



**Minutes of the Annual Sprowston Town Council meeting held Wednesday 17 May 2023  
at the Council Chamber, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston.**

**Councillors (Cllrs.) Present:** W F Couzens (Chair),  
J Leggett (Vice-Chair)

B Baby	-	A L Parker
M A Booth	-	E H Tovell
S D Booth	-	R H Tovell
M G Callam	-	A R Tipple
D Coleman	-	H W Tarlton
J H Mallen	-	J Vasco

Cllr. K Vincent

**Officers:** G Ranaweera (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)  
E Elliot (Committee Officer)

**Members of the Public:** No members of the public were present

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**23/131. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr. W F Couzens, occupied the Chair and invited nominations for the appointment of Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Cllr. M A Booth proposed, seconded by Cllr. J H Mallen the nomination of Cllr. W F Couzens.

There being no other nominations and on being put to the vote it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr. W F Couzens be appointed Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

**23/132. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Cllr. W F Couzens signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman of the Council in the presence of the Town Clerk, thanked Members for his appointment and then held the office of Chairman for the rest of the meeting.

**23/133. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

Cllr. M A Booth proposed, seconded by Cllr. K Vincent the nomination of Cllr. J Leggett.

There being no other nominations and on being put to the vote it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr. J Leggett be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

### **23/134. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Cllr. J Leggett signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice-Chairman of the Council in the presence of the Town Clerk, thanked Members for her appointment and then held the office of Vice-Chairman for the rest of the meeting.

### **23/135. TO RECEIVE COUNCILLOR'S DISPENSATION REQUESTS**

- (1) The Town Clerk reported that he had granted dispensation to discuss financial matters appertaining to Sprowston to the following Councillors:

Cllr. M A Booth	Cllr. J H Mallen
Cllr. S D Booth	Cllr. A R Tipple
Cllr. M G Callam	Cllr. E H Tovell
Cllr. D Coleman	Cllr. R H Tovell
Cllr. W F Couzens	Cllr. J Vasco

- (2) The Town Clerk reported that he had granted dispensation in respect of setting the scale of Councillors Allowances to the following Councillors:

Cllr. B Baby	Cllr. J Leggett
Cllr. M A Booth	Cllr. A L Parker
Cllr. S D Booth	Cllr. A R Tipple
Cllr. M G Callam	Cllr. E H Tovell
Cllr. D Coleman	Cllr. H W Tarlton
Cllr. W F Couzens	Cllr. R H Tovell
Cllr. J H Mallen	Cllr. J Vasco

Cllr. K Vincent

### **23/136. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Minute No. and Heading</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
Cllr. W F Couzens	Minute 23/153 (d) - Planning Application 20231135	Friend
Cllr. A R Tipple	Minute 23/153 (b) - Planning Application 20220597	Neighbour
Cllr. K Vincent	Minutes 23/153 - Planning	Broadland District Council Planning Committee Member

### **23/137. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **23/138. RESIDENTS' AND COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**

On the motion of Cllr. W F Couzens, seconded by Cllr. M G Callam 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

### **23/138. RESIDENTS' AND COUNILLORS' QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)**

questions should be addressed to the Chairman who would, assisted by the Town Clerk, reply.

Cllr. A R Tipple reported that local residents had sent a petition to Broadland District Council Planning Authority with regard to planning application 20220597 - 1B, Cannerby Lane, Sprowston voicing their concerns of over development and road safety.

The meeting was reconvened.

### **23/139. REVIEW AND ADOPT STANDING ORDERS**

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Standing Orders unamended.

### **23/140. REVIEW AND ADOPT FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Financial Regulations.

### **23/141. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Council's meeting held on 26 April 2023, having previously been circulated to all Councillors were confirmed and signed by the Chair of the Council.

### **23/142. ACTION FROM MINUTES**

- (1) Further to Minute 23/103 (3), Cllr. W F Couzens reported on a site meeting he attended with Cllr. J Leggett, the Town Clerk, PC Gill, County Cllr. J M Ward, Norfolk County Council Highways officer and residents of Wroxham Road to discuss parking issues.

It was agreed in the first instance to paint white H bars to cover approximately one metre either side of each dropped kerb along the western side of Wroxham Road from the zig zag markings of the pelican extending south past the entrance to Falcon Road West. The line would be continuous from the entrance to 177, Wroxham Road to the telegraph pole opposite the junction of Falcon Road West for the safety of motorists emerging from that road and turning north,

- (2) Further to Minute 23/115, Cllr. W F Couzens said there was still discontentment between the Glass House Growers and Independent Matters and he was working with them towards a resolution. It was hoped that the Glass House Growers would be able to continue.
- (3) Cllr. J Leggett reported hedgehog signage had been erected on Pioneer Road.

### **23/143. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

A written report was received from Cllr. J M Ward.

Cllr. J H Mallen questioned how many of the 234,620 trees planted by Norfolk County Council had survived. He also expressed concern regarding recent reports that the Western Link might not proceed due to an incorrect survey being carried out.

## **23/143. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS (CONTINUED)**

Cllr. K Vincent reported results of the County Deal public consultation were now available on the County Council's website. County Council's Scrutiny Committee would consider the results on 18 May 2023 and Cabinet on 5 June 2023 when a decision will be made on whether to proceed and, if so, submit the consultation results to the Government.

## **23/144. FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

### **(1) Internal Audit Final Update Report 2022 - 23**

Referring to Organisational Reporting 3.3 Cllr. J H Mallen asked the meaning of back testing.

The Town Clerk explained auditors chose an invoice or item of income or expenditure and test the audit trail back to the original action.

In response to questions from Cllr. J Leggett the Town Clerk confirmed a formal Contracts Register was in place albeit not up to date. He considered purchase orders unnecessary as he had view of all purchases and authorised their payment.

#### **(1.1) Internal Audit Review Checklist Part 1**

Having reviewed the Internal Audit Review Checklist part 1 it was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chairman of the meeting to complete all questions in the affirmative and sign on behalf of the Council.

#### **(1.2) Internal Audit Review Checklist Part 2**

Having reviewed the Internal Audit Review Checklist part 2 it was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chairman of the meeting to complete all questions in the affirmative and sign on behalf of the Council.

Councillors were advised that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and rights to inspect the Annual Return year ending 31 March 2023 would be advertised.

#### **(1.3) Audit Terms of Reference**

Council noted the Audit Terms of Reference.

### **(2) 2022-23 Statement of Accounts (Income and Expenditure)**

In response to Councillors' questions the Town Clerk explained:

Cost Code 7012 - Audit Fees 115.9% budget spent was due to the change of auditor.

Cost Code 5220 - Maintenance/Equipment 202.8% of £1,000.00 budget spent resulted from unplanned (or unexpected) purchases of additional shoring, to cope with an upturn in burials taking place, and ground mats to protect grass following persistent heavy rain.

## **23/144. FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023 (CONTINUED)**

Cost Code 5202 - Sundries and Contingencies 2,141.2% of £100.00 budget spent following a survey of the Church Wall and sell back of Exclusive Rights to a burial plot no longer required.

Cost Code 1203 -Salaries Account the balance of £7,642 had not been transferred back to the Active Saver Account

**RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet for year ended 31 March 2023.

### **(3) 2022-23 Bank Reconciliation**

**RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the Bank Reconciliation to 31 March 2023.

### **(4) 2022-23 Petty Cash Report**

**RESOLVED** to approve the Statement of Petty Cash for the year ended 31 March 2023.

### **(5) 2022-23 - Schedule of Public Works Loan Board Loans (PWLB)**

**RESOLVED** to approve the 2022-23 Schedule of PWLB Loans.

### **(6) 2022-23 Changes to Asset Register**

**RESOLVED** to accept the 2022-23 Asset Register.

## **22/145. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2022-23**

### **(1) Annual Internal Audit Report**

The Town Clerk advised of a staff change in May 2022 when the incumbent Finance Officer left the Council. The post was covered by temporary staff for several months until October 2022 when the post was filled on a permanent basis. In view of this instability, it was an achievement to receive a green audit.

Council asked for their thanks to be passed on to the Finance Officer, Ewelina Ciak.

**RESOLVED** to accept the Internal Audit Report 2022/23.

### **(2) Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement**

Having considered a sound system of internal control and arrangements for the preparation of the accounting statements the AGAR Section 1 was completed, question 1 to 8 in the affirmative and 9 not applicable.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and authorise the Chairman of the meeting to sign the Annual Governance Statement for year ended 31 March 2023 on behalf of the Council.

**(3) Section 2 - Accounting Statements**  
**22/145. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2022-23**  
**(CONTINUED)**

Having reviewed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 it was

**RESOLVED** to authorise the Chairman of the meeting to sign all accounting documents and supporting statements to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 on behalf of the Council.

**(4) Section 2 - Explanation of Significant Variations**

The Town Clerk explained that town and parish councils with a Neighbourhood Plan received 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts from developers. CIL receipts of £962.065 received by Council in 2022-2023 reflected the level of housing development in Sprowston.

Occupancy is now used to calculate CIL receipts.

The Council's Neighbourhood Plan is due for renewal in 2026.

Council noted the explanation of significant year on year variances in the accounting statements.

**23/146. FINANCIAL YEAR TO END 31 MARCH 2024**

**(1) Financial Risk Assessments**

The Town Clerk confirmed he was conducting one to ones with new employees and annual appraisals would be reinstated (or re-established).

Having reviewed the Financial Risk Assessments for 2023/24 it was

**RESOLVED** to approve the Assessment and Terms of Reference as listed under the Internal Audit Assurance including insurance details checklist.

**(2) Direct Debits**

In response to a question from Cllr. A R Tipple the Town Clerk said it was his intention to organise a common supplier for electricity across Council's buildings and unmetered supply to Council's streetlights subject to any contract tendering restrictions.

**RESOLVED** to approve the Schedule of Direct Debits.

**23/147. INSURANCE COVER**

- (1) Employers Liability
- (2) Public Liability
- (3) Motor Insurance

## **23/147. INSURANCE COVER (CONTINUED)**

(4) Policy Schedule

Cllr. J H Mallen enquired why the building sum insured for the Viking Centre was £1,122,000.00 when the purchase price was £370.00.

The Town Clerk explained valuations for insurance purposes had been obtained from Bidwells and represented the rebuild value.

**RESOLVED** to confirm the arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

## **23/148. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

On the motion of Cllr. W F Couzens, seconded by Cllr. A R Tipple it was **RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting for a short break.

The meeting was reconvened.

## **23/149. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Local Government Association Councillor Code of Contact.

## **23/150. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

### **(1) Staffing Committee**

**RESOLVED** those appointments be made to serve on the Staffing Panel as follows:

Cllr. M G Callam  
Cllr. J Leggett  
Cllr. J H Mallen  
Cllr. A L Parker  
Cllr. R H Tovell  
Cllr. E H Tovell

### **Recreational Facilities Working Group**

**RESOLVED** those appointments be made to serve on the Recreational Facilities Working Group as follows:

Cllr. M A Booth  
Cllr. S D Booth  
Cllr. M G Callam  
Cllr. D Coleman  
Cllr. W F Couzens  
Cllr. J Leggett (Chair)  
Cllr. J H Mallen  
Cllr. A R Tipple  
Cllr. J Vasco

**23/150. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO SERVE ON COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS (CONTINUED)**

**(2) External Organisations for Municipal Year 2023-2024**

**(i) Senior Citizens Welfare Committee**

Cllr. W F Couzens  
Cllr. J Vasco

**(ii) Sprowston Heritage**

Cllr. B Baby  
Cllr. W F Couzens  
Cllr. J Leggett  
Cllr. H W Tarlton

**(iii) Grow Your Community Group**

Cllr. W F Couzens  
Cllr. J Leggett  
Cllr. E H Tovell

**(iv) Representative to Norfolk ALC**

Cllr. J Leggett

**23/151. REVIEW OF STAFF SUBSCRIPTIONS / OTHER BODIES FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-2024**

**RESOLVED** to continue with the following subscriptions:

**(i) Norfolk ALC**

**(ii) SLCC Clerk**

**(iii) Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management**

**23/152. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLORS TO SERVE AS BANK SIGNATORIES, FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-2024**

**RESOLVED** to appoint the following Councillors to serve as bank signatories, for municipal year 2023-2024:

Cllr. M A Booth  
Cllr. M G Callam  
Cllr. W F Couzens  
Cllr. J H Mallen  
Cllr. A L Parker



## **23/153. 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:

20230899 - single storey rear extension and alterations at 103, Lone Barn Road Sprowston.

20231017 - single storey flat roof extension at 31A, Allens Avenue, Sprowston.

(b) to oppose the granting of planning application 20220957 - construct new roof over existing building at 1B, Cannerby Lane, Sprowston on the grounds that the amended application does not represent adequate improvement on the original application. The amended application does not adequately address all concerns Town Council previously raised about the original application. Therefore, Town Council's position on the amended application is unchanged from its view on the original application.

Overdevelopment of the site which will cause neighbouring properties to suffer overlooking/loss of privacy; loss of light or overshadowing.

Insufficient on-site parking space. This will cause additional on-street parking on Cannerby Lane very near to the busy junction with Wroxham Road A1151. Council believes this will affect road safety and impede traffic flow at this junction. On-street parking will also narrow the footpath on Cannerby Lane which is high footfall route for school children attending the nearby high school. A narrow footpath will increase the likelihood of school children walking in the road near the junction and therefore the likelihood of a road traffic accident will also increase.

(c) to oppose the granting of planning application 20231103 - replacement roof with dormers and rooflights to form new first floor at 23, Thornham Close, Sprowston on the grounds that there is insufficient communal living space for the number of likely occupants given the proposal is to increase the size of the property to six bedrooms.

Lack of on-site parking for a property of this size.

(d) to oppose the granting of planning application 20231135 - removal of boundary wall and replace with fence panels, gravel boards and concrete posts at 15, Inman Road, Sprowston on the grounds that six-foot fencing would be detrimental to the open design of this residential area turning the adjacent public footpath into an alleyway.

(e) to support the serving of a new Tree Preservation Order at 5, Church Lane, Sprowston.

### **23/154. PLANNING DECISIONS**

Council noted Broadland District Council's planning decisions for weeks ending 21 April 2023 and 28 April 2023.

### **23/155. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS**

Cllr. J Leggett confirmed a verbal report on the meeting of the Recreational Facilities Working Group (RFG) held 11 April 2023 had been made at the Full Council meeting held 26 April 2023.

### **23/156. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

Cllr. W F Couzens reported on his attendance at the Senior Citizens coffee morning. He also mentioned Sprowston Community Dementia Café met every third Thursday of each month and welcomed new volunteers.

### **23/157. SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS**

In response to a question from Cllr. J H Mallen the Town Clerk advised:

Invoice No.CD-223603483 Oasis Core rental charge, service and maintenance included 4 services per annum and the rental charge is for the drinking water machines located at Sprowston Diamond Centre.

The schedule of direct debit payments to 17 May 2023 totalling £1,845.42 was approved and noted.

### **23/158. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS - INVOICES TO PAY 17 MAY 2023**

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of invoices to 17 May 2023 totalling £26,321.63.

On the motion of Cllr. M G Callam, seconded by Cllr. J H Mallen it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the schedule of invoices to 17 May 2023 totalling £26,321.63 be approved and the schedule authorising payment signed by Cllr. W F Couzens and Cllr. J Leggett.

### **23/159. SCHEDULE OF CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS & BARCLAY VISA DEBIT**

The schedule of credit card and Barclay Visa Debit payments to 26 April 2023 totalling £859.47 was approved and noted.

### **23/160. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Cllr. W F Couzens proposed, seconded by Cllr. 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.

**23/161. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT**

Council considered the list of current and closed planning enforcements and

There being no other necessary business the Chair of the Council thanked Councillors for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 9.50pm.

31 May 2023

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Chair