

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 25th October 2022.

PRESENT:	Councillor	J Windell – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	Miss A Betts
	“	I Bradbury
	“	S Flunder
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	Mrs J Jeans
	“	Mrs J Jordan
	“	M Ladd
	“	M Rowan-Robinson
	“	J Sutton

Also present, The Town Clerk and the High Steward.

1. **Apologies:**

To note/approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Temple.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.* Nil.

b) *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.* Nil.

c) *To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda.* Not applicable.

d) *Councillors to be reminded of the requirement for them to individually update their Register of Interests as appropriate.* Noted.

3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 27th September 2022.

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022. All agreed.

4. **Public Participation**

a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan.*

ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.

Cllr Beavan advised that GLI group had put forward 2 motions at ESC a) double council tax for second homes, asking that in this area this be ring-fenced for affordable homes, and b) £12 minimum wage for all council employees by reducing wages of highest paid officers. New CEO has been appointed at a salary of circa £200k, and a new strategic director is to be appointed on a salary of circa £150k. Homelessness is a problem in the area, and people are being asked to leave private rented accommodation. A meeting is to be held soon regarding the new housing in Reydon which will deliver some properties for social rent. Information still awaited for the development by Copperwheat Avenue.

Flood Board - is involved in a £9m project to find a route away from coastal erosion areas. Public engagement starts December 2022, and stakeholders will be brought into discussions around January 2023.

Harbour Management Committee – The Harbour Order is due to be amended but includes a right to sell. Stakeholders are united in not supporting this aspect and will ask ESC to compromise on this.

Potters Bridge – flooding. Environment Agency need to clear outfall to keep road open but there are still some difficulties accessing the land. Dr Therese Coffey MP is now Minister for the Environment. Presently the best way to manage the flood water is put a measure on the water to know what its depth is.

b) *To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor M Ladd.*

SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors.

Potters Bridge – Environment Agency says they will clear in November. Not a Highways issue alone as outlet needs to be cleared. Highways have carried out some surveys of the land, which is very soft, and this could cause issues.

First section of Gull Wing is being put into place over railway line. 380 tonnes on delivery. When moved = 1450 tonnes in weight.

Cost of living issues – lots of support. SCC leaflet is available from the Town Hall. Cassius is the SCC IT system to help people live at home using the “Alexa” app and linked into automatic lights. It is considered that this has saved approximately 100 people going to hospital this year by preventing falls.

Question to Cllr Ladd – Cllr Beavan asked whether a consultation from SCC on Potters Bridge is happening. Cllr Ladd advised that it was not clear what a consultation would need to be about.

c) *To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda (each elector will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes). (10 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).*

There were no members of the public present.

5. To receive reports from Committees.

a) *To receive the written report of the meetings of the Planning and Development Committee held on Tuesday 4th October 2022, and Tuesday 18th October 2022. To consider and confirm the Recommendation in respect of, No recommendations.*

DC/21/5290/FUL – Construction of 13 dwellings and associated works, Fire Station, Station Road. Cllr Jeans presented the application. On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was recommended to approve this application. All agreed.

b) *To receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee on any further planning/development matters including;*

Follow up to meeting with Philip Ridley and Cllr David Ritchie. Follow up meeting had taken place at which the LPA design champion was introduced, and this was very useful meeting.

c) *To receive the written report and recommendations of the Landlords cttee meeting held on 20th October 2022. Recommendations in relation to repair work/ project mgt. costs of works required.*

Cllr Jordan presented the paper. Recommendations – 21 Market Place. It is recommended that once the designs have been updated and confirmed, a planning

application be submitted, and that Ruth Summers be asked to carry out the Heritage Statement on behalf of the council.

It was proposed that the recommendation be amended to reflect that Ruth Summers complete and file the planning application on behalf of STC. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Betts it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation.**

Conversion of 1 Strickland Place - Planning application approved 2022. Funding will be confirmed once tenders are received.

It was recommended that North and Hawkins be engaged to; a) discharge planning conditions, b) procure tender and provide recommendation, c) complete building control application, d) act as principal designer e) inspect works and project manage conversion at a cost of £16500 plus VAT.

Cllr Ladd asked about the updating of the business plan. The Clerk confirmed that this will need to be updated once tenders are received. Discussion about the need to provide residential properties, whilst at the same time ensuring that such projects are able to break even. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Jeans it was agreed by a majority to approve the recommendation with one abstain.**

Tidy of back garden at 1 Strickland Place by Henham Bees and Trees - Leaving greenhouse in situ. Cost to clear to ground level - £1000. It was recommended that the quote of £1000 be accepted.

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation.

2 Strickland Place – Planning application required for completion of priority repairs over the next 3 years as detailed in the repair schedule survey. It was recommended that North and Hawkins be engaged to prepare and submit a planning application for all the priority 1/2/3 repairs required over next 3 years at a cost of £800 plus Vat. Cllr Jeans asked that landlords cttee ensure that a Heritage statement is provided.

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed by a majority with one abstain to approve the recommendation.

6 Strickland Place – Roof does need full replacement – costs being ascertained.

Emergency repairs required to roof at cost of £1125 plus Vat. It was recommended that these be carried out with immediate effect by S.J. Clarke. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation.**

Town Hall decorating - of ground floor and stairway. One quote received to date. It was recommended that this quote of £7500 plus materials be accepted to enable the works to be carried out. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed to approve the recommendation with 2 abstain.**

Water Tower outside works – Chaplin and Farrant have met with members of the cttee to consider the feasibility and options for workshops outside. It was considered that it would be beneficial to approach Northumberland Water to ask whether STC could take over the freehold of the area to the rear of the large water tower – to provide more space for workshops. At the cttee meeting it was also mentioned that the golf club might be approaching STC with a request to place irrigation tanks in the area too. Recommend that STC approach Northumberland Water to request the freehold of the area to the rear of the

large water tower, to the side of the smaller water tower. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Sutton it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation.**

Bees and Trees to be asked to check the trees around the site and carry out maintenance works as required. Henham Bees and Trees to undertake the tree works as above – **on the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Jeans it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation.**

Landlords' legislation requirements – upgrade of carbon monoxide detectors and fire doors/fire alarms to ensure they meet new legislation requirements. It was recommended that this be carried out in accordance with the legislation. **On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Beavan it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation**

6. **To receive reports from working groups;**

a) *Sustainable Travel – to receive update from meeting held 19th October 2022. No recommendations.* Cllr Bradbury advised that there was a report in the supporting papers and that a positive meeting had been held with the new SCC Community Liaison Engineer.

Cllr Ladd advised that 'Plug in Suffolk' are offering to come again to talk to the Sustainable Travel Group to provide updates on the Scheme.

Cllr Beavan advised that in relation to overnight camping on North Parade, he is trying to get some of the harbour car park made available for camper vans.

7. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended:**

Reports to be provided in written format and circulated to members prior to the meeting unless time allows for a verbal report to be given, subject to the Chairs discretion.

a) *Sizewell/Anglia One - Cllr Flunder.* DCL been approved but still some issues with funding. Should get final decision in 2023. Cllr Beavan advised that within the Euro Link Consultation one option is to bring the cable to Easton Bavents under the Blyth. Presentation/Consultation at the Stella Peskett on Wednesday 30th November 2022 10am – 4pm. All encouraged to attend.

b) *Southwold and Walberswick Flood Board – as above.*

c) *Resilient Coasts Project Board – as above.*

d) *HMC Meeting/SAG meeting including Harbour Revision Order – Cllr Flunder explained, as above, that there is an issue in relation to the Harbour Revision Order with 'Sale of land' being retained in the HMO (which is no change to at present). Caravan site has 33 empty plots and consultation with caravan owners is going ahead over next 2 – 3 months.*

Cllr Bradbury advised that he would circulate a paper round tomorrow regarding the HMO aspects. Alistair McFarlane is manager of Harbour Lands and has created a vacancy on the HMC to which no one has yet been appointed. HMC were promised a consultation on the terms of the HMO, but this did not happen. Cllr Bradbury re sale of land – ESC solicitors did indicate that since 1933 any owner of the harbour has had power to sell assets.

Cllr Jeans asked what the legal mechanism to fight the order would be.

Cllr Flunder advised that the Stakeholders Group should get to have a say at the consultation which is due to take place. Unlikely to take place before 2023 and will last several weeks, and the Order is not likely to be in place until mid-2024.

Cllr Sutton left the meeting at 8.10pm.

Cllr Bradbury – the SAG group was unanimous in wanting some form of “veto” to make sure none of the assets of the harbour can be sold off.

e) *Health Centre* – Cllr Bradbury advised that himself and Cllr Beavan were present at the meeting on 1st August. Aim was to see how the practice and PPG was working but this was not the outcome. Another meeting needs to be chased. It was considered that the practice does not want to undertake preventative treatments. Cllr Beavan advised that he was slightly more optimistic as the practice, as per most parts of the NHS, is struggling to cope. But did remind practice of their obligation to give public feedback and that they have started to give information about vaccinations. Cllr Jeans advised that it was understood that the NHS is under complete pressure and that there is a need to be realistic and supportive. Cllr Beavan advised that “Integrated Care Services” now includes Counsellors as part of the service.

f) *Xmas Lights 2022* – Cllr Goldsmith advised that there would be a scaled down event in the Market Place only. Thanks were extended to Adnams/Town Clerk/Cllr Bradbury/ Cllr Ladd and High Steward for helping to get the event going for 2022.

8. **ESC Community Partnership - Cost of Living Crisis including ESC Ease the Squeeze Campaign** – *To receive update on projects, including community expressions of interest for Warm Rooms.* Cllr Beavan advised that not many people attended the URC event. Nearly £1m of support is available from ESC. 12 projects going ahead but people are very reluctant to get in touch. The role of STC will be to be aware and pro-active, and to inform people of what is available. Cllr Ladd advised that the library will be a “warm haven” in opening hours. Stella Peskett Millennium Hall are not able to add extra support, and nor is the Arts Centre as the ESC grant funding cannot fund staff wages. Cllr Jeans advised that under one of the ESC projects, Southgen is the only café in the Community Partnership area to supply hot meals for those in need. Cllr Rowan-Robinson advised that the Arts Centre already hold 2 warm room events 1) parent and toddler and 2) coffee club, which will continue over the winter.
9. **Police meeting Halesworth** – *representative to attend.* Cllr Bradbury will attend.
10. **High Street properties** – *to consider the present opportunities.* Strategic discussion re sale of shops available on the High Street. Cllr Jordan advised that prices are presently out of council reach for the available premises sales. It was considered that more retail shops on the High Street might be good idea in future, and the sale prices to be watched in case prices drop. It was agreed to keep this on the agenda for the future. It was suggested that enquiries could be made about those premises which have been empty for a considerable time i.e., Jennie Jones, old pharmacy etc, to see what prices are doing. It was suggested that a shop with a residential flat above may be better than holding a larger residential property. It was agreed to regularly review the market sale process and

hold an extra ordinary meeting if one was needed to make a quick decision on a particular proposal.

11. **Financial Matters**

a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for October 2022 (*circulated to members*).

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Bradbury it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for payment for October 2022. All agreed except Cllr Jeans Norse payment to make sure Blyth Road area properly cleared.

Action – hold this payment until done properly.

b) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Meeting* held on 17th October 2022. Fin Rep 9.2022. See recommendation re donation.

Recommendation re donation of £1k to Sole Bay Care Fund for shuttle. **On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Jordan it was agreed by all to approve the recommendation.**

12. **Town Mayor updates/correspondence including.**

Adnams 150th Birthday Carnival – Wednesday 28th September 2022 – very good event. URC Harvest Festival – Sunday 9th October 2022 Thanks were extended to all.

Station Rd redevelopment project – updates. Party wall awards completed. Expect start in 1-2 weeks' time once a pre-planning condition has been discharged and await UK Power Networks and BT to redirect their services. Cllr Beavan asked whether the contract had been completed with the operator and was advised that this was not yet the case.

13. **Dates for Diary**

Armistice Day - Friday 11th November 2022

Remembrance Sunday – 13th November 2022

St Edmunds Day – Friday 18th November 2022

Christmas Lights Switch on – Saturday 26th November 2022 at 6pm. It was mentioned that stewards are required for the switch on event and those who were available asked to contact the town hall.

14. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** to be confirmed.

15. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the *Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960* it might need to be resolved, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, for the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.

If required for legal, staff or tender discussions.

Nil

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed

Dated