

MEETING OF SPROWSTON TOWN COUNCILLORS – 6 JANUARY 2021

At the remote meeting of the Sprowston Town Council held by video conference on Wednesday 6 January 2021, the following Councillors were present: -

Mr J M Ward – Town Mayor

Mr A J Barton	-	Mr R J Knowles
Mr M G Callam	-	Mrs B J Lashley
Ms D Coleman	-	Mrs J Leggett
Mr W F Couzens	-	Mr N Shaw
Mr J F Fisher	-	Mr S C Walker

In attendance

Mr G Ranaweera	-	Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Mrs E Elliot	-	Committee Officer

1 member of the public was present

21/001. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute No. and Heading	Nature of Interest
Mrs J Leggett	21/004 - Sprowston Youth Engagement Project	Sprowston Youth Engagement Project - Trustee

21/002. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies for absence were received and accepted by the Council from Mrs B Cook and Mr J H Mallen.

21/003. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 16 December 2020, having previously been circulated to all Councillors were confirmed subject to the following amendment

Minute - 20/307 6.1, delete £19,6305.03 and insert £19,630.03

and will be signed by the Town Mayor of the Council at the next appropriate opportunity.

21/004. SPROWSTON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Referring to Minute 20/041, the Town Clerk reported that Clair Lincoln, Sprowston Youth Engagement Project (SYEP) had been in contact to advise that Paul Wheeler, Community Outreach Worker had been furloughed. She requested the underspend of Mr Wheeler's salary, majority funded by Sprowston Town Council, be redirected to allow SYEP to provide online activities.

21/004. SPROWSTON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (CONTINUED)

Mr J M Ward proposed, seconded by Mr M G Callam to agree to the request for SYEP to provide on-line activities using the underspend of salary. On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

21/005. POLICE LIAISON OFFICER'S REPORT

Mrs J Leggett reported she had received an example of how North Norfolk dealt with reporting of crime statistics in lieu of Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel meetings for her comment. This system was due to be trialled in Sprowston in April 2020 but had been delayed.

Mrs Leggett offered to circulate the presentation to Councillors for their consideration.

It was agreed for Councillors to respond to Mrs J Leggett by 12 January 2021 with their observations on the process adopted by North Norfolk, to be included in her response to Vicky Bailey.

21/006. CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Broadland District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Council noted the invitation to get involved with Broadland District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee by making suggestions for relevant subjects or issues to be added to their work programme.

Mrs B J Lashley requested the committee produce a guidance document on the process for when town and parish councils should get involved with developers and the planning authority to ensure they have an opportunity to participate in discussions about the allocation of open space.

(2) Norfolk ALC Wellbeing

Councillors noted the vaccination centre update from Norfolk ALC Wellbeing.

Ms D Coleman commented that co-ordination and liaison between Norwich One (the body overseeing the vaccination programme) and surgeries was lacking causing cancellations, with GP's not being notified.

(3) Police Budget 2021-22 consultation

It was agreed Councillors to respond to the Police Budget 2021-22 consultation on an individual basis.

21/007. WHITEHOUSE FARM PLAY EQUIPMENT - INDICATIVE PLANS AND SCHEDULE

The Town Clerk explained that on the previous occasion plans for White House Farm open space was presented Council had requested more information on the equipment.

Pictures provided were examples for illustration only as equipment had not yet been procured.

21/007. WHITEHOUSE FARM PLAY EQUIPMENT - INDICATIVE PLANS AND SCHEDULE (CONTINUED)

The Town Clerk drew Council's attention to the open area north of the skate park's car park which had originally been planned for a youth football mini-pitch, but which had subsequently been laid to open space (L18). He suggested, given discussions and correspondence with Sprowston FC, Council might wish to consider reinstating this area to a football mini-pitch.

There were a number of questions on size and location for a proposed reinstatement of mini-pitch and it was agreed the Recreational Facilities Working Group consider this item further.

Mrs B J Lashley noted that Broadland District Council had declined to relocate the skate park next to Harrisons Woodland away from younger children's play areas. She felt this had lost the essence of what Council was trying to achieve in the Sprowston Neighbourhood Plan.

She asked if Council had an input into who would provide equipment for this scheme and if tenders could go before Council's insurers.

The Town Clerk replied, it was his understanding that a panel of developers would decide on who the commercial contract was awarded to. However, all providers of equipment would be licensed and working to British standards, thus insurable.

He had already discussed ongoing maintenance with developers to ensure ease of procuring replacement parts.

Mr W F Couzens commented that the Town Council required quality equipment.

Mrs B J Lashley asked for reassurance that fixings would be in place to secure wheelchairs to the base of the inclusive roundabout.

Mr M G Callam proposed, seconded Mr J M Ward to accept the recommendations to be tended for, subject to Council having final approval. On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

21/008. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A written report was received from Mr J M Ward.

Mr J M Ward also verbally reported:

I recently attended a presentation on Norse. This has grown in 34 years from a £100k Norfolk County Council investment to a £338m turnover company returning £67m in rebates and dividends last year and £32.42m profit to Norfolk County Council.

It employs 9930 staff and provides 46 work placements. It comprises 40 companies and 36 partnerships and is the largest Local Authority Company in the United Kingdom.

Beryl Bikes in Norwich are a big success with 11,000 riders, 70,000 trips and 266,303 kilometres ridden last year.

21/008. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (CONTINUED)

For the second year running Norfolk has come first among its peers in a national highways and transport survey. Topics surveyed were road safety, highway maintenance, congestion and public transport.

“Go Digital” is a new grant scheme launched by Norfolk County Council in December. It will provide grants of up to £500 and expert one-to-one consultancy for businesses to identify digital opportunities.

Norfolk County Council have just started on the upgrading of another 15,000 streetlights, this is the next step in a successful scheme which has already seen CO2 emissions cut by 12 tonnes as a result of a move to LED lights. 39% of Norfolk County Council streetlights have received the upgrade.

On 31 December 2020, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy granted consent for the Hornsea Project Three off-shore wind farm. There will be up to 231 turbines making landfall at Weybourne running through North Norfolk, Broadland and South Norfolk connecting to Norwich main at Dunston.

Traffic signal equipment is being replaced on North Walsham Road at the junction of Allens Lane. This will commence 25 January for two weeks and involve temporary traffic lights.

Mrs J Leggett verbally reported that Sprowston Working Together Help Group was closed during part of the Christmas holidays but had now reopened. They had assisted with requests for shopping, a puzzle and collection of prescriptions. They were currently advertising for volunteers to help with the food bank, shopping and collecting prescriptions.

Referring to Mr J M Ward’s verbal report on grants for businesses Mrs B J Lashley asked what Norfolk County Council was doing for children at home with no or little technology.

Mr J F Fisher responded that initially all people requiring laptops or equipment were provided for but a number of these had been returned and there was now a stock available.

Some families were trying to manage using mobile phones however, more people came forward for loan of equipment following advertising.

The biggest issue is the lack of a good connection. Norfolk County Council is working with designers to improve connection, but it depends on location. There will be pockets in Norfolk that do not have connection and this is sometimes due to having the wrong provider.

Where connection cannot be provided the County Council is looking at available venues such as village halls.

Mr W F Couzens commented that in the previous lockdown vulnerable families automatically received food parcels.

21/008. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (CONTINUED)

Mr J M Ward advised that if they ring the number advertised, they will receive assistance.

Mr J F Fisher said that during current restrictions the distribution would be handled by Morrisons Supermarket with a better selection on offer than previously obtainable.

21/009. RESIDENT'S QUESTIONS

On the motion of Mr J M Ward, seconded by Mr W F Couzens it was **RESOLVED**, that the meeting be adjourned to receive residents' questions on matters concerning the town. Residents were reminded that their questions should be addressed to the Town Mayor who would, assisted by the Town Clerk, reply.

As there were no questions the Chairman moved onto the next item of business.

The meeting was reconvened.

21/010. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ALLOTMENTS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Council noted the changes to Christmas opening arrangements at Sprowston Recreation Ground and Sparhawk Park following the Prime Ministers television address on Saturday 19 December 2020.

The Town Clerk reported that during the current National Lockdown grounds staff would continue to work as they were able to practice safe social distancing. The office was closed to the public with staff and the Town Clerk working from home. The Town Clerk would attend the office on Fridays. Telephone calls were being forwarded to the Council's mobile.

The Town Clerk informed Council that temporary fencing had been erected on an area of Blue Boar Lane open space due to a problem with leaking sewerage. The problem had been resolved and Anglian Water would be returning to reinstate and reseed in March.

Mrs B J Lashley enquired as to whether play areas were currently closed and if not regularly sanitised.

The Town Clerk confirmed that in line with Government guidance the Tennis Courts and MUGA were closed, playgrounds and public toilets remained open.

Equipment was not sanitised as it would be compromised as soon as one child used it, but signage had been erected with relevant guidance.

A post had also been placed on Council's Facebook page to clarify which facilities were available for public use.

21/011. 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:

2020/2262 - Change of use from a business unit for industrial and warehousing use to adult day centre for Hamlet Centre Trust at Unit D10, Communications House, Pinetrees Road, Sprowston.

2020/2361 - demolition of existing conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension at 33, Rosemary Road, Sprowston.

(b) whilst not opposed to the granting of planning application 2020/2304 - single storey front extension, side-rear extension at 13, Parkland Road, Sprowston, concern was expressed with regard to the reduction of light to the neighbouring property should planning permission be granted.

21/012. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

No written or verbal reports were received.

21/013. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Mr W F Couzens verbally reported that Sprowston Senior Citizens Club (SSCC) was again closed for hire and the Bridge Club had been dissolved.

Mrs B J Lashley enquired if a charity such as the SSCC received grants would the Town Council qualify.

The Town Clerk responded that Council was not eligible for a rate rebate but had recently been awarded £3,000 and prior to that £20,000 for loss of income. He would continue to apply for any further grants available.

21/014. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS 6 JANUARY 2021

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule accounts to 6 January 2021 totalling £8,695.99.

The Town Clerk responded to a query from Mr N Shaw as follows:

657172 - Annual litter and dog bin emptying - litter bins and dog bins were emptied weekly, and twice weekly at Barkers Lane.

On the motion of Mr J M Ward, seconded by Mr W F Couzens it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the accounts to 6 January 2021 totalling £8,695.99 be approved and the

21/014. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS 6 JANUARY 2021 (CONTINUED)

schedule authorising payment signed by the appropriate signatories at the first opportunity

21/015. SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS

The Town Clerk responded to a query from Mr A J Barton as follows:

Credit Invoice No. 69936 N Power: Recreation Ground Electric Nov 19 - Aug 2 was a credit following an over estimated bill.

The schedule of direct debit payments to 6 January 2021 totalling £3,313.56 was approved and noted.

21/016. SCHEDULE OF CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS & BARCLAY VISA DEBIT TO 6 JANUARY 2021

The Town Clerk responded to a query from Mr R J Knowles as follows:

Invoice 1161670 SDC: Heaters x 2 was the purchase of two portable heaters for the Beryl Read Sports Hall. It is a requirement of our Covid-secure measures that hirers ventilate the hall by opening windows. These heaters were used to keep users warm as previously an adjudicator for one of the Council's regular hirers had complained of being cold during an exam.

21/017. SCHEDULE OF CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS & BARCLAY VISA DEBIT TO 6 JANUARY 2021

The schedule of credit card and Barclay Visa Debit payments to 6 January 2021 totalling £115.82 was approved and noted.

There being no other necessary business the Town Mayor of the Council thanked Councillors for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 8.17pm.

27 January 2021

Town Mayor