

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 31st October 2023.

PRESENT:	Councillor	S Flunder – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	P Davy
	“	Mrs V Gladwell
	“	R Jarvis
	“	M Palmer
	“	Mrs V Redington
	“	R Temple
	“	M Wells

Also present: SCC Cllr Ladd, the High Steward, The Town Clerk and 4 members of the public (from the Golf Club).

Cllr Flunder introduced the meeting and reflected on the current events across the world.

1. **Apologies:**

To note/approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Goldsmith, Kerr and Sutton. All apologies were noted.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

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

Cllr Flunder declared a pecuniary interest re the Golf Club.

b) *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Cllr Flunder declared an Other Registerable interest re the Millennium Trust.

c) *To receive Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Cllrs Davy, Jarvis and Wells declared a Non-Registerable Interest re the Golf Club.

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 Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 26th September 2023.

On the proposal of Cllr Wells, seconded by Cllr Palmer it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 26th September 2023. All agreed.

4. **Public Section**

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

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

Including ESC response to Storm Babet.

Ward Cllr Beavan advised as follows;

Potters Bridge –water is rising. Environment Agency now have a warrant to dig it out. Run off cannot get off the road as the drains are full - might need to think about closing the road.

Flood – Framlingham/Wickham Market – Storm Babet caused problems and ESC are helping people.

Covehithe has had more erosion.

ESC – new strategic direction launched, and this is on Cabinet papers next week.

Discussion re weeds – glyphosate needs to be used in select places.

St Edmund’s Green –a bed has been rotavated to establish wildflowers.

ESC Housing – in the last 3 years the number has risen threefold (57 – 168 – 270. In the year to date 200 people have been registered, many being evicted by private landlords) Some of those evicted have been put in temporary accommodation at a B&B in Ipswich.

ESC Cllr Beavan is now on the Health Board at CCG and liaising with Reydon surgery.

Questions from Councillors

Nil.

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

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

Including SCC response to Storm Babet and Cold Calling Zones

Ward Cllr Ladd advised the following;

Storm Babet hit the county last week. 75mm of rain fell on Friday which has less than 1% chance of happening. Fire & Rescue were called to many incidents and Highways pumped out approx. 2.5million litres of water and dealt with 19 fallen trees. For information – 0345 6066171 = Emergency SCC number.

Potters Bridge – as per ESC Cllr Beavan report.

Milestone started their Highways contract on 1st October 2023.

SCC has established that the parking by the old doctor’s surgery on York Road has a TRO so will take longer to alter the parking spaces there. For pedestrian safety reasons 2 or 3 of the East Street parking bays are suggested for removal by C&C and SCC Cllr Ladd will cover this cost from his budget.

York Road was previously nominated under the “Quiet Lanes” initiative. Quiet Lanes has been a successful scheme for which there may be more money in the future.

SCC Cllr Ladd has worked with Reydon and put in for a speed reduction at Reydon to 40mph on the bends by the Hen reedbeds on the A1095.

No cold calling zones = Trading Standards can either formalise a zone or can put stickers in individual windows. Graham Crisp is the contact as the Head of Trading Standards.

SCC Libraries – contract is up in May 2025. See consultation to 26th January 2023.

Questions to SCC Cllr Ladd

Nil.

Thanks were expressed to SCC Cllr Ladd for work on York Road and East Street parking bays. Cllr Flunder advised that by “Oaklands” a tree came down and was put by the side of the road in the evening and disposed of the next day.

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

Golf Club – Mr Clifford, Mr Mills and Mr Johnson attended to explain background to donation request. Mr Mills spoke re the old irrigation system and the need to improve the system as it is 40 years old. Full new system deemed to be required. Mid-January is the estimated installation.

Re a “drip system” – it had been decided that this would not be suitable as drip system is usually above ground and drips down. This system at the Golf Club is below ground. Drip line pipes have a 5 – 10-year life span and there would be a need to create a semi permeable layer in the ground. Tried it on the Oval in 1991 and then taken out. Not totally reliable. To do a drip system would need to have a full re-design.

The selected new system will be “flow” managed according to weather data/forecast and will be run off new electrics. Should reduce water usage by approximately 35% and this should be a saving on efficiency. Will save on hand watering too.

Cllr Beavan advised that there were concerns due to water being a scarce resource.

The meeting was advised that a drip system is popular in the US. Would not want to allow irrigation during the day so it must be in the evening- it was suggested that there be fertilisation watering still only at night - say 9pm – 5am.

5) **Donations – new requests**

Southwold Golf Club – to consider the new information provided and to consider request from previous meeting. It was agreed that this agenda item be taken from number 20 item 5.

Cllrs Jarvis, Davy, Wells and Flunder left the meeting.

Cllr Beavan took the chair for this item.

Discussion took place about the donation budget and the Clerk advised how much was remaining in this years budget. The budget for 2024.2025 has not yet been set, and the actual date for the installation might mean that the Club could approach the Town Council again in 2024.2025.

Discussion about whether to provide a donation at this stage to the Golf Club -It was Agreed by all that a donation would be made for the new irrigation system. Discussion took place about the amount of the donation. On the proposal of Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Palmer it was suggested that a donation of £3,500 be made in 2023.2024 – this is the remaining funds within the donation budget for 2023.2024. Agreed Unanimous.

Cllrs Jarvis, Davy, Wells and Flunder returned to the meeting at 8.10pm.

5. **To receive reports from Committees.**

Planning and Development Committee

a) i) *To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 3rd October 2023. The report of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held on 3rd October 2023 was received.*

ii) *To consider the Town Council response for the following planning application;*

- 1) *DC/23/3776/FUL – Alterations and additions, including demolishing and rebuilding the rear extension on a larger footprint, raising the ridge height of the roof, proposed new rear dormer, increase parking provision and replacing dilapidated fences and shed in rear garden with a new outbuilding, Forest Lodge, Godyll Road.*

One resident has objected to the frontage on Godyll Road and one objection on other matters.

The meeting was advised that this is an enlargement of an existing extension. 2023 SCC Parking principles show that parking provision is sub-standard for 6 bedrooms. no parking on Blackmill Road either.

Other comments: roof lines are not clear - would want more clarity.

Concern about drawings still coming through on a sub-standard basis which cannot be read clearly.

On the proposal of Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Beavan it was agreed by all to recommend refusal on the grounds of lack of parking provision, the change in the frontage, and that it does not preserve or enhance the design within a Conservation Area.

- 2) *DC/23/3854/FUL – Additional and improved fire escape access from second floor bedrooms and living room, 3 Trinity Street.*

There is a need to put in a new fire escape.

Cllr Temple recommended it for ESC approval. Cllr Gladwell seconded. All agreed.

- 3) *To note receipt of planning application DC/23/3807/FUL – new skatepark at Klondyke.*

Noted.

- 4) *Update re planning application for 17 Market Place Southwold – will go to ESC Planning Cttee Nov/Dec.*

Cllr Temple and Cllr Flunder met the Conservation & Planning Officer to discuss this application. It was felt that the property had not been marketed properly whilst acknowledging that it is now a dilapidated building on the street scene.

The Conservation Officer explained that if it is changed to residential as per this application, there will be some heritage improvements.

It was noted that the application will go to ESC Committee.

Cllr Temple noted concerns about the precedent which could be set to turn empty business units into residential.

The meeting was advised that the Planning Officer thinks that as it has been residential before so would not set a precedent.

Cllr Flunder explained that the Neighbourhood Plan is a vital part of this application i.e., that it would need to be a residential unit with a principal residency clause.

Discussion took place.

Question was raised as to whether the marketing procedures had been followed - Members advised that they were still unaware of the answer to this.

Cllr Beavan suggested that if it goes to committee, STC should be present at the meeting.

- b) **Landlords Cttee** – To receive the written report of the meeting of the Landlords.

Committee held on 12th October 2023. Cllr Wells explained that the committee had been through the budget required for 2024.2025.

Recommendations in relation to; properties.

25 Market Place – Hard wiring test had failed – approx. £1600 cost for improvements to pass the test. Approved for recommendation from Landlords Budget - Hard wire test is a compulsory matter. It was AGREED by all to carry out this improvement.

Putting Green – request for extended opening – Putting Green would like to open the café Nov/ Dec as a pilot – instead of closing on 29th Oct this year.

Discussion re terms of lease and conditions of opening cafe. Noted that the greens themselves will need to have some maintenance carried out in Feb/ March 2024.

Tenants were advised that putting green would need to be open as well as the café so long as the weather is suitable as per rest of the year.

On the proposal of Cllr Wells, seconded by Cllr Gladwell, it was AGREED by all to approve the request.

- c) *Leisure and Environment Cttee – To receive the written report of the meeting of L and E held on 19th October 2023.*

Recommendation in relation to Ferry Rd Garden notice board.

Signboard – to detail the history of the site. Information Board detailing the history of the area and it will also highlight that volunteers are required for the maintenance of the garden, and it will detail all the sponsors of the garden. Draft produced. Total costs for Design, manufacture and installation = £2352.

After full discussion it was AGREED by all to seek outside funding for the noticeboard alongside improvements to the access from the Jubilee Bridge.

- d) *Roads Cttee – to receive the written report from meeting held 11th October 2023. Recommendation.*

Residents parking – Cllr Beavan advised that residents could overstay on limited waiting bays as part of a process which ESC can sign off if required. Therefore, residents parking as such is still on the agenda.

To consider and if agreed approve the cost of purchase of one fast charger for Gardner Road car park.

Recommendation re Electric Chargers

Cllr Beavan introduced the topic – and advised members that the fast charger cost is approx. £25k and recommends that one be purchased by the Town Council for the Godyll Road site.

Cllr Jarvis advised that other chargers in town are low level/power.

Discussion regarding cost/usage – Southwold is a high-volume town for vehicle chargers. If there is 5% use, STC would receive £11,500 p.a. towards the costs of purchase and payback would therefore be 3 – 5 years.

A member asked what would stop people parking for longer than the charge period – members were advised that an “overcharge” can be set for the period once the car is fully charged.

2 vehicles can be charged at the same time. A maintenance contract would be required.

Question was asked about the capacity for additional slower chargers - the substation will be used 80% full by the 40kw charger and would be capacity for the 2 plug-in

Suffolk 7kw chargers too. There is the ability to pay by credit card rather than on an App and there is an option to set lower rates for a particular set of users.

Discussion about whether the unit could be leased – this to be researched further.

Cllr Beavan advised that he put forward an amendment to the recommendation – to include “Approve cost of purchase or lease”. Seconded by Cllr Jarvis.

Recommendation – to approve the cost of purchase or lease of one fast charger for Gardner Road car park. AGREED UNANIMOUS.

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

- a) *Southwold T C and Reydon P C working group* – No further updates.
- b) *Comms working group* – meeting next week.

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) *Christmas lights – Cllr Sutton/Cllr Flunder.* £14k spent to date. Lights are going up now in town.
- b) *HMC/SAG – Cllr Flunder* – no meeting yet – due next week. There is a new harbour manager who is looking after the caravan site and harbour.
- c) *Harbour Users – Cllr Gladwell.* Nil.
- d) *Reydon and Southwold Pantry – Cllrs Flunder and Kerr.* No update.

8. **National Energy Projects** –

Lionlink consultation.

To receive update from RAID meeting.

To consider STC response to consultation which closes 3rd November 2023.

The meeting was advised that the RAID meeting 27th October 2023 was very good. Reydon PC did well to bring this together. Stall in Southwold Market Place has given out information. Consultation ends 3rd November 2023.

Meeting was advised that only one third of people attending the RAID meeting had written a response. Cllr Wells has a sample letter which can be circulated to individuals to send if they wish to.

Cllr Davy advised that STC need to decide whether it is objecting to all proposed NSIPS in Suffolk and/or the one north of the pier – STC should consider the position on both issues. What do Southwold residents think of all of the NSIPS.

Cllr Beavan suggested that STC should oppose all – as energy companies should not bring in energy along the East Coast instead of London – they should go straight to London. SEAS are fighting all.

Discussion about STC response. On the recommendation of Cllr Beavan seconded by Cllr Temple it was unanimously agreed to send draft letter as is with Cllr Davy making some suggested changes before it goes off by 3rd November 2023. Copy of final letter to be circulated.

It was agreed to publicise final letter on website and to thank Reydon PC for their work to date.

To consider setting up a working group for this project – Terms of reference to be Agreed.

Volunteers for the working group - Cllr Davy, Cllr Wells and Cllr Flunder.

It was agreed that this needs to be a Task & Finish group of Councillors and independents to look at all the NSIP projects. Terms of Reference to be agreed.

Other NSIPS

Sizewell/Anglia One//Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project – To receive updates.

Cllr Flunder gave an update. Sealink is at Statutory Consultation at Friston/Aldeby area.

9. **Enterprise Hub** *to receive progress update from meetings with Project Board, construction team, and operators. **
Cllr Davy updated members that Mixbrow completion is to be extended by 2 weeks – due to weather.
Update on the lease to Menta is also awaited – all docs with their solicitor.
Gable back end of Hurren Terrace needs completing separately to the contract and STC will need professional advisers to guide on the structure etc. The Project team is asking for a full specification on this.
Gas omission – trying to bring forward the monitoring by the EPO.
A concern was expressed that both constructors and operators' timescales are slipping. Menta will market themselves and the site once the lease complete. ESC advise that Menta is doing very well on its sites.
Rental of shop/flat
Landlords Committee will need to consider the promotion of these units.
10. **Fire Station Site** – *to receive update re local lettings policy.*
Await SCC decision on the Hastoe purchase.

SCC Cllr Ladd left the meeting at 9.25pm.
11. **Community Policing** – *to receive update from recent meetings.*
CCTV – Police Design team to provide guidance. To consider and agree any next steps.
Cllr Flunder advised that the police have had a good result re the recent burglaries. CCTV design team specification is awaited, whilst Mights Bridge CCTV should now be able to be downloaded remotely.
12. **Community Land Trust** – *All members invited to information briefing on formation of CLT. 21st November 11am at Town Hall.*
Date noted.
13. **Feedback from meeting for businesses/traders 19th Oct 2023.** *To consider and agree next steps.*
Business meeting – next date being arranged.
14. **Banking in Southwold** - *To receive update, and to consider and agree next steps.*
Millennium Trust will host Barclays for 1 year for 3 days a week.
15. **Financial Matters**
 - a. *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee – To receive reports from meeting October 2023 FIN Rep 09.23.*
To consider and if agreed approve recommendations in relation to; virements/donation requests – The Common.
The Common Trust has requested a donation of £10k to enable it to carry out additional works in maintaining the Common and to start on some larger projects

i.e., fire breaks, an extension of York Rd car park spaces. The only income received by the Charity is from the 3 tenants – but additional income is now trying to be raised by car park donations for the area along York Road. The Common was previously a Town Council asset but was transferred to a charitable body to ensure its local retention in any local government review. SALC has confirmed that the Town Council has powers to contribute to the maintenance of such an area, and with GPC additional powers are available. The Finance cttee recommends approval from the Community budget.

All agreed.

It was noted that the Finance cttee will review the link between the Common Trust and the Town Council.

Cllr Temple left the meeting at 9.30pm.

b. To consider and if agreed approve costs for Planning for Town Hall refurb. Town Hall design and planning costs for all phases – quote received for £24k. In view of the specialism of the Town Hall listed property status it was considered that the chosen architect would be the most appropriate. No further quotes required as per standing orders for professional services.

It was noted that the outcome will include provision for better accessibility, and greater public involvement in the building. On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Beavan it was agreed by all.

c. Budget Setting 2023.2024 – Committees/working groups to note timescales for budget consideration requests. Await all final Committee budgets.

d. Accounts for Payment - To receive the management accounts/bank reconciliation and balance sheet for October 2023 and to receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for October 2023.

It was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for October 2023.

e. Audit 2022.2023 - To receive return of external audit report AGAR 2022- 2023. To note Nil action required.

Members received the return of external audit report AGAR 2022- 2023 and noted that there were no matters arising for attention. Nil action required.

Thanks were extended to the Town Clerk.

As per Standing Orders it was agreed by all to continue with a 15-minute extension.

16. Forthcoming Meetings/ Events for Council/councillors

Armistice Day – 11th Nov – 10.45 am at war memorial.

Remembrance Sunday Parade – 12th Nov – 10.20am at Town Hall

St Felix – networking event – 5th Dec at 6.30pm

Christmas Carols at St Edmunds Church – 17th Dec

17. Town Mayor updates including.

a) *Events attended*

Southwold School Council Elections at Town Hall.

Ipswich Civic Event.

b) *Upcoming engagements*

Induction of new vicar – 21st Nov 2023

Xmas Lights switch on – 25th Nov.

c) *Town Mayor volunteering project* – update.

Promotion of volunteering opportunities – Community Action Suffolk, and Rotary Club.

18. **Consultations**

To consider STC response to the following consultations;

a) *Control of Dogs Renewal of three Public Space Protection Orders -*

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/2023-consultation>, the consultation will close on the 13th November 2023. Noted

b) *East Suffolk - Polling District & Polling Places Review 2023. The consultation period runs until 30 November 2023. [Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations 2023 » East Suffolk Council](#) Noted.*

19. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 28th November 2023 at 7.30pm

20. **Donations – new requests**

Southwold Golf Club – to consider the new information provided and to consider request from previous meeting.

See above.

****Note: Discussions above may need to be considered as confidential as appropriate and dealt with in the agenda item below.**

21. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it will 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.*

Agreed by all.

Potential for Property Purchase – To consider available properties – to consider and agree next steps.

Property purchases – it was agreed by all to look into the opportunities further. Visits to be arranged.

To consider and if agreed approve H R paper attached re Town Co – Ordinator role. It was Agreed by all to approve the recommendation contained within the HR paper.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed

Dated