

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 6.30pm on Tuesday 22nd April 2025.

PRESENT:	Councillor	S Flunder – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	P Davy
	“	V Gladwell
	“	P Goldsmith
	“	C Hurr
	“	R Jarvis
	“	M Palmer
	“	J Miller
	“	V Redington (arrived at 7.25pm)
	“	R Temple
	“	M Wells

Also present: The Town Clerk.

1. a) **Apologies:**
To note/approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from the High Steward.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a) *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.* Cllr Gladwell declared an interest re 1 Strickland Place.
 - b) *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests / Non registrable interest regarding the agenda.* Nil.
 - 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 meeting held on Tuesday 25th March 2025.
Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Temple. 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 Coastal Management work on prom north of Pier and moving of Beach Huts.*
ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and public.
ESC report – no further update since Annual Town Meeting.

Questions to ESC Cllr Beavan. Nil.

- b) *To receive a report from SCC Ward Councillor M Ladd including update on proposals for a Norfolk/Suffolk Unitary Authority and Suffolk Energy projects. SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and public.*
Potters Bridge – there is now money in SCC to do a full inspection of Potters Bridge in 2025-26 to find out the integrity of the bridge.
Library – coming back to SCC as “Suffolk Community Libraries”. Will be a broader offer for SCC and will offer people the opportunity to report other SCC matters i.e. potholes etc. SCC Scrutiny cttee will look in 9 months time at how the libraries are progressing.

Cllr Beavan asked what they would be looking at re Potters Bridge
SCC Cllr Ladd advised that they will be looking at both the road and bridge.
Cllr Miller asked what the plans are to resource the other offer in the libraries i.e. reporting of pot holes. SCC M Ladd advised that this includes additional training for/ and use of existing SCC staff.

Cllr Flunder asked SCC Cllr Ladd about the next steps re devolution and what would the involvement of Town Councils be. SCC Cllr Ladd advised that the Mayor election will be in 2026. LGR will be slightly different i.e. how it will all run in Suffolk in the future. There will be opportunities for larger councils to have more control of some aspects.

- 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 the minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2025*
Minutes noted. No other matters to report.
- b) *Landlords Cttee – Next meeting 24th April 2025. To receive update on gable end tender works.* Cllr Gladwell advised that the preferred contractor had been notified and that a timescale will be forthcoming in due course.
- c) *Leisure and Environment Cttee To receive update re V E Day anniversary events and promotion of events.*
V E Day anniversary programme of events is available, and all members were asked to highlight the activities which are taking place.
- d) *Roads Cttee – To receive minutes and update from meeting of 16th April 2025. To consider recommendations.* The meeting was not quorate, but members are trying to keep things moving as quickly as possible, working alongside SCC.
- e) *NSIPS working group – to receive update on;*
- Sealink – DCO process and timescales.
 - Sizewell C – Feedback from Community Forum 27th March at High Lodge.
 - Anglia One/Eurolink and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project.
 - Lionlink – update.
 - Feedback from meeting on Thursday 10th April at Snape Maltings.

Cllr Davy provided an overview for all of the above.

10th April 2025 attended Snape with Cllrs Jarvis and Wells at which 20+ councils were present there plus ESC and SCC. The proposed new Terms of Reference are a better partnership with members of the community. People at the meeting had experience of going through the DCO process before.

DCO process for Sealink will start from tomorrow - STC need to register.

NSIP working group will need to meet to say what it recommends to council about the project. The strategic overview is that if Sealink gets turned down then other projects become less likely for the council too. Interested parties need to be able to respond quickly to DCO/Inspectorate.

Delegated authority is requested for NSIP Project Group or Chair of NSIP working group to respond on behalf of STC.

Cllr Flunder spoke to Reydon PC about this DCO. Reydon P C will consider what/how to do their response and register independently.

It was proposed by Cllr Flunder that the Chair of NSIP Working Group (Cllr Davy) be able to respond to the DCO process on behalf of STC. Cllr Davy to represent STC views to Sealink DCO process. Cllr Davy to update STC monthly.

Cllr Wells seconded the proposal.

It was unanimously agreed that the Chair of NSIP Working Group (Cllr Davy) be able to respond to the DCO process on behalf of STC. Cllr Davy to represent STC views to Sealink DCO process. Cllr Davy to update STC monthly.

Cllr Davy advised East Suffolk Community Partnership are meeting again tomorrow and are having discussions about mitigating/compensation.

Cllr Flunder updated members on the Sizewell C meeting attended. Local areas to Sizewell are seeing massive rent rises. Sizewell C comms is poor still. And Southwold is still excluded from grant mitigation.

f) Harbour Revision Order working group.

To receive update re STC member application for HMC vacancy.

Cllr Davy advised that the working group have met to discuss HRO and MOU. STC do not need to sign MOU yet. It was agreed by the working group that STC reserve their position on the camp site land – noting that camp site works are going ahead.

HMC vacancy. Cllr Jarvis advised that he will be appointed. But this seems to be a paid post and might have Register of Interest implications re ESC payroll, and this still needs to be worked out. HMC first meeting is on V E Day 4pm – 7pm

Cllr Beavan advised that he would not want to delay the meeting so this will need to go ahead and noted that Cllrs Flunder/Jarvis will need flexibility to leave the meeting early to attend the VE Day church service.

g) Town Awards working group – *To receive feedback from award nominations***
See confidential.

h) Devolution working group

Response sent to Norfolk Suffolk Mayor Consultation.

Cllr Jarvis advised that;

Response to consultation has been sent in.

Implications for STC; what assets/ services might come to STC and what the unitary might be and where they will be located i.e. would 1 unitary be city centric? Several unitary might be more local for town/parishes.

SALC is involved in the consultation process with SCC and the District councils and will continue to update towns/ parishes.

Members were reminded that the election of Mayor will be in 2026, with a Shadow unitary operating 2026/27 and a full unitary in 2027. Timeline may need to get pushed back to enable everything to happen smoothly.

- i) Comms working group – *next meeting 28th April.*
- j) Spruce up Southwold – *Next event Sunday 18th May 2025 10am – midday starting from Town Hall.* Similar arrangements to the autumn clear up event. KIV harbour might need to be an area to concentrate on with HMC/business owners.
Cllr Jarvis suggested that the prom is an area to concentrate on. Flower beds on prom are in need of work. Action – L&E to put pressure on ESC to focus more on this area.
- k) Public Rights of Way working group – *to receive update from Reydon P C. To consider draft Footpath/ walks information from SRS.*
Reydon PC wanted to involve STC and SRS on an ‘improving footpaths’ initiative that they are looking at. Joint meeting to be set up once Reydon PC have a new Chair.
SRS are doing a map of some footpaths but needs to have more detail added to it.

SRS would like STC logo to go on their map – discussion took place regarding this as STC has not been involved in the creation of the map and there are already many other footpaths maps available, including online walking apps. Cllr Gladwell confirmed that anyone can add a walk/route to Komoot app and that there are already many on there which include Southwold.

Discussion took place about STC logo being used on the map – it was felt that this was not appropriate at the moment due to a variety of factors. **AGREED BY ALL.** Map and text needs refinement with additional information about footpath responsibilities being included so that users know to contact SCC if there are issues with the SCC areas etc.

SRS to be made aware of the PROW working group meetings.

6. Financial Matters Audit and Governance

- a) *Accounts for Payment - To receive the management accounts, balance sheet and bank reconciliation to March 2025 and confirm the Accounts for Payment for April 2025 (circulated to members)*

On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Davy it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for April 2025. All agreed.

SCC Cllr Ladd left the meeting at 7.10pm.

- b) *To receive verbal report of Finance and Governance Cttee Meeting held on 22nd April 2025. To consider and if agreed approve recommendations.*

Cllr Jarvis provided a verbal update for members following the Cttee meeting earlier in the day. Members were advised that the 2024.2025-year end accounts are slightly better than budgeted. Reserves will remain at £1.3m, and there is a budget deficit for 2025-26 of £75k to cover from reserves.

Cllr Jarvis suggested that the governance of the Common Trust still needs to be reviewed with assistance from experts, and that this could be done over the next year, as this will then align with LGR.

Recommendation;

Full analysis of income/ expenditure for the electric car chargers had been circulated at the previous meeting with comparison against market figures for other charging sites.

Following recommendation/ analysis from Anglia Car Charging it is recommended that the Gardner Road charges be increased to 75p per unit, and that East Green be increased to 53p per unit - both with immediate effect.

AGREED BY ALL.

- c) *To note year end close arrangements as in previous minutes.*

The Town Clerk reminded members of the various procedures for year-end close and audit arrangements. Noted by all.

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) HMC/ SAG – Caravan Site forward strategy. See above. It is hoped that the funds are available to do the works.

8. Town Mayor updates including.

Future Mayor events

Southwold Lions Charter Lunch – 27th April 2025

Southwold Town Mayors Charity Concert. 2nd May 2025

Sole Bay Bowls Club official opening of outdoor green – 4th May 2025

Mayor's Concert – It is hoped that the funding raised will help keep music in local schools.

Councillor events

ESC Town conference 27th Feb 2025 – this was very well attended, and breakout groups were held to gather views.

Commonwealth Day was good event. Thanks to all who came.

VE Day – STC will arrange 3 flags to fly Thursday – Sunday.

9. **Consultations** - *see above re Devolution.*

UKPN – Proposed overhead line works Reydon – Walberswick – *see papers attached.*
To consider and agree Town Council response to consultation.

Cllr Flunder advised members that some councillors met National Landscapes regarding the project, but that UKPN were absent. Cllr Flunder advised that general feeling is that this is not required and that the monies could be better spent. The benefit is that it will provide additional resilience, but project costs are circa £2m.

Members felt that the poles were not of significant enough disruption to the landscape to require this project to go ahead - especially in view of the changes to the landscape that will occur with the proposed NSIPS. All agreed to object.

ESC Community Governance Review – *To increase or decrease councillor numbers – responses by 30th April 2025.*

Members discussed the need for a mix of council skills to carry out the work required for council. It was noted that STC does not have a problem recruiting. Committees need populating therefore if there is a reduction in councillor numbers then the committees will suffer, and projects will not get progressed.

On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Gladwell it was agreed by all to stay the same number as at present. All agreed.

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

Tuesday 6th May 2025 at 6.30pm - Annual Meeting of Town Council

Tuesday 27th May 2025 at 6.30pm

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

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

Fire Station Site – Cllr Ladd to be asked to arrange a meeting

Awards – Agreed with working group recommendation.

Cllrs Gladwell and Redington left the meeting

1 Strickland Place – STC survey being carried out tomorrow.

Cllrs Jarvis and Wells met the potential purchasers.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.pm.

Signed

Dated