



**Minutes of the Meeting of Sleaford Town Council held on
Wednesday 15th February 2023 at 7.00pm, at The Town Hall, Sleaford**

Present:

Cllr Linda Edwards-Shea – Chairman
Cllr James Thomas – Vice Chairman
Cllr Bozena Allan
Cllr David Darmon
Cllr Paul Edwards-Shea
Cllr Ken Fernandes
Cllr Tarek Hayat

Cllr Heather Lorimer
Cllr Robert Oates
Cllr Malcolm Offer
Cllr John Parry
Cllr Adrian Snookes
Cllr Alison Snookes
Cllr David Suiter

Also in attendance: Mr Chris Pilkington (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer),
Mrs Debbie Scott (Minute Taker) and three Members of the Public

23.24 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. She also reported the death of a parishioner who had been one of the volunteer litter pickers in the Town. The Town Council would be sending a condolence card to his family.

23.25 APOLOGIES

Apologies for the meeting had been received from Cllr Linda Lowndes, Cllr Melody Shanahan-Kluth, Cllr Stephen Shanahan-Kluth and Cllr Mark Smith.

RESOLVED: That the reasons for absence of Cllrs Lowndes, M Shanahan-Kluth, S Shanahan-Kluth and Smith be approved.

23.26 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

(a) To receive disclosures by members of any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and any other relevant interests under the Members' Code of Conduct.

None

(b) To receive and decide upon requests for dispensations to councillors to take part in discussions and votes where they have declared disclosable pecuniary interests

None

23.27 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Members of the public raised questions on the following:
Anglian Water's proposed reservoir – the Clerk gave a brief update based on information received from AW. It was suggested that a link to AW's website be added to the Council's website to share the latest updates,
National trial of noise cameras. It was suggested that this was a matter for North Kesteven District Council and that the district councillors present share their contact details with the relevant member of the public.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

23.28 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 18th January 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 18th January 2023, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman of the Council.

(b) Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 25th January 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 25th January 2023, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman of the Council.

23.29 CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported on events that had taken place since her previous report, including being interviewed on Radio Lincolnshire to promote the Burns Night on 21st January, a planning briefing at RAF Digby and a meeting about the RiverLight Festival being planned for Saturday 21st October with fringe events the preceding week. She had also attended a meeting at North Kesteven District Council with the Chairman of Sleaford Castle Heritage Group to discuss the Castle project. She reported that the Burns Night had raised £248 for the Mayor's Charities and thanked everyone involved. The next Civic Event, Sleaford Slam, was planned for 25th February 2023 and the Chairman had already been interviewed on Radio Lincolnshire to promote it.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

23.30 TOWN CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer updated members on his work since the last report to Council on 18th January. This included supporting and attending meetings of the full Council on 25th January, meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group on 27th January and 3rd February, a meeting of the Sleaford Castle Heritage Group on 2nd February, a meeting of the S106/CIL Task & Finish Group on 9th February and a meeting of the HR Committee on 10th February. He had also attended meetings with North Kesteven District Council to talk about the Market Place, Eastgate Car Park, litter picking, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and anti-social behaviour happening in Money's Yard toilets. With the Chairman, the Clerk had attended the briefing at RAF Digby and a visit to Sleaford Castle and, with members of the S06/CIL and staff, he had met with potential play equipment suppliers. With the Administrative Officer (SG), he had attended the North and South Kesteven Safety Advisory Group to discuss events planned for 2023. The Clerk also shared an updated list of high, medium and longer term priority work areas, highlighting the projects that could benefit from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which had a completion deadline of March 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

23.31 GOVERNANCE MATTERS

(a) National Allotment Society

The Clerk explained the benefits of joining the Society, in terms of model documents and legal advice. The current membership subscription cost was £55 + VAT.

RESOLVED: That the Council become a member of the National Allotment Society.

(b) Revised Grievance and Disciplinary Policies for the Council

The Clerk explained that the HR Committee had agreed to recommend to the full Council that it adopted revised grievance and disciplinary policies based on the model versions produced by the National Association of Local Councils. The documents had only recently been circulated and it was suggested that consideration of the documents be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

RESOLVED: That approval of the revised grievance and disciplinary policies be deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

23.32 PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS

(a) Request from Tesco Stores Ltd to extend an option agreement over Town Council owned land.

The Clerk explained that the option agreement with Tesco had expired on 25th January 2023 even though Tesco had asked to extend it before that date. The complication in terms of getting the legal work done in time had been that three parties were involved rather than two. Namely the Town Council, Tesco and Fields in Trust. A discussion took place and it was asked whether the Council could now chose to not have a new option agreement at all.

It was understood that the Tesco could now be looking at alternative proposals for the land. He added that the issue was further complicated by the need to also reach agreement with Fields in Trust. It was suggested that a fresh start be made.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk continue to liaise with the Council's solicitors regarding the option extension but also to ask whether the Council could now chose to not have an option agreement and to provide an update to the next meeting of the Council.

(b) Planning Application 23/0082/FUL, Change of use to tattoo and piercing studio. 80 Southgate, Sleaford, NG34 7RL.

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(c) Planning Application 23/0120/FUL, Change of use of the existing public house from Sui Generis to create 4no. guest rooms (Class C1) & retention of first floor flat (Class C1 (resubmission of 22/1028/FUL). Former Marquis of Granby, 65 Westgate, Sleaford, NG34 7PU.

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(d) Planning Application 23/0118/RESM, Reserved matters application for erection of 34 residential dwellings within parcel 2A (part replan of 21/0276/RESM to provide an additional 11 dwellings) pursuant to outline planning permission 15/1347/OUT - Erection of up to 1,100 dwellings and 150 care/retirement units (C2/C3), the formation of a roundabout to Camp Road, A46 junction improvement works, public open spaces and associated service infrastructure (outline with means of access). Witham St Hugh's Cell 2A East Of Camp Road And North Of Hannah Crescent Witham St Hugh's Lincolnshire LN6 9GD.

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(e) Planning Application 22/1545/FUL, Erection of 3 dwellings and the conversion of an existing curtilage listed outbuilding to be associated with one of the new dwellings. Land Adjacent To 22 & 24 Town Road, Quarrington, Sleaford.

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(f) Planning Application 22/1546/LBC, Erection of 3 dwellings and the conversion of an existing curtilage listed outbuilding to be associated with one of the new dwellings. Land Adjacent To 22 & 24 Town Road, Quarrington, Sleaford.

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(g) Planning Application PL/0003/23, Development for the construction of a new 3G synthetic multi-use games area to replace the existing natural grass playing area, Church Lane Primary School, Church Lane, Sleaford.

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(h) Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Review – Proposed Main Modifications Consultation

RESOLVED: That no response be made.

(i) Boston Road Layby

The Clerk spoke to the report on the layby in relation to which ownership and maintenance responsibilities were not clear. The Town Council owning part but not all of the site and the layby appearing to still be public highway and therefore the maintenance responsibility of the County Council. The layby was badly potholed and needed repairing as it was an access area to the Boston Road Recreation Ground and the Coronation celebrations at the Ground would be happening in May. The Acting Deputy Clerk had sourced four quotes for the resurfacing to be done and the recommendation was to accept Quote A (£22,308.92 + VAT). The other recommendation was for the Town Council to liaise with North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council with a view to the Town Council becoming the recognised legal owner of the whole site and extinguishing any residual status of the layby as public highway.

RESOLVED: That quote A, for £22,308.82 plus VAT, be accepted for the resurfacing work at the layby. Moreover that the Council liaise with North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council to formalise the Town Council's ownership of the whole layby and to extinguish any residual status of the site as public highway.

23.33 FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Council's Bank Balances

RESOLVED: That the Bank Balances be noted

(b) Financial transactions made retrospectively and pending

RESOLVED: That the financial transactions listed on the reports totalling £108.30, £46,270.56, £49,285.26 and £3,087.36 respectively be approved.

(c) To authorise the following items of expenditure

- (i) Mrs M Free, 2021-2022 Interim Internal Audit, £398.64
- (ii) Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils, 2023-2024 Membership Subscription, £2,680.98
- (iii) Lincolnshire Association of Local Council, 2023-2024 Training Scheme, £222

RESOLVED: That the above items of expenditure be approved.

(d) Skip hire for the allotments

The Clerk reported that skip hire was essential to clear the build up of rubbish at the allotments. He added that such costs would be factored into the forthcoming review of charges.

RESOLVED: That expenditure of up to £2,000 plus VAT on the hire of skips for the removal of waste from the allotments sites be authorised.

(e) Refurbishment of the Town Hall lift

The Clerk explained that the final quote had not yet been received.

RESOLVED: That the matter be deferred to a future meeting.

(f) Purchase of replacement litter bins

The Clerk reported that four litter bins needed replacement.

RESOLVED: That expenditure of up to £2,000 plus VAT be authorised for the replacement of four litter bins.

(g) The writing off of bad debts owed to the Council

The Clerk explained that two debts, one for market stall rent and one for a parking permit, remained unpaid, despite numerous efforts to resolve. Financial Regulations required any bad debts to be written off by the Full Council. The option to take the matters to the Small Claims Court was considered but dismissed.

RESOLVED: That the two debts, of £77 and £26.75 respectively, be written off and the names of the debtors be retained for a period lest they attempt to hire Council facilities again.

(h) Authorisations of expenditure under financial regulation 4.6

- (i) Fixfire, Fire alarm service, £366
- (ii) One Stop Disposables, Cleaning products, £453.06
- (iii) Pear Technology, Cemetery mapping software annual fee, £102
- (iv) Local Lincs, Article in March 2023 edition, £286.80
- (v) Sleaford Playhouse, Venue hire for Sleaford Slam, £280

RESOLVED: That the expenditure authorisations be noted.

(i) Fund transfers within the Council's banking arrangements since the last meeting of the Council

RESOLVED: The transfer of £50,000 from the Council's Capital Account to the Current Account on 8th February be noted.

(j) Two members to sign paperwork

RESOLVED: That Cllrs Darmon and Ad Snookes sign the paperwork.

23.34 COUNCIL AND TOWN MATTERS

(a) Sleaford Climate Action Network

The Clerk reported that the Sleaford Climate Action Network (SCAN) had contacted the Council in January about its forthcoming Annual General Meeting and other activities. Upon asking he had established that the Town Council was not a member of SCAN but could join for the sum of £1. A discussion then took place regarding the group.

RESOLVED: That the Council become a member of SCAN and that Cllrs Fernandes, Lorimer and Suiter be the Council's representatives to SCAN meetings until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

(b) Draft cleaning agreement in relation to the Bristol Water Fountain in the Market Place, Sleaford

The Clerk presented a draft cleaning agreement for the Bristol Water Fountain prepared by NKDC following past discussions between the Town and District Councils about the fountain. It was noted that it was owned by NKDC and that they were not proposing to pay the Town Council anything to cover the cleaning costs.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council not enter into the agreement.

(c) Handley Monument

The Clerk spoke to his report relating to the Monument and explained that its building had been funded by public subscription in the 19th Century, that its ownership was not clear, that it was not on the asset register of the Town Council and it did not appear to be listed on the registers of either North Kesteven District Council or Lincolnshire County Council. Historically it was understood that the Town Council had carried out repairs to the Monument at various times since the early 1980's. Before then it may have been maintained by Sleaford Urban District Council prior to its abolition in 1974 and the transfer of its assets and liabilities to North Kesteven District Council in that year. The Town Council minutes from the 1970's and 1980's were not extant so it was not currently clear what, if anything, had been agreed between the Town Council and the District Council between 1974 and the early 1980's. The NKDC minutes from the time were extant in the Lincolnshire archives and would be consulted in due course but in the meantime there was a need to make sure that the Monument, which was one of the symbols of the Town, was added to someone's asset register and insurance schedule and a condition survey done. He recommended that the Town Council do this on behalf of the community. He added that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund project relating to the monument might cover the costs of a condition survey.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council register the Handley Monument with the Land Registry as the Council's property, add it to its asset register and insurance schedule and ask North Kesteven District Council to fund a condition survey from UKSPF monies.

(d) Eastgate Car Park Permits for the Hub

The Clerk explained that staff at the Hub currently had free use of four permits to park in Eastgate Car Park, under an arrangement made with a previous Clerk. Other users were required to either pay daily or pay for a numbered permit.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk be authorised to write to the Hub and explain that the current free permits would not be renewed in April 2023, but that Hub staff could consider paying daily or applying for numbered permits.

23.35 COUNCIL COMMITTEES, PANELS, TASK & FINISH GROUPS AND OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Minutes of the meetings of the Human Resources Committee held on 16th December 2022 and 6th January 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee on 16th December 2022 and 6th January 2023 be noted.

(b) Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Meeting held on 27th January 2023

It was noted that these minutes and the recommendations within them were not yet available.

RESOLVED: That this be noted and the minutes brought to a future meeting of the Council.

It was noted that the time had reached 9.30pm and the Council agreed to extend the meeting to 10pm to enable the rest of the business to be transacted.

(c) To receive the notes and consider the recommendations of the S106 and CIL funding Task & Finish Group meeting held on 12th January 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted and the recommendations as listed below be approved:

George Street Play Area – that quotes and information be sought for a new pathway and that play equipment companies be approached again in order to quote for more equipment with a higher spending value of up to £100,000.

Boston Road Recreation Group – that the meeting of Councillors and the Clerk with the member of the public who had raised the issue of lighting for the children’s play equipment go ahead on Thursday 16th February. Next Steps – that the Task & Finish Group continue its work as planned.

(d) To receive the minutes and consider the recommendations of the Coronation Event Task and Finish Group meeting held on 17th January and 31st January 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received and the recommendations as listed below be approved:

The Sleaford Town Awards 2023 be renamed the 'Coronation Year Sleaford Town Awards'

The cost of the large screen, equipment and engineers, total £3,000 be approved for payment once the invoice is received to secure the booking

The costs for security and medics over £1,000 to be approved if necessary.

(e) To receive the notes and consider the recommendations of the Sleaford Castle Heritage Group Meeting held on 2nd February 2023 and to approve the appointment of Cllr J Parry as an additional representative of the Town Council on the group

RESOLVED: That the notes be received and that Cllr J Parry be appointed as a Town Council representative on the group, as recommended.

(f) To receive the notes of the Sleaford and District Twinning Association meeting held on 9th January 2023

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting be received.

23.36 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

There were no County Councillors present. North Kesteven District Council Cllr Allan reminded the meeting that North Kesteven District Council would be hosting briefings for prospective candidates at the May elections. Details had previously been shared by the Clerk by email.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

23.37 DATES AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Town Council take place on Wednesday 15th March 2023 at 7pm at the Town Hall, Sleaford.

The time having reached 9.52 pm, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.