

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 30th May 2023.

PRESENT:	Councillor	S Flunder – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	Mrs V Gladwell
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	R Jarvis
	“	Mrs C Kerr
	“	M Palmer
	“	Mrs V Redington
	“	J Sutton
	“	R Temple
	“	M Wells

All Declaration of Acceptance of Office had already been signed.

Also present: SCC Cllr Ladd, The Town Clerk, the High Steward and 3 members of the public.

1. **Apologies:**

To note/approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Davy whose apologies were noted.

Cllr Flunder introduced the meeting.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

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

b) *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Nil.

c) *To receive Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Nil.

d) *To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda.* Nil.

e) *To note that the Register of Interests of all Members is to be completed within 28 days of the election and updated thereafter with changes as they occur.* Noted.

3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 28th March 2023, and the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 17th May 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Temple it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 and 17th May 2023. All agreed.

4. **Public Forum** (15 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).

- a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan*
ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.

Congratulations were extended to Cllr Beavan for success at ESC election and for appointment as Deputy Leader at ESC.

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that the GLI group had won majority at election and had now formed the administration with Cllr Topping as ESC Leader. Cllr Beavan is Deputy Leader and Chair of Southwold Harbour Management Committee and Housing Portfolio Leader. It is hoped to make real changes within the next 4 years especially on housing and the harbour. Hope to just have 1 Harbour Committee in due course (instead of 2) and to carry on the work of the Resilient Coasts.

Q from public – Reydon/Walberswick/STC had a good collaboration last year on public rights of ways. Can this continue? ESC Cllr Beavan suggested SCC Ward Cllr Ladd to respond.

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

SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors. See SCC annual report attached.

The Town Mayor gave thanks to SCC Cllr Ladd for all his work on STC (33 years) - and for doing so much for this Council - pleased to have him as SCC Ward Councillor.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he joined council in 1990 and had seen many projects take place.

As ward Cllr, SCC Cllr Ladd gave an outline of SCC work. SCC Cllr Ladd division is Kessingland and Southwold (includes many parishes as well). Term finishes in 2025 when there will be boundary changes to try and achieve approx. 10k residents per Ward Councillor. Southwold and Kessingland separate, and Southwold goes into the group of Wrentham. SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he is Chair of Scrutiny and holds administration to account and sits on the Fire and Rescue Board and sits on Joint Venture Housing Board – as SCC is the 3rd largest landowner in the county. Going to build 3k houses as affordable. SC has £655m budget – 70% = adult social care and children’s social services. SCC looks after highways. Have repaired 37k potholes in the last 2 years and carried out 280 miles of resurfacing. Re York Road/Kings Head repairs – agree this is not good enough and has asked for much harder/firmer surface there.

SCC Cllr Ladd will come to STC meetings on a regular basis to discuss highway concerns etc. SCC have replaced all streetlights in the past few years. Cost £10m to do.

Question from public re public rights of way. SCC Cllr Ladd advised that the group had had 2/3 meetings and would suggest they start up again. SCC will participate if invited.

Q to SCC Cllr Ladd from Cllr R Jarvis re devolution to Suffolk. SCC Cllr Ladd – advised Suffolk have had an offer/deal of devolution from central government, but SCC view is that they are not needing a Mayor and still in negotiations about this.

The Town Mayor asked SCC Cllr Ladd re Energy Coast and SCC’s views on Sizewell and the Windfarms.

SCC Cllr Ladd – SCC will support clean renewable green energy but wanted mitigation for residents of Suffolk during construction. Same with offshore.

- c) *To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda.*
Nil.

5. **To receive reports from Committees and Working Groups:**

- a) *To receive the report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee meetings held 4th April 2023, 18th April 2023 and 23rd May 2023*
No recommendations
And to receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee on any further planning/development matters to be brought to the attention of the Council.
Cllr Temple has been elected as Chairman of Planning cttee. No other matters.
- b) *Landlords Cttee – No report - Next meeting 29th June 2023 – Noted.*
- c) *Leisure and Environment Cttee –To receive verbal report re Coronation event on 6th May 2023 and upcoming Civic Events. Next Meeting 6th July 2023 – Cllr Goldsmith advised that the Coronation Event went very smoothly. Thanks to the High Steward for the briefing to stewards.*
- d) *Sustainable travel – No report. Next meeting 23rd June 2023 – noted date.*
- e) *Comms Working Group – No report. Next meeting 6th June 2023. Noted. The Town Mayor will seek to find a way forward for all the forms of comms for Southwold and Reydon, specifically increasing comms about events in the town.*

6. **Model Code of Conduct:**

To confirm the re-adoption of the LGA Model Code of Conduct. On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Temple it was agreed by all to confirm the re-adoption of the LGA Model Code of Conduct. Unanimous.

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) *RDC – Cllr Goldsmith – see written report.*
- b) *Xmas Lights – Cllr Goldsmith – New committee was formed “Light Up Southwold”. Just Giving page has achieved £5k income and events are planned for this year. Need to replace the old Xmas trees on the brackets. Committee now beginning to realise the limitations of what can be done, and the legislation required. Q re target figure – A - Minimum £10k but more like £15k - £20k will be required. Q re what can STC help with? A – STC could try and support the group in their work/events. Thanks to Cllr Goldsmith for her involvement and to Cllr Ladd who had previously chaired the Xmas Lights Group for many years.*
- c) *National Energy Projects – Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project - Cllr Flunder gave a report. There are 2 judicial reviews taking place. Government still has problems raising sufficient funds. But looks as if Sizewell C will proceed. Windfarm = question about location of substations. Members were advised that substations offshore are more preferable, but costs are more than onshore. Cllr Beavan advised that this needs the energy contractors to cost the options as there is a cost to loss of countryside, and the government needs to put infrastructure in.*
- d) *Southwold Beach Cttee – Cllr Beavan – beach shower is going in by Suzies Café. Beach wheelchair is being maintained/upgraded and will be available for use soon.*

It will only be available for use every other day as no one will be available every day to service it. Could improve this service if resource is available.

The Environment Agency algorithm for monitoring water quality has been altered and Blue Flag has been achieved.

North Parade Shelter – Cllr Beavan has asked for BBQ on the grass in front of shelter. Cllr Beavan advised that he is asking for more beach huts along the denes end of the beach as there are some in storage at Lowestoft.

Cllr Flunder asked re dogs on the beach – advising that a warden would be a very good addition. Are more signs required to ensure people comply or is additional resource required.

8. **To confirm Town Council Representatives on outside bodies for 2023/24**

To confirm Town Council Representatives on outside bodies for 2023/24 – see list attached as per names.

Cllr Flunder spoke regarding a means of having comms with Reydon PC. Need to formalise the scenario and develop a working group to work with Reydon PC.

Cllr Flunder suggested that a working group with Terms of Reference be worked out through Finance & Governance Committee. **On the proposal of Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed by all to set up a working group for informal discussions with Reydon PC – the terms of reference to be drawn up. Potential members = Cllr Temple, Cllr Jarvis and Cllr Palmer. All agreed. Unanimous.**

*To confirm 3 members for the Enterprise Hub Project Board – Cllr Flunder provided the background. First meeting is on 12th June 2023 on zoom. **It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Goldsmith, Cllr Flunder, an Cllr Davy be the STC representatives on the Enterprise Hub Project Board. Cllr Jarvis as substitute.** ESC Ward Cllr Beavan will be part of the ESC representation.*

To confirm members who can assist with the Reydon/ Southwold Food Pantry – Cllr Flunder advised that he went to opening last week. Is there for sustainability of food waste. Need STC Councillors to work with Reydon PC – min of 2 Councillors. STC role would be to work with second homeowners/visitors regarding preventing food waste when they leave town etc.

Members volunteering – Cllr Kerr, Cllr Flunder. Cllr Goldsmith offered to liaise re the holiday home letting agents. Agreed by all.

9. **Flag Days** – *To consider incorporating Armed Forces Day*

*(www.armedforcesday.org.uk) within the Flag Flying Days at Gun Hill and, if agreed, to confirm purchase of an Armed Forces Day Flag – see quote attached. Cllr Kerr – see quote etc. £125.94 cost. **On the proposal of Cllr Kerr, seconded by Cllr Temple it was agreed by all to purchase and raise on the due day on Gun Hill flagpole the Armed Forces Day flag. Cllr Wells offered to be the Deputy Flag Raiser – agreed by all.***

10. **Financial Matters - Audit and Governance**

a) Financial Officer: to re-appoint the Clerk as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer for 2023/24.

On the proposal of Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Beavan, it was unanimously agreed to re-appoint the Clerk as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer for 2023/24. All agreed.

b) Internal Auditor

- i. To confirm that SALC are an effective internal auditor for Town Council audit requirements.*
- ii. To appoint SALC as the internal auditor for 2023/24.*
- iii. To receive Internal Control Statement and to confirm that Internal Controls are appropriate and effective for Council purposes as per the Internal Control Policy.*
- iv. To receive and note the SALC internal audit report for 2022/23 and the Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 on the AGAR.*

It was proposed by Cllr Goldsmith to adopt items i) to 4) en block, seconded by Cllr Sutton. All agreed. Unanimous.

- v. To Resolve to adopt the Action Plan arising from the internal audit report. The report and action Plan had been circulated prior to the meeting.*
It was proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Sutton to adopt the Action Plan arising from the internal audit report. All agreed. Unanimous.
Finance Cttee will also review audit report in detail throughout the year.

- c) Risk Assessment: To receive draft Risk Assessment for 2023/24 – Finance Cttee to consider any update required from Internal Audit Report.**
Cllr Flunder – covers all risks including properties etc. **On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Wells, it was RESOLVED unanimously to adopt the risk assessment for 2023/24 (as a working document).**

d) Accounts 2022/23:

- i) To receive and if approved, confirm Section 1, the Annual Governance Statement, of the Annual Return to the Audit Commission, for the year ended 31st March 2023 and provide permission for signature as required. (Note: (i) In signing the Annual Governance Statement the Town Council is obliged under Schedule 12, para 41(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to record and note the yes/no answers in Section 1) and provide permission for the Chairman of this meeting to sign these accordingly.*

On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Flunder, it was unanimously RESOLVED to receive and approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement of the Annual Return to the Audit Commission, for the year ended 31st March 2023.

- ii) To consider and approve Section 2, the Statement of Accounts, of the Annual Return to the Audit Commission for the year ended 31st March 2023 and provide permission for the Chairman of this meeting to sign these accordingly.*

On the recommendation of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Flunder, and unanimously agreed, it was RESOLVED to confirm Section 2, the Statement of Accounts of the Annual Return to the Audit Commission for the year ended 31st March 2023 and to provide permission for these to be signed off accordingly.

- e) To Resolve to re-adopt the Reserves Policy together with confirmation of the**

earmarked reserves as detailed at 31st March 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was agreed by all to re-adopt the Reserves Policy and to note and approve the Earmarked reserves as detailed at 31st March 2023.

f) *To confirm and adopt the General Power of Competence for Southwold Town Council. To resolve that the Council meets the conditions of eligibility set out in the Schedule to The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, thereby enabling it to use the General Power of Competence. This will remain valid until the annual meeting following the next ordinary election in May 2027. Southwold Town Council confirms that it meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk.*

On the proposal of Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith, and agreed by all to confirm the General Power of Competence for Southwold Town Council.

g) *To confirm Model Publication Scheme 2023. All documents are on the website. On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Flunder. All agreed.*

h) *To confirm Investment Strategy 2023.2024. On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Flunder. All agreed.*

11. **Financial Matters**

a) *Accounts for Payment - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for May 2023 (circulated to members).*

Cllrs asked that the F and G cttee keep a watch on Professional fees and the budget for these.

On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Sutton it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for May 2023.

b) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee - Meeting 28th April 2023 FIN Rep 04.23. Recommendation as in 10e) above regarding reserves. Next meeting 9th June 2023. Noted.*

c) *To confirm delegated budget of £25k for Leisure and Environment Committee for 2023/24 as per Town Council Budget. On the proposal of Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed to confirm a delegated budget of £25k for the Leisure and Environment Committee for 2023/24 as per Town Council Budget. All agreed.*

d) *Enterprise Hub – next construction valuation assessment update. Cllr Flunder as a member of the Finance Committee advised that he and the Town clerk review the valuation from the employer’s agent for the payments to be made as they become due. All Councillors were encouraged to get up to date with the project and visit the site as per the offer from Mixbrow.*

12. **Standing Orders:**

To re-confirm the Town Council’s Standing Orders for 2023/2024 and to re-confirm the Financial Standing Orders for 2023/24.

On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Beavan, it was unanimously RESOLVED to adopt the Town Council’s Standing Orders for 2023/2024 and to adopt the Financial Standing Orders for 2023/24 (financial documents as agreed by Council). All agreed.

13. **Sealing of Documents 23/24:** *to authorise the Clerk to seal legal and civic documents.*
On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Sutton, it was unanimously agreed to authorise the Clerk to seal legal and civic documents. All agreed.
14. **GDPR** – *to confirm that Council and Councillors are aware of their responsibilities and obligations in relation to collecting, using and protecting personal information in accordance with provisions of GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.*
To consider and approve the GDPR risk assessment as reviewed.
On the proposal of Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was RESOLVED by all to agree that Councillors are aware of their responsibilities and obligations in relation to collecting, using and protecting personal information in accordance with provisions of GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. All agreed.

15. **Town Mayor updates including.**
Presentation to Southwold Primary School pupils – 25th May 2023 – Excellent event and well received by school. Council to consider increasing Charter money in future years due to the cost of rides.
Lions Fete – 28th May 2023 – numbers were as pre-Covid but not well advertised. Signage in Town might be thought about for the future.
Opening of Charter Fair – Thursday 1st June 2023 – Bellman will be attending.
Songs of Praise Service – Sunday 11th June 2023
Suffolk Day Proclamation – 21st June 2023
Aldeburgh Mayors Sunday – 9th July 2023

Town Mayor to advise members of the personal theme/selected organisation for their Mayoral Year.

Cllr Flunder’s chosen theme for his Mayoral year is about “volunteering” and the effect of the current volunteering crisis on the economy and the sustainability of organisations.

A member suggested that council could perhaps undertake a project each month where a representative of the Council could be in charge of the voluntary project.

Councillor Dates for Diary – Civic, Town Council, Briefings, Committees, as circulated previously by email.

16. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:**
Tuesday 27th June 2023 at 7.30pm.

Cllr Flunder thanked all members of the public for attending.

Some items from this agenda might need to be considered within a confidential session as below.

17. **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.*
Any matters, including those above as required.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed

Dated

DRAFT