

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 6.30pm on Tuesday 16th December 2025.

PRESENT:	Councillor
	“ D Beavan
	“ P Davy
	“ S Flunder
	“ P Goldsmith (Mayor)
	“ C Hurr
	“ R Jarvis
	“ J Miller
	“ M Palmer
	“ V Redington
	“ R Temple
	“ M Wells

Also present: The Town Clerk and the High Steward.

1. **Apologies:**

To receive and approve apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gladwell and SCC Ward Cllr Ladd. Noted.

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 / 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.

3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meetings held on Tuesday 25th November 2025.

2 alterations on page 4 f)

Para 2 - 'wind farm will be **coming onshore** at Thorpeness'

Para 3 line 6 – meeting of **ESCEP** (rather than East Suffolk Project Group)

**Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Wells to approve with these alterations.
Agreed by all to approve the minutes of Tuesday 25th November 2025 with these alterations.**

4. **Public Forum** (15 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).

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

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

a) To receive the verbal report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee meeting – *to receive report from meeting held 16th December 2025, including representation at ESC Planning Cttee 9th Dec. Cllr Temple.*

Woodley's planning application to ESC Cttee – Cllr Flunder, Cllr Redington and ESC Cllr Beavan spoke at the Committee meeting in support of the STC response. However the application was approved by the ESC planning cttee 6 – 3, with a number of conditions.

Coach House planning application – This application has been successful at Inspectorate Appeal. It was noted that it is unusual for ESC to lose an appeal.

b) Leisure and Environment Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee meeting held 4th December 2025. *Cllr Goldsmith. To include update on CCTV since meeting,*

Report noted. CCTV update – police have advised further sites which they would like to have some CCTV cover at. They advised that having new cameras would provide high resolution infra-red which would be more effective in the darker areas. Cost of cameras have reduced in recent years.

c) Roads Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Roads Committee meeting held 4th December 2025. *Cllr Beavan.*

Report noted. SCC 20mph - designs received today and these show that other streets as well as the High Street will be covered by a 20mph in view of the requirements for notifying motorists of 20mph area.

To receive invitation to the Public Rights of Way working group to join Reydon PC, and S and R Soc, for meeting 14th Jan 2026 at 2pm. – see previous T of Ref as attached.
PRW falls under the Terms of Reference of the Roads Cttee. No members of the cttee are available to attend a meeting on 14th Jan.

d) NSIP working Group – To receive response for Deadline 2 Sealink DCO. Submitted as per delegated approval. *Cllr Davy. See attached.*

Cllr Davy advised that a response has been sent to DCO submission and this has been copied to all councillors. Thanks were extended to Cllr Davy for his work on this matter.

e) LGR / Devolution working group.

Devolution - A meeting had been requested with each Mayoral candidate, and some had replied, despite the Mayoral Elections now being postponed from 2026 to 2028. It was suggested that meetings still take place with candidates who offer to meet.

LGR – to consider, and if agreed, approve that STC provide a response to the consultation. LGR working group to have devolved authority to respond to the Three Councils for Suffolk, and the One Suffolk submissions. (Consultation deadline is 11th Jan

2026 (see selected pages of the reports from each submission attached – and see full submissions from the respective authorities)
See discussion at end of meeting.

f) Bright Light Award working group – to confirm the eligibility and selection criteria for the 2025 award.

Eligibility and selection criteria – i.e. can anyone be put forward or just from the voluntary sector. Selection criteria – is this only on merit? Or are the number of nominations to be taken into account?

The Working Group to consider and get back to the Clerk as soon as possible.

Council to consider any individual long service awards for this year, as per previous.

g) Emergency Plan working group – to confirm date to meet with Reydon PC to update Joint Plan.

Cllr Beavan suggested that this must be taken forward to ensure that the Emergency Plan be kept up to date.

Walberswick has an Emergency Plan of its own.

Cllr Hurr will assist Cllr Wells on behalf of STC, and a meeting with Reydon P C will be arranged.

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

a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for December 2025 (*circulated to members*).

Legal Fees – breakdown of legal fees to be provided to the Finance Committee.

Discussion re the Sailing Club “slip” payment – see previous minutes for the agreement to the donation.

On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Redington, it was agreed by all to approve the payments.

b) *To receive and consider* management accounts/ budget/ and balance sheet for month end November 2025 – see supporting papers. Noted by all with no queries raised.

c) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee* meeting held on 10th December 2025 – *recommendation in respect of T of Ref/ donations policy* - Cllr Jarvis – *see recommendations*.

Updated Terms of Reference – Roads Committee. Proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Jarvis. Agreed by all.

Donations Policy. Finance Committee advised that council should not give donations to businesses, as this could be considered as giving competitive advantage. See the updated Policy for clarification.

Revised Donations Policy - Proposed by Cllr Jarvis seconded by Cllr Temple. Agreed by all.

Discussion re repairs and upgrades to the Town Hall, how this might be considered by the public, and what comms might be required to explain the works required.

d) *To note meeting dates for confirming budget and precept for 2026.2027.*

Council meeting to be held on 13th January 2026 to consider budget and precept – to align with ESC timescales.

7. **Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor updates including:**

- Bungay Town Trust Town Dinner – 28th November 2025
- Light Up Southwold – 29th November 2025.
- A Suffolk Christmas Service at Bury St Edmunds – 10th December 2025
- Christmas Reception for businesses and local organisations. It was noted that the Christmas Drinks reception had been very well received. Noted that several High Street businesses had mentioned that they could not attend as it was held during daytime. Consider timings for next year. Event was very well attended with several non High Street businesses attending, as well as many from the voluntary sector.
- VHC Christmas Lunch – 18th December 2025

8. **Forthcoming Events for councillors**

Christmas Carol Service at St Edmund's Church 21st December 2025 at 6pm

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

Tuesday 13th January 2026 - for consideration of budget 2026.2027. Tuesday 27th January 2026.

- 5.e) continued. Cllr Jarvis advised that the LGR consultation is underway – with a response deadline of 11th January 2026. Members were advised that large businesses/education/adult care are likely to support 1 unitary but smaller businesses/parish and town councils might support the 3 unitary option.

Cllr Jarvis advised that SALC is putting in a neutral response to both options, stating that the ideal scenario is to ensure that services are better for town and parish councils.

Discussion on LGR and funding and where monies are going to come from to Town Council. Cllr Jarvis advised that cost savings of losing a tier of local government may not be as high as previously thought by central government.

Lengthy discussion took place as to whether STC should respond as a corporate body, and state what it would want from the creation of a unitary.

After full discussion, it was suggested by Cllr Jarvis that STC make the same response to both option submissions, advising that the Town Council would want the option which will be beneficial for improved services/economic growth for the town of Southwold, that the outcome needs to be beneficial for all in the town, and that if it does not deliver any improvement it should not go ahead. Response to also state that STC would want funding for issues important to this area, such as funding for Southwold being a coastal community in a rural area. The individual consultation questions will not be answered, but the 'free text box' will be used for the STC response to both submissions as stated above.

On the recommendation of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Davy it was agreed by all to submit this same response in the 'free text box' to both consultations.

Following the discussion above, Cllr Jarvis asked whether STC would still wish him to remain as the LGR working group chair/ rep. Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Miller that Cllr Jarvis remain as the LGR working group chair/ rep. Agreed with 1 abstention.

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

10. **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***

Nil.