

## NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - FULL COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Full Council meeting of Northstowe Town Council held on  
**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022** at Pathfinder Primary School, Northstowe.

Members: 11  
Quorum: 5 Members  
Present: 8 Members: Cllr Owen (Mayor); Cllr Littlemore (Deputy-Mayor); Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Bros Sabria (until 20:16); Cllr Castelino; Cllr Delip; Cllr Males; Cllr Susarla.  
[Joined by Cllr Kinnera and Cllr Sovago from 19:50].  
Apologies: Cllr Nikoro; Cllr Oluwasanya.  
Absent: Cllr Panvekar.  
Public present: 7 Members of the public.

Meeting was started at 19:01 pm. Cllr Owen took the Chair.

### **66/22-23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and approved from: Cllrs Nikoro and Oluwasanya.  
Apologies had also been received from SCDC Cllrs Malyon and Cheung Johnson.

### **67/22-23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- Cllr Males declared the following interests: Co-Secretary of Northstowe Social; Treasurer of Northstowe Sports and Wellbeing, although indicated that neither would be relevant to any of the agenda items.
- Cllr Males and Cllr Delip both declared an interest that they are friends with a member of the public present who they know wishes to speak on an item on the agenda.

Dispensation was granted to afore-mentioned Councillors to participate in discussions and vote on all items.

### **68/22-23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at the meeting.

A member of the public spoke, in regards to item 80/22-23(2), explaining that they were concerned about the lack of communication that had gone to nearby residents, finding out about this only the day before the District Council's press release, and wished all involved to consider whether there are any examples elsewhere where a private residence had been converted into a council building. A second resident spoke about the same item, explained that they believed it to be unfair that residents were not engaged and informed until the last minute, and wished to know whether organisations including the Town Council knew about these plans at an earlier stage.

The Chair added that, once notification of the change-of-use planning application from SCDC is received by the Town Council, the Town Council intends to hold a detailed discussion about the application and will respond through the planning system as a statutory consultee.

The meeting was reconvened.

### **69/22-23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022**

1) *To approve the minutes of the meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 as a true record of that meeting.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Males and **RESOLVED with 5 votes for and 3 abstaining, to approve the minutes of the meeting of 25th May 2022 as a true record of that meeting.**

### **70/22-23 ITEMS/RESOLUTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS - UPDATES**

1) *For information - To receive updates from the Town Clerk on the following items;*

- *64/22-2(2): update on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Northstowe Community Forum and NTC's offer; Cllrs to come forward for manning stall.*

The Clerk informed the Council that SCDC Officers reserved a stall for the drop-in session, but that – due to a busy meeting – it is unlikely that the Town Council can have a speaker slot at the Community Forum this time. He requested Councillors to come forward who would like to man the NTC stall at the drop-in session. Cllrs Males and Littlemore reiterated their availability; the Clerk was **tasked** to contact them to arrange logistics and content for the stall with them.

## **71/22-23      REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLORS**

- 1) *To receive a report from Cllr Sarah Cheung Johnson & Cllr Alex Malyon, South Cambs. DC.*  
There were no questions.

- 2) *To receive a report from Cllr Firouz Thompson, Cambridgeshire County Council.*

County Council Councillor Firouz Thompson was present, and the Chairman invited her to provide any updates to the report; the following updates on recent developments were provided;

- Fixing the ramps on the junction B1050 with A14 near Bar Hill had seen some delay, but will be done shortly. Testing why the subsidence has been taking place will also take place shortly.
- There had been a meeting earlier that day about the missing .6 mile cycle path link to be developed parallel to the B1050 and alongside the Hatton's Ponds, south of Longstanton, and options are being considered.
- Following from a Town Councillor question about the arrows on the new B1050 roundabout where the Southern Access Road West ends, this is being looked into.
- On the back of discussions at a recent meeting with Stagecoach, coming week a passenger count will take place during the morning rush hour at the Longstanton P&R.
- Following House by Urban Splash going into administration, there have been discussions around finishing off the homes and streetscapes on the Phase 2 peninsula. Homes England has declared that it remains committed to the Northstowe Development and will do all they can to have this completed to standards as expected. To this end she read out a statement received from Homes England and which included the following: *'Homes England has a contract (in the form of a building lease) with Urban Splash House (USH) to deliver the 43 homes that have commenced on the 'peninsula site'. The remaining 363 homes forming the total Inholm development, are under a conditional contract and works have not yet commenced. In an administration event the site with the rights and obligations within those contracts pass to the administrator. Homes England has met with the administrator and has made it clear that our expectation is that the 43 home parcel (not just the homes but access, communal areas, boundaries etc) is completed to the high standard originally intended. We have also said we will work with and support them in achieving this.'*

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the Town Council would get advance notice when the Access Road West is to be opened.

## **72/22-23      REPORT FROM SOUTH CAMBS DC'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS**

- 1) *To receive a report from Mihaela Stan and Kathryn Beck, SCDC Phase 1 & Phase 2 Community Development Officers.*

The Chairman invited Mihaela Stan to speak. She informed the Council that, further to the updates in their report;

- The public consultation period for the change-of-use application for the Taylor Wimpey show homes will be long enough for everyone being able to have a say on the application proposals.
- In order to deliver all Welcome Packs the SCDC Officers will get a call-out for volunteers to help, to ensure all residents not yet reached due to the hold-up by the pandemic can get a welcome pack after all.

In response to a question, the officer explained that there were about 500 packs to be delivered, of which 40 have been done recently, and that they aim to have caught up by the end of the calendar year.

In response to a question about the Pioneer Café relocation from the Wing, the officer explained that a decision on this had not yet been made and that discussions with Northstowe Secondary College were still ongoing as one of the options being considered. It was noted that, in the meantime, the Pioneer Café is making use of Longstanton church.

In response to a request to consider alternative times/days in the week for the 'walk and talk' initiative, the officer responded that other options will be looked into.

### **73/22-23 REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK**

- 1) *To receive a report from Mark Nokkert, Town Clerk to Northstowe Town Council (for May 2022).*  
Noted. No questions were raised.

### **74/22-23 COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

*To receive and note minutes from the following Committee meetings held:*

- a) *Events and Markets Committee – 7th June 2022 (status: draft)*

Noted.

### **75/22-23 INTERNAL AUDITOR**

- 1) *To receive a report from the Clerk on Internal Auditor options (following resolution passed at the 11th May FC meeting, item 33/22-23(2)) (report attached for Cllrs' information).*

Noted; some discussion followed.

- 2) *To formally appoint the Internal Auditor for 2022/2023.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Bros Sabria and **RESOLVED unanimously, to appoint CAPALC as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for 2022/2023.**

### **76/22-23 CO-OPTION OF TOWN COUNCILLORS**

- 1) *To receive a report with prospective candidates' information who have applied for the four casual vacancies of Town Councillor, following uncontested elections on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (report attached).*

Noted. No questions were raised.

- 2) *To receive presentations from candidates present at the meeting, for a maximum of 2 minutes each.*  
The Town Council received presentations from two of the prospective candidates who were able to be present at the meeting.

- 3) *To vote on who are to be co-opted as Town Councillors, in accordance with the resolution passed under item 55/22-23(3) and the Town Council's Co-Option Policy.*

The Chair proposed, in order to speed up the voting process, to change the Council's co-option procedures as set out in its Co-Option Policy, by allowing each Councillor to vote – using a ballot paper for this purpose - for up to four candidates in one go. Each candidate who then has an absolute majority (at least 5 out of 8 potential votes needed in this case) will then be co-opted, with a further round of voting to take place thereafter, if needed, to consider filling in any remaining vacancies.

It was proposed by Cllr Owen, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED unanimously, to amend the motion to adopt the amended co-option process, to allow for voting for up to four candidates in one go, to be followed by further rounds of voting where needed.**

Following two rounds of voting with counting carried out by the Clerk, the Chairman **declared** that all four vacancies were now filled, with the following candidates each having received an absolute majority of votes and were voted in as Town Councillor: Ioana Sovago; Balaji Kinnera; Leena Ummadi; and Majdi Mgaidia.

- 4) *For those candidates voted in who are present and wish to join as a Councillor straight away, to sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and join the Councillors at the meeting.*

Cllrs Kinnera and Sovago signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined (at 19:50 the Councillors for the remainder of the meeting. The Chair congratulated them on their new positions.

## **77/22-23 FEWS LANE CONSORTIUM LTD: PRESENTATION**

1) *To receive a presentation from Fews Lane Consortium, setting out the organisation's plans for a Judicial Review of the SCDC decision to approve 4,000 dwellings and related development at Northstowe Phase 3A, to be followed by time for questions (letter from Fews Lane Consortium attached, dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022),*

Mr Fulton, representing Fews Lane Consortium (FLC), gave a presentation to the Town Council, setting out the organisation's reasons for wishing to have a judicial review conducted, as set out in their letter sent to Councillors in advance of the meeting. He explained that a judge had, only two days earlier, allowed the judicial review to go ahead on the basis of four points of the claims made. He then asked for support, including financial support, from the Town Council, to ensure that the judicial review can take place, and stressed that this is the only opportunity available to address what FLC considers to be an unlawful planning decision on outline planning for Northstowe phase 3A.

A lengthy discussion followed, with many comments and questions raised by Councillors, in particular around the following points;

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): FLC claimed that no evidence was presented showing that the impact on the ground water levels would be negligible, and that the impact on the local ground water levels were not considered as part of the EAI that was carried out for the planning application.
- Baseline data: FLC claimed that no evidence has been provided showing a clear baseline for groundwater levels.
- Water supply issues and links to water abstraction: FLC claimed that it is unlawful exclusion of information showing that the drinking water for Northstowe comes from the Cam chalk aquifer, and is working on collating further evidence for the links with Northstowe.
- Phase 1 and phase 2 links: FLC considered water abstraction, as well as flooding issues, in phases 1 and 2 to be relevant to the phase 3A planning case.
- Support: FLC stated that Longstanton PC, as well as CPRE, Cambridge Friends of the Earth, Friends of the Cam, Cam Valley Forum and Cambridge PPF, are amongst the organisations who have pledged their support.

Cllr Bros Sabria leaves the meeting at 20:16.

- Planning conditions: Councillors pointed out that, partly as a direct result of Northstowe Town Council asking for conditions as part of its planning response to the phase 3A outline planning application, a specific condition (condition 39) has been included to ensure that monitoring of the groundwater condition is to take place throughout and against baseline data, with remedial action to be taken in case the monitoring shows up any issues. FLC argued that this would nevertheless be unenforceable.
- Policy CC/7: A Councillor pointed out that Policy CC/7 has actually been referenced in a number of related conditions, i.e. 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 53. FLC argued that in their opinion the District Council nevertheless failed to take into account policy CC/7 of its statutory development plan, which concerns adequacy of water supply, sewerage facilities, and the impacts of development on bodies of water and also failed to consider whether the proposed development meets the relevant policy requirements.

Mr Fulton offered to continue discussing and sharing information with the Town Council.

2) *To receive and consider x 6 documents (attached) from South Cambs DC's Single Point of Contact for Fews Lane, together with the following statement on behalf of Senior Planning Lawyer, Richard Pitt (as received by NTC on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022);*

*The paragraph below explains the District Councils position in relation to the Judicial Review. This should be read in conjunction with the attached documents which were filed at court last week in defence of this claim by the Council. Also appended is the response by the Applicants, Homes England, to the claim.*

*As is explained in the Council's Summary Grounds for resisting the claim, the Grounds advanced by FLCL bear no resemblance to those raised in pre-action correspondence by FLCL. The Grounds now raised allege that: (1) a particular Policy (CC/7) on water quality has not been taken into account, when it was contained in a list of policies identified for consideration in the Officer Report; (2) the advice as to deferral was misleading, when there was no proper basis for deferral; (3) the EIA should have included information on water supply issues, when that was not something requested by the Environment Agency; and (4) a Statement of Reasons has not been provided, in circumstances where the Council has now complied with that requirement. The Crowd Funding page appears to refer to one part of one of those grounds, but does not appear to acknowledge the extensive discussion of water quality, supply, and environmental effects which took place at the Committee - a discussion which included FLCL - before the decision was taken by the Committee to approve the application. The Environment Agency also took part in that discussion and confirmed that they did not object. The Council contends that the grounds are unarguable on their merits, and is supported by Homes England in that view.*

Noted. No questions were raised.

3) *To consider NTC's position on the Judicial Review raised by Fews Lane Consortium and its request for a financial contribution towards this legal action.*

Following a further, detailed discussion amongst Councillors, the Chair summarised the discussions. He explained that there seems to be a general support for the plans as proposed and that everyone involved ultimately wishes the same, positive results for the community. He continued explaining that the Town Council is carefully following all plans and delivery instigated through the planning system and will hold anyone to account where this is considered necessary. A key result of Town Council actions has been the inclusion of a condition for ground water monitoring as now attached to the planning approval for phase 3A and that – although the condition does not go as far as the Town Council had asked for - the Town Council nevertheless believes this should have the desired effect. He continued, highlighting that where it comes to water-related issues, the Town Council has instigated a Hydrology Working Group and that the Council wishes to first and foremost identify issues and help resolve any identified issues through the ongoing research carried out by this Working Group which reports back to the Council on a regular basis. He also clarified that, due to the recent loss of the General Power of Competence, the Town Council would not be in a legal position to contribute financially to the cause, but that the Council wishes to continue exchanging information with Fews Lane Consortium, to help identify and resolve any hydrology-related issues across Northstowe.

It was decided to **defer** the motion to a future full Council meeting, pending further information arising from the judicial review process. In addition, Fews Lane Consortium Ltd were asked to provide details of the planning matters where clarity is being sought on, and these are to be brought to a future Planning Committee meeting.

## **78/22-23 COMMITTEES - MEMBERSHIP**

1) *For Cllrs to come forward to join any of the under-mentioned, currently active Committees;*

- *Finance and Governance: Membership = 8; Seats filled: 5*
- *Events and Markets Committee: Membership 8; Seats filled: 5*
- *Planning Committee: Membership = 8; Seats filled: 6*
- *Personnel Committee: Membership = 6; Seats filled: 5*

2) *To appoint members onto the above-mentioned Committees.*

It was proposed by Cllr Owen, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED unanimously, to appoint Cllr Kinnera to the Events and Markets Committee and to the Planning Committee.**

### **79/22-23 SLCC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

- 1) *To approve the renewal of the annual membership for SLCC, period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 – 30 June 2023. Subscription costs are £327 (budget for £337 in approved '22-'23 budget). To find out more about the benefits of SLCC membership, see [Membership \(slcc.co.uk\)](http://Membership(slcc.co.uk)*

Following some questions from Councillors regarding the benefits the Clerk experiences from the membership and his subsequent response, it was proposed by Cllr Owen, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED unanimously, to approve the renewal of the annual membership for SLCC, for the period 1st July 2022 – 30 June 2023.**

### **80/22-23 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

*To receive information from the Clerk on the following items;*

- 1) *Update on office solutions for NTC, post-Wing: short term - Wednesdays at NSC; and likely medium-term solution (see also SCDC press release 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022, [Council invests at Northstowe to provide community facilities - South Cambs District Council \(scambs.gov.uk\)](http://Council%20invests%20at%20Northstowe%20to%20provide%20community%20facilities%20-%20South%20Cambs%20District%20Council%20(scambs.gov.uk))).*

The Clerk informed the Council that since this week the Wing can no longer be used for Council use, but that, thanks to a generous offer from SCDC, the Town Council can now make use of an office room at Northstowe Secondary College, each Wednesday between the hours of 9:30 and 15:30, with the additional potential for use of the larger room next to the office to hold meetings with Councillors when not already being used by SCDC or other organisations.

- 2) *Investment in community facilities Phases 1 and 2, pending SCDC Full Council decision in July – see SCDC press release, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2022, [Council proposes funds for Northstowe community facilities - South Cambs District Council \(scambs.gov.uk\)](http://Council%20proposes%20funds%20for%20Northstowe%20community%20facilities%20-%20South%20Cambs%20District%20Council%20(scambs.gov.uk)).*

The Clerk informed the Council that, pending the outcomes of the expected SCDC's change-of-use planning application and any subsequent decisions to be made by both SCDC and NTC, there is a possibility that the Town Council could make use of the refurbished Taylor Wimpey show homes, for both office and meeting space, from early 2023 onwards.

### **81/22-23 UPDATES FROM OUTSIDE BODIES WITH TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION**

*To receive and note minutes and/or updates from meetings of the following outside bodies with official Northstowe TC representation;*

- a) *12th May 2022 - Phase 1 Open Spaces Steering Group (attended by Cllrs Littlemore and Owen) (minutes attached).*
- b) *17th May 2022 at 13:30 - Northstowe Support Partnership (attended by the Clerk) (redacted minutes for NTC attached).*
- c) *18<sup>th</sup> May 2022 – Northstowe Community Networkers (attended by Cllr Owen) (minutes attached).*
- d) *20th May - Homes England Quarterly meeting (attended by Cllrs Benedicic and Castelino)*
- e) *8<sup>th</sup> June at 19:00 – Northstowe Community Networkers (no NTC representation) (minutes attached).*
- f) *9<sup>th</sup> June - Northstowe and Longstanton Councillor Meeting – Stagecoach (no NTC representation).*
- g) *9<sup>th</sup> June - Phase 1 Open Spaces Steering Group (attended by Cllrs Bros Sabria and Littlemore).*
- h) *13<sup>th</sup> June - Police and Crime Commissioner. Virtual roundtable meeting (attended by Cllr Susarla).*
- i) *14<sup>th</sup> June – Northstowe Youth Partnership (no NTC representation).*

Noted. Regarding item 81/22-23(h), Cllr Susarla informed the Council that a new 'booby scheme' was launched, allowing for the potential to assist parishes, and considered that this might be useful for Northstowe.

### **82/22-23 NEW DATES MEETINGS OUTSIDE BODIES WITH TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION**

*To note;*

- a) *28th June at 09:15 – Northstowe and Longstanton Heritage Steering Group.*
- b) *7th July at 10AM: Phase 1 Open Spaces Steering Group.*
- c) *19th July at 13:30 – Northstowe Support Partnership.*

Noted.

**83/22-23 NEW DATES OTHER MEETINGS WHERE NORTHSTOWE TC IS INVITED**

To note;

- a) 27th June – Cabinet-Parish Liaison meeting – times TBC
- b) 26th July 19:00 – 21:00 – Northstowe Community Forum (with 18:00 – 19:00 stalls for partners/agencies including NTC).

Noted.

**84/22-23 DATES OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- Full Council: Wed 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 7-9PM – Location TBC [Finalised motions by 18/07].
  - Full Council: Tue 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022, 7-9PM – Location TBC [Finalised motions by 17/09].
- For all Council meetings, see [www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk)

Noted.

The meeting was closed at 21:02 pm

Signed.....

Town Mayor

Date.....