P B Sharp

Southern Area Road Safety Committee

Cllr Mrs S M Nunn and Cllr A D Stacey

West Norfolk Arts Forum

Cllr J Groom

West Norfolk MIND

Ms R M Bodle

West Norfolk Tourism Forum

Cllr F E Daymond, Cllr Mrs S M Nunn and Cllr M C Ross

School Governors:**Clackclose School**

Cllr D J Sharman

Hillcrest (Crimpleham, Downham Stradsett & Wereham)

Mr C Moreton

Charities:**100 Acre**

Mr P Allen, Mrs J Day and Cllr C T Sampson

Batchcroft

Mr P Allen, Mrs J Day and Cllr C T Sampson

Retreat Almshouses

Cllr J K Fox and Mrs J Watson

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2173. Appointment of Standing Committees

The Standing Committees were appointed as follows:

Community Development	Finance	Planning & Environmental	Property	Town Hall
Cllr Groom	Cllr Doyle	Cllr Daymond	Cllr Mrs Botham	Cllr Mrs Botham
Cllr Judge	Cllr Ford	Cllr Ford	Cllr Doyle	Cllr Daymond
Cllr Neate	Cllr Mrs Mellish	Cllr Groom	Cllr Fox	Cllr Fox
Cllr Mrs Nunn	Cllr Neate	Cllr Reed	Cllr Judge	Cllr Pegg
Cllr Pegg	Cllr Mrs Nunn	Cllr Ross	Cllr Mrs Mellish	Cllr Sharman
Cllr Ross	Cllr Pyatt	Cllr Mrs Sharp	Cllr Pyatt	Cllr Stacey
Cllr Mrs Sharp	Cllr Stacey	Cllr Starreveld	Cllr Reed	Cllr Starling
Cllr Teverson	Cllr Starling	Cllr Teverson	Cllr Sharman	Cllr Starreveld

Community Development – Appointment of Chairman**Proposed – Cllr Pegg****Seconded – Cllr Ross****‘That Cllr Mrs Nunn is elected Chairman of the Community Development Committee for the ensuing year.’****All in favour**Finance – Appointment of Chairman**Proposed – Cllr Doyle****Seconded – Cllr Mrs Nunn****‘That Cllr Pyatt is elected Chairman of the Finance Committee for the ensuing year.’****All in favour**Planning and Environmental – Appointment of Chairman**Proposed – Cllr Starreveld****Seconded – Cllr Ross****‘That Cllr Daymond is elected Chairman of the Planning and Environmental Committee for the ensuing year.’**

All in favour

Property – Appointment of Chairman

Proposed – Cllr Botham

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That Cllr Doyle is elected Chairman of the Property Committee for the ensuing year.’

All in favour

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Town Hall – Appointment of Chairman

Proposed – Cllr Fox

Seconded – Cllr Stacey

‘That Cllr Sharman is elected Chairman of the Town Hall Committee for the ensuing year.’

All in favour

2174. To inspect the Deeds, Leases and Agreements held on behalf of the Council

The Mayor, Cllr Pegg, advised that a folder was available in the office for Councillors to inspect which held copies of all deeds, leases and agreements for the properties and agreements that the Council has.

2175. To approve the minutes of the Town Council meetings

The approval of the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday, 10th April, 2012 (pages 3854-3860) would be deferred to the Full Council meeting on Tuesday, 15th May 2012. Clerk

2176. To receive Councillors’ questions

There were no questions.

2177. To fix the dates and times of Standing Committee meetings for the coming year

A list of the Standing Committee meeting dates had been circulated (Appendix 1).

The meeting dates were noted.

2178. To confirm bank signatories – Cllrs Doyle, Fox, Pyatt, Reed, Sampson, Stacey and Starling

Proposed – Cllr Stacey

Seconded – Cllr Fox

‘That the 2012/2013 Council bank signatories are Cllr Doyle, Cllr Fox, Cllr Pegg, Cllr Pyatt, Cllr Stacey and Cllr Starling.’

All in favour

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

Chairman

Date