

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023.**

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

Also present: SCC Cllr Ladd, the High Steward, The Town Clerk and 1 member of the public.

1. a) **Apologies:**  
*To note/approve apologies for absence.* Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Sutton and Temple. All apologies were noted.  
  
b) *Councillor vacancy* – Council is now waiting to see whether an election will be called or if the vacancy can be filled via co-option, following the resignation of Cllr Kerr. Thanks were extended to Cllr Kerr for all her work whilst a Councillor.
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.* Cllr Flunder declared an Other Registerable interest re the Millennium Trust.
  - 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 Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.  
**On the proposal of Cllr Wells, seconded by Cllr Beavan it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 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.*

ESC Cllr Beavan – Re Hope Cottages – concerned re fuel poverty as these are old houses. Cavity wall works will be carried out next summer. Windows need attention – secondary double glazing might be added.

Health – East Coast Community Healthcare are looking at integrated care schemes. Making good progress on sharing patient records. Trying to make surgery use IT more effectively.

Potters Bridge – Environment Agency have got a warrant to clear, but surge tide was 1.2m above normal last Friday. Potters Bridge breeched again – 3 – 4 metres of seawater on the road. Do need long term solution. The EA will redo the outfall when they can – warrant means that they can still go on the land. Need Highways to clear the drains too. 2 cars were flooded on the night of the storm. Electronic signs were asked for several years ago.

ESC Strategic Plan was passed on casting vote by councillors.

#### *Questions to ESC Cllr Beavan*

Question was asked regarding the flooding – is there a long term plan for serious flooding – for example if Easton Bvents goes?

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that Mr Nicholls is not carrying on after Spring as Chair of the Community Emergency Group and suggested that Cllr Wells might like to take it on. People need to be trained to operate a rest centre in case this is needed.

Cllr Flunder asked what was happening with the Flood Board that had been set up to review all of the flooding issues.

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that the ESC officers are having to fire fight at the moment i.e. Pakefield cliff fall etc. Funding is going on fire fighting instead of resilience building.

Cllr Flunder advised that it was not clear if all those on the Board are aware of what needs to happen and that STC need someone on the Board.

Cllr Gladwell asked about the flooding on the marshes and why the Harbour Road is flooded.

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that the control boards went in when they should not have done. The boards had previously been out but when the EA went, they were back in. The harbour master will now take the boards away so that they cannot keep being put in when the water needs to drain away.

The meeting was advised that the sluice might also not be overly efficient.

Cllr Flunder asked who was trying to sort out the Potters Bridge/highway issues.

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that a multi-agency approach was required. It was suggested that maybe a half day conference could be called with all the agencies.

Digital warning signs would de-risk the issue of cars going through the water – but would not solve the problem.

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

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

SCC Cllr Ladd – Potters Bridge is passable with care today. SCC Highways will go on as soon as the water clears, to check the road/drains etc.

SCC Library consultation – STC to encourage responses as SCC need to find out what people want from the library service in the future.

SCC Scrutiny Cttee looked at the transfer of the Highways Kier contract to Milestone. Care Quality Commission rated Suffolk Adult Care as “good”.

Fire Station Site – Hastoe put in a planning application. The site is an odd shape with ½ in flood zone. SCC were going to have 2 of the houses instead of Hastoe paying full purchase price for the land up front. However, funding rules have changed, and this cannot now happen so SCC/ Hastoe are now trying to find a solution.

SCC – putting in extra £1m in the budget to assess how they can reduce floods – for example that experienced at Framlingham in October.

*Questions to SCC Cllr Ladd*

Cllr Beavan – asked whether SCC had received £25m extra for roads? SCC Cllr Ladd advised that £10m has been allocated to SCC, payable spread over several years.

SCC Cllr Ladd has put forward the Kings Head corner re the surfacing to be improved.

Cllr Beavan asked whether electronic signs for Potters Bridge could be allocated from these monies - SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he did not think that it will cover signage.

But that CIL money could be used for signs.

- b) 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*).

There were no questions from members of the public.

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 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023.*

The report of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 was received.

ii) *To consider the Town Council response for the planning applications on the attached list.*

1) *DC/23/4131/FUL – Single storey rear extension, 3 Dunwich Road. Approve. Proposed Cllr Goldsmith, seconded Cllr Jarvis. All agreed.*

2) *DC/23/4066/AND – Non-Illuminated Advertisement – A traditional church notice board consisting of two display areas each 841mm x 594mm. The left-hand area carrying permanent information such as contact details and the timing of services. The right-hand area comprises an opening glass fronted display for temporary notices. Above is a shaped header board carrying the name of the church. The notice board is made of powder coated metal and coloured maroon. The Board will be located on the west side of the entrance path in a location similar to that of the previous historic board removed in the 1980s, The Sacred Heart Church, Wymering Road.*

2 residents have sent in objections. It was suggested that Town Council should ask that it be refused. Proposed Cllr Goldsmith, seconded Cllr Redington. All agreed to request that ESC Refuse.

3) *DC/23/4330/CLE – Certificate of Lawful Use (Existing) – Removal of porch and replace with smaller (3 square meter) open porch at front. Change windows*

*from single to double glazed. Replace retaining wall. Replace concrete drive with block paving. Paint house brickwork, Silver Shore, Station Road.*

Query was raised with regards to the colour. It was suggested that STC ask for more information for the whole application.

4) *DC/23/4050/FUL – Retrospective Application – Removal of leylandii hedge on the North and West sides of the property and replacing by topping existing wall with custom made Brampton Willow woven fencing up to 2m, Tricorne House, 39 Marlborough Road.*

Approve. Proposed Cllr Goldsmith, seconded Cllr Wells. All agreed.

5) *DC/23/4238/FUL – 4 no. replacement windows to the front of the property at first and second floor level, Second Floor, 1 Market Place.*

Approve. Proposed Cllr Goldsmith, seconded Cllr Davy. All agreed.

iii) *Other planning matters;*

*17 Market Place update, and meeting with new Principal Planning officer for Southwold.*

Cllr Flunder advised the meeting that work has now started at 17 Market Place as per permitted planning approvals. Change of Use has not got to ESC Committee yet – due in December.

STC planning cttee has met with the new Planning Officer Rachel Smith.

b) **Landlords Cttee** – *To receive the written report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee REP 6.2023 held November 2023. Recommendation in relation to shop and flat at Station Road new development.*

Station Road Shop and flat – see recommendations in report REP 6.2023 regarding rent. **It was proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Wells and agreed by all to accept the recommendation as follows;**

**Ground floor retail unit has been assessed at £7600 pa - tenant to fit out.**

**One Bed First floor flat has been assessed at £7800 pa – unfurnished.**

**Combined rent - £15,400 pa**

**Marketing material to be produced for both units and that they be advertised as widely as possible.**

**Understanding the needs of those using the Hub, and the general public, visitors, and other local businesses it is suggested that the covenant for the retail premises reads as follows;**

**Property to be used as a ‘general convenience store including the provision of hot drinks and refreshments.’**

*To receive verbal update on potential gable end works to Hurren Terrace – asbestos and structural surveys.*

Gable end works Hurren Terrace – initial costs are now circa £217k for gable end and 3 toilets etc. Now trying to ascertain a smaller project to reduce costs. Already agreed cost for 1 structural survey and 1 asbestos survey and it is suggested that the project then be revisited.

Meeting was advised that STC do have a duty of care as landlords but could perhaps reduce the specification of the gable end. Works will be a separate contract and will need to be tendered.

**It was proposed by Cllr Flunder seconded by Cllr Goldsmith and Agreed by all to wait for surveys to come back and then reassess the extent of the project.**

c) **Leisure and Environment Cttee – No meeting held.**

*To receive verbal update re new skatepark project.*

Cllr Flunder advised that the Skatepark Project is very complicated and there is still a need to get the contract/financials agreed. JCT has been extended discussion but now agreed for the start date to be 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 with works taking place to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Contract is going out for the contractor to sign and STC will then pay the balance of the deposit.

Cllr Jarvis confirmed that contractual negotiations have taken a while but the skatepark will be completed by Spring 2024. It has been suggested to the Community Skatepark group that a joint press release be sent out.

d) **Roads Cttee – no meeting held. See below.**

6. **To receive reports from Working Groups (task and finish) Groups;**

a) *Comms working group – update from meeting November 2023 – see policies within F and G report. See Finance.*

**Cllr Goldsmith gave report re Comms Group. The working group had produced both the Comms Strategy and the Policy. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed to adopt the Comms Policy and Strategy Document.**

b) *Roads working group – update from the meeting held to consider the responses from the proposals displayed at the Sept drop-in sessions.*

*Recommendations –*

*i) that STC carry out a survey containing the questions, as attached,*

*ii) and that STC consider and if agreed approve the proposed actions arising, as attached.*

**See roads survey and actions arising.** Cllr Redington asked who would be classed as a resident. Cllr Beavan advised that a resident is someone who ‘pays council tax’.

Query was raised as to how the second home owner definition works. Cllr Beavan advised that it need to be allocated to a particular car and could not be a situation of keeping an empty space available if people are not in the town. Cllr Beavan advised that only 6 people have taken up the exemptions so far.

Cllr Gladwell asked that question 2 on the questionnaire be explained before it goes out.

**Cllr Flunder asked that the council consider an in principle agreement to produce and deliver the consultation but add the ESC link about resident exemption to question 2 to ensure people can understand it. Proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Beavan. All agreed.**

Cllr Flunder advised the meeting of the priority actions for the Roads Committee. One of the major topics at business meetings is about signage (see attached).

Business groups were concerned with style of signage i.e. to use older style signs. Can this be raised with SCC? Cllr Davy suggested that signage be put on the next Roads Committee to progress.

Cllr Jarvis advised that he had attended an online forum regarding the bus partnerships – SCC Simon Barnett is coming to Southwold to discuss this further.

*c) NSIP working group. To consider and if agreed approve the Terms of Reference for the group.*

**Draft Terms of Reference had been circulated. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Gladwell. All agreed to adopt the draft Terms of Reference.**

7. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended and any training events 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 Flunder.* Good feedback had been received. Thanks to the Committee from STC. It was noted that the sound system still needs improving. No official feedback has been received from the businesses- and it was suggested that the value of Christmas lights night will need to be assessed once Christmas is over.

b) *HMC/SAG – Cllr Flunder.* Rental costs to users - SAG asked that these be kept as moderate as possible and that the Working Groups start working. Await more information.

Cllr Beavan advised that ESC is trying to get things moving. Want to get the caravan site consultation out over the winter. There is a long list of matters that need doing. Need to establish what the harbour is wanted for.

It was mentioned that there is frustration about non-letting of vacant sites at caravan site as circa £85k is being lost in rental at present.

c) *Harbour Users – Cllr Gladwell.* Cllr Gladwell – 9am – 7pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024 Harbour/Sailing Club and RNLI will run a festival. Cllr Gladwell has been asked to help with the event.

d) *Allotment Holders – Cllr Goldsmith.* Annual prize giving in November. National Allotment Holders Association seems to be folding.

e) *Suffolk Preservation Society training course re old buildings – Cllr Wells attended.* It was suggested that the council property portfolio windows be assessed, and an inventory created to see if secondary double glazing is needed. This will help the EPC rating.

8. **National Energy Projects –**

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

*Sealink Consultation - Consultation documents are available.*

*at [www.nationalgrid.com/sealink](http://www.nationalgrid.com/sealink). Comments should be sent to National Grid by 23:59 on Monday 18 December 2023.*

Cllr Flunder - Sealink Consultation to note. Draft STC response to be sent to all Councillors - the STC response will need to be sent in by 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

Sizewell – have been invited to the February Council meeting.

9. **Enterprise Hub** to receive progress update from meetings with Project Board, construction team, and operators. \*\*  
Delay in completion as window materials have been rejected. 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 is the present completion date. Project Managers are looking at whether any financial claim is valid against the contractors. Menta have been advised of the above. Lease issues are being dealt with. Traffic lights will be on Station Road the beginning of January 2024 for up to one week.
10. **Feedback from Community Land Trust meeting** –21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. Cllr Flunder advised that this was a very informative meeting but is not relevant to Southwold as there is no land vacant.
11. **Feedback from meeting for businesses/traders 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023.** To consider and agree next steps. See notes attached.
12. **Financial Matters**
  - a. To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee – To receive reports from meeting November 2023 FIN Rep 10.23. To consider and if agreed approve recommendations in relation to; E V Charger/ Communication Policies/ NALC Pay agreement.  
**To note Virements – see paper attached. Agreed by all.**  
Cllr Jarvis advised the meeting that the underspend is due to property repair underspend which will be rolled over to next year. Money is therefore available to earn interest on. Noted and agreed by all that Finance cttee could invest for more interest as required, through CCLA.  
  
EV Charger – sits in Roads Committee but Finance discussed lease/purchase. Lease is not an alternative at present, but this is not an issue as the infrastructure will be 10 – 15 years in place. An alternative supplier has also been approached for a quote which is awaited.  
Cllr Jarvis – re EVC profit – NALC legal aspect for the Town Council is that it cannot sell electric i.e. “make money” – but can recover all costs.  
**It was recommended that the Council consider purchasing one fast charger unit outright at a cost of £25,066.35 and remaining on the SCC Pilot for the other units for Godyll Road.**  
**Budget available from Code 327 Cil Reserve Fund £32,434. All agreed.**  
  
**Communication Strategy, and Communication and Engagement Policy – Both received from the Comms working group. Town Council to adopt. Agreed by all.**  
  
**NALC pay agreement 2023.2024 Local Government Services Pay agreement 23/24 has finally been settled by NALC, SLCC and ALC, and the new pay scales provided, for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. To be noted for Town Clerk and Admin Assistant. Proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. All agreed.**  
  
b. *Precept 2024.2025.* – see attached.  
Budget 2024.2025, and precept requirements, to be confirmed by full Council at the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

c. *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 November 2023.*

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

13. **Forthcoming Meetings/ Events for Council/Councillors**

*St Felix – community networking event – 5<sup>th</sup> Dec at 6.30pm*

*Christmas Carols at St Edmunds Church – 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2023 at 6pm*

14. **Town Mayor updates including.**

a) *Events attended*

*Induction of new vicar – 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 2023*

*Xmas Lights switch on – 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023*

*Golf Club swing room opening – 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023*

b) *Upcoming engagements*

*SALC Conference – 29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023*

*Volunteering event 30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023.*

c) *Town Mayor volunteering project – verbal update.*

15. **Consultations**

*To consider STC response to the following consultations;*

a) *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.](#) No response.*

b) *ESC – Street Trading Policy consultation to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023.*

*<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Business/Licensing/Street-Trading-Guidance.pdf>. Re unpermitted street – reply.*

c) *Rural Development & Healthy Environments Public Consultation to 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024. <https://eastsuffolk.inconsult.uk/Drafruraldevelopment23/consultationHome> <https://eastsuffolk.inconsult.uk/DraftHESPD2023/consultationHome>. Nil.*

d) *Litter and Fido Waste Bin policy from East Suffolk Council - consultation to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Nil.*

e) *Shaping the future of the Library Service – SCC Consultation to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024. STC need to reply.*

16. **Date of next Town Council Meetings:**

*Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Budget & Precept and Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.*

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



Red Cross Hut – It is anticipated that Council will receive a proposal from the architect soon so that this can go in for a pre-app.  
Initial Town Hall plans should also be received very soon.

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

**Regarding a retail premises on High Street. It was agreed by all to put in an offer as per the recommended offer suggested by the professional surveyor.**

It was suggested that Council also look at a residential opportunities, as for example, a property in St Edmund’s Road has been reduced.

**Millennium car park – Enterprise Hub car park – 10 spaces in the Millennium car park are required. It was agreed by all to go back to the Millenium Foundation with an offer for a lease for the Millennium Trust parking, and delegated authority was provided to the finance cttee to negotiate as per budget if required. All agreed.**

Signed .....

Dated .....

