

STOWMARKET TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **STOWMARKET TOWN COUNCIL** held in the John Milton Room, Milton House, Milton Road South on Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillor G M Brewster (Town Mayor)

Councillors: Ms S L Britton  
N G K Gowrley  
G P Harris  
B Humphreys  
D J MacPherson  
Mrs L M Mayes  
Mrs P J E Robinson  
N J Rozier  
K E Scarff  
Mrs V I Waspe

In attendance: Mr D G Blackburn (Town Clerk)

Present: Mr P Baker (Stowmarket resident)  
Mr P Ekpenyong (Stowmarket resident)  
Miss S T Goonan (Accounting & Finance Manager)  
Ms M L Marshall (Deputy Town Clerk)

43. ELECTION OF A NEW MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL TO REPRESENT THE STOWMARKET NORTH WARD

Members welcomed Councillor N G K Gowrley to the Town Council.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Green, B J Salmon, Mrs A E J Whybrow and D S Whybrow.

45. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were none.

46. DISPENSATIONS IN RESPECT OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were none.

47. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor's announcements for the period Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 to Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2014 were received by the Council. The Town Mayor thanked the Deputy Town Mayor for attending the Southwold Civic Service held at St Edmunds Church.

48. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record.

49. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDERS

There were none.

50. POLICE REPORT

Police Community Support Officer, Ryan Brunning, submitted the Police Report for the period 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 to 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2014, during which there had been 131 recorded crimes in the Stowmarket area compared with 100 recorded crimes for the same period in 2013. Of the 131 recorded crimes there had been 57 of criminal damage, 38 of theft, 5 drug offences, 16 assault offences and 15 classed as "other" offences.

PCSO Brunning reported that there had been a rise in crime compared to the same period for 2013 including damage to residential properties and shops in the town centre including Barton's Cycles, The British Heart Foundation, Argos and M & Co. The Safer Neighbourhood Team had visited the residents and the shop managers to give out crime reduction leaflets and the investigations into the damage continued.

PCSO Brunning reported that he would be leaving the Stowmarket Safer Neighbourhood Team in June and his replacement would be PCSO 3274 Adam Fish. PCSO Brunning thanked the Town Council for the support he had been given throughout his time in the town.

A question was raised by a Member regarding the vacancy for a Police Constable in the town. The Town Clerk confirmed that the vacancy had not yet been filled and that he would raise the matter at the next Safer Neighbourhood Team Meeting.

51. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

This item was deferred due to the fact that Councillor G Green and Councillor S Searle were unable to attend the meeting.

52. ANNUAL RETURN AND ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2013/2014

The Town Clerk presented the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 and the Annual Return for 2013/14 for approval and signature.

The Statement of Financial Position 2013/14 showed that overall, the Town Council's reserves had increased by £76,120. The creation of the Regal Theatre Frontage reserve had been funded from cinema admissions and theatre lettings in 2013/14 (£166,170). This had been effectively funded from a surplus of income over expenditure on the Income and Expenditure Account (including capital) of £76,120 with the balance of £90,055 leading to a reduction in the General Reserve.

Capital projects during the year had reduced the General Reserve with the main effects arising from the Community Café Project (£40,000), Memorial Clock (£8,000) and, Recreation Ground Lighting (£5,750). There had been some minor transfers to the designated reserves with the most significant being the Christmas Lights (£5,470)

within the Environment Reserve. However, there has also been an increase in the Capital Fund balance of £47,590 as various projects have not been completed.

The Town Council achieved a surplus on its income and expenditure account in 2013/14 through the effective management of resources and operation of services. Favourable variances were achieved in 15 out of 19 cost centres. The surplus did not include capital expenditure which reduced the surplus to £76,120 as stated above.

The Annual Return reflected the Council's financial position at year end.

Governance arrangements continued to be strong under the direction of the Council's Risk Management Committee and a review was undertaken of the Councils' Risk Management and Internal Control procedures by the full Council. Therefore, the Council was in a position to certify that it had strong corporate governance arrangements in place.

The Town Clerk invited all Members of the Council to approve the accounts and governance statement for submission to the external auditor. Public notice of the accounts were displayed and the accounts were available for viewing between the hours of 10am to 12pm, Monday to Friday at the Town Council Offices until the 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2014.

RESOLVED:

- a. That the Statement of Financial Position 2013/14, the Income and Expenditure Variations 2013/14, the Income and Expenditure Variations 2013/14 incorporating re-charges and the Annual Return 2013/14 incorporating the Annual Governance Statement be received;
- b. That the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 be approved;
- c. That the Council confirms that it has reviewed and is satisfied with its Risk Management Arrangements and Internal Control Procedures;
- d. That the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk be authorised to sign the Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement for 2013/14; and
- e. That the Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement 2013/14 be submitted for external audit.

### 53. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

The Town Clerk submitted a report regarding appointments to Committees following the election of Councillor N G K Gowrley.

#### a) Operations & Services Committee

RESOLVED: That the Operation & Services Committee for 2014/15 comprises: Councillors Mrs S L Britton, N G K Gowrley, G P Harris, B Humphreys, D J MacPherson, Mrs P J E Robinson, K E Scarff, Mrs A E J Whybrow and D S Whybrow.

#### b) Personnel Committee

RESOLVED: That the Personnel Committee for 2014/15 comprises: Councillors: N G K Gowrley, B Humphreys, Mrs L M Mayes, B J Salmon, K E Scarff and Mrs A E J Whybrow.

c) Planning, Consultation & Strategy Committee

RESOLVED: That the Planning, Consultation & Strategy Committee for 2014/15 comprises: Councillors: G M Brewster, G Green, B Humphreys, Mrs L M Mayes, D J MacPherson, N J Rozier, B J Salmon, Mrs V I Waspe, and D S Whybrow.

d) Risk Management Committee

RESOLVED: That the Risk Management Committee for 2014/15 comprises: Councillors: G M Brewster, G P Harris, B Humphreys, D J MacPherson, Mrs P J E Robinson and N J Rozier.

e) Special Purposes Committee

RESOLVED: That the Special Purposes Committee for 2014/15 comprises Councillors: G M Brewster, G P Harris, B Humphreys, Mrs L M Mayes, B J Salmon and D S Whybrow.

f) Capital Programme Working Group

RESOLVED: That the Capital Programme Working Group for 2014/15 comprises Councillors: D J MacPherson, Mrs P J E Robinson and K E Scarff.

54. OPENING OF THE RECREATION GROUND CAFÉ

The Public Services Manager submitted a report (C/04/1415, copy on report file) providing an update on the Recreation Ground Café Project.

The Town Council allocated £40,000 towards the development of the toilet block at the Recreation Ground into a community café facility to incorporate new toilets. The Town Council had developed proposals in consultation with Dayle Bayliss Associates and MENTA with a new site being identified close to the existing toilet block that offered greater scope regarding the size of the footprint for the building. Planning permission had been obtained for the building. MENTA had appointed the social enterprise initiative, 'Realise Futures' to operate the facility.

The capital cost was funded from the General Reserves as part of an 'invest to save' project with the payback anticipated over five to eight years through a reduction in the costs of cleaning and maintaining the toilets saving approximately £8,000 per year.

The use of container architecture in public spaces had been growing in momentum up and down the country as a cost effective way of delivering community buildings and office accommodation. It had versatility because the whole structure could be removed from the site in the future, if a new use for the land or a new structure is required.

A three Member Project Team had been very supportive of the works throughout and has endorsed the 'modern' look of the building that had been designed by Dayle Bayliss Associates which juxtaposed orange and black elements to the exterior of the building.

The construction phase of the Community Café Project had all but been completed. The project had been delivered close to the original capital allocation and on time. The building had been signed off by Building Control and had met all the necessary standards required.

The lease between MENTA and Stowmarket Town Council had been finalised and Realise Futures CIC, the social enterprise organisation, have recruited two full time and two part time staff from Stowmarket to run the café.

The Grand Opening of the Community Café will take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June from 10.00am – 2.00pm. Activities at the opening will include a climbing wall, circus skills workshop, bouncy castle and skateboarding showcase.

Special mention was made of the Project Designer, Dayle Bayliss, of Dayle Bayliss Associates LLP, who had generously provided her services for free. The Town Clerk reported that had Ms Bayliss made a charge, it would have been within the region of £11,000 to £12,000.

The Council thanked Glenn Markwell, the Public Services Manager and his team for all their hard work and efforts on the project. The Council put forward the suggestion that the names of those who had worked on the project be recorded within the building in a suitable manner.

The Town Clerk reported that as part of the original plan, the installation of a sail type canopy had been put forward to provide a covered outside seating area at the café. The Town Clerk reported that it would cost approximately £5,000 to £6,000 to install the canopy and asked Members to consider the proposal stating that it would take approximately two to three months for the installation.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the opening of the Community Café on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 was welcomed; and
- ii) That approval was granted for the installation of a sail type canopy to create an outside seating area at the café up to a maximum cost of £6,000.

## 55. ITEMS OF REPORT AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

- i) The Town Clerk reported that he had received a letter from Colonel Ted Champion, President of the Stowmarket Branch of the Royal Legion thanking the Council for its assistance in organising the two events to commemorate the start of the First World War which took place over the weekend of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2014.
- ii) The Town Clerk reported that there would be no Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2014 due to the fact that the Corporate Planning Event will take place on that evening at the Cedars Park Community Centre. The next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2014.

The meeting ended at 7.50pm.

CHAIRMAN