

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024.**

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

Also present: The High Steward, SCC Cllr M Ladd, the Town Clerk and 2 members of the public.

Prior to the meeting Cllr Flunder presented Mr Tobin with a past Mayor pin badge in recognition of his period as Town Mayor.

1. a) **Apologies:**  
*To note/approve apologies for absence.* Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Miller. Noted.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
  - a. *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.*
  - b. *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.*  
Cllr Jarvis, as governor at the primary school, regarding donation request re Southwold Primary School/food for kids.
  - c. *To receive Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Nil.
  - d. *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.*
3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024.  
**On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Davy it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024. 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 including update on Second Home Council Tax.*  
*ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and public.*

ESC Cllr Beavan advised that second homeowners now need to pay double council tax, payable in April 2025. It is estimated that there are 400 second homes at present in Southwold. This could be an extra £80k going into ESC for Southwold. Previous ESC Council said that these monies need to go to affordable housing - this could be at Fire Station/Police Station. Cllr Beavan suggested that the town council could consider projects to ensure that the money was used appropriately.

Duncans Yard – 2 flats have been sold to the tenants under Right to Buy. One is being advertised for rent now.

Q from Cllr Goldsmith – does the terms of Right to Buy mean that the new tenant will need to be full time/ principal resident? ESC Cllr Beavan offered to find out.

Anglian Water issues – Anglian Water is supposed to let the harbour know when they are going to empty into the harbour, and this is not happening. Anglian Water map is available but not accurate. ESC Cllr Beavan, as Chair of HMC, is in correspondence with Anglian Water, asking whether this is putting lives at risk. 3 instances of emptying out have been registered, each for less than 1 minute whereas last year there were 28 instances.

Cllr Flunder asked about the effect on town blue flag/sea conditions.

Cllr Flunder advised that he also has complained about the smell from the treatment works and is in contact with Anglian Water regarding this.

Cllr Gladwell asked about the second home monies and what the eligible projects would be. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that the monies were for affordable homes only. Discussion about those renting out second homes/ those renting out and registering as a business.

b) *To receive a report from SCC Ward Councillor M Ladd.*

*SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from councillors and public.*

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that the Cabinet has met and will put extra money into SEND. Suffolk Roads was considered at Scrutiny meeting. Recommendation is for more comms on highways matters.

£8bn pa is raised by vehicle tax. 17% goes to local councils for highways works which equates to £7 per vehicle. £688m is the SCC overall budget. £17.2m is the highways budget which is 4.9% of SCC council tax.

With regards to local highways works in York Road looks very good now that it has been re-tarmaced. Pier Avenue is on the list for October. Suffolk has 4180 miles of roads.

SCC is already looking at budget for 2025-26 but is now waiting for the new government announcement on funding.

Cllr Jarvis asked about Send Dedicated Schools Grant and whether SCC have a deficit? SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he would find out.

Cllr Flunder asked about the street festival costs for erecting bunting licence as they have been advised by SCC that this will be £85 per row of bunting. Therefore, the cost for putting this up next summer would be over £1k. SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he was not aware of this amount and will query the fee.

Cllr Flunder asked that thanks be extended to SCC Cllr Ladd and SCC officer W Saunders for their work in assisting the Roads Committee projects.

- c) To receive comments from the public on matters on the agenda.  
A member of the public spoke about the Right to Buy at Duncans Place and asked why there is a loophole to enable this to happen. ESC Cllr Beavan explained that every council tenant has a Right to Buy after 5 years. The Neighbourhood Plan would now prevent this if new council houses were built. Under the new regulations if a person buys then they could rent to someone who lives there full time.  
SCC Cllr Ladd advised that when these properties were built it was understood that there was a clause put into the deeds of Duncans Yard to prevent the sales/Right to Buy.  
SCC Cllr Ladd offered to contact Mr Duncan who owned the land and who completed its sale to ESC.  
A member of the public asked why other ESC council houses are not occupied. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that they are not fit for present ESC standards to rent out.

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

To receive the report of the meeting of;

- a) the Planning and Development Committee to receive minutes of meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024. *No recommendations.* No other matters.  
b) Landlords Cttee – To receive verbal update from meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024\*  
Cllr Gladwell provided update from draft minutes.

Recommendations as follows.

**Under Arch at Station Road – Contractor B could not give the same level of fire protection. Recommend go ahead with original quote of £3503 plus VAT from Contractor A. Cooper & Denny. Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Wells. Agreed by all**

**Shop on Station Rd – feedback from various parties who have looked round. Some thoughts around whether there is local demand for a convenience provision at this location as there are competitors within the High Street and at Reydon. Margins on convenience foods might be a challenge. There is still provisional interest though.**

**Discussion about whether there is a need to widen the covenant to increase interest – it was agreed to recommend that this not be considered at the present time – but to ask for further information from those who have expressed an interest to see how these progress.**

**Proposed by Cllr Gladwell, seconded by Cllr Redington. Agreed by all.**

Cllr Flunder asked about CCTV around Pier. Cllr Gladwell confirmed that this had been covered in the meeting – see minutes.

ESC Cllr Beavan was asked if he could provide any help regarding the ESC policy on this. Town Clerk to send details to Cllr Beavan of the ESC response to council request for assistance.

- c) Leisure and Environment Cttee –meeting to be held 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 at 9am. Formal opening of skatepark 15th August 2024 at midday.

- d) Roads Cttee – to receive minutes of meeting held 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024. To consider recommendations with regards to, funding for projects.

Recommendation as follows.

**ESC CIL £23k grant award for roads cttee priorities – recommend that STC accept this grant.**

**Proposed by Cllr Palmer, seconded by Cllr Beavan. All agreed.**

Cllr Flunder extended thanks to ESC Cllr Beavan, SCC Cllr Ladd and SCC W Saunders for their help with the work of this cttee.

Cllr Temple asked about off-road parking provision for residents. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that residents can park in limited waiting time bay with permission from ESC– but need to have a nearby timed bay to park in.

Cllr Temple suggested that there might be other options – and was asked to email any suggestions to the committee who would then be able to consider these.

- e) Comms Working Group –Next meeting to be arranged for September.
- f) NSIPS working group – to receive update on; Lionlink/Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project / Nautilus.

Members were advised that Nautilus is back on the agenda so this is another interconnector which could have implications for Southwold.

Cllr Davy and Cllr Flunder had attended an ESC meeting with other parishes regarding Lionlink where it was suggested that local communities come up with any mitigation needed as it is unlikely that there will be the opportunity to actually stop projects. Landfall for Lionlink will be Southwold or Walberswick.

AEPA has prepared a letter to Ed Miliband MP and have asked that local councils support the letter.

Proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith and agreed by all that STC sign the letter.

Cllr Flunder advised that it was disappointing to hear ESC Planning officer Phil Ridley advise attendees that it is all likely to happen.

Cllr Gladwell showed a diagram detailing the effect on the town of the various projects. Cllr Flunder has asked for data reports on the possible effects on tourism (these had been carried out for Sizewell, but these are old now).

Members suggested that the only compensation seems to be on highway concerns – there does not seem to be anything for businesses affected by reduction in trade.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that Richard Rout is the Cabinet Member for NSIPS and that he would be a good contact for STC.

- g) Harbour/ Harbour Revision Order working group – see agenda item 8 below.
- h) Entrance to Town working Group – see agenda item 9 below.

6. **Enterprise Hub** –Formal opening event to be arranged for Autumn 2024.  
People are in using the Hub. The Flat will be occupied this week.  
Shop – see Landlords Committee minutes.  
Gable end project is with Landlords Committee to progress to next stage.
  
7. **Business website** – to receive update on launch.  
See leaflet and Window stickers.  
Members were advised that any suggestions for information can still go to Spring to add to the website.  
Maintenance and upkeep of the website will be covered by a joint apprentice with Menta– ESC/Menta/Adnams will mentor the apprentice who will keep website up to date.
  
8. **HMO consultation Update** – to receive update from HRO working Group \*  
No response has been received to date. Lara Moore presented to HMC and mentioned the public comments which have been received.  
Discussion regarding potential for a sale of the site / ring fencing. Lara Moore felt that these had been well dealt with within the provisions already made. It will take 2 years for the HRO to be in place. HMC have confidence that the principles of the HRO could be put in place now i.e. ring fencing and sale. Cllr Beavan advised that the Secretary of State could be a statutory consultee regarding the potential for any sale.  
  
Cllr Davy updated members on discussions with ESC. ESC will consider a STC Cllr being on the HMC and will consider extending the boundary covered by HRO to cover caravan and camp site. ESC suggested that they would prepare a motion to confirm that the principles of the HRO could be in place with immediate effect.  
It was suggested that if ESC do allow an STC Cllr on the HMC, it would be appropriate to ask that they have voting rights. Cllr Beavan suggested that it was unlikely that this would be permitted.  
  
**ESC has suggested that a member of STC be appointed to be STC Rep on the ESC Harbour cttee Strategy Task & Finish Group for Harbour.  
It was agreed by all that Cllr Jarvis would represent STC.**
  
9. **Entrance to Town** – to receive update from working group. \*  
See confidential section of agenda.
  
10. **Councillor vacancy** – update.  
To date one application had been received. For further discussion and consideration at the August meeting.
  
11. **Tourist Information Venue**  
40A High Street should be open very soon – hold up is due to the fact that the tenants cannot trade until they have bank account open.
  
12. **Article 4 Consultation** - Consultation to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2024.  
**It was agreed by all that Cllr Temple would draft a response and circulate to all members.**

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

- a) Accounts for Payment - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for July 2024 (*circulated to members*).

**On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for July 2024. All agreed.**

- b) To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee - Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024. *Recommendations as per report in relation to items including donation request for Feed all Children.*

**Cil balances and projects. Cil returns and calculations agree with those from ESC. The Cil return for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 needs to be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 and draft Cil report for 23.24 was provided to members and will be made available for sign off by council. Recommend sign off. Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. All agreed.**

**Donation requests**

**Discussion about Common Trust and whether they might be requesting a donation in this financial year. Recommend that STC vires £10k of its community support services budget to a reserve fund to be held for Common Trust.**

**Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Redington. Agreed with one abstain.**

**Feed all Children – a request has been received to assist the local project by Sole Bay Care Fund/ Rotary Club to ‘Feed all Children’ at Southwold School. The cttee considered the request to feed all those who attend Southwold School, who presently do not receive free school meals, for the autumn and spring term– full funding required for Southwold school is over £5k for this period (whilst the costs for Reydon school is in excess of £20k ). Rotary and Sole Bay Care fund are raising funds to cover costs.**

**Discussion. It was proposed by Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith and Agreed with 2 abstentions to provide a donation of £1k for this request.**

14. **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) SAG

Cllr Gladwell advised that SAG discussed HRO and redevelopment strategy for caravan site. ESC wants to keep minimum 30 sites to let out. There will be design groups set up with caravan owners.

There was disappointment expressed about Licences/Leases for businesses taking so long. Needs to be more consistent. ESC seems to suggest this will be looked at.

Lara Moore will reply to SAG on their concerns.

- b) Summer Theatre – Cllr Redington advised that they had had a very good start. Bookings going well. It was noted that the Arts Centre does need air conditioning.

15. **Town Mayor updates including.**

NSPCC Annual Reception & Meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Felixstowe Civic Service – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Sam May Prize Giving – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Town Mayor Charity – will support Nathan Williamson music concerts. Considering concert next Spring.

Arts Festival and Civic Service will be combined again next year, with Leiston Band attending, and it will be on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.

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

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at 7.30pm.

*\* 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.

Cllr Davy updated members with regards to the camping field along Ferry Road.

Fire Station Site. STC asked that SCC be made aware that STC is supportive of Hastoe and would like to see affordable housing on site as soon as possible.

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

Signed .....

Dated .....