



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

Present:

Cllr Linda Edwards-Shea – Chairman	Cllr Malcolm Offer
Cllr James Thomas – Vice Chairman	Cllr John Parry
Cllr Bozena Allan	Cllr Melody Shanahan-Kluth
Cllr David Darmon	Cllr Stephen Shanahan-Kluth
Cllr Paul Edwards-Shea	Cllr Mark Smith
Cllr Ken Fernandes	Cllr Ad Snookes
Cllr Tarek Hayat	Cllr Al Snookes
Cllr Heather Lorimer	Cllr D Suiter

Also in attendance: Mr Chris Pilkington (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer), Mrs Debbie Scott (Minute Taker), Cllr Mark Allan (Lincolnshire County Council), and eight members of the public.

23.38 CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting. She reminded them that the Annual Town Meeting would take place on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7.00 pm at the Town Hall.

23.39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the meeting had been received from Cllrs Linda Lowndes and Robert Oates.

RESOLVED: That the reasons for absence of Cllrs Lowndes and Oates be approved.

23.40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(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

Cllr Lorimer declared an interest in the item on the agenda relating to the Nationwide Building Society as she was a member of it.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

(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

There were no requests for dispensations.

23.41 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There were no questions from members of the public present. However it was understood that several might want to speak on particular agenda items along with the county councillor present and the Council agreed to move those agenda items up the agenda.

23.42 REQUEST FOR DOUBLE YELLOW LINES AT EASTGATE

The Chairman reported that a request had been received from a resident asking for the double yellow lines to be extended to prevent his access/egress being obstructed by parking related to drop-off/collection near the William Alvey School. He had been advised by Lincolnshire County Council that any such requests should be made through the Town Council.

The Chairman understand that Cllr M Allan had relevant information to report and invited him to speak. Cllr M Allan explained that the County Council had put parking restrictions in place six or seven years ago in the area, but further restrictions were already being planned to extend the double yellow lines now being requested. He added that the Headteacher had been proactive in trying to reduce parking problems, including introducing walking buses and negotiating the use of Lafford Terrace Car Park while Council staff were working from home. He offered to speak directly to the resident. Councillors also raised issues about traffic management, since the retirement of the 'Lollipop Lady' the continual flow of pedestrians using the Zebra crossing often caused long tailbacks of traffic. It was suggested that a Pelican crossing would be more effective. Cllr Allan agreed to investigate it. Possible parking issues caused by other businesses in the area were also mentioned.

RESOLVED: That this be noted and the proposals for parking restrictions brought to a future meeting of the Town Council once they were received from Lincolnshire County Council.

23.43 REQUEST FROM THE SLEAFORD HISTORIC CAR AND MOTORCYCLE SHOW COMMITTEE

A member of the organising committee spoke to the request, explaining that the show had used Lafford Terrace Car Park for several years but the condition of the empty LCC buildings had deteriorated so badly that the unattractive backdrop was now inappropriate and it was further understood that at some unknown point in the future the site may be developed which would inevitably reduce the space available. He asked that the Council consider allowing the show to use either Eastgate Car Park or Boston Road Recreation Ground instead, from September 2024. It was noted that the date of the show, the first Saturday in September, coincided with the Council's Town Crier Event, Farmers' Market, etc., which together made a great weekend for Sleaford, attracting many visitors to the town. The Committee recognised that closing the Car Park would result in a loss on income for the Council. Councillors expressed concerns about a clash with the proposed resurfacing of the Car Park and the potential damage to the Recreation Ground if the ground conditions were wet.

RESOLVED: That the request by the Sleaford Historic Car and Motorcycle Show Committee to use either Eastgate Car Park or the Boston Road Recreation Ground in September 2024 and future years be accepted in principle with further negotiations regarding which site and the terms and conditions to be undertaken.

23.44 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 15th February 2023, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman of the Council.

23.45 CHAIRMAN'S & VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman spoke to her report. She had attended the event to mark the anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine, the South Holland District Council Charity Ball, a meeting with RAF Cranwell, the funeral of one of the local volunteer litter pickers, the NKDC Chairman's Brains of Kesteven Quiz and the Commonwealth Day Flag Raising at Lafford Terrace. It was also noted that the Mayor's event, Sleaford Slam, had been very successful and thanks were given to all involved. Cllr Edwards-Shea reported that the Charity Fundraising events had so far raised £965.23 for the Mayor's Charities, EDAN Lincs and RAFA, with more fundraising to take place at the Coronation Event. A list of Twinning Association dates was provided, including the Coffee Mornings, the AGM on Monday 20th March and Twinning Visits planned for May, August and October this year.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

23.46 TOWN CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

The report had been shared. The Clerk had attended meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, the Armed Forces Day Working Group, the S106/CIL Task & Finish Group, the Sleaford Castle Heritage Group and an inquorate meeting of the HR Committee. He had also had meetings with the internal auditor, RAF Cranwell representatives and attended the Ukraine Anniversary event in the Market Place. He reported on the planning for the Coronation Event, the advertising of the forthcoming District and Parish Elections and discussions with NKDC re payments due in respect of Eastgate Car Park income. The Clerk reported that the tarmac contractors would be starting work on the Boston Road layby the following week. The skips were now in place at the allotments. He explained that the Handley monument was now covered by the Council's insurance, provisionally valued at £200,000, but a full condition survey and rebuild valuation would be the next step. The Clerk's prioritised list of Work Areas was also shared. A question was asked about when RAF Digby would be allowed to exercise the freedom of the town. The Clerk stated that he would investigate the legalities of the matter and report back to the Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

23.47 GOVERNANCE MATTERS

(a) MID-YEAR INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Clerk spoke to the mid-year internal audit report which had recently been carried out.

RESOLVED: That the report and its recommendations accepted and an update brought to the next meeting of the Council.

(b) REVISED GRIEVANCE AND DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

The Clerk presented revised grievance and disciplinary policies for adoption by the Council. They were based on the model documents produced by the National Association of Local Councils and their adoption was being recommended by the HR Committee. Adopting the revised policies would help the Council achieve Local Council Award Scheme status.

RESOLVED: That the revised grievance and disciplinary policies presented be adopted by the Council.

(c) MOTION ON ROLE OF CHAIRMAN AND MAYOR

Cllr Smith spoke to the motion he had proposed explaining that he was aware of several councillors who might make effective chairmen but who were not able or keen to take on the additional role of Mayor, and vice versa. He suggested that the roles could be separated if necessary. A discussion then took place. View expressed including that the role of Mayor was important in promoting the town and supporting town organisations. It was noted that other councillors could deputise although only the Chairman, styled as Mayor, could wear the Mayoral Chain. The Clerk explained the legal obligations of the role of chairman and explained that the civic work done by the Mayor could be shared out between members of the Council. The motion was then put to the vote.

RESOLVED: That the motion not be adopted.

(d) PROPOSALS FOR A COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Clerk spoke to his proposals for a new committee structure for the Council to take effect from the Annual Meeting of the Council in May. Under the new structure would have human resources, finance and planning committees as well as an advisory committee relating to the Sleaford Castle site, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would become a sub-committee of the planning committee and the S106/CIL Task & Finish Group would continue as a working group. A discussion took place and it was suggested that the Council also have a services committee.

RESOLVED: That the proposed committee structure be adopted by the Council with the addition of a services committee and that detailed terms of references for the committees be brought to the Annual Meeting of the Council on 24th May 2023.

The Council resolved to exclude the press and public from the next two agenda items due to the confidential nature of the agenda items further to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

(e) CONSIDERATION OF COMPLAINT

The Clerk reported on a complaint received by the Council and the various options open to the Council were discussed before a course of action was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the course of action be adopted.

23.48 PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS

(a) REQUEST FROM TESCO STORED LTD TO EXTEND AN OPTION AGREEMENT OVER TOWN COUNCIL OWNED LAND

The Clerk spoke to the report he had prepared, and the solicitors advice contained within it. He was recommending that the Council invite its solicitors to meet with it to explore the issues involved in more depth and a decision as to whether or not to grant a new option agreement be made at the Town Council meeting on Wednesday 31st May 2023. He was not suggesting that the matter be discussed at the April meeting of the Council due to the pre-election restrictions relating to publicity ahead of the elections to the Council on 4th May 2023.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation be accepted and the Council's solicitors be invited to meet with it before the meeting of the Town Council on 31st May 2023

The time had now reached 9.30pm and it was agreed to extend the meeting until 10pm.

(Cllr Hayat left the meeting)

23.49 FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) COUNCIL'S BANK BALANCES

RESOLVED: That the Council's Bank Balances be noted.

(b) FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS MADE RETROSPECTIVELY AND PENDING

RESOLVED: That the financial transactions listed on the reports £8.79, £9,454.95, £2,590.17, £49,636.98 and £2,654.31, totalling £64,345.20 respectively be approved.

(c) AUTHORISATION OF ITEM OF EXPENDITURE

(i) Mrs Debbie Scott, Minute taking services, £480.00

RESOLVED: That the payment be authorised

(d) AUTHORISATIONS OF EXPENDITURE MADE UNDER FINANCIAL REGULATION 4.6

(i) One Stop Disposables, Sanitary Products, £146.40

- (ii) Gallagher Insurance Brokers, amendment to insurance policy to cover Handley Monument, £255.20
- (iii) FG Adamson & Son, Service of Mower, £700

RESOLVED: That the above authorisations be noted.

(e) FUND TRANSFERS WITHIN THE COUNCIL'S BANKING ARRANGEMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That the transfer of £30,000 from the Council's Capital Account to the Current account on 7th March 2023 be noted.

(f) TWO MEMBERS TO SIGN PAPERWORK

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

(g) QUOTES FOR LAPTOPS AND IT SUPPORT

The Clerk reported that quotes had been received from three companies and he suggested that a small working group of councillors and staff look at the details of what two of the companies were providing and bring a recommendation back to the next meeting of the Council. The third company was only providing actual laptops and not wider IT support and he was therefore not recommending that the work be placed with them.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk and Cllrs Fernandes, Lorimer, S Shanahan-Kluth and Suiter meet study the details of the quotes and services offered by the two companies providing wider IT support in more depth and bring a recommendation to the next meeting of the Council.

(h) QUOTES FOR MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING OF COUNCIL MANAGED TOILETS

The Clerk explained that he and the Acting Deputy Clerk were recommending that one company be engaged to clean and maintain the three public toilets operated by the Council. They were only aware of two companies which could provide the service and therefore wanted to put the work out to tender through Contract Finder to see if any other companies might be interested even though the value of the work was below the £30k threshold requiring the use of Contract Finder.

RESOLVED: That one company be engaged to clean and maintain the three public toilets operated by the Council and that the contract for the work be put out to tender via Contract Finder.

(i) QUOTES FOR WORKS REQUIRED TO LIFT IN TOWN HALL

The Clerk reported that four quotes had been received for the works required to the lift and that he and the Deputy Clerk were making a recommendation as to which supplier to place the works. They were also recommending that a service agreement for the lift be put in place.

RESOLVED: That the Council accepts the quote from Stannah for the works to be done at the cost of £45,715.60 + VAT, that the works be arranged, and that a service agreement for the lift be put in place.

(j) APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID FROM MOSART

Members considered a request for grant aid from MosArt for £1,000 to create a mosaic panel for the arboretum at the cemetery. Once installed it would be maintained by the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That funding of £1,000 be granted to MosArt towards the cost of creating the mosaic panel and that the panel be maintained by the Town Council after installation.

(k) APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID FROM POP IN BARGAINS (POST OFFICE)

Members considered a request for grant aid which had been received from the proprietor of the Post Office in Riverside Precinct for help with the cost of a new Post Box at their premises, Unit 4, Riverside. It was understood that Royal Mail would charge £3,000. It was expected that the new Post Box would be one of the first of the King Charles III design. The applicants had already raised funds towards the project. The Clerk confirmed that the Council had suitable powers under its General Power of Competence.

RESOLVED: That in principle a grant be made towards the balance of the funding still required subject to advice from the Clerk as to a suitable budget line from which the funding could come from.

The time then having reached 10.05 pm, the Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting. The outstanding agenda items not discussed would be deferred,

where appropriate, to the next meeting of the Council scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19th April 2023.

Chris Pilkington PSLCC
Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Sleaford Town Council
4th April 2023

15th March 2023

Signed:

Date: