

## **COUNCIL MEETING – 13 JANUARY 2016**

At the meeting of the Sprowston Town Council held at Sprowston Diamond Centre, School Lane, Sprowston on Wednesday 13 January 2016, the following Members were present:-

Mr I Moncur – Chairman

Mr J W Bracey	-	Mrs B J Lashley
Mr W F Couzens	-	Mr K Lashley
Mr R A Fowkes	-	Mrs J Leggett
Mr R J Knowles	-	Mr C L Noble
Mr T Landamore	-	Mr N Shaw

Mr J M Ward

In attendance

Mrs J Hunt	-	Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Mrs E Elliot	-	Committee Officer

No Members of the public were in attendance

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### **16/001. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests were received.

### **16/002. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Verbal apologies for absence were received and accepted by the Council from Mr J H Mallen, Ms G Landamore and Mrs J Poynter.

### **16/003. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Council's meetings held on 16 December 2015, having previously been circulated to all Members were subject to the following amendment

Minute 15/318 (5) after tables **insert** for value added

confirmed and signed by the Chairman of the Council.

### **16/004. POLICE LIAISON OFFICER'S REPORT**

Members noted the instances recorded in the crime statistics for Sprowston since the last meeting.

### **16/005. PRIZE DRAW**

Referring to Minute 15/320, Mr C L Noble asked about the response rate to the questionnaire for the prize draw and conclusions drawn from residents' comments.

The Town Clerk advised that approximately 45 people had responded to the questionnaire. The conclusions drawn from the results was that larger rooms/hall for sporting activities were required, and mothers and elderly people would like to see activities during the day.

#### **16/006. PAVILION, RECREATION GROUND ROAD**

Referring to Minute 15/321, Mr C L Noble asked if quotations had been received for proposed works at Sprowston Pavilion.

The Town Clerk advised that she was still working with the appointed Architect with regard to design.

#### **16/007. PARISH ELECTIONS**

Further to Minute 15/327, the Town Clerk reported that following a challenge to the cost of elections held in May 2015 a meeting was held and attended by the Chairman, Town Clerk and officers of Broadland District Council where the District Council maintained that the amount charged for the election in 2011 was incorrect, with figures for 2015 being reallocated between the three elections taking place in May 2015. The percentages at the poll increased meaning that the count was increased with additional staff costs.

A number of issues were discussed at this meeting including:

- polling stations where it was thought reducing the warding in Sprowston might be a solution
- the splitting of votes into separate boxes by the electorate with no solution identified.
- more postal votes being received, which Broadland attribute to increased costs
- the delay of the election count for the parish, which was attributed to staffing being unable to continue and a recommendation would be made by Broadland District Council that future parish election counts be scheduled for later in the week and not on election day, apart from verification of numbers polled.
- the comparison against the precept increase and the election costs where it was agreed that more notification should be available from Broadland staff with a need for towns and parishes to budget yearly for the election costs.

The Town Clerk also advised that the average cost of an election in Sprowston was identified as £5,000 and the account for the second May 2015 election would be received soon. A request for a reduction by this Council on this occasion was refused by the District Council's Returning Officer.

#### **16/008. SPROWSTON DIAMOND CENTRE**

Further to Minute 15/325, Mr C L Noble enquired if a report had been received from Bidwells with regard to a revised design for Sprowston Diamond Centre.

The Town Clerk advised that she was meeting Bidwells Architect on Friday 15 January 2016 to look at designs from successful community buildings recently developed in the area.

#### **16/009. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

A written report was received from Mr J M Ward.

Mr Ward also verbally reported:

- (1) Housing benefit for new applicants will no longer be the responsibility of the District Council but will be administered by Norwich Job Centre as part of the Universal Credit.

## **16/009. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (CONTINUED)**

- (2) at the full Council meeting of Broadland District Council on 5 January 2016 Councillors voted to discontinue council tax discounts on empty properties, properties undergoing renovation and on second homes.
- (3) The Government would like a larger group of councils than just Norfolk and Suffolk working together and have suggested that Peterborough and Cambridgeshire be included, all to be overseen by one elected Mayor. Talks to discuss this proposal start on 18 January 2016 and there will be a number of conferences for Councillors across Norfolk from 25 January to 3 March 2016.

Mr K Lashley gave a verbal report on his attendance at the reimagining Norfolk Meeting advising that there was a lot of information and an opportunity to comment.

Mrs J Leggett reported:

- (1) that the next meeting of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel would be held on 20 January 2016 at Spixworth village hall. She also commented that a previous priority of the panel had been to reduce anti-social behaviour in the Tills and Edwards Road areas and asked Members if they were aware of any improvement.
- (2) that she had attended a casualty reduction meeting and commented on hot spots at the roundabout to the South of Thetford and Thickthorn to Daniels Road, Norwich roundabout.

## **16/010. RESIDENT'S QUESTIONS**

As no members of the public were present the Chairman moved to the next item of business.

## **16/011. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

**RESOLVED** to accept the finding of the Internal Auditor responding as follows to the recommendations:

- R1 - the Chairman will undertake such a review and provide evidence
- R2 - to review holding reserves in longer term investments until interest rates rise to 2% taking into consideration the Council's Corporate Business Continuity Plan (loss of investment)
- R3 - to confirm if the Council is covered by the requirements of the DCLG Guidance on Local Authority Investments and if so to produce and approve a formal investment strategy prior to the start of 2016-17 financial year to be updated annually.

## **16/012. DRAFT POLICIES**

The Town Clerk explained the new policies being introduced.

1. Crime, Disorder and Community Policy
2. Efficiency and Value for Money Policy
3. Recording of decisions made by offices (delegated decisions) Policy
4. Statement of Internal Control
5. Treasury Management Strategy

**RESOLVED** that the above policies be accepted subject to minor amendments.

## **16/013. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 1Y**

On the motion of Mr K Lashley, seconded by Mr R J Knowles it was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 1Y to complete the business of the evening.

## **16/014. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**

### **COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ALLOTMENTS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

#### **1.1 Pavilion Refurbishment**

Members suggested that representatives from local Churches and the Youth Engagement Project be invited to attend the official opening of the new facilities at Sprowston Pavilion.

### **CEMETERY**

#### **2.1 No matters were reported.**

### **STREET LIGHTING**

#### **3.1 No matters were reported.**

### **CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL**

#### **4.1 Health and Safety Audit**

Members considered the Health and Safety Audit report and it was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations of the Audit Report.

#### **4.2 Barclays Bank PLC**

Following the recommendation of the interim audit report it was **RESOLVED**

to review holding reserves in longer term investments until interest rates rise to 2% taking into consideration the Council's Corporate Business Continuity Plan (loss of investment).

### **PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION**

#### **5.1 Norfolk County Council - Buy a Highways Ranger "top-up" service**

Members noted the Buy a Highways Ranger "top-up" service available from Norfolk County Council.

#### **5.2 Broadland District Council - Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Members noted that Broadland District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee were consulting parish and town councils to identify topics for consideration for their next schedule of work via an on-line survey.

Members identified the following topics:

- New homes across the board including bonus disbursements, rates and precept.
- housing for the benefit of the older person.

## **16/014. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (CONTINUED)**

- Broadland District Council to take responsibility for parking enforcement.
- why Parish and Town Councils are charged for elections.
- linking job creation with house building
- the community bus services to enable older people to use the bus services.

### **5.3 Officer of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk**

Members noted the email headed "Increase or freeze police council tax? - Have your say now".

### **5.4 Broadland District Council - Planning Application 11 Caston Industrial Estate, Salhouse Road 2 x No Non - illuminated Freestanding Sign Retrospective)**

Members noted that the Planning Authority had granted planning permission for 11, Caston Industrial Estate subject to a condition which states that no part of the signage shall overhang or encroach upon highway land.

### **5.5 Norfolk County Council - Norwich Northern Distributor Road - Community Liaison Officer**

Members noted the email from John Birchall introducing himself as the Community Liaison Officer (NDR) and giving details of the next phases.

Mr C L Noble left the meeting room following this item.

## **16/015. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

On the motion of Mr I Moncur, seconded by Mr R J Knowles it was

**RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting for a short break.

The meeting was reconvened.

## **16/016. PLANNING**

The Town Clerk reported that observations had been requested by the District Council's Head of Planning on applications received since the last meeting.

Having considered each application and the accompanying plans the Council

**RESOLVED**

(a) to raise no objection to the following applications:

2015/1969 - erection of detached outbuilding to be used as Gymnasium at 1, St. George Loke

2015/2023 - erection of detached single garage at 160, Proctor Road

2015/2024 - single storey front/side extension (revised proposal) at 2, Blenheim Crescent

2015/2062 - sub-division of plot and erection of 1 No. dwelling with detached garage at 51, Cozens Hardy Road

Y/5/2015/5032 - excavate and dig an area of 250sqm and 150mm deep lay kerbing and concrete and cover with top coat of stone to allow the area to become an overflow car park at Falcon Road West

## **16/016. PLANNING (CONTINUED)**

- (b) were opposed to the granting of planning application 2015/2035 - proposed development of up to 19 dwellings with associated access, open spaces and infrastructure at land south of Moorsticks, Buxton Road, Spixworth on the grounds that it will impact on the safety of cyclists as the proposed access will cut across an established cycle path, adverse effect on the environment with the removal of hedgerows and verges and lack of any provision for affordable housing.
- (c) felt that notification 2015/2079 - EIA Screening Opinion - residential development of up to 3,520 dwellings (C3 use class); up to 16,800m<sup>2</sup> (Gross Internal Area (GIA)) of commercial development (B1 use class); Up 8,800 m<sup>2</sup> (GIA) of hotel development (C1 use class); up to 7,000m<sup>2</sup> (NIA) non-residential uses including up to 5,000m for two form entry primary schools; two community halls, a library, a health centre, and up to five nurseries/creches (D1 use class); an energy centre measuring up to 1,500m<sup>2</sup> (sui generis use class); 82.5ha of green space including up to 20.1ha of play and recreational space and at least 31.3ha of new and retained natural and semi-natural space, and the dedication of Beeston Park as a major new public park; and four accesses to the highway networks was making material changes and that it was imperative that the development is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (screening option) under The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. In the outline planning application page 3 the assessment methodologies used in 2012 should be repeated to give accurate up to date information. Page 4 the original EIA used 2001 Census data within the Socio- Economic Chapter, the 2011 Census has not been applied in this methodology. It was noted that it said that the data is not significant to have given rise to any unidentified significant environmental effects that would warrant a reassessment however Sprowston has incurred substantial development and the Council felt the 2011 Census to now be relevant.

Mrs J Leggett left the meeting following this item.

## **16/017. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S WORKING GROUPS**

No written reports were received.

## **16/018. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Due to the lateness of the hour it was

**RESOLVED** to postpone the verbal report on attendance at the National Association of Local Councils AGM.

## **16/019. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of accounts to 13 January 2016 totalling £75,099.78 and answered Members' questions arising therefrom.

On the motion of Mr R J Knowles, seconded by Mr N Shaw it was

**RESOLVED** that payment of the accounts to 13 January 2016 totalling £75,099.78 be approved and the schedule authorising payment signed by Mr R A Fowkes and Mr R J Knowles.

**16/020. SCHEDULE OF CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS**

The schedule of credit card payments totalling £483.75 was approved and noted.

**16/021. SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBITS**

The schedule of direct debit payments totalling £243.66 was approved and noted.

There being no other necessary business the Chairman of the Council thanked Members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.

**3 February 2016**

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**CHAIRMAN**