



**Minutes of the Meeting of Sleaford Town Council held on
Wednesday 19th July 2023 at 7.00pm, at The Town Hall, Sleaford**

Present:

Cllr Anthony Brand (Chairman), Cllr David Suiter (Vice-Chairman), Bozena Allan, Nadim Aziz, Pat Cockcroft, David Darmon, Linda Edwards-Shea, Ken Fernandes, Heather Lorimer, Steve Mason, Robert Oates, Malcolm Offer, Melody Shanahan-Kluth, Stephen Shanahan-Kluth and Mark Sharpe.

Also in attendance: Mr Chris Pilkington (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer), Mr Robert Oliver (Acting Deputy Clerk), Administration Officer (MW) and nine members of the public.

23.104 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Cllr Brand welcomed all those present to the meeting.

23.105 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the meeting and reasons for absence from it had been received from Cllrs Mark Smith, Adrian Snookes and Alison Snookes.

RESOLVED: That the reasons for absence of Cllrs Smith, Ad Snookes and Al Snookes be approved.

23.106 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 CONDUCT.

Cllrs Allan, Edwards-Shea, Oates and Suiter all declared an interest in agenda item 10, Planning and Highway Matters, due to them being members of the Planning Committee of North Kesteven District Council (NKDC).

(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.

23.107 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

Members of the public raised concerns about the NKDC proposals for the Market Place. These included the lack of consultation with business owners and others, potential negative impacts on the businesses around the Market Place and on the market traders who used it, the removal car parking spaces, the impact on disabled users of the removal of the parking space and difficulties for market traders and other businesses in loading and unloading goods. It was felt that the Market Place should continue to be able to be used for multiple purposes as it currently is.

Another member of the public raised concerns about Lincolnshire Police cutting back on the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's). Some councillors reported that they had attended an LALC conference where the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner had been present and who had reported that the money saved on PCSO's would be being spent on police officers. It was suggested that Police & Crime Commissioner be invited to a future meeting of the Council.

Finally a member of the public thanked the Town Clerk and his staff for improvements made to Sleaford Cemetery.

23.108 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

The Town Clerk reported that Lincolnshire County Councillor Mark Allan had given his apologies for the meeting. Cllr Edwards-Shea reported that, in her NKDC ward councillor capacity, she had attended a meeting of district and other councils in the East Midlands.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

23.109 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 21st June 2023, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman of the Council.

23.110 CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Brand reported on his attendance at the Glenholme, Holdingham Grange Care Home's 5th anniversary; the Choral Concert at St. Deny's Church; the Sovereign Anniversary at RAF Cranwell; the funeral of a past Mayor and Cllr, Mr John Charlesworth, and the William Alvey School Day Service.

He also reported that his chosen charity for his Mayoral year would be Evergreen and that he was planning his civic events for the year. Proposed events included a Musical Charity Concert, Town Awards, Christmas Market and Light switch on, St. George's Day event and a Civic Service.

Cllr Suiter added that he had also attended the Glenholme, Holdingham Grange Care Home's 5th anniversary and a charity football match.

Cllr Linda Edwards-Shea would be supporting the Chairman with a "Sleaford Slam 2" event and Cllr Suiter would be supporting him in arranging a Burns Night in January 2024.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be noted.

23.111 TOWN CLERK'S & RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Town Clerk report on various meeting he had attended as listed, including meetings of the Council and its committees, of the Planning Committee on 5th July, a Health & Safety policy meeting with Worknest on 6th July, the meeting of the Human Resources Committee on 7th July, the meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group on 7th July, a day long site visit with Worknest on 10th July to discuss practical health and safety issues at the Town Hall, cemetery and elsewhere to inform the H&S documents they have prepared for us, a meeting of the Sleaford Castle Heritage Group on 11th July, an Armed Forces Day de-brief meeting with NKDC, a training webinar on cemetery and churchyard memorialisation safety, and a meeting of the Finance Committee all on 12th July, and a meeting with NKDC on 18th July about upgrading CCTV provision in the Town to which the Town Council currently contributes £5,000 per annum.

The Acting Deputy Clerk also attended the training webinar on cemetery and churchyard memorial safety and following on from it the Council was scheduling work to get memorials at the cemetery tested.

He also reported that on 27th June he had visited the Lincolnshire Archives in Lincoln to examine the NKDC minute books dating from their creation in 1974 to the start of

the 1980's. The purpose being to identify why certain assets are owned or managed by Sleaford Town Council (which also came into existence in April 1974) when the assets and liabilities of the old Urban District Council transferred to NKDC. He found a significant NKDC minute from 19th March 1974 which read:

“That the Chairman of the Council and the Chief Executive be authorised to affix, out of meeting, the Common Seal of the Council to the undersigned documents:-

Agreement for the discharge of District Council functions by the Sleaford Town Council’

He reported that no detail of the agreement was given in the minutes and that the Town Council minutes from the time are not extant, so he intended to look at the Sleaford Standard from the time to see if they shed any light on what was agreed. He would also contact NKDC to ask whether they have a copy of it.

He further reported that he was making sure that all of the Council's land and property was registered with the Land Registry and that currently Sleaford Cemetery was not.

In addition to the above, he also attended the meeting of the Sleaford Civic Trust on Monday 26th June, a meeting of the Lincolnshire Branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks in Horncastle on 28th June at which Marcella Heath from NKDC gave a presentation, along with councillors a meeting with Sleaford Property Developments on 3rd July to discuss Handley Chase and the meeting of the Sleaford Twinning Association on 7th July.

Repairs to the lift have been completed since the last meeting and repairs to the Town Hall commissioned last year had begun.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

23.112 GOVERNANCE & FINANCE MATTERS

(a) INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR 2022-2023

The Clerk reported that he was continuing to progress implementing the recommendations of the report.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted and a further one given to the next meeting of the Council.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE RELATING TO COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

The Council considered recommendations from the Finance Committee that councillor allowances be raised in line with the CPIH measure of inflation in April 2023 (7.8%) backdated to 1st April 2023 and that the Independent Remuneration Panel at NKDC be requested to carry out a review of councillor allowances at Sleaford Town Council. Their last report in December 2019 having recommended a review after four years.

RESOLVED: That councillor allowances be raised in line with the CPIH measure of inflation in April 2023 (7.8%) backdated to 1st April 2023.

RESOLVED: That the independent Remuneration Panel at NKDC be requested to carry out a review of councillor allowances at Sleaford Town Council.

(c) RECOMMENDATION FROM THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the HR Committee, Cllr Oates, reported that its meeting on 7th July, the HR Committee has considered concerns raised about remarks made about members of staff by a councillor at the June meeting of the Council. He reminded members that if they have any issues or concerns relating to staff then they should contact the Town Clerk in the first instance, reminded members of their responsibilities under the Council's code of conduct and the Civility & Respect agenda which the Town Council supported.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk re-circulate the Council's code of conduct.

(d) APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL NON-COUNCILLOR MEMBERS OF THE SLEAFORD CASTLE HERITAGE GROUP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Councillors considered a recommendation from the Sleaford Castle Heritage Group Advisory Committee that Mr Doug Plowman be appointed as a non-councillor member of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That Mr Doug Plowman be appointed as a non-councillor member of the Sleaford Castle Heritage Group Advisory Committee.

(e) APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE SLEAFORD HOSPITAL ALMSHOUSES

The Town Clerk reported that at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council on 24th May 2023 appointment of a representative to the trustees of the Sleaford Hospital Almshouses had not been on the agenda. This was because it had been understand

that the appointment of Cllr Adrian Snookes in May 2022 had been for three years. However subsequently the Charity had contacted the Council to ask who its representative for the year was. Cllr Adrian Snookes had made the Clerk aware that he would like to continue in the role.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Adrian Snookes be the Council's representative on the Board of Trustees of the Sleaford Hospital Almshouses Charity until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

23.113 PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS

(a) STREET NAMING, NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AT PRIDE PARKWAY, SLEAFORD

The Town had been notified by NKDC of the proposed name of 'Enterprise Way' for the development.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council notify NKDC of its support for the proposed name of Enterprise Way.

(b) PROPOSED UPGRADE TO EXISTING RADIO BASE STATION INSTALLATION AT CTIL 23559723 GALLEY HILL, NORTHGATE, SLEAFORD, NG34 7BB

RESOLVED: That the Town Council support the proposed upgrade to the radio base station.

(c) NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL, WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PHASE 2 CONSULTATION

The matter had been considered by the Town Council at its meeting on 21st June and councillors were asked to contact the Town Clerk by the end of the following week with their thoughts. Only a limited response had been received.

The Town Clerk reported that NKDC had specifically asked for feedback as to what Sleaford Castle should be referred to on the maps and on the fingerposts and directional signage that they would be installing within the town.

RESOLVED: That the term to be used for the castle site should be 'Sleaford Castle'.

23.114 LAND AND PROPERTY MATTERS

(a) THE GRANTING OF A NEW OPTION AGREEMENT TO TESCO

The Town Clerk reported that he still awaited a revised document to present to the Town Council for approval.

RESOLVED: That this be noted and an update provided to the next meeting of the Council.

(b) LAND AND PLAY EQUIPMENT AT TAMAR COURT

The Town Clerk spoke to the report he had produced. At the Town Council meeting on 6th November 2019 the Council had agreed to approve the transfer of the play area and equipment at Tamar Court. There were some unsigned Land Registry forms in the office which would indicate that the ownership of the land may have been transferred to the Town Council from NKDC.

At its meeting on 28th September 2022 the Town Council had agreed to note the request by NKDC to transfer the play area at the site to the ownership of the Town Council, and to defer any further decision until inspection reports and maintenance details had been received. This information has now been received and circulated to councillors. The Acting Deputy Clerk reported that the play equipment was safe and gave an update on the condition of the surface.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk seek clarification of the land ownership of the site, identify costings for the Council maintaining the site and an update be provided to the next meeting of the Council.

(c) ASBESTOS SURVEYS

It was reported that a registered asbestos consultancy company had carried out an asbestos survey of the Council's properties. The Acting Deputy Clerk had produced a report containing recommendations arising from the surveys.

RESOLVED: That the Council notes the contents of the surveys and instructs the Town Clerk to engage competent contractors to address the issues raised by them, that a competent contractor is engaged to cut back the vegetation in the cemetery to enable sampling of the relevant location to take place and that when produced an Asbestos Management Plan is brought back to a future meeting of the Council.

23.115 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PROJECTS

(a) TO APPOINT A COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE TO THE NKDC UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PARTNERSHIP GROUP

The Town Clerk explained that NKDC were setting up a Partnership Group as part of the required governance structure for the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Funding. They are intending to have quarterly meetings, select a chair and send out invites to relevant organisations for membership of the group. In addition to the Town Clerk NKDC had asked the Town Council to nominate an elected member to join the group.

RESOLVED: That Cllr Melody Shanahan-Kluth be appointed as its councillor representative to meetings of the Partnership Group in addition to the Town Clerk also being a representative of the Council on the Group.

(b) NKDC MARKET PLACE PUBLIC REALM PROJECT

Councillors considered information received from NKDC regarding their proposals for the Market Place. A planning application relating to the project had also recently been produced by NKDC.

A majority of members who spoke echoed concerns raised by local businesses, market traders and others about the NKDC proposals but some were supportive of the proposals.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council's response to the proposals be made by its Planning Committee. Moreover that the Town Clerk liaise with the market traders to allow them to trade from Eastgate Green should the NKDC planning application be approved and they have to temporarily relocate whilst the works at the Market Place are carried out.

(c) NKDC CONCEPT PLAN FOR THE MONUMENT GARDENS

Members considered the concept plan for the Monument Gardens provided by NKDC

RESOLVED: That the Town Council support the proposed concept plan.

(d) HANDLEY MONUMENT PUBLIC REALM PROJECT

The Town Clerk reported that he waited a detailed design guide from NKDC for the project. Decisions on it might be required before the next meeting of the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk have the delegated power to agree the design guide for the project acting in consultation with the Chairman of the Council.

23.116 COUNCIL AND TOWN MATTERS

(a) MOTION RELATING TO THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE TICKET OFFICE AT SLEAFORD RAILWAY STATION

Cllr Edwards-Shea spoke to the motion she had prepared and supported by cllrs Cockcroft and Darmon. Cllr Lorimer suggested an amendment to it that was accepted by councillors. The motion as amended was then put to the meeting for approval.

- 1. To oppose the closure of the ticket office and removal of the employee who mans the ticket office.*
- 2. On behalf of Council the Clerk to submit this Motion and resolutions to Transport Focus by email by the deadline of 26th July 2023.*
- 3. On behalf of Council the Clerk to send the wording of this proposal and our resolutions to our Member of Parliament, Dr Caroline Johnson.*
- 4. On behalf of Council the Clerk to send the wording of this proposal and our resolutions to East Midlands Railway.*
- 5. On behalf of Council the Clerk to issue the text of this Motion in a press release.*
- 6. Post the wording of this proposal on our website.*
- 7. Arrange for either the rail delivery CEO or/and the Media relations Manager to come to an STC Meeting to which residents are invited.*

RESOLVED: That the motion as amended be adopted by the Council.

(b) COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

This agenda item had been placed on the agenda at the request of Cllr Allan and a member of the public who had raised the issue with her. The member of the public was not present.

RESOLVED: That a more detailed discussion of Community Speedwatch take place at a future meeting of the Council.

19th July 2023

Signed:

Date:

(c) ADOPTION OF NEW HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY AND HEALTH STAFF HANDBOOKS

Members considered a new Health & Safety policy and a new Health & Safety handbook prepared for the Council by Worknest.

RESOLVED: That both the new Health & Safety Policy and Health & Safety Handbook be adopted by the Council.

23.117 LINCOLNSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The Town Clerk together with the Acting Deputy Clerk and several four councillors had attended the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils Summer Conference on Wednesday 19th July 2023 and they had found it to be very informative.

RESOLVED: That this be noted.

23.118 CORRESPONDENCE FROM ICCM

Correspondence had been received from the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management regarding their forthcoming board elections.

RESOLVED: That the correspondence be noted.

23.119 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Town Council take place on Wednesday 20th September 2023 at 7pm at the Town Hall, Sleaford.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9:33pm.