



# Needham Market Town Council

Needham Market town Council Office, Community Centre, School Street, Needham Market, Suffolk IP6 8BB  
01449 722246

<https://www.needhammarket-tc.gov.uk/>  
Town Clerk/RFO: Georgina de Cova  
Assistant Clerk: Jessica Green

## Governance and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

**Held at: The Green Room, Community Centre, School Street, Needham Market. Meeting started at 19:00**

### **Councillors Present:**

C Goodchild (Chair), J Reardon, A Reardon, K Hunter, L Smith, G Blake and R Darnell

### **Also in Attendance:**

G de Cova (Town Clerk and RFO)

At the beginning of the meeting, the Committee observed a minute's silence in memory of Alan Parsons, former Chairman of the Council. Members reflected on his many years of dedicated service and his significant contribution to the life of Needham Market

### **GF/25/079 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mason (family commitment), Harrison (family commitment), Cooke (illness) and Chandler (prior commitment)

Cllr J Reardon proposed that apologies be accepted. Seconded by Cllr Hunter. All in favour.

It was **Resolved** to accept the Apologies for Absence.

### **GF/25/080 To receive declarations of interest from members relating to items on this agenda**

No interests were declared

### **GF/25/081 To approve any Dispensations with respect to Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests**

As no interests were declared, no dispensations were needed.

### **GF/25/082 To receive and confirm the Minutes of the Governance and Finance Meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025**

Councillors received the previous minutes for review ahead of the meeting.

Cllr Hunter proposed to confirm the minutes of the previous meeting. Seconded by Cllr Smith.

It was **Resolved** to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.



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## **GF/25/083 To discuss matters arising from previous meetings minutes**

Councillors discussed actions and matters from the previous meeting. All were either in progress or resolved.

## **GF/25/084 To receive questions from any members of the public present**

No members of the public were present

## **GF/25/085 To receive a report from the Town Clerk/RFO**

Councillors received a report from the Town Clerk. She confirmed that no timelines had been received from the External Audit Providers yet for the AGAR. It was also confirmed that preparation for the internal audit had started. It was noted at the time of the meeting that there were 4 vacancies for Councillors, 2 of which were eligible for co-option with the other 2 awaiting to hear if an election is to be called.

## **GF/25/086 To discuss and agree working towards the SLCC Civility and Respect Pledge**

Councillors discussed the Civility and Respect Pledge and agreed that it would be something they felt would be good to work towards. Cllr Hunter proposed that we work towards the signing of the Civility and Respect Pledge. Seconded by Cllr Smith. All in favour.

It was **Resolved** to work towards the signing of the Civility and Respect Pledge

## **GF/25/087 Update on Governance and Finance Arrangements**

### ***GF/25/087/a To monitor the Council's approved Budget 2025/26 against actual expenditure***

Councillors had information that included all monies spent and received up until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

### ***GF/25/087/b Review of the Council's Financial Management Procedures***

It was agreed at this time; nothing was needed to be reviewed.

### ***GF/25/087/c Review of Council's Community Infrastructure Levy priorities and expenditure***

The CIL priorities list has been reviewed, and quotes are being obtained for works. There has been no expenditure to date

### ***GF/25/087/d Review of Council's policies***

Councillors had received all reviewed policies, along with a report detailing changes made in advance of the meeting. The following were agreed for recommendation for adoption by Town Council:

**CCTV Policy** – Proposed by Cllr J Reardon, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour.



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**Complaints Policy** – Proposed by Cllr J Reardon, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour

**Data Protection Policy** – one small amendment to be made. Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Darnell. All in favour

**Data Retention Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Blake, seconded by Cllr A Reardon. All in favour

**Disciplinary Policy** – Proposed by Cllr A Reardon, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour.

**Equality and Diversity Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Hunter, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour

**Freedom of Information Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr A Reardon. All in favour

**Staff Grievance Policy** - Proposed by Cllr J Reardon, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour

**Health and Safety Policy** – one small amendment to be made. Proposed by Cllr A Reardon, seconded by Cllr Smith. All in favour

**Internet Banking Policy** - one addition to be made. Proposed by Cllr Hunter, seconded by Cllr Smith. All in favour

**Lone Working Policy** - Proposed by Cllr Hunter, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour

**Staff Sickness Policy** – Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Blake. All in favour

**Statement of Internal Controls** – Proposed by Cllr Hunter, seconded by Cllr Smith. All in favour

When discussing the General Privacy Policy, Councillors felt that more advice should be taken. Cllr J Reardon proposed to defer the policy, seconded by Cllr Darnell. All in favour

### ***GF/25/087/e Review of the Council's Risk Assessment***

Members felt that an in-depth review should take place of the Council's Risk Assessment document in advance of the end of the Civic year, to ensure that any additions or amendments could be agreed in a timely manner. It was also discussed that a schedule for monitoring be written up.

**AP: Clerk to review and present at the next Governance and Finance meeting**

### ***GF/25/087/f Review of the Council's Reserves Position***

Councillors are aware of the monies held in reserves. A reserves policy has been drafted and is ready for presentation at the next Governance and Finance Committee meeting

### ***GF/25/087/g Review of the Councils Investment Strategy***

The Clerk confirmed that an Investment Policy had been drafted and would be ready for presentation at the next Governance and Finance meeting.



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## **GF/25/088 To receive and discuss draft Terms of Reference for Committees**

Councillors had draft Terms of Reference for each committee, ahead of the transition to Committees with Delegated Authority at the start of the next Civic Year.

## **GF/25/089 To receive an update on Committees with Delegated Authority**

The Clerk informed members that the majority of Councillors had responded with Committee Preferences. Any members that had not sent preferences would be asked again, and if no preferences given then they would be assigned to Committees that needed more membership.

## **GF/25/090 To consider matters raised in the Councils Internal Audit Report 24/25**

Councillors were informed that progress was being made with matters raised from the Internal Audit.

## **GF/25/091 To receive an update on the Register of Interests for Councillors**

Councillors were given an update, with most Councillors now having completed a Register of Interest.

## **GF/25/092 To scrutinise any matters referred from, or to, The Council's Community and Assets Committee and/or Planning Committee**

Cllr Hunter gave an update on the Needham Market Neighbourhood Development Plan Review, with the next meeting being held on March 17<sup>th</sup>

## **GF/25/093 Matters to be raised by members**

No matters were raised.

## **GF/25/094 To confirm the Date, Time and Location of the next Governance and Finance Committee Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting is on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 7PM in the Green Room of Needham Market Community Centre.

**Meeting closed at 20:30**

**Chair**.....

**Date**.....