

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - FULL COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Full Council meeting of Northstowe Town Council held on **Wednesday 30th March 2022** at The Wing, Pathfinder Primary School, Northstowe.

Present: 10 - Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Bros Sabria; Cllr Castelino; Cllr Gamon; Cllr Harrison; Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Males; Cllr Nikoro; Cllr Oluwasanya; Cllr Panvekar.
Quorum: 5 Members.
Apologies: Cllr Delip; Cllr Owen; Cllr Susarla; Cllr Thompson; Cllr Van der Meijden.
Absent: N/A.
Public: One member of the public present.

Meeting started at 19:00 pm. In the absence of Cllr Owen, Cllr Littlemore (Deputy-Mayor) took the Chair.

207/21-22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and approved from: Cllr Delip; Cllr Owen; Cllr Susarla; Cllr Thompson; Cllr Van der Meijden.

The Clerk added that apologies were also received from the: CCC Councillor; both SCDC Councillors; and both SCDC Community Development Officers.

208/21-22 WELCOME TO NEW COUNCILLOR

1) To welcome Cllr Snow Nikoro, following the co-option procedures carried out at the last Full Council meeting.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Nikoro who has joined the Town Council as Councillor, following the recent co-option vote.

209/21-22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Harrison declared the following interests: Treasurer of Sustainable Northstowe; Secretary of Northstowe Horticultural Association.

Cllr Males declared the following interests: Co-Secretary of Northstowe Social; Treasurer of Northstowe Sports and Wellbeing.

Dispensation was granted to above Councillors to participate in discussion and vote on all items.

210/21-22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

The member of the public identified himself as Daniel Fulton, representing Fewes Lane Consortium. In relation to item 218/21-22 on the agenda, he addressed the Chair, explaining that he wished the Town Council to take note of the Decision Notices published on the 25th March by South Cambridgeshire District regarding both the outline planning permissions for Phase 3A and Phase 3B, detailing the conditions attached to these permissions granted.

He set out that it is the opinion of Fewes Lane Consortium that The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations were not followed by South Cambs in regards to these decisions, and that there is therefore ground for a judicial review for Phase 3A around water level management issues. He continued, explaining that if these decisions are not challenged within six weeks of last Friday, there is no other legal or regulatory mechanism to hold anyone to account for the groundwater changes at Northstowe.

He expressed the wish for the Town Council to take this on board and to consider providing Fewes Lane Consortium with an expression of support.

The Chair thanked Mr. Fulton for his contribution, and **tasked** the Clerk to respond to him by email. The meeting was reconvened.

211/21-22 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 23rd FEBRUARY 2022

1) *To approve the minutes of the meeting of 23rd February 2022 as a true record of that meeting.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Benedicic and **RESOLVED with 8 votes for and 1 abstaining, to approve the minutes of the meeting of 23rd February 2022 as a true record of that meeting.**

212/21-22 ITEMS/RESOLUTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS - UPDATES

For information - To receive updates from the clerk on the following items;

a) *190/21-22 PATHFINDER SCHOOL – update on plans for signs and costings.*

The Clerk informed the Council that, following the presentation by Pathfinder Primary School pupils at the previous Full Council meeting, the Town Council has assisted the school in obtaining in-principle approval by the landowner, L&Q, for using the lampposts along the spine roads in Northstowe to hang up their posters. The Clerk has also had further conversations with the school about the materials and suggested that the school could apply for the Town Council's new grant funding (to be discussed at item 219/21-22 at today's meeting) to assist with the costs for creating the posters. In response to a question from the school regarding material use, the Clerk has provided information back to the school about an alternative material option, as suggested by the developer.

In response to the latter point, the Chair requested the Clerk to go back to the school and suggest that they make a decision on the materials to be used depending on the length of time they intend to have the posters up and whether they may perhaps wish to rotate with new ones along the way, and added that he would look forward to receiving a grant application once the grant application form is live.

Cllr Oluwasanya joined the meeting at 19:09 pm.

b) *198/21-22 MARKET BUSINESS PLAN TO SECURE SCDC FUNDING – update on securing funds and NTC usage of funds.*

The Clerk & RFO informed the Council that he has had discussions with the relevant staff at the SCDC Business Team regarding the transfer of funds to the Town Council. He has been informed by SCDC that the transfer of funds and associated paperwork is still being finalised between the Combined Authority (the originator of the grant funding) and SCDC, following which the Clerk & RFO will be informed. It has, meanwhile, been agreed with SCDC that at that stage, the full £8,000 grant funding will be transferred to Northstowe Town Council in one go. The Clerk has also requested clarification on any monitoring or evaluation requirements to either SCDC or the Combined Authority.

c) *199/21-22 MARKET COMMUNITY SURVEY PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION – update on survey results and next steps.*

The Clerk informed the Council that the market survey was closed on the 27th March. It had a very good response rate, with well over 500 responses online, plus a good number of paper sheets handed in. Although the results will be analysed fully once all data has been put together, it is already clear from the interim results (as shared with the Councillors) that some 95% of respondents wish for the Town Council to instigate a market in Northstowe. Further work on this will continue to be carried out by the Market Development Working Group, reporting back to the Events and Markets Committee.

d) *203/21-22 (b) NORTHSTOWE SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP – Update on Kick-Start Fund Panel invitation.*

The Clerk informed the Council that this item can be dealt with under item 224/21-22 (d).

213/21-22 REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

- 1) *To receive a report from Cllr Firouz Thompson – Cambridgeshire County Council. NB: No report from the District Council Councillors can be presented, as this meeting is being held within the pre-election period.*

The report was noted.

214/21-22 REPORT FROM SOUTH CAMBS DC'S OFFICERS

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

The report was noted.

215/21-22 REPORT FROM TOWN CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 1) *To receive a report from Mark Nokkert, Town Clerk & RFO to Northstowe Town Council (reporting period: February 2022).*

The report was noted.

216/21-22 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

- a) *Finance and Governance Committee – 22nd February 2022 (status: approved)*
- b) *Personnel Committee – 24th February 2022 (status: draft)*
- c) *Planning Committee – 8th March 2022 (status: draft)*
- d) *Finance and Governance Committee – 15th March 2022 (status: draft)*

The minutes were noted.

217/21-22 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- 1) *For Councillors to consider joining the following Committees which do not yet all seats occupied (see [Terms of Reference for Committees](#)), to reduce risk of being non-quorate:*

- i) *Finance and Governance Committee – 2 seats vacant.*
- ii) *Planning Committee – 2 seats vacant.*

The Chair observed that there have been several occasions recently where meetings were almost non-quorate, highlighting that it is therefore important that all committees should be at full capacity wherever possible, to reduce the risk of situations of being non-quorate materialising.

- 2) *To appoint Councillors coming forward to join either or both of above committees.*

It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Gamon and **RESOLVED unanimously, to appoint Cllr Castelino to the Planning Committee.**

218/21-22 HYDROLOGY WORKING GROUP

- 1) *To receive an update from the Hydrology Working Group on the latest activities.*

Cllr Littlemore provided the following update:

Following on from the resolution in agenda item 197/21-22 of February 2022's Full Council meeting the Working Group, on 25th February, shared the Hypothesis and request to facilitate and document the tests proposed with Greater Cambridge Planning.

Imagery of outlet S422H was also shared with Greater Cambridge Planning on 6th March, showing a level of standing water. Further inspections will take place by the working group in the coming weeks.

The Working Group was due to meet with Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development at Greater Cambridge Planning, on 15th March for an update on progress, however that meeting was subsequently cancelled. An indication was given that Greater Cambridge Planning were aiming for an update to be issued on 25th March, however to date this has not been received.

Following a question about this, Cllr Littlemore added that he, together with Cllr Owen, had met with MP Anthony Brown on 25th March, also attended by representatives from the Environment Agency (EA). This was on the back of an invite from the MP who had organised this meeting, the aim of the

meeting to discuss with the EA what they might be able to do in Northstowe to rectify observed hydrological issues.

219/21-22 GRANT POLICY

1) *To receive a draft Grant Awarding Policy including a grant application form, as approved by the Finance and Governance Committee on 15th March 2022 (V1.3).*

2) *Northstowe Town Council to adopt the Grant Awarding Policy as proposed.*

It was proposed by Cllr Gamon, seconded by Cllr Males and **RESOLVED unanimously, to adopt the Grant Awarding Policy as proposed.**

3) *To agree to start promoting the new grant funding opportunity from April 2022.*

It was proposed by Cllr Gamon, seconded by Cllr Bros Sabria and **RESOLVED unanimously, to start promoting the new grant funding opportunity from April 2022.**

The Clerk pointed out that, due to the pre-election period, a formal launch of the grant scheme would not be possible at this time, and active promotion of the scheme will start after 5th May. He would, nevertheless, ensure that the grant policy and application form would be added to the website soon and would already start pointing out the grant opportunity to any community group where questions towards this are raised with him.

220/21-22 FINANCES

For information: To ensure the RFO can close the accounting books at the end of March 2022, the following payments are included in this meeting agenda;

i) HMRC – period 6 Feb – 5 Mar 2022	£1,149.69
ii) HMRC – period 6 Mar – 5 Apr 2022	£1,324.58
iii) CAPALC – Training Elections and the Clerk’s role (training date 7 th Mar 2022)	£30.00
iv) Print-Out, Histon – Survey forms x1,200	£84.00
v) Staff expenses - clerk - period 10 th March – 25 th March 2022	£52.29

It was proposed by Cllr Castelino, seconded by Cllr Gamon and **RESOLVED unanimously, to approve the above payments.**

Cllr Littlemore and Cllr Benedicic countersigned the invoices and any other associated paperwork, and also both completed online bank authorisation.

221/21-22 ASSET REGISTER

1) *To receive an updated Asset Register, updated since Full Council, 20th May 2021 - item 7/21-22.* The Asset Register was noted. Cllr Littlemore pointed out that the charger was erroneously listed on the register as residing at his house but is in fact at Cllr Owen’s home address.

The Clerk & RFO was **tasked** to update the Asset Register accordingly, before publicising the updated register on the NTC website.

222/21-22 TERMS OF REFERENCE – NORTHSTOWE/LONGSTANTON HERITAGE STAKEHOLDER GROUP (NLHSG)

1) *To receive and discuss the draft ToR for the Northstowe/Longstanton Heritage Stakeholder Group (NLHSG).*

The Clerk highlighted that, during a Northstowe/Longstanton Heritage Stakeholder Group meeting that same morning, which he attended, a few changes were discussed and approved, which he summarised for the Council.

The ToR was noted; there were no further comments.

1) *To provide feedback on the draft ToR, to be given to Cambridgeshire County Council.*

The Clerk was **tasked** to inform the relevant County Council Officer accordingly.

223/21-22 DELEGATED POWERS UNDER COVID RESTRICTIONS

1) *To give full delegated powers to the Clerk in the event that the Council could not meet due to Covid restrictions. Delegated powers to last until the next meeting of the Full Council.*

It was proposed by Cllr Benedicic, seconded by Cllr Gamon and **RESOLVED unanimously that: In response to the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK, and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting and legislation does not allow for virtual meetings, the Town Clerk will have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Town Council where such a decision cannot be reasonably deferred or must be made in order to comply with commercial or statutory deadlines. This will be carried out where possible in consultation with the Mayor and the Deputy-Mayor. Any decision made under this delegation must be recorded in writing by the Clerk and reported to the next convened meeting of Full Council. The delegation authority ceases upon the first meeting of the Full Council after the Council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.**

2) *To give full delegated powers to the Clerk in the event of the Queen passing away and the Council could not meet due to Covid restrictions.*

This would be of particular importance if this situation would materialise around the time of the elections and before the new Council has been formed. Delegated powers to last until the next meeting of the Full Council. Note: Under the Local Government Act 1972, s. 101 the Council can arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by an officer of that authority (as well as by a committee or sub-committee, or by any other local authority).

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Gamon and **RESOLVED unanimously to amend the above motion by changing the wording of ‘the Queen passing away’ to ‘a period of national mourning’.**

It was proposed by Cllr Gamon, seconded by Cllr Males and **RESOLVED unanimously that: In the event of a period of national mourning, the Town Clerk will have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Town Council where such a decision cannot be reasonably deferred or must be made in order to comply with commercial or statutory deadlines. This will be carried out where possible in consultation with the Mayor and the Deputy-Mayor. Any decision made under this delegation must be recorded in writing by the Clerk and reported to the next convened meeting of Full Council. The delegation authority ceases upon the first meeting of the Full Council after the Council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.**

3) *To discuss the need for the Council’s Standing Orders to be updated, to provide for decisions to be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and/or Deputy-Mayor in any emergency situation, and to task the Clerk to propose revised Standing Orders wording towards this.*

It was agreed that this would be a sensible approach. The Chair flagged up that the Council’s Scheme of Delegation would also need to be altered in line with the revised wording.

The Clerk was **tasked** to devise such wording for the Standing Orders and the Scheme of Delegation and bring this back to a future Council meeting.

224/21-22 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

To receive information from the Clerk on the following items;

a) *Joint Sustainability Working Group – first meeting held 21st March; and proposal for the Working Groups focus areas is to be presented at a future Council meeting (verbal update).*

The Clerk informed the Council that, with thanks to Cllr Harrison for arranging this, on 21st March 2022 Cllr Bros Sabria and himself joined two Cllrs, Cllr Baker and Cllr Ferreira, from Longstanton PC, for the first Joint Sustainability Working Group meeting. Information was exchanged and two key actions came out of the meeting: to compile a history of previous relevant engagements at Longstanton PC leading to the current situation, and to devise a proposal setting out the remit for the Joint Sustainability Working Group, to be presented to both Councils for further input.

b) *Membership CAPALC '22-'23 - CAPALC affiliation costs Apr '22 - Mar '23, incl. Data Protection Officer (email).*

The Clerk informed the Council that the '22-'23 payment approval has already been given by the Finance and Governance Committee (see minutes under item 216/21-22 (d)), but wished to make sure the CAPALC affiliation information was shared with the Full Council. He added that for next year it will be the intention to bring the membership renewal proposition to Full Council at an earlier stage in the year, before payment is due.

c) *NALC – Smaller Councils Committee - request for input: issues the Town Council would like to see addressed (email).*

The Clerk referred to the information shared in the email from NALC. In the ensuing discussion it was raised whether NALC is providing for a similar group, or services, specifically for new communities such as Northstowe or existing communities that experience rapid growth.

The Clerk was **tasked** to write to NALC to obtain an understanding of what it can do for new communities.

d) *Northstowe Support Partnership - Kickstart Fund - Panel representative NTC sought (email).*

The Clerk referred to the information shared in the email about the Kickstart Fund panel. The following questions were raised by Councillors;

- Whether the position on the panel would be advisory only or whether the panel would become the decision-making body;
- How the funding panel as well as the Northstowe Support Partnership would be dealing with potential conflicts of interests, as it is likely that various people on the panel may have multiple hats on, including being active in community groups that may apply for the funds; and
- Whether Councillors who would be on the panel would do so in a personal manner, or whether there is an expectation that they would be representing the Town Council on the panel – in the case of the latter it was pointed out that individual Councillors cannot make decisions on behalf of the Council and that decisions would normally need to come back to the Council first.

The Clerk was **tasked** to get back to the Partnership coordinators and obtain clarity on the above matters raised.

e) *Naming of Water Parks x 3 lakes – lake naming competition organised by Homes England – NTC asked to be on panel to decide on lake names (verbal update).*

The Clerk referred to the information shared in the email. A question was raised whether Councillors who would be on the panel would do so in a personal manner, or whether there is an expectation that they would be representing the Town Council on the panel – in the case of the latter it was pointed out that individual Councillors cannot make decisions on behalf of the Council and that decisions would normally need to come back to the Council first.

The Clerk was **tasked** to get back to Homes England and obtain clarity on the above matter raised.

f) *Noticeboard funds offered by Friends of The Wing (verbal update).*

The Clerk informed the Council that discussions have been held recently with the Chair of the Friends of the Wing (FoW), regarding a £500 grant they previously obtained from the Phase 1 Community Developers Fund, in 2021. The FoW agreed, at their recent AGM, to provide Northstowe Town Council with this money, were the Town Council to accept this, to use this for a wider project to create new noticeboards for the community. The Clerk furthermore explained that the grant funder has also already given permission for the change of use, both in intended location, purpose and for the grant monies to be transferred to a different organisation.

The Clerk expanded, explaining that preliminary discussions have also been held with both FoW as well as with Greenbelt regarding potential locations for a noticeboard in Phase 1, and that this is to form part of a wider project also to provide a noticeboard for Phase 2 which should also benefit the Rampton Drift residents. The Town Council is now also in possession of the first tranche of funds from the Phase 2 S106 contributions specifically meant for use for noticeboard delivery, and recent initial explorations with Homes England indicate that they are willing to look at a detailed proposal for using some of these monies also to benefit Phase 1 residents.

With the Wing to be closed soon, it was raised that the creation of a noticeboard in Pioneer Park or in that general area would be welcome, soon, as the Wing's railings have been functioning as a community noticeboard. The Clerk explained that this would need some time, not least for the need for planning permission and the likely need for a legal agreement with L&Q and/or Greenbelt, so that it would not be realistic expecting a noticeboard to appear in the near future.

Alternative suggestions mentioned were looking into a digital media noticeboard, and to look at neighbouring communities such as St Ives what kind of noticeboards they use. It was also suggested that it would be beneficial to consider the location of a noticeboard near where the market may be located.

The Clerk was **tasked** to enquire with SCDC as to what alternative option for community notices could be provided for after the closure of the Wing for community use.

- g) *SCDC Comms - £117K grant funding awarded to SCDC by the Government's Department for Levelling Up Homes & Communities (Proptech Engagement Fund), awarded to SCDC, for the development of a digital marketing, business and community engagement platform for Northstowe (email).*

The Clerk referred to the information shared in the email. Several Councillors expressed the wish to learn more what the money is to be spent on, and how the Town Council as well as the residents could be part of shaping the project and its intended outcomes.

The Clerk was **tasked** to enquire with SCDC to obtain further details about the intended use of the grant, and whether a relevant officer may be able to come to a future Town Council meeting to talk about the project.

- h) *Email Chair Oakington and Westwick PC – rent home for Ukrainian refugees (email).*

The Clerk referred to the information shared in the email. Councillors expressed being sympathetic to the proposals, but wishing to learn more as to which Council is going to take responsibility for a legal entity that may need to be set up and all responsibilities that come with the proposal. The Council also wishes to be assured that SCDC would be working with all parishes together on this, and how this could be arranged.

The Clerk was **tasked** to provide above feedback to the email originator.

- i) *Elections Timeline – nominations and poll (verbal update).*

The Clerk informed the Council that the nomination period is now live and highlighted the information published on the Town Council's website that the Clerk can take nomination forms to Cambourne on nominees' behalf, if they so wish. He did emphasise the need to ask the SCDC election team directly for any query people may have when filling in the nomination form.

225/21-22 MEETINGS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES WITH TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION

- 1) *To receive minutes, notes or updates from meetings of the following outside bodies with official Northstowe TC representation;*
 - (a) *25th January 2022: Northstowe & Longstanton Heritage Stakeholder Group (attended by the Clerk) – no minutes received.*
 - (b) *27th January 2022: Phase 1 Open Spaces Management and Maintenance Steering Group (attended by Cllr Bros Sabria; Cllr Owen; and the Clerk) – minutes attached.*
 - (c) *22nd February 2022: Northstowe/Longstanton Heritage Group (attended by Cllr Littlemore) – no minutes received.*
 - (d) *24th February 2022: Phase 1 Open Spaces Management and Maintenance Steering Group (attended by Cllr Owen) – minutes attached.*
 - (e) *15th March 2022, 1:30PM: Northstowe Support Partnership (no NTC representation) – no notes received yet.*

Noted.
- 2) *To receive notes from other key partner meetings with Town Council representation:*
 - (f) *25th February 2022 - Quarterly meeting with Homes England (attended by Cllr Bros Sabria; Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Owen; and the Clerk) – minutes attached.*

(g) 3rd March 2022 - Stagecoach meeting – attached: minutes and PowerPoint, plus additional notes Cllr Thompson (CCC).

Noted.

226/21-22 DATES MEETINGS OUTSIDE BODIES WITH TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION

1) To note;

- a) [for information] 29th March 2022: Northstowe/Longstanton Heritage Group.
- b) 13th April 2022 at 7 pm: Northstowe Community Networkers.
- c) 21st April 2022 at 10 am: Phase 1 Open Spaces Management and Maintenance Steering Group.
- d) 26th April 2022 at 9:15 am: Northstowe/Longstanton Heritage Group.

Noted.

227/21-22 DATES OTHER MEETINGS EXTERNAL BODIES WITH NORTHSTOWE TC INVITED

1) To note;

- a) 26th April at 7 pm - Northstowe Travel Partnership Steering Group.
- b) 20th May at 13:30 pm: Quarterly meeting Homes England.

Noted.

The Clerk was **tasked** to ask the Northstowe Travel Partnership Coordinator whether she could present the results of the recent annual Northstowe Travel Survey at a future Council meeting.

228/21-22 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

Full Council: Wed 27th April 2022 at 7PM – The Wing.

Annual Meeting of the Town Council: Wed 11th May 2022 at 7PM – The Wing

For all Council meetings, see www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk.

Noted.

The meeting was closed at 20:43 pm

Signed.....

Town Mayor

Date.....