



WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

WISBECH MARKET PLACE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

30 JULY 2019 – 7.30 pm

MINUTES OF MEETING

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

In attendance: Councillor Tierney.

Apologies: None (all members were present).

The minutes of the meeting of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee held on 3 June 2019 were confirmed and signed.

M5/19 Public participation - Wisbech Market Place: enhancement scheme

A parishioner commented that he had made the suggestion last year that Wisbech Town Council should consider, as part of any enhancement scheme, the re-location of a trough which is located currently in Elgoods' Gardens to Wisbech Market Place; he mentioned that there is also a trough located at Lynn Road, which would also look good on the Market Place. He mentioned that he is generally supportive of the Town Council's concept ideas for the enhancement scheme but feels that the council should seek to include some existing "historical" items as well as introducing new features.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted.

M6/19 Wisbech Market Place – operational issues

Further to minute M3/19, the Chairman reported to members on the progress with undertaking works necessary to achieve an efficient, effective and safe electrical supply for Wisbech Market Place.

The Chairman informed members that the Clerk and he had met since the time of minute M3/19 with appropriate contractors to discuss the council's needs in this regard and to invite quotations for the works.

The Chairman reminded members that a quotation for the manufacture of new "lids" for the existing electrical installations had been accepted and that, consequently, one lid is currently being manufactured and is likely to be ready for installation within the next two to three weeks. Subject to that being successful, the remainder of the lids would be manufactured and installed.

Members were informed by the Chairman that the electrical contractor is in the process of producing a quotation for new electrical connections that would be accessed via the lids. On behalf of the Chairman, the Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, drawings of the new lids.

The Chairman responded to members' questions.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and that the Chairman be thanked for the time and effort that he has devoted to progressing this matter to date.



M7/19 Wisbech Market Place - enhancement scheme

Further to minute M4/19, members considered further the proposed traffic management scheme for the Market Place area.

The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, a draft plan produced by an Engineer within the Highways Service at Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to the Town Council's application for a new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the Market Place area. He drew members' attention to certain aspects of the Town Council's proposal which had been omitted from the plan.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Tierney, as the ward member for the geographical area which includes the Market Place, addressed the committee. Councillor Tierney commented that he had "steered clear" of the debate regarding proposed traffic management changes in the Market Place area; he expressed the opinion that there are no easy solutions – what would please some people would upset others.

Councillor Tierney stated his awareness of a view that the proposed scheme could be more effective if Hill Street were to be included in the proposed "traffic-free" area but he is aware also of the fact that a number of disabled people had requested that access to the disabled bays within the Market Place area be maintained; also, the prevention of traffic along Hill Street would cause difficulty for disabled persons in accessing the Baptist Church.

Councillor Tierney encouraged the committee to be bold in its decision-making on this matter.

The Chairman commented that he is not 100% sure that maintaining vehicular access to the Market Place area and to High Street via Hill Street would be in the best interests of the people of Wisbech but accepts that the committee had made a particular decision (at minute M7/18 refers), on the basis of which it had made application to Cambridgeshire County Council, as the Local Highway Authority for a new TRO (minute M9/18 refers); he sought members' views as to whether it would still be appropriate to proceed with this matter as agreed at minute M7/18 or whether the committee should now consider the inclusion of Hill Street within the proposed TRO.

Members were reminded by the Clerk that the council's proposed traffic management scheme (as agreed at minute M7/18), which had been the basis of an application to the Local Highway Authority for a Privately Funded Highway Improvement (minute M9/18 refers), for Wisbech Market Place consists of:

- a) "pedestrianisation" of the Market Place area (but without the inclusion of Hill Street and High Street to the area from which vehicles would be prohibited) between the hours of 7.00 am and 4.00 pm (controlled access for deliveries between 7.00 am and 10.00 am; the arrangement would be controlled by the installation of gates adjacent to the Beales department store (Church Terrace) and at the Market Place end of Market Street
- b) the prohibition of vehicles along Little Church Street, to be controlled by bollards or barriers
- c) parking restrictions (double-yellow lines) to be introduced along both sides of Hill Street, the existing loading bays on that street to be removed and a 5 tonnes weight limit to be introduced
- d) the installation of bollards on the pavement edges along High Street, to prevent the parking of vehicles on pavements.

Councillor Maul expressed the opinion that the current problems which are caused by the parking of vehicles on Hill Street and High Street could be addressed by the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement; a matter which is being considered currently by Fenland District Council.



The Chairman commented that the committee had made its previous decision (at minute M7/18), which did not include the closure of Hill Street, having regard for the outcome of a public consultation exercise; furthermore, any change to the Town Council's application for a new TRO at this time could result in a delay to a new order being put into effect. He suggested that the Town Council should proceed with its current traffic management proposal at this time and review the effectiveness of the arrangement following an appropriate period of time.

Councillor Maul expressed the opinion that, unfortunately, people in general have no concerns as to whether they are parking their illegally or inconsiderately in Wisbech; they park anywhere that they can find a space.

Councillor Mrs Wallwork commented that, yesterday she had thought that the best approach would be to make the Market Place area completely car-free; however, now that she had heard the comments of other members, she is of the opinion that whatever approach the council were to take would be a "no win" situation. Consequently, she is supportive of the Chairman's suggestion that the council should proceed with its current proposal now but consider, after an appropriate period of time, whether it would be more beneficial to include Hill Street (and consequently High Street) within the area to which traffic would be prohibited during certain hours of each day.

Councillor Maul expressed the opinion that the council should make a decision which would be of benefit to the majority of people.

Councillor Oliver commented that the plan which had been produced by the Highways Engineer does not reflect fully the wishes of Wisbech Town Council; the plan:

- does not show parking restrictions (double yellow lines) on Hill Street
- does not show bollards along the High Street
- does not appear to include a weight restriction on Hill Street
- shows the proposed Market Place gates in the wrong location
- does not include Little Church Street
- shows incorrect times in relation to the prohibition of vehicular access.

Councillor Oliver pointed out that he had suggested originally that Hill Street should be included in the proposed "closed" area (minute M6/18 refers). He now feels that the council should proceed with its current proposal (which does not include Hill Street) at this time but consider, after an appropriate period of time, whether it would be more beneficial to include Hill Street (and consequently High Street) within the area to which traffic would be prohibited during certain hours of each day. He made the point that if the council did, in future, wish to include Hill Street within the "closed" area, it would need to consider how access could be maintained to the residential properties and for deliveries to businesses in that street.

Councillor Miss Hoy commented that the people of Wisbech are waiting to see something happen in terms of reducing the amount of traffic in the Market Place area; she recognises that whatever is put in place, the council would not make everyone happy.

Councillor Prest expressed the opinion that providing access to the existing four disabled parking spaces adjacent to the Market Place is a minor issue and should not be the reason for not putting in place a more effective traffic management scheme, which would be of greater benefit to the majority of the town's people. He expressed the view that there other possible locations nearby where "replacement" disabled parking spaces could be provided.



Councillor Topgood commented that he would not support a proposal to extend the current scheme to include Hill Street at this time; access to the properties in Hill Street and the disabled parking bays must be maintained.

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

- (1) the traffic management scheme as proposed (as set out at (a) to (d) above) be not changed at this time but, subject to that scheme being implemented on this council's behalf by the Local Highway Authority, it be reviewed after six months of operation;
- (2) the Local Highway Authority be requested to investigate the possibility/feasibility of providing additional disabled parking spaces in Wisbech Town Centre;
- (3) the Clerk would arrange to meet with the Highways Engineer, with the aim of ensuring that the plan of the proposed traffic management proposals includes all of the aspects within this council's application;
- (4) further to (3) above, the updated plan would be provided by the Clerk to the members of this committee, who would, acting in the capacity of a working party, consider the changes;
- (5) the Chairman's suggestion, that he would meet with market traders prior to the enhancement scheme being developed further, be supported.

Meeting finished at 8.20 pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....