



## WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

### WISBECH MARKET PLACE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

17 AUGUST 2020 – 7.30 pm

#### MINUTES OF MEETING

**Present:** Councillor Lynn, Chairman; Councillors Miss Hoy, Maul, Oliver, Prest, Topgood and Mrs Wallwork.

**Apologies:** None (all members were present).

The minutes of the meeting of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee held on 9 December 2019 were confirmed, for signature by the Chairman when possible.

#### **M1/20 Election of Chairman**

On the proposal of Councillor Prest, seconded by Councillor Miss Hoy, it was decided that Councillor Lynn be elected as Chairman of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee for the municipal year 2020/21.

#### **M2/20 Election of Vice-Chairman**

On the proposal of Councillor Miss Hoy, seconded by Councillor Lynn, it was decided that Councillor Oliver be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee for the municipal year 2020/21.

#### **M3/20 Wisbech Market Place - enhancement scheme**

Further to minute M13/19, members considered further the delivery of an enhancement scheme for Wisbech Market Place, with the intention of agreeing a proposed scheme design and commissioning the site survey works etc and obtaining any consents/permissions which would be necessary to facilitate implementation of such a scheme.

The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, a draft scheme design which had been produced by the Design Engineer who had been engaged by the council in that regard (minute 21/20 refers). The draft scheme design includes:

- re-paving works to the whole Market Place, featuring a compass motif within the central area
- a water feature (with the necessary drainage arrangements) and walkover lighting within the central area
- new benches (with attached planters)
- new waste bins
- planters
- a tidal clock.

Members discussed the various elements of the proposed scheme design. This scheme would be Phase 1; a second phase could be considered, which would see the addition of a play area for children, in the event of additional funding being secured by the council.



Councillors Prest and Mrs Wallwork expressed their full support for the scheme design, which they feel would improve significantly the appearance of the Market Place; making it a place where people would wish to spend time.

Councillor Oliver informed members of his concerns regarding some aspects of the design; such as the style and positioning of the proposed benches, together with the fact that the number of benches provided by way of this scheme would be lower than the current level of provision. He also expressed concern regarding the suggested location of the proposed tidal clock; if located where indicated on the plan, it could cause difficulty with operating certain events on the Market Place (such as the annual Christmas Lights Switch-on). He commented that he would like to see a more detailed plan than the one being considered by the committee, to enable members to consider all of the potential operational implications of implementing the enhancement proposal. He made the point that waste bins ought not to be installed in positions where they could be susceptible to damage by vehicles.

In response to the views expressed by Councillor Oliver, the Chairman commented that the current plan makes suggestions as to the locations for benches and the tidal clock but he could see no reason why these could not be changed.

Councillor Prest commented that a 3D plan of the proposal may be useful.

Councillor Maul expressed his support for the plan overall and enquired as what arrangements would be put in place to address maintenance issues following implementation of the enhancement scheme. In response, the Clerk commented that it is anticipated that the council would engage the services of appropriate contractors (as is the case currently) to undertake the various maintenance works.

Councillor Miss Hoy commented that the Design Engineer had produced a proposed scheme design which had reflected the discussions involving the Chairman of this committee, the Clerk to the Council, the Design Engineer and her and that she is very pleased with what had emerged.

The point was made by Councillor Miss Hoy that the purpose of this evening's meeting is to reach a decision on the proposed plan, including the elements to be provided and the location of any "structures"; to also agree to engage with the Local Planning Authority and to commission the necessary site survey works etc.

The Clerk informed members of the necessary site survey and investigation works which would be required to facilitate this scheme, as well as the need to obtain certain specialist advice for certain aspects of the scheme etc. He made members aware of the estimated costs (which had been provided by the Design Engineer) of all of this preparatory work.

Members were informed by the Clerk of the financial resources which are currently available to the council – including a grant from Cambridgeshire County Council, a specific allocation within the Town Council's 2020/21 budget, two ear-marked reserves and the opportunity to utilise a proportion of the council's general reserves – to fund this scheme, as well as meeting the costs of the associated proposed changes to traffic management in that part of the town.

With regard to the proposed changes to traffic management within the Market Place area, the Clerk informed members that the Policy and Regulations Team at the County Council would be commencing a public consultation exercise, which would last for 6 weeks, on 26 August 2020.

The Chairman shared with the committee a copy of the consultation letter which would be used by the County Council for this purpose.



The consultation letter informs the public that Cambridgeshire County Council proposes to introduce a pedestrian zone and associated parking controls in the Market Place area of Wisbech.

The letter makes the point that those restrictions are part of the Market Place enhancement scheme and would create a safer environment for all road users and simplify the parking controls. It summarises the proposals, as follows:

- a pedestrian zone, prohibiting use by all vehicles between 7.00 am and 4.00 pm, covering Market Place, Market Street (part), Church Terrace (part) and Little Church Street, with loading/unloading permitted between 7.00 am and 10.00 am
- the installation of gates at the closure points in Market Place, Market Street and Church Terrace to physically prevent motor vehicles entering the pedestrian zone during the restricted hours
- a prohibition of waiting between 7.00 am and 4.00 pm within the pedestrian zone
- the removal of existing disabled parking spaces and loading bays in Hill Street, Union Street and High Street, to be replaced with double yellow lines
- the provision of additional disabled parking spaces in Blackfriars Road.

Members were also informed by the Clerk that the officer of the County Council who had designed the proposed new traffic management arrangements is aware that a few issues had been raised as a result of the safety audit for the scheme; he had undertaken to contact the Clerk again as soon as he had been able to examine those issues.

Members expressed their thanks to the Leader of the Council, the Chairman of this committee and the Clerk to the Council for the time and effort that they had devoted to the development of this scheme.

Members decided, on the proposal of Councillor Maul, seconded by Councillor Mrs Wallwork, that

- (1) the scheme design be approved, with the amendment that the proposed location of the tidal clock be changed to the eastern (instead of western) end of the Market Place;
- (2) the Clerk would enquire of Local Planning Authority whether or not Wisbech Town Council would need to obtain planning permission for the implementation of this scheme;
- (3) the Clerk would request the Design Engineer to take the next steps to progress the implementation of this scheme; to include commissioning, on behalf of the council, the necessary site survey works etc;
- (4) the current situation regarding the proposed new traffic management arrangements associated with the enhancement scheme be noted;
- (5) the financial implications of the delivery of this scheme and the funding currently available, as reported by the Clerk, be noted.

**Meeting finished at 8.15 pm.**

Signed.....

Dated.....