

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - FULL COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday **23rd JULY 2024** at The Cabin, Northstowe

Members: 15
Quorum: 5 Members.
Present: 8 Members: Cllr Littlemore (Mayor); Cllr Delip (Deputy-Mayor); Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Bros Sabria (from 19:04 pm); Cllr Greef; Cllr Owen; Cllr Panvekar; Cllr Sovago.
Town Clerk; Deputy Clerk.
2 Members of the public were present.
Apologies: Cllr Castelino; Cllr Kinnera; Cllr Males; Cllr Nikoro; Cllr Oluwasanya; Cllr Susarla.
Absent: Cllr Mgaidia

The meeting was opened at 19:00 pm. Cllr Littlemore took the Chair.

72/24-25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Standing Item)

To record apologies for absence received prior to the meeting.

Apologies had been received and accepted from: Cllr Castelino; Cllr Kinnera; Cllr Males; Cllr Nikoro; Cllr Oluwasanya; Cllr Susarla. Apologies had also been received from CCC Member Cllr Thompson.

73/24-25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Standing Item)

a) *Councillors to declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any items on the agenda.*

b) *Councillors to declare any prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chair if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation.*

Cllr Delip declared an interest for her role in Northstowe Sports & Wellbeing but mentioned that there was no agenda item at this meeting that would be relevant. Noted.

74/24-25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Standing Item)

a) *To adjourn the meeting for up to 15 mins. to allow members of the public, and Councillors declaring a prejudicial interest, to address the meeting in relation to business to be transacted at this meeting.*

b) *To reconvene the meeting.*

No members of the public wished to speak. The Chair reconvened the meeting.

75/24-25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS (Standing item)

1) *To approve the minutes of the 28 May 2024 Full Council meeting (Annual Meeting of the Town Council) as a true record of the meeting (minutes attached). [Deferred at F.C. meeting 25th June 2024]*

It was proposed by Cllr. Owen and seconded by Cllr. Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, with 6 voting for and 1 abstaining, **to approve the minutes of the 28th of May 2024 Full Council Meeting (Annual Meeting of the Town Council) as a true record of the meeting.**

2) *To approve the minutes of the 25 June 2024 Full Council meeting as a true record of the meeting (minutes attached).*

It was proposed by Cllr. Owen and seconded by Cllr. Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, with 5 voting for and 2 abstaining, **to approve the minutes of the 25th of June 2024 Full Council meeting as a true record of the meeting.**

76/24-25 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL (Standing Item)

1) *To receive a report from Cambridgeshire C.C. Division Member Cllr F. Thompson (report attached).*

There were no questions. Noted.

Cllr Bros Sabria joined the meeting at 19:04 pm. They had no declaration of interest to make.

2) *To receive a report from South Cambs D.C. Ward Member Cllr. N. Warren-Green (report attached).*

Cllr. Warren-Green provided an update mentioning that she, at their recent Council meeting, had supported a motion to support the request for removal of the two-child benefit cap. She also highlighted the 'good news' announcement by the Government in the recent Chancellor's Speech of Northstowe development being accelerated along with other developments in the Country.

3) *To receive a report from South Cambs D.C. Ward Member Cllr. T. Bygott (awaiting report).*

No report was received; Noted.

77/24-25 REPORT FROM SCDC'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS (Standing Item)

To receive a report from South Cambs D.C.'s Community Development Officers (attached).

SCDC Officer S. Stan mentioned that there were no further updates to their report. There were no questions. Noted.

78/24-25 NORTHSTOWE DELIVERY GROUP (Standing Item)

To receive minutes of the Northstowe Delivery Group meeting held on 16th May 2024 (minutes attached).

NB: no N.D.G. meeting was held in June 2024.

There were no questions. Noted.

79/24-25 KICKSTART FUND PANEL (Standing Item)

No Kickstart Fund Panel meeting held recently.

There were no questions. Noted.

80/24-25 NTC STAFF REPORT (Standing Item)

To receive a report from the Town Clerk on NTC staff activities (period: June 2024) (attached).

There were no questions. Noted.

81/24-25 MOBILE FOOD HUB / UPDATE

[Further to F.C. meeting 25th June 2024, item 60/24-25]:

To receive a verbal update from the Clerk on progress towards getting the Mobile Food Hub service to Northstowe, to be delivered by Hope CIC.

The Clerk noted that, between the summons and this meeting, he had sent around to all Councillors an overview of progress made against outstanding actions. He summarised these and added further information gained since then;

- Homes England has agreed that the Town Council can make use of the Community Endowment S106 Funds to support this project financially.
- At the most recent Finance and Governance Committee meeting relevant existing budget headings from which the costs are to be financed were agreed.
- Longstanton Parish Council has indicated that they wish to support the trial period with a donation of £250 and would consider a regular collaboration thereafter, to be based on feedback on the proportion of residents from Longstanton utilising the service and with proportionate numbers of stops in Longstanton to be considered.
- Hope CIC has provided data and information around the data they are able to gather and share on customers of the service and provided further information on the timeslots still available within their schedules for the Mobile Food Van.
- A land use agreement between the landowner, South Cambs DC, and Hope CIC is to be arranged shortly.

In a discussion that followed, Councillors expressed that they wished to learn more about how Hope CIC is to collect data e.g. from which parish customers come from and how such data is to be shared with the Town Council. In this, it was also raised that the Council wishes to be reassured that everybody is welcome to use the service and that personal data is not collected if people do not wish to provide this. The **Clerk was tasked** to discuss these points with the organisation.

82/24-25 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

To decide to have Cllr Panvekar join as Member of the Finance and Governance Committee.

[NB: Finance and Governance Committee's current situation: Members = 5; Available Seats = 8].

A question was asked around concerns about low Council Meeting attendance to date and whether this is to be addressed; the Councillor answered the question.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Greef and seconded by Cllr. Panvekar; with 2 voting for, 4 voting against and 1 abstaining this motion was **NOT CARRIED**.

83/24-25 RECRUITMENT OF ASSETS & ESTATES MANAGER

[Motion from: Asset Transfer Opportunities Working Group]

1) *To receive a motion paper and accompanying report on recruitment of an Assets & Estates Manager.*

Noted. A comment was made around the seemingly tight deadline for getting information to the District Council. It was answered that a plan B could potentially be deployed were there to be problems with recruitment which would lead to a business plan not being created in time, by reallocating money to, for instance, bring in consultancy support on a temporary basis.

2) *To receive a draft job description and draft recruitment advertisement for position of Assets & Estates Manager.*

In a wide-ranging discussion, various points were raised including;

- A comment was made about how the role can be more visionary rather than just task-focused;

- The lack of a Person Specification in the recruitment paperwork was discussed;
- The timeline for recruitment was considered tight by some;
- It was questioned whether and how there could be a role for the Personnel Committee in the recruitment processes;
- It was mentioned that SCDC may be able to help with targeted questions for the candidates as they have had experience in recruitment for similar roles;
- It was suggested that a presentation with a second interview could be considered useful to get the right candidate;
- Some discussion took place around options for advertising the position.

3) *To decide to commence recruitment activities for an Assets & Estates Manager.*

It was proposed by Cllr. Benedicic and seconded by Cllr. Owen and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to commence recruitment activities for an Assets & Estates Manager.**

4) *To delegate to the clerk the task of finalising the job role and advertisements required for the recruitment process.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore and seconded by Cllr Benedicic and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to amend the motion to read 'To delegate to the clerk the task of finalising the job role and advertisements required for the recruitment process in conjunction with Councillors.'**

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore and seconded by Cllr Benedicic and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to adopt the motion, as amended.**

84/24-25 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To consider submitting a consultation response to the following planning applications:

Application details can be accessed via the [South Cambs Planning Portal](#).

i)	Consultation	24/02646/S73 2 The Mount Station Road Longstanton [Consultation on application for Removal or Variation of a Condition (Section 73)]: S73 to vary condition 2 (Approved plans) of planning permission 23/04569/FUL (Conversion of existing Class E Premises to Tap Room, Cafe and Gym). https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/24/02646/S73 Consultation deadline: 6 th August 2024.
Noted; No Comments.		
ii)	Information	S/3854/19/COND16 Digital Park Station Road Longstanton Cambridgeshire. Submission of details required by condition 16(Archaeology) of planning permission S/3854/19/OL. https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/S/3854/19/COND16 Awaiting decision (at time of writing)
Noted; No Comments.		
iii)	Information	S/3854/19/COND17 Digital Park Station Road Longstanton Cambridgeshire. Submission of details required by condition 17(Construction Management) of planning permission S/3854/19/OL. https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/S/3854/19/COND17 Awaiting decision (at time of writing)
Noted; No Comments.		
iv)	Information	S/3854/19/COND45 Digital Park Station Road Longstanton Cambridgeshire. Submission of details required by condition 45(Tree Protection) of planning permission S/3854/19/OL. https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/S/3854/19/COND45 Awaiting decision (at time of writing)
Noted; No Comments.		

v)	Information	S/3854/19/COND14 Digital Park Station Road Longstanton Cambridgeshire. Submission of details required by condition 14(Construction Ecological Management Plan) of planning permission S/3854/19/OL. https://applications.greatercambridgeplanning.org/online-applications/PLAN/S/3854/19/COND14 Awaiting decision (at time of writing)
Noted; No Comments.		

85/24-25 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

5) To receive an overview, obtained from Homes England, setting out the current and planned consultancy works directed by Homes England and how they relate to each other (email with document shared with Cllrs.).

Noted. It was mentioned that it would be important to continue discussions with Homes England and their consultants regarding the plans for the Phase 2 Market Hall, considering the Town Council's ambitions for its own market.

6) Invitation for NTC Town Councillors: Fri 26th Jul. '24, 12:00 – 13:30 (Virtual): meeting about Phase 3A Key Phase 1 Design Code; with: Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design Ltd, on behalf of Homes England [Further to their public consultation on this held on 12th July at the Pavilion].

Noted. The **Clerk was tasked** to share the Teams link with all Town Councillors.

86/24-25 SOCIAL VALUE AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY / HOMES ENGLAND

1) To receive a (draft) report, 'Northstowe Social Value and Engagement Strategy', from Henbe on behalf of Homes England (draft report and email shared with Cllrs.).

Noted.

2) To consider the request to provide Town Council representation at the Steering Group to be formed.

In a discussion a number of questions were raised, key amongst those were questions around how the document to be future-proofed, to ensure it evolves over time with the community; and questions about the frequency and timing of these meetings. It was noted that a decision is to be made on who the representation is once the answers to the questions are received. The **Town Clerk was tasked** to request above information from the consultants.

It was proposed by Cllr. Littlemore and seconded by Cllr. Benedicic and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to provide Town Council representation at the Steering Group to be formed, but with a final decision in this to be made once clarity has been obtained regarding meeting timescales and frequency of the new Steering Group.**

87/24-25 STEWARDSHIP SOLUTIONS / HOMES ENGLAND

1) To receive information about the work being carried out by Community Stewardship Solutions on behalf of Homes England, regarding possible future stewardship solutions for Northstowe (email shared with Cllrs.). [NB: also shared with Cllrs. a copy of the Northstowe Stewardship' document, dated June 2023 and previously shared with the Town Council (see minutes item 136/23-24 (F.C. meeting 26th Sep. '23)].

Noted.

2) To consider providing feedback to the consultants on the three questions asked of NTC (see email shared with Cllrs.).

In a discussion that followed the following key points were raised; the **Clerk was tasked** to provide this feedback back to the consultants;

- Re: Long term placemaking vision for Northstowe: Northstowe Town Council has always been keen to be involved in shaping long-term place-making and has a proven track-record of helping partner organisations out to consider long-term planning, bringing local knowledge to the table. Northstowe Town Council already has a well-established relationship with Homes England and remains keen to help out and wishes to be involved at all stages and plans for long-term place-making.
- Re: Strategy to get there: The Town Council has decided to employ a permanent Full-Time 'Assets and Estates Manager' to work with partner organisations to understand options and create business plans for asset and management/maintenance transfer to the Town Council. In this, a key focus will also be to consider how the Town Council might be able to take on green space/open space maintenance and management across Northstowe. By investing in this role, the Town Council makes its intentions clear and wishes to be considered as a serious partner for future stewardship. The Town Council wishes to emphasise that it will be imperative that lessons are learned from phase 1 in that any overly complicated landownership/land stewardship is avoided at all costs, to keep things clear and simple and reduce levels of household dissatisfaction, and that transferrals of land ownership/management are streamlined better. The Town Council also recommends that the whole of Northstowe is considered as one place for public space maintenance and management, also wishing to highlight that the existing maintenance regime as currently being employed within Rampton Drift is taken into account.

- Re: Capacity / Experience within the Town Council to deliver on this: The Assets and Estates Manager soon to start employment with the Town Council will only be the start of a new route the Town Council wishes to take with an ambition to consider management of key community assets, facilities and infrastructure. At this stage in the Town Council's existence, this investment in new staffing is a big expense; it shows that the Council is willing to invest in people to seriously consider taking on management and maintenance of open spaces in the future, to benefit the community. The Council also would like to highlight the recent recommendations from the Competition and Markets Authority regarding management structures for land and open spaces in new build areas.

88/24-25 COMMITTEE MEETINGS (Standing Item)

To receive minutes from the following committee meetings held:

- a) Personnel Committee, 4th June 2024 (draft minutes attached).
- b) Finance and Governance Committee, 18th June 2024 (finalised minutes attached).
- c) Planning Committee, 18th June 2024 (finalised minutes attached).
- d) Finance and Governance Committee, 16th July 2024 (draft minutes attached).
- e) Planning Committee, 16th July 2024 (draft minutes attached).

Noted; there were no questions.

89/24-25 WORKING GROUPS (Standing Item)

To receive an update from Working Groups reporting to Full Council; from:

- a) Community Lounge Working Group.

Cllr Delip provided an update that the Community Lounge Lead was waiting to hear back from Cambridge ACRE regarding the funding package for the next period from Nov. 2024 - Oct. 2025, expecting to learn more in September or October, but that it is likely that there will be less on offer than the current year's grant funding. Other funding streams were considered in a discussion that followed, to cover the potential deficit; the CDO from SCDC mentioned that could also look into available options.

Praise was provided by a Councillor for the Councillors and volunteers who have been successfully keeping the Community Lounge going and the wide range of activities it has been able to provide.

- b) Asset Transfer Opportunities Working Group.

No further update was provided; no questions were raised..

- c) Road Safety Working Group.

Cllr Sovago raised a point discussed amongst the Working Group around children not wearing cycle helmets. A suggestion was made to approach schools and also Smart Journeys who provide talks and training for schools.

To resolve to move into a closed session and exclude the public and press, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, due to the sensitive or commercial nature of business to be discussed under item 90/24-25.

It was proposed by Cllr. Littlemore and seconded by Cllr. Owen and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to move into closed session and exclude the public and press, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, due to the sensitive or commercial nature of business to be discussed under item 90/24-25.**

90/24-25 MARKET MANAGEMENT

[Further to item 61/24-25, F.C. meeting 25th June 2024]:

1) MARKET MANAGER RECRUITMENT

- a) To receive a recommendation from the Recruitment Panel (Clerk and Councillors) to appoint a preferred candidate as Market Manager (shared with Cllrs.: motion paper; application information; Panel report).

Questions were asked around the scoring system used at the interview stage and their validity, with further detail and clarification requested. The Town Clerk, supported by Councillors on the Interview Panel who were present at the meeting, explained how the scoring worked and how the Interview Panel had arrived at a consensus as written down in the paperwork and recommendations presented to the Town Council.

Following a discussion, it was recommended that the Personnel Committee considers where and how the Council's recruitment processes and associated paperwork could be improved and standardised.

It was proposed by Cllr. Littlemore and seconded by Cllr. Owen and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to appoint the preferred candidate as Market Manager.**

- b) To approve the Panel's recommendation for appointment of a Market Manager.

It was proposed by Cllr. Bros Sabria and seconded by Cllr. Delip and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to approve the Panel's recommendation for appointment of a Market Manager.**

- c) To approve the draft employment contract (draft contract shared with Cllrs).

A question was raised regarding the legality of the draft contract. The Town Clerk mentioned that he believes the Council contracts used to date stems from a NALC template. It was recommended that the Personnel Committee looks into this further.

It was proposed by Cllr. Bros Sabria and seconded by Cllr. Delip and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to approve the draft employment contract.**

d) *To delegate to the Clerk to finalise any remaining arrangements on behalf of the Council, for the new member of staff to be able to start work on 15th August 2024.*

It was proposed by Cllr. Bros Sabria and seconded by Cllr. Delip and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to delegate to the Clerk to finalise any remaining arrangements on behalf of the Council, for the new member of staff to be able to start work on 15th August 2024.**

2) ALTERNATIVE MARKET MANAGEMENT OPTION

a) *To receive and consider an alternative (interim) management option, as back-up plan in case recruitment plans do not materialise (Quote obtained from an events management organisation, shared with Cllrs.).*

A question was asked if there would be a situation where the candidate recruited would not be able to start whether another candidate could be considered. The Town Clerk answered this question.

It was proposed by Cllr. Littlemore and seconded by Cllr. Owen and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to DEFER this option to a future meeting, should this be required.**

To resolve to end the closed session.

It was proposed by Cllr. Littlemore and seconded by Cllr. Owen and **RESOLVED** unanimously, **to resolve to end the closed session.**

91/24-25 UPDATES FROM OUTSIDE BODIES WITH NTC REPRESENTATION (Standing Item)

To receive minutes, or updates, from meetings of outside bodies with Northstowe TC representation;

a) *21st May '24: Northstowe Open Spaces & Landscape Steering Group – no NTC representation (minutes attached).*

b) *12th Jun. '24: Northstowe Community Networkers – attended by Cllr Delip (minutes to follow).*

c) *13th Jun. '23: Pavilion Board – attended by the Clerk (minutes shared with Cllrs.).*

d) *25th Jun. '24: Northstowe Open Spaces & Landscape Steering Group – attended by Cllr Sovago (minutes to follow).*

e) *26th Jun. '24: Community Centre Board – attended by the Clerk (minutes to follow).*

f) *1st Jul. '24: Northstowe Youth Partnership – attended by Cllr Bros Sabria (notes to follow).*

g) *11th Jul. '24: Northstowe Support Partnership – attended by Cllr Males (minutes to follow).*

h) *11th Jul. '24: Pavilion Board – attended by the Clerk (minutes to follow).*

- *A question was asked about when there would be a food offer available. The Town Clerk gave an answer to the question.*

i) *17th Jul. '24: Faith Strategy Group (minutes to follow).*

j) *18th Jul. '24: Northstowe Delivery Group – attended by Cllrs Littlemore and Owen (minutes to follow).*

k) *18th Jul. '24: Plastic Free Steering Group (Sustainable Northstowe).*

l) *29th Jul. '24: Northstowe Heritage Stakeholders – POSTPONED TO AUGUST – DATE TBC*

Noted; No questions.

92/24-25 UPCOMING MEETINGS OUTSIDE BODIES WITH NTC REPRESENTATION (Standing Item)

a) *Mon 29th Jul. '24, 10:00 – 12:00 (in person/ virtual): Quarterly Parish/Town Council meeting, Homes England.*

b) *Thu 15th Aug. '24, 19:30 – 20:30 (virtual): Plastic Free Steering Group (Sustainable Northstowe).*

c) *Tue 27th Aug. '24, 12:00- 13:15 (virtual): Northstowe Open Spaces & Landscape Steering Group.*

d) *Wed 4th Sep. '24, 13:00 – 14:30 (in person): Community Centre Board.*

e) *Wed 4th Sep. '24, 19:00 – 20:30 (in person): Northstowe Community Networkers.*

f) *Tue 10th Sep. '24, 18:00 – 20:00 (in person): Cabinet / Parish Council Liaison Meeting.*

g) *Tue 19th Sep. '24, 11:30 – 12:30 (virtual): Northstowe Delivery Group.*

h) *Tue 19th Sep. '24, 13:00 – 14:30 (in person): Northstowe Support Partnership.*

i) *Tue 19th Sep. '24, 19:30 – 20:30 (virtual): Plastic Free Steering Group (Sustainable Northstowe).*

Noted; No questions

93/24-25 OTHER MEETINGS WHERE NTC HAS BEEN INVITED.

a) *Wed 11th Sep. '24, 18:00 – 21:00 (in person): Northstowe Community Forum.*

Noted; No questions.

94/24-25 EVENTS WITH NTC INVOLVEMENT/SUPPORT (Standing Item)

- a) *Sat 31st Aug. 2024: Northstowe Running Festival. Town Councillors' involvement; NTC grant awarded to Northstowe Running Festival Ltd. towards costs of event.*
- b) *Sat 23rd Nov. 2024: Light Up Northstowe: Led by Northstowe Arts. Town Council involvement; NTC grant awarded to Northstowe Arts CIC towards costs of event.*

Noted; No questions.

95/24-25 DATES OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS (Standing Item)

- *Full Council: Tue 24th September 2024 (7-9 pm); The Cabin, Northstowe. [Final versions of motions & papers to be received by 14/09 at the latest].*
- *For all Council meetings and annual meeting schedule, see www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk*

Noted.

The meeting was closed at 21.00.

Signed.....

Town Mayor

Date.....