

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 29th October 2024.

PRESENT:	Councillor	S Flunder – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	C Hurr
	“	P Davy
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	Mrs J Miller
	“	Mrs V Redington
	“	R Temple
	“	M Wells

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

1. a) **Apologies:**
To note/approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jarvis and Gladwell which were noted. Apologies were also received from Cllr Palmer which were approved.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a) *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.* Cllr Goldsmith declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest re Durrants/ 1 Strickland Place.
 - b) *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests / Non registrable interest regarding the agenda.* Cllrs Davy, Flunder and Wells declared an interest re the Golf Club.
 - c) *To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this 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.* Noted.
3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 27th August and 17th September 2024.
Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Wells. 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 public.
 - ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that much going on in health regarding IT at hospitals/i.e. James Paget where he is a governor. IT provision is not the same throughout the NHS and is not working well.
 - Thermal imaging heat camera has been booked by STC for use by Landlords Committee for the community. ESC Cllr Beavan will arrange a briefing on what grants are available for residents.
 - Potters Bridge – MP has called a multi agency meeting. Outfall is clearing naturally at the moment. However the Reedbed may be lost to the sea – this will be

a great loss. Natural England have done nothing to stop it. SCC have done the drains.

- ESC Temporary accommodation at St Edmunds Road – tenants have caused problems within town but it is anticipated that they will be moved once a 4 bedroomed house becomes available elsewhere.
- Harbour – a piece has fallen off from the north trailing arm and pieces are corroding at low water level. ESC Cllr Beavan is questioning whether such a fender is needed there again. This matter also raises the issue of needing to raise money for the harbour. Last consultation is taking place with the caravan site owners.
- Local Flood Board have not met – as there is no money/resources to get things going again. Money will be required to make the improvements required.
- Lionlink survey – one of the engineers had reported that the soil is very sandy. This might be an argument to be used to lobby for it to be offshore. Consultation will come through next year.

b) *To receive a report from SCC Ward Councillor M Ladd including Potters Bridge. SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and public.*

- Potters Bridge – see above. SCC Cllr Ladd is chasing the date for bridge inspection.
- SCC is in budget process for 2025 – 2026. Adult social care/children and young people services are very expensive.
- SCC Highways – Scrutiny looked at drainage and flooding issues since storm Babet and it was apparent that the drains could not cope. SCC has plenty of salt for winter programme. Pier Avenue has been resurfaced very well. Park Lane was resurfaced last week. East Street is due to be done before end of year once done the new TRO regarding the parking will come into place.
- Princess Royal is formally opening Gull Wing bridge on 19th November 2024.
- ESC Cllr Beavan suggested that as SCC will get extra £6.8m for second homes double council tax, could some of this be used to help push fire station site design through.

c) *To receive comments from the public on matters on the agenda.*

Nil.

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

To receive the report of the meeting of;

a) *Planning and Development Committee to receive minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 8th October 2024 and Tuesday 22nd October 2024.*

Cllr Temple referred members to the notes and advised that ESC has been very helpful in helping the cttee understand the varying applications.

To consider and note.

- *Planning cttee membership – to consider adding Cllr Hurr as a sub for Cllr Palmer. **Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Wells that Cllr Hurr be a substitute for Cllr Palmer on the planning cttee. All agreed.***
- *Bio Capital plans for Reydon site – note that STC are awaiting planning application. Await full application. The major issues raised at the meeting were the potential of smells/increased traffic. Reydon PC is concerned, and suggested an option to reduce the speed limit on A1095 Halesworth Road.*

SCC Cllr Ladd suggested that if this was to be put forward to SCC, then this would need to be requested as an 'exceptional case' as it would not probably meet the set criteria.

- b) *Landlords Cttee – to receive minutes and recommendations of meetings held on 29th August 2024, 26th September 2024 and 21st October 2024 (Rep 09.24).*

Recommendations in relation to; costs to consider for various repairs.

See Report 09.24 for recommendations.

11 Station Road – quote for front door received – new door will cost £1532 plus VAT, and gate post repairs will be £309 plus vat. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Temple. All agreed.

Painting of rear of Town Hall – Adnams are repainting the brickwork for the top rooms at the rear of the Town Hall – and will repaint the rest of the wall including those areas for STC. Cost of paint to be reimbursed by STC for our part of the building – approx. £400. No labour costs will be incurred by STC. Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. All agreed.

Shelter – South Green. Neither SCC nor ESC feel that they own the shelter which is now in need of repair. It does not appear on the STC asset register either.

Estimate for repair is £450, - recommend approving these costs to get the shelter repaired. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Temple. All agreed.

- c) *Leisure and Environment Cttee –to receive minutes and recommendations of meeting held Tuesday 24th September 2024.*

Recommendations in relation to Land Registration and new benches for Ferry Road footpath.

Land registration – land next to the Ferry Rd Garden to be registered at HMLR. Discussion took place regarding registering all of the marsh area from Ferry Road Garden to camp field at HMLR. After full discussion it was proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed by all to register all of the land from Ferry Road Garden to camp field at HMLR.

Benches – 2 along Ferry Road footpath are in need of replacement. SCC Cllr M Ladd has offered funds to assist with replacement of one of them. L & E budget to cover the cost of replacement of the other. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed.

- Spruce Up Southwold - Feedback had been very good. Leisure & Environment to consider how to keep the initiative going once/twice/year in conjunction with the other volunteer groups. Thanks were extended to Cllr Davy and staff for all work to get day organised.

- d) *Roads Cttee – To receive minutes and recommendations of meeting held on Wednesday 11th September 2024.*

Recommendation in relation to lining works.

Cllr Beavan advised that the 20mph count has finished. Project road map/ plan is being prepared. ESC Kerry Blair response on the £54k funding pot is awaited.

Recommendation - Lining Safety Improvements for area outside Town Hall/ East

Street entrance/ Market Place area and outside Fatface - Road traffic costs will be £5035-87. Need it done. Supplier who has quoted is authorised by SCC. Proposed by Cllr Beavan, seconded by Cllr Temple. Agreed by all.

- Local Transport Plan for Suffolk to 2040 - Public Consultation to 25th November 2024.
- Suffolk Highways Newsletter.
- Cadent/ Costain – update on works. Cadent/Costain update on works. The Town Clerk provided members with an update from the latest meeting. All planned works expected to be complete by 13th December 2024.

e) *Comms Working Group – To receive notes from working group meeting of 5th September 2024. See notes.*

The Town Clerk to copy ‘Meet your Councillor leaflets’ for those who have not yet delivered the quarterly newsletter so that the councillor surgeries can be promoted again.

f) *Entrance to town working group – to receive update from Teams meeting held re Fire Station Site.*

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that discussions had been going on for 12 years. Hastoe would like to develop the site but needed funding help from Homes England. Due to new legislation the funding cannot happen now so SCC is trying to work something else out with Hastoe.

ESC ward Cllr Beavan advised that he was confident things will change to get sites developed because of new planning legislation. Cllr Beavan suggested that perhaps ESC could use some of their extra tax monies to help with the development of the site. Regarding the police e station site - Police & Crime Commissioner says that they will start to re-use the site in relation to Sizewell.

Cllr Flunder advised that STC will keep both sites in the STC strategy budget for 2025-26.

g) *NSIPS working group – to receive update on;*

- *Lionlink – including response to their consultation. Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project / Nautilus*

Cllr Davy advised members of the NSIP meeting held yesterday

- 1) Wider holistic view - many councils have come together to help facilitate meetings with the government under the name of AEPA.
- 2) LionLink – local focus is the Southwold/Walberswick landfall. **Recommendation - STC now writes a supplementary letter to LionLink to be drafted by Cllr Davy with delegated authority to prepare and send via Town Hall. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Redington. All agreed.**

h) *Harbour/ Harbour Revision Order working group – To receive update from meetings.*

Cllr Davy briefed members on the meeting held 11th October 2024 with ESC Cllr Paul Ashton and ESC Cllr Beavan to discuss the existing camp site. It is the intention that ESC would acknowledge STC as freehold owner and STC then to grant long lease to ESC and to not take back rent. STC to have a representative on HMC. STC third field to be for discussion at a later date. Cllr Ashton has delegated power (to be verified) for Memorandum of Understanding, (which is awaited from ESC). Town

Clerk to remind Cllr Ashton of the need to see the draft of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Cllr Davy mentioned that a joint press release will come forward to announce the above once it has all been agreed.

6. **Business meeting/ website**

- Feedback from meeting held 11th September 2024 – the Town Clerk provided an update from the business meeting.
- Update on business website – the town website is being well used.
- Christmas Drinks reception for Business community – Thursday 12th December 2024 at 5.30pm – 7pm at the Town Hall. Noted by all.

7. **Meeting with MP** – 4 councillors met the new MP at the Hub. Jenny Riddell Carpenter advised that she is now getting involved with Potters Bridge and working with ESC/Menta re business rates on the Hub. Jenny is on a committee within government for Coastal Communities.

8. **Suffolk Awards Ceremony** - 24th September 2024. Members were advised that this was a very good awards ceremony and very positive. The Award to the Town Council is on the front page of the latest SALC newsletter.

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

a) Accounts for Payment - To receive the management accounts, balance sheet and bank reconciliation to September 2024 and confirm the Accounts for Payment for October 2024 (*circulated to members*).

On the proposal of Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Miller it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for October 2024. All agreed.

b) To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee - Meetings held on 22nd August 2024 and 22nd October 2024.

Recommendations in relation to approval of new Financial Standing Orders

New Nalc Model financial standing orders – new Model Financial Regulation had been drafted for consideration by members. Members compared these against existing financial regs and agreed to recommend that Full Council approve the new Model Financial Regulations, with the figures in red to be those for approval (figures in green represent existing financial limits).

On the proposal of Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was unanimously agreed to approve this recommendation.

c) AGAR 2023 .2024 – To receive completion of external Audit for 2023.2024 and note recommendations/ actions required are Nil.

Members thanked the Town Clerk and staff for all their work on the audit requirements. **Nil action required from audit. AGAR – nil comments - considered and agreed by all.**

d) Budget arrangements 2025.26 - and strategy document to be drawn up (Finance & Governance to draft strategy to also include the new second home council tax at ESC).

- e) Sizewell Community Fund. Members wished to thank the representatives for attending and suggested that the town council keep the dialogue going.
10. **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.
- SAG – no meeting held. Next one due within a week.
 - Summer Theatre – very successful summer season. Ceiling project means centre will be closed for 6 weeks Jan/Feb.
 - Christmas Lights – Cllr Wells advised that the lights are ready to go up over the next few weeks. Lights are going on at 5pm on Saturday 30th November. Fundraising is going well. A new sound system has been funded as a result of feedback last year.
 - Emergency Group – to consider adding Cllr Hurr as a rep for STC.
 Cllr Wells advised members that he had attended a desk top exercise. Action plan for Southwold/Reydon/Walberswick was used. Rest centre manager training has been cancelled. **STC to recommend Cllr Hurr join the group. Proposed by Cllr Wells, seconded by Cllr Redington. All agreed.**
11. **STC Citizen of the Year Award** – discussion about format – example given as per 2016 previous award paper.
 Members were advised that the Southwold & Reydon Society are no longer going to do their awards. Reydon PC will do theirs.
 Discussion about the potential for STC to re- establish their own Award. Cllr Beavan – asked whether giving out an award would be considered as positive/negative messaging. It was suggested that, whilst there might only be one winner, a certificate could be given to all nominees.
Discussion about whether STC should re-launch Citizen of Year award. On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Miller it was agreed with one abstain that STC should relaunch an Award for 2025.
It was agreed by all that a Task & Finish Group be set up to consider the basis for applications etc for the award – Cllrs Miller, Hurr and Redington approved as the members of the T and F group.
12. **Town Mayor updates including.**
 Photo at the new stocks – 28th August 2024
 Scouts Award – 18th September 2024
 Business meeting – 11th September 2024.
 URC Harvest Festival – 13th October 2024.
 Blessing of the Nets – 13th October 2024.
 Opening of EACH Charity Shop – 17th October 2024.
 Beccles Civic Service – 20th October 2024.
 Town Mayor Charity – Concert date to be arranged.
13. **Councillor events – dates for diary**
- Remembrance Sunday – 10th November
 - Armistice Day – 11th November
 - St Edmunds Day – Wednesday 20th November 2024 at 2.30pm
 - Christmas Business reception at Town Hall – Thursday 12th December 2024 at 5.30pm
 - Christmas Carol Service – Sunday 22nd December 2024 at 6pm.

14. **Training opportunities**

- New councillor training – Cllr Hurr advised that he had attended the SALC new councillor training online which was very good. Cllr Hurr mentioned that some councils continue to live stream their meetings via YouTube/Facebook.
- ESC pilot' Town Councils' Conference with a particular focus on economic development and regeneration - Wednesday 6 November from 2pm until 4pm at the Darsham Village Hall (Cheyney Green, The Street, Darsham, IP17 3FA). Cllrs Davy/Flunder and possibly Cllr Miller will attend.

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

Tuesday 26th November 2024 at 7.30pm.

Tuesday 17th December 2024 at 7.30pm

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

16. **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.*

** Items including*

Update from Employment working group meeting of 4th September 2024 – *recommendation re apprentice.* see report. **To Approve that the costs of the apprentice be allocated from CCF revenue reserves.**

Proposed by Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Temple. Agreed by all.

Civic Officials for 2025. Way forward for 2025 agreed.

Quality of Place Awards – Noted date and time.

Recommend approval of the draft Bad Debt Policy, and draft Tenant Debt Policy.

Proposed by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. Agreed by all.

Updates from Landlords Cttee meeting – *see Confid. report 09.24 attached with recommendations in respect of policies, sale prices, and rents outstanding.*

Cllr Goldsmith left the meeting.

1 Strickland Place - Savills to be sole agent and market the property at £950k. Proposed by Cllr Redington, seconded by Cllr Miller. All agreed.

Cllr Goldsmith returned to the meeting.

Cllrs Davy, Flunder and Wells left the meeting.

Golf Club rent – see Confid llords report 09.24. Proposed by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Temple. £4000 payable. All agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed

Dated