



**Minutes of the Sprowston Town Council meeting held Wednesday 6 December 2023
at the Council Chamber, Recreation Ground Road, Sprowston.**

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

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

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

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

23/317. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute No. and Heading	Nature of Interest
M G Callam	Minute 23/300 Sprowston Youth Engagement Project	Trustee - Sprowston Youth Engagement Project
W F Couzens	Minute 23/331 Planning - Application 2023/3391	Acquainted with the applicant

23/318. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Written apologies for absence were received and accepted by the Council from Cllrs. A R Tipple, E H Tovell and K Vincent.

23/319. RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

On the motion of Cllr. W F Couzens, seconded by Cllr. A L Parker, 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.

As there were no residents' or councillors' questions the meeting was reconvened.

23/320. MINUTES

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

Minute 23/310. Paragraph two, **delete** intened and **insert** intended

confirmed and signed by the Chair of the Council.

23/321. ACTION FROM MINUTES

Viking Centre

Further to Minute 23/279, the Town Clerk reported tenders for the Viking Centre re-development had been received. He asked for volunteers to assess each application together with the Town Clerk and Bidwells Jason Menezes and make a recommendation to full Council.

Volunteers included Cllrs. B Baby, M G Callam, D Coleman and J Leggett to meet Friday 8 December 2023 at 12.30pm.

23/322. POLICE UPDATE

Cllr. J Leggett reported Norfolk Constabulary's Safer Neighbourhood Teams priority setting meeting would be held Friday 8 December 2023 at 7.00pm in the Jones Room, Sprowston Diamond Centre, Sprowston.

Cllr. J H Mallen said there had been two road traffic accidents in the space of ten days in the vicinity of the parade of shops on Wroxham Road.

He asked if Council could speed up the process of introducing additional White H lines.

Building works at both the dentist and residential property opposite was exacerbating parking issues creating pinch points for larger vehicles causing tail backs at peak times.

The car park outside the parade of shops was under extreme pressure with shoppers, deliveries and patrons of the recently opened café.

Cllr. S D Booth commented that higher usage of the pedestrian crossing during the school run also impacted on traffic flow.

Cllr. D Coleman remarked that she had seen a large delivery vehicle circumnavigating Blenheim Road and Cozens Hardy Road as unable to find a parking space to unload. These residential roads were unsuitable for such large vehicles.

Cllr. H Tarlton suggested proprietors be encouraged to relook at the parking bay and make improvements.

It was agreed the Town Clerk contact Richard Pearson (Norfolk County Council's Highways Engineer) to review signage arrangements to improve ingress and egress to the car park.

23/323. CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Norwich Western Link Update

Council noted the Norwich Western Link Project Update.

23/324. REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Cllr, M A Booth verbally reported:

(1) A Broadland District Council meeting was due to be held 14 December 2023.

(2) After much chasing, the developer had arranged for both dog and litter bins to be emptied on a regular basis at the White House Farm development. The delay was due to the original contractor refusing to empty litter bins containing dog faeces. A new contractor had since been engaged.

A written report was received from Norfolk County Councillor J M Ward.

23/325. BEESTON PARK DEVELOPMENT

Councillors discussed the Beeston Park illustrative master plan map (Rev K) and Council's requirements for recreational amenities.

It was noted the current design was different from previous plans submitted. Specific areas of divergence are:

- removal of the proposed village green and town centre
- decreased industrial/business land allocation
- absence of formal recreational amenities within the residential centre
- the reduction in existing woodland to accommodate development
- lack of green highways throughout the development

Council requested the inclusion of the following recreational and amenity facilities:

- Good quality land suitable for allotments
- A variety of football pitches (11s, 9s 7s), with onsite storage facilities for equipment; changing rooms; car parking
- A community building or hall
- Public access multi use games area
- Outdoor gym area
- High-quality informal recreational space (NOT verges, SUDS, or "leftover" corners)
- Dedicated bicycle routes throughout (and particularly to schools) providing a safe alternative to car use
- Carparking (and possible toilet facilities) for visitors to Beeston Park itself
- Formal recreational facilities within the residential area
- Retention of all existing mature trees (in particular; along Church Lane)
- Green highways
- Land provision for a health hub (doctor's surgery, dentist, etc)
- Land provision for a Community Centre/Village Hall

23/325. BEESTON PARK DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

- Swimming Pool (A 2020 survey of Sprowston residents identified this as a top two priority)
- A Town Centre as proposed in previous planning applications
- A plan to ensure public amenities are delivered to coincide with the occupancy of housing and not left to the very end of the house building programme

Council also questioned:

- The high density of housing
- The wisdom of diverting a major arterial road (B1150) carrying 1000's of vehicles per day into a residential centre and bisecting the development into two. Councillors noted this was contrary to recent trends in road planning where, increasingly, densely populated areas are bypassed to reduce excessive traffic and associated pollution for residents.
- Availability of the design code for this redesigned development and the ethos behind it
- Involvement of the company 'Urbed' as it appears to have ceased trading in January 2023
- The name of the current developers?
- The unclear route of the link road from Wroxham Road to Buxton Road, in particular the junction where the link road joins Wroxham Road

Council was hugely disappointed that despite its letter (dated March 2022) to Phil Courtier, Director of Place at Broadland District Council (BDC) and numerous meetings throughout 2023 with BDC's Major Development Manager Chris Raine, where Council had repeatedly requested recreational amenities and other facilities be included in the Beeston Park development (and any future large scale applications); the illustrative master plan submitted by the developers on 31 January 2022 had not been updated to take Council's wishes into account.

Council agreed a more detailed map including infrastructure was required.

Cllr. M A Booth offered to raise the Council's concerns with the District Council's Cabinet following submission of the Town Council's comments to Chris Raine.

RESOLVED Town Clerk to submit the Town Council's list of requirements for formal and informal recreational amenities in the upcoming Beeston Park development, plus details of any other concerns to Chris Raine.

23/326. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK

COMMUNITY BUILDINGS, ALLOTMENTS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

1.1 Sprowston Diamond Centre - Community Cinema Proposal for a Childrens' Film Show in Easter 2024 School Holiday

Council supported the proposal to hold a Childrens' Film Show in Easter 2024 School Holiday.

Cllr's. J H Mallen and A L Parker volunteered to assist with the event.

23/326. REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK (CONFIRMED)

Cllr. M G Callam proposed, seconded by Cllr. R H Tovell to approve a Childrens' screening of "Wonka" (Cert PG) 10.00am on Thursday 4 April 2024 in Sprowston

Diamond Centre School Room with a ticket price of £2.00. On being put to the vote the motion was CARRIED.

1.2 Blue Boar Lane Open Space

Councillors noted the sewer running under the Council's Blue Boar Lane and Chopyngs Dole play areas is scheduled for major work with trial holes being dug commencing 8 January 2024 when machinery will access the open space and play areas.

Town Clerk to continue liaising with Anglian Water.

1.3 Millennium Woodland

Further to the Town Clerk's report on conservation volunteers planting bulbs and clearance work at Millennium Woodland Cllr. D Coleman confirmed coppicing and planting of English Blue Bells had taken place.

CEMETERY

2.1 No matters were reported

STREET LIGHTING

3.1 No matters were reported

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

4.1 Recruitment of a New Grounds Maintenance Person

Council noted the appointment of a new groundsman from 8 January 2024 subject to references.

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

5.1 No matters were reported

ATTACHMENTS

6.1 Blue Boar Lane Sewer Maintenance Works - Email and Maps

23/327. BIODIVERSITY DUTY UNDER THE 2021 ENVIRONMENT ACT

Council considered its statutory duty under the 2021 Environment Act. Council received a model biodiversity policy and draft model action plan.

Cllr. J Leggett commented that whilst action plans were a good idea Council should carefully consider what it could achieve.

23/327. BIODIVERSITY DUTY UNDER THE 2021 ENVIRONMENT ACT (CONTINUED)

The Recreational Facilities Working Group could look at the policy and draft an action plan.

The Town Clerk referred Councillor's to the NALC Model Bio-Diversity Policy and the commitment to carry out a biodiversity audit of Council's landholdings, typically conducted by a professional specialist ecological surveyor paid for by the Council.

He also advised Council's only obligation under the Act is to consider what they can do conserve and enhance biodiversity. The best intention is to adopt the policy as soon as possible.

RESOLVED

- (1) To consider investigating options for conducting a bio-diversity audit of Council's land holdings
- (2) Consider adopting an appropriate Bio-Diversity Policy and review the model policy.
- (3) Nominate Councillor/s to attend Biodiversity Zoom session on 9 February 2024
- (4) In the interim take the model policy under advisement.

Cllrs. M G Callam, D Coleman, W F Couzens, J Leggett and J H Mallen agreed to attend the Biodiversity Zoom session on 9 February 2024.

23/328. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Cllr. W F Couzens, seconded by Cllr. S D Booth it was **RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting for a short break.

The meeting was reconvened.

23/329. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

- (1) Recreational Facilities Working Group (RFGW)

Cllr. J Leggett expressed her disappointment with regard to the RFGW's meeting with the District Council's Major Development Manager Chris Raine to discuss planning application 2023/1943 (Details of Condition 21 of 2014/0652 (21) Landscape proposals) Land at Blue Boar Lane. Given the size and complexity of the application it was thought the District Council's Planning department would be more helpful. However, it has been left to Town Councillors to sift through the application to ensure all Council's requirements are included the application and the Town Council has not been allocated areas of responsibility not previously agreed to.

- (2) Heritage Working Group

Cllr. Tarlton reported he had spoken to a local website designer who had not as yet responded with a price.

23/329. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS
(CONTINUED)

Cllr. B Baby advised that it would be significantly cheaper to outsource web design to another country.

Help will be required to migrate data.

Cllr. J Leggett was still concerned about the Statement of Requirements.

23/330. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OR AT
OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Councillor W F Couzens reported:

- (1) the Chairman of Broadland District Council, Mayor of Norwich and himself had attended the Sprowston Dementia Community Café on 16 November.
- (2) He had attended the Christmas lights switch on at a property in Glenburn Avenue where over £1,250.00 was raised for charity.

23/331. 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:

2023/2766 - single storey side extension with internal and external alterations at 276, Constitution Hill, Sprowston

2023/3391 - variation of condition 2 of 20160457 - alter hip roof at rear to gable and enlarge rear windows in height. Change downstairs bedroom to dining area and change the window to patio doors and add highline window. Form covered area over front door at 21, Church Lane, Sprowston.

2023/3476 - single storey rear extension to replace conservatory at 38, Russell Avenue, Sprowston

2023/3489 - single storey side extension with link extension to existing garage at 1, St. George Loke, Sprowston

2023/3492 - single storey side and rear extension at 36, Russell Avenue, Sprowston

2023/3512 - proposed single storey rear and side extension at 60, Linacre Avenue, Sprowston

2023/3556 - single storey side and rear extension at 19, School Lane, Sprowston

23/331. PLANNING (CONTINUED)

2023/3560 - installation of 1 no. 20m telecommunications street works pole, 1 no. equipment cabinet, 1 no. meter cabinet and associated ancillary development at verge at North Walsham Road, Beeston St. Andrew

2023/3570 - proposed single storey rear extension at 28, Lone Barn Road, Sprowston

23/332. AGREE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP

In response to a question from Cllr. J Leggett the Town Clerk said it was his understanding that benefits (25% Community Levy Receipts) associated with the existing Neighbourhood Plan remained in place until the new Neighbourhood Plan was adopted. He would make enquiries to confirm this.

Cllr. M A Booth proposed, seconded by J H Mallen to adopt the Sprowston Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Group draft, Terms of Reference. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

23/333. FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024 - SECOND QUARTER BANK INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Town Clerk reported that despite inflating the 2022/23 budget to cope with rising energy costs the Council will still be overspent energy. Given the significant and ongoing price increases, careful consideration should be given to what could be an appropriate allocation for 2024/25.

In response to questions from Cllr. M G Callam the Town Clerk explained

Cost Centre 5502 - 501.6% of budget spent was due to the installation of a Water Fountain at Sprowston Recreation Ground.

Cost Centre 7020 - 177.1% budget spent was following bulk purchase of stamps prior to a price increase.

23/334. FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024 - SECOND QUARTER BANK RECONCILIATION TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED to approve and adopt the Bank Reconciliation to 30 September 2023.

23/335. 2020-2024 BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET PLANNING FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-25

Councillors considered the Business Plan Action Plan and it was agreed the Town Clerk draft a revised plan to include the following for consideration at a future meeting of the Council:

1.2a Increase budget for website update

4.6 Explore feasibility for provision of an infant play area and adult fitness equipment on the Diamond Field

23/335. 2020-2024 BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET PLANNING FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024-25 (CONTINUED)

4.7 Obtain costings for converting one grass tennis court to all-weather and one grass tennis court to enlarge the enclosed children's play area on Sprowston Recreation Ground.

5.3b Proceed with phased streetlight replacement programme

5.4b Remove item

6.4 Include a statement to cover all potential partners

23/336. SCHEDULE OF DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS

The schedule of direct debit payments to 6 December 2023 totalling £14,554.24 was approved and noted.

23/337. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer presented the schedule of invoices to 6 December 2023 totalling £19,230.81.

On the motion of Cllr. R H Tovell, seconded by Cllr. H Tarlton it was **RESOLVED** that payment of the schedule of invoices paid to 6 December 2023 totalling £19,230.81 be approved.

There being no other necessary business the Chair of the Council thanked Councillors for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

20 December 2023

Chair