

## **MEETING OF SPROWSTON TOWN COUNCILLORS – 15 MARCH 2023**

At the meeting of the Sprowston Town Council held at the Council Chamber, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston on Wednesday 15 March 2023, the following Councillors were present: -

Mr W F Couzens – Chairman

Mr M A Booth	-	Mrs J Leggett
Mr M G Callam	-	Mr J H Mallen
Ms D Coleman	-	Mr G S Tingle
Mrs B J Lashley	-	Mrs K Vincent
Mr J M Ward		

In attendance

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

Five members of the public were present

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### **23/071. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS**

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests were received.

### **23/072. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Written apologies for absence were received and accepted by the Council from Mr A J Barton, Mr J F Fisher, Mr R J Knowles and Ms C T Rumsby.

### **23/073. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS**

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

Residents of Wroxham Road expressed their concern with regard to dangerous and inconsiderate parking on Wroxham Road by staff and clients of Friends Dentist Practice. Commenting that vehicles often obstructed the pavement forcing users of wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs to pass them via the carriageway as well as restricting visibility to neighbouring residents entering and exiting their properties.

Further concern was voiced with regard to current plans to extend the premises thus attracting more customers and greater demand for parking.

Residents referred to double yellow lines in front of the parade of shops restricting on-road parking outside these commercial properties. Given that the Dentist Practice is a commercial property, and a precedent has been set, they felt double yellow lines should be extended to the dentist practice and nearby properties. The meeting was reconvened.

## **23/074. PARKING RESTRICTIONS WROXHAM ROAD**

Mr J M Ward reported this had been an ongoing issue for some time. On the particular occasion he had visited site most drivers of vehicles parking in the vicinity were going to Tesco Express. He had spoken to Police who advised if an obstruction occurred residents should contact them. White lines were discussed, however it was felt this would move the problem elsewhere.

Mr J H Mallen reported lorries delivering to Tesco Express made the situation worse. It was an accident waiting to happen as Wroxham Road is a major arterial route from the north of the county into Norwich.

Mr M G Callam said Council had tried to get a 20mph speed limit however, was told it was a feeder route to the Broadland Northway and not appropriate. Council also opposed the granting of the planning application to extend the dental practice. The fact that customers are parking in this location to shop at Tesco supports the claim by residents for double yellow lines.

Ms D Coleman mentioned there used to be double yellow lines on Blenheim Road until resurfacing took place and they were not reinstated.

Since on-street parking enforcement transferred from the police to local authorities there is no longer any law enforcement.

It was noted the most recent planning application for the dental practice was decided under delegated powers. Mrs B J Lashley observed the practice had outgrown the premises which was not designed for business use. She felt Council should express their misgivings to the Planning Authority that permission had been granted considering the objections and highway issues raised. Council should renew their efforts to get double yellow lines on Wroxham Road and reinstate those on Blenheim Road.

Mrs K Vincent questioned the practicalities of ringing police to inform of an obstruction i.e., when on the school run.

Mr J M Ward proposed, seconded by Mrs J Leggett to consult with police before requesting any road traffic measures.

Mr M G Callam proposed, seconded by Mrs K Vincent an amendment to include and report back to Council.

Mrs B J Lashley proposed Council ask the Planning Authority why the application had been considered under delegated powers, why permission had been granted given the size of business and highway concerns and if the highways Authority had been consulted. There was no seconder for this proposal.

Mrs J Leggett offered to investigate.

On being put to the vote the amendment to include and report back to Council was CARRIED.

On being put to the vote the motion to consult with police before requesting any road traffic measures and report back to Council was CARRIED.

## **23/075. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 22 February 2023, having previously been circulated to all Councillors were subject to the following amendments

Minute 23/051, **delete** 11 January 2023 and **insert** 1 February 2023

Minute 23/059 (1), **delete** £1.8m and **insert** £1.8b

Minute 23/059, **delete** Mrs K Vincent verbally reported she had contacted and **insert** Mr W F Couzens verbally reported Cllr. K Vincent had contacted

Minute 23/066, **delete** 22 January 2023 and **insert** 22 February 2023

Minute 23/067, **delete** 1 February 2023 and **insert** 22 February 2023

confirmed and signed by the Chair of the Council.

## **23/076. ACTION FROM MINUTES**

Further to Minute 23/059 (2), Mrs K Vincent reported she had attended an on-site meeting with the Town Clerk and Norfolk County Council's Highway Engineer, Richard Pearson to discuss proposed safety railings outside White Woman Lane school.

It was agreed Mr Pearson to prepare a list of options with costings. This project could be funded from her Norfolk County Council Members allowance or if insufficient also apply for Parish Partnership funding.

Further to Minute 23/060 1.1, the Town Clerk reported installation of a public drinking fountain would be carried out on 16 March 2023. The Junior option was unavailable so the slightly taller adult version had been ordered.

## **23/077. CORRESPONDENCE**

### (1) Norfolk Lieutenancy Coronation Newsletter February 2023

Mrs J Leggett requested the Coronation Emblem be included on all advertising material for the Garden trail.

Mrs B J Lashley proposed, seconded by Mrs K Vincent to officially invite the Lord Lieutenants Deputy to the garden trail.

### (2) Norwich Western Link Update and introduction from Cllr. Graham Plant

Council noted the Western Link Project Update and introduction from Cllr. Graham Plant.

### (3) Offshore Transmission Network

Council noted the update on the Development Consent Order application by Equinor for offshore windfarm projects and **RESOLVED** to continue to support The Norfolk Parishes Movement for an Offshore Transmission Network.

## **23/077. CORRESPONDENCE (CONTINUED)**

- (4) Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk News Roundup Jan - Feb 2023

Council noted the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk News Roundup January/February 2023.

- (5) Sprowston Infant School Organisational proposal

Council considered Sprowston Infant School's Organisational proposal.

Mrs B J Lashley proposed, seconded by Mr M G Callam to welcome and fully support the proposed changes to Sprowston Infant school. On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

## **23/078. PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON ATLANTIC AVENUE TO WHITE HOUSE FARM NURSERY**

Mr M A Booth reported he had received several requests for a pedestrian crossing on Atlantic Avenue to provide safer access to the school and other activities in the area as it is a fast and difficult road to cross.

Whilst Mr J M Ward welcomed the idea he questioned if Council could consider it as Atlantic Avenue had yet to be adopted.

Mr M A Booth suggested developers pay for a crossing to be installed.

Mrs B J Lashley asked if planning permission had been granted for development on the north side of Atlantic Avenue as this could include pavements and an opportunity for developers to share costs for installation of a crossing. She supported the idea to approach developers for funding.

Mr M G Callam agreed in principle advocating installation of a light controlled crossing. However, he queried the practicality of getting developers to fund and install as they were not currently progressing with facilities already agreed in the planning application. He recommended Council keep pressing for Atlantic Avenue to be adopted and introduction of a 30mph limit.

Mr M A Booth proposed, seconded by Mr M G Callam that Council speak to developers with regard to installation of a traffic-controlled crossing from the south side to the north side of Atlantic Avenue close to White House Farm. On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

## **23/079. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

A written report was received from Mr J M Ward.

Mr J M Ward also verbally reported:

- (1) Norfolk Museums are taking part in the National lottery Open Week 18 - 26 March 2023. When you can gain free admission on production of a current lottery ticket or scratch card.

## **23/079. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (CONTINUED)**

- (2) Parana Road will be closed to through traffic 27 - 31 March 2023 for Anglian Water meter replacement works.
- (3) The Mindful Towns and Village Project sponsored by Broadland District Council (BDC) is running Wellbeing Champion training at Sprowston Diamond Centre, Sprowston 4 April 2023, 7.00pm - 9.00pm. Details from BDC Website.

Mrs J Leggett verbally reported:

- (1) She had given four trees, as part of the Broadland Free Tree Giveaway to Sprowston Youth Engagement Project's urban garden.
- (2) Broadland District Council have launched interest-free loans for residents to install renewable technologies or energy saving measures in their homes such as solar panels, cavity wall insulation, double glazing, ground source heat pumps etc.
- (3) Broadland Council's Big Litter Pick 2023 runs from 13 March 2023 to 30 June 2023. Local residents and community groups are being asked to help keep the district looking tidy. Every group that takes part will be given a £20 voucher to spend on their group, charity or local community and there are also twenty £200 prizes.
- (4) Broadland Food waste collection service is now expanding into flats which have sufficient space for this service to operate.

## **23/080. LOCATIONS FOR WILD FLOWERS AREAS ON VERGES 2023**

Council considered the proposal for wildflower areas on highways verges.

In response to Councillors' questions the Town Clerk advised:

- (1) Wild flowers were shallow rooted and would not impact on the crates buried in the green on the junction of Allerton Road and Cannerby Lane.
- (2) With regard to previous rewilding schemes in Sprowston one complaint had been received from a resident on Carleton Road.
- (3) He had not yet replaced the tree on Cannerby Lane Green however, the green had potential to be an area suitable for rewilding.

Mrs J Leggett proposed, seconded by Ms D Coleman to support the proposal. On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

## **23/081. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

On the motion of Mr W F Couzens, seconded by Mr M G Callam it was **RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting for a short break.

The meeting was reconvened.

## **23/082. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

Minutes of the Recreational Facilities Working Group held 10 February 2023 were previously circulated.

Mrs J Leggett reported:

- (1) Planning Application 20221648, White House Farm infrastructure plan L5, L15 and L17 is to be agreed with other areas coming on later.
- (2) L5 has one dog bin and L15 has two dog bins
- (3) L17 is a small area and has no dog bins.

Mr M A Booth felt collections should be increased as existing dog bins were often full and suggested two more were required.

Mrs J Leggett agreed to ask for two additional bins to be located on Atlantic Avenue.

Mr J W Couzens said he had requested Chris Reins to co-locate litter bins with dog bins.

Mrs J Leggett advised:

- (1) Barkers Lane shelter is to be painted on 13 April 2023.
- (2) It was now time to consider looking for someone who would like to run the community café at the Viking centre
- (3) A group who had approached her about rewilding Roundtree Way was now in discussion with their landlord in Saffron House about provision of raised flower beds.
- (4) Cambridge University's agent had again confirmed they did not want to lease or sell vacant land north of Salhouse Road.
- (5) Plans for the summer fete were progressing.
- (6) Mr J M Ward had not received a response to his enquiries for hedgehog signage.

Council discussed whether the Viking Centre's dumb waiter should be retained or removed. It was **RESOLVED** to offer it to Norfolk Museum Service. Should they not want it to remain in situ.

Mrs B J Lashley asked why the Pavilion Floor was a concern.

The Town Clerk responded that whilst a structural survey had not been carried out historically it had been considered prudent to limit the number of attendees given the age and design of the building.

It was agreed the Town Clerk clarify Council's insurance cover for the Pavilion. It was noted that all businesses hiring the Pavilion would have their own insurance.

## **23/083. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Council considered the written report from Mr W F Couzens.

Mr J H Mallen queried if Council was obligated to make changes to the current plans requested by Norfolk County Council Highways and if there was a cost implication.

## **23/083. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS (CONTINUED)**

Mrs B J Lashley asked what were the implications should someone get hurt whilst litter picking and whether volunteers had been informed as to appropriate materials to collect.

The Town Clerk confirmed Council provided litter pickers, bags and hi viz tabards and participants signed a disclaimer.

## **23/084. 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 application:

20230231 - installation of a solar pv roof mounted system on south east facing roof at Eastern Counties Omnibus Co Ltd, Roundtree Way, Sprowston.

20230314 - raise roof with new gable to improve first floor accommodation, new pitch roofs and single storey flat roof rear extension at 60, Wroxham Road, Sprowston.

20230383 - proposed two storey side extension at 3, Park Cottages, Wroxham Road, Sprowston.

20230447 - proposed garage conversion at 2, Clover Road, Sprowston.

20230492 - two storey side extension and single storey rear extension at 29, Blenheim Road, Sprowston.

(b) to raise no objection to the granting of planning application 20230462 - change of use from retail (sales and offices) to rage room (use class E.d) at Technology house, Roundtree Way, Sprowston subject to retention of the 12 existing parking spaces, considerate disposal of waste and adequate provision of toilet facilities.

Additionally, to raise concern with regard to the changing profile of this industrial estate and loss of a valuable employment area.

(c) to oppose the granting of planning application 20230473 - on the grounds that building an extension to the boundary of the property is a move towards terracing.

(d) to oppose the granting of planning application 20230508 - first floor extension over existing ground floor at The Homestead, 5, Mousehold Lane, Sprowston on the grounds it is an overdevelopment of the site.

## **20/085. PLANNING DECISIONS**

Council noted Broadland District Council's planning decisions for week ending 24 February 2023 and 3 March 2023.

## **23/086. INTERNAL AUDIT INTERIM REPORT FEBRUARY 2023**

Responding to the auditor's recommendations the Town Clerk explained:

### 1. Debt chasing

Whilst there is a procedure in place for debt chasing there was a period of time when Council did not have a Finance Officer in post.

### 2. Petty Cash

As petty cash is very rarely used a running total petty cash book would be more practical than an Imprest account.

### 3. Use of new supplier forms

Most new or one-off purchases are made by credit card which includes consumer protection. The few new suppliers tend to be tradesmen such as electricians.

### 4. Use of purchase orders

When orders are made by email they are signed off by the Town Clerk and there is no requirement for purchase orders, which would be a duplication of work.

### 5. Approval of payments by Full Council

The cases identified as in excess of the authorisation limit in the financial Regulations related to the Viking Centre Business Rates and Little John Auditors both authorised by Council.

### 6. Contract recording

The Contract Register has not been updated recently due to the absence of a Finance Officer and the Town Clerk's time.

Mr J H Mallen asked the approximate number of new suppliers Council engaged each year.

The Town Clerk felt this was difficult to identify, but estimated an average of two regular, repeat suppliers.

Council thanked all staff involved in the internal audit.

**RESOLVED** to accept the Internal Audit Report: 2022-23 (Interim).



### **23/087. SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS**

The schedule of direct debit payments to 15 March 2023 totalling £3,704.05 was approved and noted.

### **23/088. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS 15 MARCH 2023**

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of invoices to 15 March 2023 totalling £35,324.34.

Responding to Councillor's questions the Town Clerk explained:

Invoice No. 4402 A.T Coombs - Supply and install Cobra Braces, the braces were to secure a tree which had split.

Invoice No. 928199 Heritage - Repairs to Viking Centre Flat Roof, the tradesperson was sourced through Heritage.

Invoice No. 212462 Moviola Ltd - Supply of Film, the Council generally covers costs, but it depends on how the costs are accounted for. If staff, refreshments and energy costs are taken into consideration this community activity runs at a loss.

Invoice No. 63196 Price Bailey Chartered Accountants, two members of their staff visited site for one day with follow-up contact.

On the motion of Mr M A Booth, seconded by Mrs J Leggett it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the schedule of invoices to 15 March 2023 totalling £35,324.34 be approved and the schedule authorising payment signed by Mr W F Couzens and Mrs J Leggett.

### **23/089. SCHEDULE OF CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS & BARCLAY VISA DEBIT**

In response to a question from Mr J H Mallen the Town Clerk confirmed the invoice from Urban Jungle for £82.00 was purchase of a tree for the cemetery to be recharged to the customer.

The schedule of credit card and Barclay Visa Debit payments to 15 March 2023 totalling £1,137.83 was approved and noted.

### **23/090. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Mr W F Couzens proposed, seconded by Mr M G Callam to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the remaining business because otherwise information prejudicial to the public interests which is exempt by virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act) 1960 Section 1 (2) would be disclosed to them.

**23/091. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT**

Council considered the list of current and closed planning enforcements.

Town Clerk to contact Miss P Maryon to express Council's concerns with regard the length of time enforcement cases were taking to resolve and request the reason be recorded when an enforcement case is closed.

There being no other necessary business the Chair of the Council thanked Councillors for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 9.54pm.

5 April 2023

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Chair