



Newmarket

TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Development & Planning Committee Held on Monday 22nd January 2024 at 6.15pm

Attendance:

Councillor R Hood (Chairman)
Councillor A Drummond
Councillor J Harvey

Councillor P Hulbert
Councillor E Kavanagh
Councillor R Nobbs
Councillor S Perry

Also Present: C Whitaker - Town Clerk, J Ashton – Minute Assistant, Cllr Winter as an observer and 1 Member of the Press.

Minute	Action by
D/24/01/19 <u>Chairman to Read the Fire Safety Notice and Announce that Proceedings May be Filmed or Recorded</u> The Chairman welcomed everyone, opened the meeting and read out the Fire Notice and announced that proceedings were being recorded and asked if anyone intended to record the meeting.	
D/24/01/20 <u>Apologies</u> Apologies were received from Cllr Berry. Cllr Clover was absent.	
D/24/01/21 <u>Declaration of Members Interests & to Remind Councillors of the need to keep up to date their Register of Member's Interests and to Consider any Requests Received for Member's Dispensation</u> None noted. There were no requests for dispensation.	
D/24/01/22 <u>To Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 8th January 2024 and any Matters Arising</u> The Chairman presented the minutes of the Development & Planning Committee held on 8th January 2024 and the following amendment was made. Page 7 – Summary resolutions – D/24/01/8.02 Resolved – the full resolution was added to the summary for Long Cottage. Subject to the amendment being made, the following was agreed: <u>D/24/01/22.01 Resolved</u> That the minutes of the Development & Planning Committee held on 8th January 2024 be adopted and signed as a true record by the Chairman of the Development & Planning Committee. There were no matters arising.	
D/24/01/23 <u>Public Open Session</u>	

No members of the public were present.

D/24/01/24 Impact of Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan Policies on Applications Being Considered

Policy 14 – Trees and Policy 30 – Conservation Area.

D/24/01/25 Planning Applications

Week Commencing 01/01/202 & 08/01/2024.

D/24/01/25/1 DC/24/0023/ADV – Application for advertisement consent – a. replacement illuminated hanging sign b. replacement non-illuminated fascia c. replacement illuminated ATM sign c. replacement door vinyl – 49-51 High Street Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.01 Resolved

The Committee voiced no objection subject to the signage being heritage signage suitable for a Conservation Area and being in keeping with the Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan and Shopfront Policy.

D/24/01/25/2 DC/24/0028/TCA - Trees in a conservation area notification - one Robina (T1 on plan) fell - 7 Balaton Place Snailwell road Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.02 Resolved

The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and object to the felling of trees. The Committee objected to this application in the absence of evidence to justify the felling of the tree.

D/24/01/25/3 DC/24/0007/CLP - Application for lawful development certificate for proposed use or development - single storey side extension to existing dwelling house - 56 Bill Rickaby Drive Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.03 Resolved

The Committee voiced no objection.

D/24/01/25/4 DC/23/2042/ADV – Application for advertisement consent – two non-illuminated name signs – Goodwin Business Park, Unit 6 Willie Snaith Road Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.04 Resolved

The Committee voiced no objection.

Cllr Nobbs declared another interest in the following application and did not vote.

D/24/01/25/5 DC/23/2090/FUL – Planning application – a. alterations to existing ground floor shop front and internal alterations to create new entrance b. change of use of first floor from retail (class E) to one dwelling (class C3) – 34 Old Station Road Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.05 Resolved

The Committee voiced no objection subject to the Fire Officer's recommendations being implemented and the shop front being in keeping with a

Conservation Area, and the approval of the Listed Buildings Officer.

Cllr Winter joined the meeting.

D/24/01/25/6 DC/23/2081/TPO – TPO/1990/01 tree preservation order – one Beech (T1 on plan, A1 on order) reduction to limbs back to fence line overhanging 80 Churchill Avenue by approximately six metres – 78 Churchill Avenue Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.06 Resolved

The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and does not object to this application, subject to the Tree Officer's approval.

D/24/01/25/7 DC/24/0044/TCA – Trees in a conservation area notification – one Horse Chestnut (T1 on plan) one Ash (T15 on plan) fell – Palace House Palace Street Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.07 Resolved

The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and objects to the felling of healthy trees and on that basis the Committee objected to this application.

D/24/01/25/8 DC/24/0012/TPO – TPO 08 (1991) tree preservation order – a. five Sycamore (G1 and T3 on plan within A1 on order) one Scots Pine (T1 on plan within A2 on order) fell b. one Cherry (T2 on plan within A1 on order) 1.5 metre lateral reduction away from building – Kingfisher House St Fabians Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.08 Resolved

The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and object to the felling of trees. However, on this occasion the Committee did not object to this application due to the evidence supplied, and supported the plan to replant.

Cllr Hood declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following application and did not vote.

D/24/01/25/9 DC/23/2096/FUL – Planning application – a. conversion of one dwelling into three dwellings b. glazed canopy to front elevations of two dwellings c. rear pitched lean to for two dwellings d. raising of roof height to create second floor habitable rooms for one dwelling – Woodland The Severals Newmarket Suffolk.

D/24/01/25.09 Resolved

The Committee deferred this application and requested an extension to arrange a site visit.

D/24/01/26 Amended and Deferred Planning Applications

D/24/01/26/1 DC/23/2011/TPO – 13 Collings Place – deferred to receive the application documents and the following was agreed:

D/24/01/26.01 Resolved

The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and object to the felling of trees. The Committee supported the neighbour's objection and objected to this application.

D/24/01/26/2 DC/23/1941/FUL & DC/23/1942/ADV – The Guineas – deferred to receive further information and the following was agreed:

D/24/01/26.02 Resolved

The Committee voiced no objection.

D/24/01/26/3 DC/23/2068/P3CMA – 147 All Saints Road – deferred to receive further information and the following was agreed:

D/24/01/26.03 Resolved

The Committee placed a holding objection due the information requested not being received.

D/24/01/26/4 DC/23/1984/HH – 108 Churchill Avenue – deferred for a site visit. Site visit still to be carried out.

D/24/01/26.04 Resolved

The Committee have a planned site visit on 23/1/24 and deferred this application for a report at the next Committee meeting.

D/24/01/26/5 DC/23/1812/HH – 23 Edinburgh Road – re-consultation with amended plans. The following was agreed:

D/24/01/26.05 Resolved

The Committee supported the neighbour's objection on loss of privacy and the proposed materials not being in keeping, and objected to this application.

D/24/01/27 Planning Appeals

Appeal in Progress – AP/23/0052/LDC – Lanwades Park Kentford – it was noted that the Inquiry will be opened on Tuesday 16th April 2024 starting at 10:00am. This item will be deferred to the next committee meeting to consider an NTC response.

D/24/01/28 East Cambs Planning Applications

The East Cambs Weekly Lists for 05/01/2024 & 12/01/2024 were noted.

D/24/01/29 To Receive Results of Applications as Determined by West Suffolk and Plans Withdrawn

West Suffolk Planning Determinations received during week commencing 01/01/2024 & 08/01/2024.

Applications	Description	Address	WS Decision	NTC Decision
DCON(A)/23/1285	Application to discharge condition 3 - arboricultural method statement of application DC/23/1285/HH	Bury Lodge 56 Bury Road Newmarket Suffolk	Discharged	Comments not invited
DC/23/1808/TPO	TPO 12 (2005) Tree preservation order - one Walnut (T1 on plan T2 on order) overall crown reduction by 1.5 metres to previous pruning points	6 Balaton Place Snailwell Road Newmarket Suffolk	Approved	No objection
DCON(E)/20/0624	Application to discharge condition 19 (ecological enhancement) of DC/20/0624/FUL 143A All Saints Road Newmarket Suffolk	143A All Saints Road Newmarket Suffolk	Discharged	Comments not invited

DC/23/2048/TCA	Trees in a conservation area notification - one Tree of Heaven (T001 on plan) fell	8 Abernant Drive Newmarket Suffolk	Withdrawn	No objection	
DC/23/2004/TCA	Trees in a conservation area notification - one Bay (T1 on plan) fell	12 St Marys Square Newmarket Suffolk	Approved	No objection	
DC/23/1935/TCA	Trees in a conservation area notification - 10 Sycamore (0005, 0007, 0008, 0009, 0010, 0011, 0013, 0014, 0017, 0020 on plan) fell	Palace House Palace Street Newmarket Suffolk	TPO Served	Objected	
DC/23/1614/HH	Householder planning application - single storey side and rear extension to existing garage/habitable space to create home gym	Lynwood House 1 Murray Park Newmarket Suffolk	Approved	No objection	

D/24/01/30 Delegation Panel Decisions

DC/23/1262/VAR - Planning Application - Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans); 3 (parking of vehicles and cycles) and removal of condition 9 (air source heat pumps noise control) of DC/20/1025/FUL - Plot 1, Police Station, Vicarage Road, Newmarket.

It was noted that the Delegation Panel were minded to grant permission. Town Clerk to encourage the Newmarket District Councillors to inform NTC if something is going to Delegation Panel in advance; in the event they may be requested to 'call it in' and send to Development Control Committee.

D/24/01/31 Licensing

Premises Licence – 128 High Street Newmarket – Alcohol Sales OFF Premises Monday – Sunday 7:00 – 01:00.

D/24/01/31.01 Resolved

The Committee strongly objected and delegated the details for the objection wording to Cllr Kavanagh and the Town Clerk.

D/24/01/32 Tree Protection Orders

TPO/001 (2024) Palace House Palace Street Newmarket Suffolk – the TPO was received and noted.

D/24/01/33 Enforcement

34 Old Station Road - SCC reported that the contractors have now taken the hoarding back to allow 1.3m footway access.

D/24/01/34 Cycle Paths

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

D/24/01/35 On Street Advertising

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

D/24/01/36 Parking and Transport

A report regarding the Bus Service Improvement Plan submission by NTC has been received from Suffolk County Council; the result being that there is not enough funding (and not enough evidence provided) for any of the Town Council's

suggestions regarding bus/transport services. This is very disappointing. The Voluntary Network have shown an interest in providing extra services, but they are unfunded to date.

This matter will be on the Full Town Council agenda for further discussion regarding keeping the subject 'live'.

D/24/01/37 Consultations

A response to the Street Vote Development Orders Consultation will be considered at the next full Town Council meeting.

D/24/01/38 Accounts

The accounts for December 2023 were received and noted.

D/24/01/39 Correspondence

None noted.

D/24/01/40 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 5th February 2024 at the Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 7:25pm.

Signed _____ Date _____

Summary of Resolutions/Recommendations

Resolution/Recommendation	Resolution/Recommendation Wording
<u>D/24/01/25.01 Resolved</u>	The Committee voiced no objection subject to the signage being heritage signage suitable for a Conservation Area and being in keeping with the Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan and Shopfront Policy.
<u>D/24/01/25.02 Resolved</u>	The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and object to the felling of trees. The Committee objected to this application in the absence of evidence to justify the felling of the tree.
<u>D/24/01/25.03 Resolved</u>	The Committee voiced no objection.
<u>D/24/01/25.04 Resolved</u>	The Committee voiced no objection.
<u>D/24/01/25.05 Resolved</u>	The Committee voiced no objection subject to the Fire Officer's recommendations being implemented and the shop front being in keeping with a Conservation Area, and the approval of the Listed Buildings Officer.
<u>D/24/01/25.06 Resolved</u>	The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and does not object to this application, subject to the Tree Officer's approval.

<u>D/24/01/25.07 Resolved</u>	The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and objects to the felling of healthy trees and on that basis the Committee objected to this application.
<u>D/24/01/25.08 Resolved</u>	The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and object to the felling of trees. However, on this occasion the Committee did not object to this application due to the evidence supplied, and supported the plan to replant.
<u>D/24/01/25.09 Resolved</u>	The Committee deferred this application and requested an extension to arrange a site visit.
<u>D/24/01/26.01 Resolved</u>	The Committee actively encourages responsible tree management and object to the felling of trees. The Committee supported the neighbour's objection and objected to this application.
<u>D/24/01/26.02 Resolved</u>	The Committee voiced no objection.
<u>D/24/01/26.03 Resolved</u>	The Committee placed a holding objection due the information requested not being received.
<u>D/24/01/26.04 Resolved</u>	The Committee have a planned site visit on 23/1/24 and deferred this application for a report at the next Committee meeting.
<u>D/24/01/26.05 Resolved</u>	The Committee supported the neighbour's objection on loss of privacy and the proposed materials not being in keeping, and objected to this application.
<u>D/24/01/31.01 Resolved</u>	The Committee strongly objected and delegated the details for the objection wording to Cllr Kavanagh and the Town Clerk.

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Newmarket

TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & Policy Committee **Held on Monday 22nd January 2024 at the Memorial Hall 7:30pm**

Attendance:

Councillor J Harvey (Chairman)
 Councillor A Drummond
 Councillor R Hood

Councillor P Hulbert
 Councillor R Nobbs
 Councillor Yarrow

Also Present: C Whitaker – Town Clerk, J Ashton – Minute Assistant and Cllr Winter as an observer.

Minute

- F/24/01/1 Chairman to Read the Fire Safety Notice and Announce that Proceedings may be filmed or Recorded**
 The Chairman opened the meeting and advised that the Fire Safety Notice was not required and confirmed that proceedings were being recorded.
- F/24/01/2 Apologies for Absence**
 None noted.
- F/24/01/3 Declaration of Member's Interests and to Remind Councillors of the Need to Keep up to Date their Register of Member's Interests and to Consider any Requests Received for Member's Dispensation**
 None noted. There were no requests for Member's Dispensation.
- F/24/01/4 To Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 20th November 2023 and any Matters Arising**
 Members received the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 20th November 2023 and the following was agreed:
F/24/01/4.01 Resolved
That the minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee meeting held on 20th November 2023 be adopted and signed as a true record by the Chairman of the Finance & Planning Committee.
 There were no matters arising.
- F/24/01/5 Public Open Session**
 No members of the public were present.
- F/24/01/6 Submission of Schedules of Payments for Information CB1 - CB4**
 Members reviewed CB1 - CB4 for month 8 and 9 (2023/2024) and the following was agreed:
F/23/11/6.01 Recommendation

Minutes of Finance & Policy Committee held on Monday 22nd January 2024

Book Number 13 2023 - 2024

That the ratification of the schedules of payments for the period 01/11/2023 – 30/11/2023 and 01/12/2023 – 31/12/2023 (Cash Book 1 - 4) be received and adopted.

F/24/01/7 To Confirm the Bank Statement Balances & Related Bank Reconciliation have been signed by the Chairman of F&P Committee

The Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee confirmed scrutiny of the bank reconciliations relating to the end of 31/12/2023 (month 9) for the Town Council's Current, Petty Cash, Salaries and Barclaycard Cashbooks.

F/24/01/8 To Receive the Income and Expenditure

The Income and Expenditure reports for December 2023 were received and noted.

F/24/01/9 Predicted Budget Outcome 2023/2024

The predicted budget outcome for the end of Quarter 3 was presented and the total predicted total outcome for 31/3/2024 of £55,171 underspend, was noted.

F/24/01/10 Neighbourhood Plan Government Funding for NNP Review

A report on the available funding for the NNP review was considered and the following was agreed:

F/24/01/10.01 Recommendation

That an application be made for government Locality free of charge technical support and funding for planning consultancy for the NNP Review.

F/24/01/10.02 Recommendation

That delegated powers be given to the Town Clerk to apply for any future necessary funding for NNP consultancy.

F/24/01/11 Health and Safety

The monthly Health and Safety report was received and noted. Town Clerk was asked to make enquiries regarding the efficiency of the lift and what possible strategy could be put in place to plan for replacement in due course.

F/24/01/12 Policies

An update was given on the Policy Review Schedule and the following policies were reviewed. The following was agreed:

F/24/01/12.01 Recommendation

That the following revised policies be approved:

- **Newmarket Town Council Standing Orders NTC/2.3**
- **Newmarket Town Council Financial Regulations NTC/203**
- **Newmarket Town Council Financial Risk Assessment**
- **Newmarket Town Council Internal Control Statement**

F/24/01/13 Small Grants

A request from the Newmarket Allotment Association was considered and the following was agreed:

F/24/01/13.01 Recommendation

That the grant application from the Newmarket Allotment Association for £500.00 be approved.

A request from Abbeycroft Leisure was considered and the following was agreed:

F/24/01/13.02 Recommendation

That the grant application from Abbeycroft Leisure be approved with an award of £1,300.00

A request from the Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid was considered and the following was agreed:

F/24/01/13.03 Recommendation

That the grant application from the Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid for £1,000.00 be approved.

F/24/01/14 Investments

A report regarding Town Council investments and the need to update the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and Treasury Management Policy was discussed and the following was agreed:

F/24/01/14.01 Recommendation

That delegated powers be given to the Chairman and Town Clerk to review and update the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and the linked Treasury Management Policy, and to research the professional advice regarding investment opportunities. To report findings to the next F&P meeting.

F/24/01/15 Correspondence

None noted.

F/24/01/16 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 18th March 2024 at the Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:00pm

Signed

Date

Summary of Recommendations	Recommendation Wording
<u>D/24/01/6.01 Recommendation</u>	That the ratification of the schedules of payments for the period 01/11/2023 – 30/11/2023 and 01/12/2023 –

	31/12/2023 (Cash Book 1 - 4) be received and adopted.
<u>D/24/01/10.01 Recommendation</u>	That an application be made for government Locality free of charge technical support and funding for planning consultancy for the NNP Review.
<u>D/24/01/10.02 Recommendation</u>	That delegated powers be given to the Town Clerk to apply for any future necessary funding for NNP consultancy.
<u>D/23/11/12.01 Recommendation</u>	That the following revised policies be approved: • Newmarket Town Council Standing Orders • Newmarket Town Council Financial Regulations • Newmarket Town Council Financial Risk Assessment • Newmarket Town Council Internal Control Statement
<u>D/24/01/13.01 Recommendation</u>	That the grant application from the Newmarket Allotment Association for £500 be approved.
<u>D/24/01/13.02 Recommendation</u>	That the grant application from Abbeycroft Leisure for £1,300.00 be approved.
<u>D/24/01/13.03 Recommendation</u>	That the grant application from the Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid for £1,00.00 be approved.
<u>D/24/01/14.01 Recommendation</u>	That delegated powers be given to the Chairman and Town Clerk to review and update of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and the linked Treasury Management Policy, and to research the professional advice regarding investment opportunities. To report findings to the next F&P meeting.



Report to	Full Council Committee
Subject	Newmarket Youth Strategy
Purpose	Information
Classification	Unrestricted
Meeting date	29th January 2024
Item number	10
Written By	Cathy Whitaker CLERK

Summary: This report outlines the progress of the Newmarket Youth Action Group in its aim to create a Youth Strategy for Newmarket.

1.	Introduction
a.	NYAG is meeting monthly with good attendance from a wide range of stakeholders, students and guests.
2.	Context
a.	A very draft document is attached for a Youth Strategy and this is currently being worked on.
3.	Proposal/Options
a.	Newmarket Charitable Foundation have proposed that it could be the conduit to take forward a Youth Action Group which would refine the draft YS document, with the current NYAG becoming the umbrella Youth Strategy Group carrying out general scrutiny of the new Youth Action Group. (see attached graphic)
4.	Financial/Resource Implications
a.	The Town Council has a revenue line for Youth Strategy in the annual budget which is currently being used to provide part funding for the youth shelter installation at the skate park on GL Playing Fields and an annual provision for Teen Chill at the Leisure Centre for a second youth worker.
b.	There is also a YS EMR sitting at £12K which is there for possible future contributions which may be required as the Youth Strategy progresses.
5.	Next Steps/Recommendations
a.	To continue liaising and moving forward with NCF and the YAG groups to provide a Newmarket Youth Strategy.

NEWMARKET YOUTH STRATEGY

Organisation chart

Youth Strategy Group

Meeting Frequency: Quarterly

Memberships: Youth Representatives, Newmarket TC, West Suffolk DC, Suffolk CC, current YAG membership (to be reviewed)

Purpose:

- Approve Youth Strategy;
- Receive updates and reports from Youth Action Group;
- Review strategy, change and amend when necessary.

Youth Action Group

Meeting Frequency: Monthly

Memberships: Newmarket Charitable Foundation, Youth Representatives West Suffolk DC, Abbeycroft, any action 'owners'

Purpose:

- Draft a strategy for approval;
- Ensure delivery against each action;
- Report to Youth Strategy Group.

e.g. Newmarket Charitable Foundation

Safe Spaces Action

e.g. West Suffolk District Council

Sports and Recreation

e.g. Newmarket BID

Develop Youth High Street Experience

A strong youth strategy is vital for the health of a community.

Young people should come first when designing a Youth Strategy. This can be achieved by:

1. Understanding young people by breaking down barriers, in a kind, respectful and unthreatening atmosphere.
2. Guiding and encouraging young people towards opportunities for success.
3. Working with other organisations to signpost them for additional support.
4. Highlighting the achievements of young people in the area.

The following strategic aims are appropriate for young people in Newmarket:

1. Fast, responsive and joined up interventions when young people are experiencing challenging circumstances. This will build on existing strengths to create a suite of services that joins up seamlessly from early adolescence through to early twenties. This requires further development of professional relationships, good intelligence gathering and shared information systems and a willingness to refocus resources quickly.
2. A coordinated approach to antisocial behaviour which extends beyond it to create diversionary activities and involves the public sector and community based organisations.
3. Engaging community groups, individual volunteers and businesses in a straightforward and effective way, making use of the goodwill that is prevalent in Newmarket to create a wider range of opportunities for young people.
4. Good employment prospects, with local businesses taking a lead role so that they can offer opportunities to young people to get a start in the world of work, starting with school pupils and including young people who are unemployed or NEET (16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training).

These can be achieved by accepting three key aspirations:

1. A positive role for young people in Newmarket, with more respect and recognition for their efforts and achievements and nurturing their sense of independence and personal responsibility.
2. Young people should be having a key role in shaping the services that are delivered to them in Newmarket and that the broader community, local businesses and public sector services have to work together to create a way of making that work.
3. Young people's aspirations towards independence and decent life prospects are key to all of this, and this means creating more opportunities for personal development, positive social activities, training and employment.

There are two core features that must be part of a Youth strategy

A Youth Skills programme which will:

1. Promote apprenticeships by linking businesses and young people, to provide mutual benefits in terms of opportunities for jobs, apprenticeships and work experience.
2. Apply for grants for bespoke projects to meet young peoples 'needs.
3. Offer one-to-one guidance on CV writing, interview techniques, and job applications.
4. Provide a programme of local events to offer inspiration, experience, advice and guidance.
5. Provide local training opportunities by working closely with both young people and businesses, helping to tackle skills gaps at both the business and individual level.
6. Work with schools and targeted groups of students during times of change, such as the transition between leaving school and their next pathway.

And recognising the lack of activities for young people and the significant waiting lists for existing clubs, we must:

1. Provide and support more activities for young people.
2. Encourage volunteering and participation in different activities.
3. Increase participation in sports clubs and provide improved facilities for sports clubs in Newmarket

The ambitions outlined above can best be achieved by:

1. Employing a detached Youth Worker in Newmarket.
2. Having a safe space for 16-24-year olds including those who have a variety of wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem issues.
3. Providing advice in skills and wellbeing, at various locations in the community including schools.



Report to	Full Council Committee
Subject	Transport
Purpose	Information
Classification	Unrestricted
Meeting date	29th January 2024
Item number	11
Written By	Cathy Whitaker CLERK

Summary: This report outlines updates regarding previously discussed funding opportunities for Newmarket Railway Station and Newmarket's bus services.

1.	Introduction
a.	Railway Station: Andrew Bramwell, Senior Strategic Transport Planner at SCC, indicated that there was a fund of £10K for improvements at the rail station. Cllrs McHugh and Perry carried out some surveys at the station last year. £10K will not fund any large projects and it is still uncertain what this amount could go towards. Resurfacing of a footpath, bins, shelter were mentioned on a recent call with no definite conclusion.
b.	Bus Services: See attached response from Simon Barnett, SCC Integrated Transport & Enhanced Partnership Manager, to the Council's submission for the Bus Service Improvement Plan Consultation recently. No funding for Council's suggestions is available unfortunately.
5.	Next Steps/Recommendations
a.	Railway Station: Further communication with SCC regarding suitable use of the secured £10K.
b.	Bus Services: Communication has been made with the Voluntary Network, who are keen to provide extra transport services but have no funding. Transport & Parking Working Group to keep discussions 'live' and investigate further any potential way forward.

Townclerk

From: Simon Barnett <Simon.Barnett@suffolk.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 January 2024 17:15
To: Townclerk
Cc: Councillor Harvey; Councillor Perry; Councillor Hulbert; Emma Forde
Subject: BSIP+ Funding decision

Dear Cathy,

Thank you for your Bus Service Improvement Plan + (BSIP+) submission and supporting correspondence. In total we had over 60 schemes and services suggested via the online portal - it was gratifying to see such enthusiasm from the community. All submissions have been scored against the same criteria, with our conclusions on which should receive funding also being approved by the cabinet member for Transport Strategy, Councillor Richard Smith. The total funding "ask" of all the schemes combined comes to more than double the amount of the grant from the DfT over the next two years, so you will appreciate that we will not be able to fund every idea at this stage.

Unfortunately we are not able to fund any of the services you proposed at this point. Please note that this is not an outright rejection of the ideas, but the review panel did not find sufficient evidence that any services put on now would have the ability to sustain themselves once the grant funding was used up. We will continue to work with our operators and neighbouring local authorities to develop ideas ready for when additional funding may be available.

In general terms, all of the schemes we are not able to fund at this point have merit and in many cases are not being progressed simply because the fund as a whole will not cover the cost to operate them all. We are committed to working with all of those who submitted ideas to develop them further and gather additional evidence of demand. This way we will be able to move quickly to implement more of them in the event of further funding becoming available from the DfT or within the Council's local bus budget. Options for gathering such evidence will be discussed at future meetings of the Suffolk Enhanced Bus Partnership, to which you will be invited.

Whilst I am writing, I would also like to respond to the points raised in your email of 12th January:

Newmarket Town Council wishes to see:

1. *A county-wide network of frequent and reliable services between major towns and villages providing hubs which local / rural services can link into. Our application for improved service between Newmarket (population 19k) and Bury St Edmunds (population 41k), via Kentford is such a major route. The current service is only short-term funded so we are concerned that even this could be in jeopardy.*

As part of our ongoing review of the main BSIP document and following new guidance issued by the DfT we will be considering the re-introduction of "minimum service levels" for Suffolk going forward. Given the current regulations for provision of bus services, we are not able to compel operators to run services to match what we design, but these will at least give us all something to strive towards.

2. *Vehicles should be appropriate for passenger numbers on those routes and at appropriate times (so some may be minibuses, some may have peak commuter demand). Our application for an improved Newmarket Town circular service would increase connectivity and opportunities around the town.*

Vehicle size is something we consider for all our contracted services, but we are restricted by what the operators who bid for the work actually have. The majority of buses operating in Suffolk carry out home to school work during their operational day so may be required to carry up to 70 pupils on key journeys. This can lead to large vehicles running with empty seats during the off-peak period because it is simply not economical for operators to swap them out for smaller types. Such actions would impact on the frequency of services, fuel costs and driver hours involved in running back and forth from depots not to mention the capital investment in having two buses for every one currently in use.

3. *Extending concessionary fares to community services to encourage users*

The English National Concessionary Fare Scheme as defined by the DfT only covers registered local bus services between 0930 and 2300 Monday to Friday and all day at weekends. Reimbursement to operators for accepting the pass is administered by local authorities, but funded by the Government. Extensions to the scheme to allow travel before 0930 on weekdays, or to cover community transport operations are permitted, but would have to be funded locally. As I am sure you are aware, Suffolk County Council is facing severe financial pressures over the next few years and simply cannot afford to bear the cost of such enhancements. Through our Connecting Communities contracts we already subsidise community transport across Suffolk which helps to keep their fares as close to regular buses as possible.

4. *Contracts being awarded on a service basis whereby profitable routes cross-subsidise (presumably with some level of subsidy) other routes, rather than operators cherry-picking routes.*

Unfortunately this will require changes to legislation on a national level or a significant investment locally to adopt a franchising system. The 1985 Transport Act de-regulated the bus market giving operators the power to cherry-pick the routes they operate. The same Act states that each commercial route should be self-supporting and prevents them from using profits from one route to cross-subsidise another. Adopting a franchising system in Suffolk would enable us to determine what routes were needed rather than the market just providing what is profitable, but the costs involved would be prohibitive to consider. As examples, the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority requested over £100million in their BSIP to develop franchising which was not granted, while Greater Manchester are spending over £200million to undertake it in their area. Our current budget for local buses is under £1million per year so this is simply not realistic for us to consider at present.

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