



# Needham Market Town Council

## Extraordinary Town Council Meeting

### Minutes – 31.05.2024

This meeting was called due to the following circumstances which occurred in the period 19.05.2024 – 22.05.2024:

- Cllrs Annis, Lea, Phillips and Stansfield resigned with immediate effect.
- Town Clerk, Kevin Hunter, gave notice of retirement.
- Responsible Finance Officer, Louise Mills, gave notice of resignation.

On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May, Town Councillors were summoned to this meeting and the Chairperson made the following statement on the summons:

*Due to the above nature of the agenda items, it is my view that regarding the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) Section 1 (iv) we are justified in excluding the public from this Extraordinary Meeting due to the confidential nature of the business and other reasons. If you agree that this is the case SALC has advised us that we have legislative support in not notifying the public. Should any of you disagree please let me know.*

There was no disagreement.

#### **CO01/24 Chair's welcome and apologies of absence:**

**Present:** Cllr Lawrence (In the Chair). Councillors: G Cave, T Cooke, R Darnell, C Goodchild, I Mason, M Norris, M O'Shea, A Reardon, J Reardon.

**Apologies:** Cllr M Ost – holiday.

#### **CO02/24 To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations.

#### **CO03/24 Banking Arrangements Update:**

It was confirmed that remaining councillors and employees do not have access to banking and no handover had been completed.

It was confirmed that a new mandate form has been completed and returned to Barclays requesting new signatories.

#### **CO04/24 Security Arrangements:**

##### **CO04/24 a Town Council Office Keyholders:**

Arrangements are being made to obtain the remaining keys.

##### **CO04/24 b Laptops encryption and passwords:**

Laptops used by the Town Clerk and RFO are with the Town Council.

There is one laptop yet to be located.

##### **CO04/24 c Petty Cash:**

It was confirmed that the petty cash, cashbook and key in in the possession of Town Council. At present we have no ability to replenish it.

##### **CO05/24 Employee Issues:**

**CO05/24 a Those on leave during notice period:**

Cllr Lawrence informed councillors that the Town Clerk and RFO are working their notice periods on holiday with termination dates of 30.06.2024.

Cllrs Lawrence and J Reardon have an HR meeting with SALC on 05.06.2024.

**CO05/24 b Those continuing to work:**

It was confirmed that the other four members of staff remain in post and are aware of the current situation.

**CO05/24 c Short term arrangements for future positions:**

It was confirmed that a candidate to fulfil the Clerk's role has been identified. CV and details were discussed.

**CO06/24 Internal Audit Report for period ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and its lack of distribution:**

The Audit report had been circulated to councillors with the summons for this meeting. The impact on the AGAR return was discussed.

Cllr Lawrence requested that councillors ensure they have read the report in readiness for the ETCM on 11.06.2024.

**CO07/24 Reconsider and signing a new AGAR section 1 for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024:**

The AGAR (Annual Governance and Accountability Return) form had been circulated to councillors with the summons for this meeting.

Restating the AGAR (Section 1) will be an agenda item at the ETCM on 11.06.2024.

**CO08/24 Other items to be raised at future Town Council Meetings:**

Appoint Locum Clerk/RFO.

Appoint Chairs of Committees.

Appoint members of the Employment Group.

Appoint bank signatories.

Appoint office keyholders.

Appoint representatives to the Community Centre.

Agree Terms of Reference for Employment Group.

Standing Orders review.

Consider gov.uk emails for all councillors.

Website audit against compliance list.

Signed: ..... *J L Lawrence* ..... Date: ..... *11/06/24* .....