SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 6.30pm on Tuesday 30th September 2025.

PRESENT: Councillor
" P Davy
" S Flunder
" V Gladwell
" P Goldsmith (Mayor)
" C Hurr
" R Jarvis
" M Palmer
" J Miller
" Temple
" M Wells

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

Before the meeting began members received a letter of resignation from Cllr Flunder relinquishing duties as Town Mayor/ Chair. Cllr Flunder will remain as a councillor. The Deputy Mayor offered thanks from all members for the work that Cllr Flunder had carried out for the council and the community during his two and a half years in office. Cllr Flunder advised that it had been a privilege to serve as Town Mayor and thanked all members, staff and the Town Clerk for the support that they had given him.

1. **Election of Chair/ Town Mayor for the remainder of the term of 2025.2026.**
Cllr Jarvis proposed that Cllr Goldsmith be elected as Chair/ Town Mayor for the remainder of the term of 2025.2026. Seconded by Cllr Wells. No other nominations. It was Agreed by All that Cllr Goldsmith be elected as Chair/ Town Mayor for the remainer of the term of 2025.2026.
Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair signed by Cllr Goldsmith.

Election of Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the term of 2025.2026.
Cllr Gladwell proposed that Cllr Wells be elected as Deputy Chair/ Mayor for the remainder of the term of 2025.2026. Seconded by Cllr Hurr. No other nominations. It was Agreed by All that Cllr Wells be elected as Deputy Chair/ Mayor for the remainer of the term of 2025.2026.

2. a) **Apologies:**
To note/approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Beavan and Cllr Redington. Noted.

3. **Declarations of interest:**
a) To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.
Cllr Gladwell 1 Strickland Place.

b) To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests / Non registrable interest regarding the agenda. Cllr Davy re 1 Strickland Place. Cllr Jarvis re donation to Feed the Children project. Cllr Wells re the Men's Shed donation.

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.

4. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 29th July 2025.
   It was Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Jarvis and Agreed by all to approve the minutes of 29th July 2025.

5. **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. Cllr Beavan had provided apologies.*
   The ESC report had been circulated prior to the meeting

   b) *To receive a report from Suffolk CC Ward Councillor M Ladd.*
   Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors.
   Ward Cllr Ladd advised that;
   The 20mph scheme for the High Street had been approved.

   The £54k funding available at SCC means that the build outs for the scheme will not incur chargeable Vat or the 18% onward cost to 3rd parties, as it will be a SCC funded project. The £54k will cover most of the costs and Cllr Ladd advised that if there was any excess payable he would hope to cover these from his own budget.
   Pier Avenue Traffic survey results reveal that the majority of vehicles are within the 30mph speed limit and that the mean average speed is 22mph.
   Two residents of St Edmunds Road have contacted Cllr Ladd about the state of the footpath and road, and these matters have been entered onto the Highways reporting tool.
   Gull Wing Bridge has now been open for 12 months – data shows that there have been 112 incidents of people trying to cross the bridge when the red lights are going.
   Budget 2026 -2027 – SCC predicts an overspend of £13.8m – most of which is needed for adult social care.
   Nominations for Mayor are being announced. SCC made its submission to government about LGR.
   SCC will be investing further in the recycling centre in Suffolk.

   Questions to SCC Cllr Ladd
   Fire Station Site. Cllr Ladd advised that he was not aware of any update from SCC and that council could contact ESC Ward Cllr Beavan who might be aware of any progress.

   SCC Cllr Ladd left the meeting at 7pm.

c) To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda. Nil

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

a) To receive the reports of the meetings of the Planning and Development Committee meeting – to receive reports from meetings held 19th August 9th September, and 23rd September 2025.

Members were advised that Cllr Wells would like to withdraw from this cttee and that Cllr Redington would like to take up the vacancy. No other requests received. **It was Agreed by All that Cllr Redington join the planning cttee to fill this vacancy.**

Cllr Temple explained the decision with regards to pavement licences and re the alcohol licence application from Nine Deli. Cllr Temple also updated members on the pending application for a pavement licence for The Nelson, and with regards to the planning application for Woodley's.

Cllr Temple was asked about the Bay Hotel planning application – to remove the bar and restaurant areas. Cllr Temple advised that on planning grounds there was no reason to object to this application.

The Town Mayor asked SCC Cllr Ladd for an update on the tables/ chairs outside the Sole Bay Inn which have been removed. SCC Cllr Ladd advised that himself, ESC Ward Cllr Beavan and Adnams had met to see what could be done to get the tables/ chairs re-installed. Discussions are continuing.

b) Landlords Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee held 30th July, 28th August and 25th September 2025. *To consider recommendations in relation to quotes for work/ expenditure and budget.* **

Cllr Gladwell advised that there has been much work going on with regards to both practical and strategic aspects of the property portfolio, as per the report.
Hurren Terrace Gabel End works have started.
Recommendations
Upgrade of fire alarm systems at residential premises Hurren Terrace – it has been recommended that STC upgrades the residential fire alarm systems at HT/ Station Road at a total cost £9107. Recommend approve from landlords budget.

The insurers also require that STC has its own Hot works permit policy for contractors to adhere to – for which the insurers provided a template. Recommend to adopt.

Door Locks – all Hurren Terrace – to comply with new fire regulations – i.e. should be turn locks not key locks inside main exit doors to residential properties. Full cost of replacement locks - £912 plus Vat -

25 Market Place – Quote for works to downpipes/ clay air bricks/ replacement gutters – Total cost £3584.

It was AGREED by all that the four recommendations above be approved. Unanimous.

c) Leisure and Environment Cttee – To receive the reports of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee held on 31st July 2025 and 25th September 2025 –*To consider recommendations.*
Cllr Miller advised that there were no recommendations from the meeting of 31st July 2025.

From meeting held on 28th September - **It was suggested that a meeting be held between L and E, and ESC/ ESS, to find out what budget they had available for maintance on these areas, the sort of maintenance/ planting that would be possible, the stability of the cliff area, costs/ budgets etc and who might be able to fund any improvements. Once this meeting has taken place it is then suggested that there might be the potential to set up a working group, to include other stakeholders/ interested parties such as BHOA, cafe owners along the prom, to progress issues.**
It is therefore recommended that in the first instance, a meeting be arranged between L and E and ESC/ESS to follow up on the meeting which had already been held re asset transfers. On the proposal of Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Jarvis it was Agreed By All . Unanimous.

Quotes have been received for both repair and new. Repair will be as expensive as new in some instances.
2 Quotes have been achieved for carving a replacement from English Oak, primed painted and varnished. Quotes of £2600, or £7,347 plus VAT
L and E agreed, under Delegated Auth, that a new sign be commissioned, to copy the previous sign, and that the quote of £2600 be accepted. Within L and E budget. Council to note. On the proposal of Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Jarvis it was AGREED BY ALL that this would be noted. Unanimous.

Cllr Goldsmith advised that there is a vacancy now on the L and E cttee as Cllr Redington has withdrawn from this cttee.

d) Roads Cttee – To receive report and recommendations from meeting held 28th August 2025. *To consider any recommendations - Cllr Beavan* No Recommendations.

e) Comms working group – To receive notes from the meeting held on 31st July 2025. *To consider recommendations*. There were no recommendations.

f) Employment working group - To receive notes from the meeting held on 17th September 2025. *To consider recommendations in relation to policies and HR/ H and S services.* **

Cllr Davy provided the report and detailed the HR companies whom the group had met to date. No recommendation at this stage with regards to this aspect.

Recommendations;
It is recommended that a Nest pension with an employer contribution of 3% be offered to the apprentice and asset officer should they wish to join a pension scheme at any stage. Town Council Pension Policy to be updated to reflect this.
On the proposal of Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Wells, it was Agreed by all to approve this recommendation.

It was agreed to recommend that the Eye test/ glasses policy, as attached, be adopted for Southwold Town Council.
On the proposal of Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Wells, it was Agreed by All to approve this recommendation.

It is recommended that council notes and approves the payment of the NJC approved Pay Award for 2025 – 2026 for the Town Clerk and admin assistant and to note that this is backdated to 1st April 2025.
On the proposal of Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Wells, it was Agreed by All to approve this recommendation.

g) NSIP working Group - National Energy Projects – Lionlink/Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/ and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project - Sealink DCO**.**

Cllr Davy advised that there are ongoing grounds works taking place with respect to Lionlink. Statutory Consultation will be January 2026. Scottish Renewables is looking at construction works. Sealink virtual prelim meeting is being held on 5th Nov at Snape. Both SCC and ESC have made good submissions. East Suffolk Energy Partnership has a meeting next week and an open meeting before the Sealink Prelim meeting. Sizewell and the effect on transport on and around A12 is the major problem at the moment. Rail and sea are to be used at some stage in the future.
Application for 340 touring pitches has been applied for at Pakefield Caravan and camping site. Discussion about whether this would have an effect on the Southwold caravan site once the need for Sizewell use has ended. It was suggested and agreed by all that STC send in a planning response to the application to this effect.
Discussion about whether Southwold caravan site would benefit from Sizewell workers – and it was suggested that the HMC discuss this further.
Cllr Davy advised members that Council will need to consider how to get positive results from Sizewell and how to access funding from their grants, to offset some of the disruption. Discussion about the length of the 30mph restrictions on the A12 and whether this could be shortened as work is not taking place along the whole length of the 30mph.

A member asked whether there had been any update from ESC Ward Cllr Beavan about Lionlink and the suggested connection with Southwold Harbour – no update known.
It was noted that SALC is holding webinars on the Sealink process, which are open to all.

h) LGR working group – to receive updates from various meeting held – including with ESC re asset transfers on 30th July, and with all District Councils re best practices.

Cllr Jarvis advised that the submissions have been made by ESC and SCC and the outcome is awaited. Local labour MPS seem to be backing the 3 unitary proposal. But with the government financial assessment – savings are needed and a one unitary is likely to deliver more savings.
Cllr Jarvis advised of the recent decision from the Local Leaders Group to not approve funding to SALC for a NSIP co Ordinator.
Cllr Jarvis advised re the Powers which will be devolved to the Mayor- Transport will be a Mayoral responsibility including stations, rail, bus fleets, highways, and Network Rail.

7. **Business Group**
To receive feedback from meeting with MP re Business rates.
Members were advised that the business rate relief has been pulled, so for many the business rates have increased significantly. Added to this is the impact of NI and Wage increases.
Businesses present at the meeting felt that footfall/ spend had reduced. (5 business members were present to represent the views of the business community).
The MP advised that she had reported to a Select Cttee that there was no joined up thinking on NSIPS in this area.

To receive update on Southwold business association/group - including survey. There seems to be a desire to rejuvenate the business group and one of the business owners is circulating a survey to see if there are key priority areas.

To note Business networking programme and surgeries being provided by Menta as part of the business association programme. Noted.

8. **Wi Fi Provision**– *To note concerns of businesses/ residents regarding Wi-fi provision*.
Both at the meeting with the MP, and separately, some businesses have expressed concern about the lack of mobile coverage especially at busy parts of the season, or when large events are taking place close by – i.e. when Latitude takes place. This is effecting business continuity.
This is also evidenced by the number of complaints being received about the difficulty for people to download the necessary parking App when trying to use local ESC car parks.
It is understood that new fibre upgrades are taking place – but it is unknown whether this will improve coverage/ stability of the networks
After full discussion it was Agreed by all to write to ESC Economic Development Team about the effect of poor mobile coverage and to ask whether there is any help that they can provide in this respect – i.e. lobbying the providers etc.

9. **Fire Station Site** – *to receive update – Cllr Beavan.* No update available.

10. **<u>Financial Matters</u> - Audit and Governance**

a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for September 2025 (*circulated to members).*
On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Temple, it was Agreed by all to approve the payments.

b) *To receive and consider* management accounts/ budget/ and balance sheet for month end August 2025. Members had received the up to date documents and reports. No matters of concern were raised.

c) *AGAR 2024 .2025* – To receive completion of external Audit for 2024.2025 and note recommendations/ actions required are Nil.

Thanks were extended to the Town Clerk and the team for their work on the Council financial management, which has enabled a clean audit to be received again, with no actions required.
Members considered the audit report and timescales for public notices.
It was Agreed by All to note and approve the audit closure report for 2024.2025.

d) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee* meeting held on 29th September 2025 – *To consider recommendations including donation requests, NALC Pay award 2025, policy updates.*
External audit has been provided to all councillors. There are 'No matters to note' and no action plan is required for council to progress. See above. Agreed by all.

Pay award – 2025.2026. To adopt as per Employment Cttee recommendation and note the backdate to 1st April 2025. Agreed by all. See above.

Pre-payment Card - Presently online purchases are paid for on personal card and claimed back through council. If a pre-payment card was provided the VAT on purchases would be able to be reclaimed. The Cttee Recommend a pre-payment card with a pre-paid sum of £1,000 be provided for council use. Agreed by all.

Cllr Wells left the room
Donation request - Sole Bay Men's Shed toward total project cost of £75k. It is recommended that the town council donate £1000 to this project. It is within donation budget. Agreed by all.

Cllr Wells returned to the room.

Cllr Jarvis did not take part in the following discussion.
Donation request - Feed All children Project for Southwold School. Council provided £1000 in 2024 for this project.
Costs have been provided for term 1 of £1568 to feed all those not otherwise eligible to free school meals.

It is recommended that a donation of £1568 be provided to cover all the costs for the first term. This is within donation budget. Agreed by all with one abstain.

The accounting system is presently not available on the council laptops. To improve efficiency and flexibility of use it is recommended that the quote to enable the system to be web based be approved – cost £404.05.
Agreed by all.

11. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended:**

a) SAG - Members were advised that all recent meetings had been cancelled and that this was disappointing. The project for the caravan site does not seem to have moved forward. There seem to be examples of people enquiring about static caravan pitches and no one is going back to them. There appear to be leases/ licences which are not progressing. It was mentioned that ESC does not seem to be supporting local businesses at the harbour.

Discussion took place on the above. It was suggested that a letter be sent to ESC, detailing the concerns of the town council in relation to; how the businesses are being affected, the length of time being taken on leases/ licences, up to date annual accounts for the harbour, up to date details of the reserves retained for the harbour, how these reserves will be accounted for and transferred to the new Unitary/ Mayor, details of the assets of the harbour held within ESC, details of who the duty holder is and who it will be in future, and how the harbour/ duty holder role will be dealt with as part of devolution/ LGR. Copy of letter to be sent to MP and Dept of Transport.

b) Summer Theatre. Members were advised that a thank you event had been held for the volunteers.
Arts Festival is likely to take place 1-4th May 2026. There is no date for the street festival. Members were advised that the Arts Festival had been very difficult to deliver this year and that the street festival cost approx. £4k to be held this year. It was suggested that the town did not seem to support the events -businesses not financially supporting/ no bunting etc. The costs for the Arts Festival had risen greatly hence the need to reduce it from 7 days to 4 days in 2026.

c) Light Up Southwold – Cllr Wells advised that the cttee is on track with their organisation of the event and that the fundraising has gone well.

12. **Sole Trustee** – *to consider whether the council would consider, in principle, being a sole trustee of The Common Southwold if requested to be*.
Cllr Davy explained the background to the agenda item. Cllr Temple asked whether the Common Trust had considered becoming a CIO.
After discussion it was agreed by all to suggest to the Common Trust that they consider a CIC as a governance option. Unanimous.

13 **Deputy Town Mayor updates including;**
V J Day – service on Gun Hill – 15th August 2025
Tour of Britain cycle event – 2nd September 2025

Plus upcoming events
Beccles Civic Service – 19th October 2025 at 10.30am
Ipswich Civic Service – 19th October 2025 at 3.30pm
Mid Suffolk District Council Civic Service – 26th October 2025 at 2pm

14. **Councillor updates**
Meeting with Suffolk High Sheriff has taken place. No matters to bring forward at this stage.
Attendance at Battle of Britian Parade and Service Bury St Edmunds. Noted.

15. **Forthcoming Events for councillors** to note;
URC – Harvest Festival – 12th October 2025 at 10.30am
Remembrance Parade – Town Hall – 9th November 2025
Armistice Day – Laying of Crosses – 11th November 2025
St Edmunds Day – St Edmunds Church – 20th November 2025
Light Up Southwold – 29th November 2025.
Businesses Christmas reception – Town Hall – 11th December 2025

16. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:**
Tuesday 28th October 2025 at 6.30pm

***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 Bodied (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** and Strickland Place property update.

Menta lease of Enterprise Hub. Cllr Davy provided an update re the KPI detailed within the terms of the lease and confirmed that these were being achieved. ESC has suggested that additional business community surgeries/ advice support be delivered for businesses locally – see new programme of events as detailed above.

Cllr V Gladwell left the meeting
Members were updated re the interest being shown and offers received for 1 Strickland Place. No decision required at present.