

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 6.30pm on Tuesday 13th January 2026

PRESENT: Councillor
“ S Flunder
“ P Goldsmith (Mayor)
“ C Hurr
“ R Jarvis
“ J Miller
“ V Redington

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 Beavan, Cllr Davy, Cllr Gladwell, Cllr Palmer, Cllr Temple and Cllr Wells. 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.

d) *To note that the Register of Interests of all Members is to be updated with changes as they occur.* Nil.

3. **Minutes:** To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 16th December 2025.

Amendment on page 3 – from Bright Light Award 2025 to Bright Light Award 2026.

With this amendment it was Agreed by all to approve the minutes of Tuesday 16th December 2025.

4. **Public Forum** (15 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion). To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda. Nil.

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

To receive the reports of the meeting of;

a) *the Planning and Development Committee:*

- *To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16th December 2025. All agreed.*
- *To receive verbal report from the meeting held on Tuesday 13th January 2026.*
Verbal report re meeting 13th January 2026 – Pier wants to create new second floor to create 11 rooms. Planning Committee has concerns and will be responding with these.

b) *NSIPS working group – to receive written update on;*

- *Sealink/Lionlink/Sizewell C*
- *Anglia One/Eurolink and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project*
Cllr Davy report had been circulated, and thanks were extended to him.

c) *Town Awards working group – to receive confirmation of eligibility and selection criteria.*

Eligibility – to include anyone who is nominated within the other criteria.

Selection criteria – this will not be based on the number of nominations but will be selected on a ‘worthy’ basis.

STC to advise who is being considered for long service award.

6. **Financial Matters – Budget and Precept 2026.2027**

Budget 2026.27

Revenue Budget and Precept 2026.27

a) Revenue Budget – To consider, and if agreed, approve the Town Council Revenue Budget 2026.27 and 2027 – 2029 – see papers attached.

Members had all received the draft budget and had been able to go through this on a line-by-line basis. There were no queries with regards to the revenue budget.

It was agreed by all to approve the Revenue budget which for 2026 -2027 indicates income of £235,960 and expenditure of £310,838 with the £74,878 deficit being covered by reserves. Forward budgets for 27 – 29 show a net positive figure moving forward.

b) Precept 2026.27 – to consider, and, if agreed,

approve a precept for 2026.27 – see ESC papers, draft budget and supporting papers.

Members considered that the budget was very comprehensive. Finances are very well controlled and are in line with the projects/ outcomes indicated within the strategic plan. It was noted that the budget was drawn up on the basis of a 5% increase in precept to £185,960. For a Band D property this would be an increase of £6/yr, i.e. 12p per week on the previous year. But, in view of the change in the number of houses being charged precept, the Band D charge would still be the same as it was in 2017. It was noted that there has been no precept increase since 2017, but costs have risen significantly over the past few years.

On the proposal by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was AGREED by all to request a precept of £185,960 as above.

Discussion re comms – the council newsletter in March 2025 had indicated that a precept rise was likely for 2026. A newsletter will be circulated to explain the budget for 2026 – 2027.

Capital Budget 2026 – 2027

- c) To consider, and if agreed, approve the Town Council Capital Budget 2026 – 2029 – see papers attached.

Refurbishment of Town Hall will be a major project. £60k is required for immediate essential work within the premises including upgrades to fire system and boiler. Discussion about whether the e accessibility project should go ahead or whether essential work only should be commissioned. Discussion about the options for both and the options available to cover costs. It was suggested that grants could be applied for including Heritage Grant funding. Building is Grade II Listed.

The High Steward advised that the building is not fit for purpose and that the council should be able to show to the public and what it is about i.e. all the history/artefacts should be on display.

After full discussion it was agreed that the Capital budget be updated to include the accessibility project and be brought back to the next council meeting for approval.

Thanks were extended to Cllr Jarvis and the Town Clerk for their work the budget.

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 – Cllr Jarvis – Members were advised that the HMC meeting was held last week to consider the budget. Harbour budget includes £150k spend on consultations and shows £150k deficit to be paid out of reserves. No statement of reserves was produced. Previous accounts on the website do not seem to be correct and Cllr Jarvis has advised that he does not agree with the figures. ESC has specific timescales to approve the budget so that it can then be considered by Cabinet/Full Council. It is hoped that the deficit of £150k will not materialise.

SAG/HMC –The Pontoon Group will be a stakeholder and consultee.

ESC Director of Finance has assured the HMC that ESC is complying with the Department of Transport requirements, for the audit and has advised that they will now place these on the website.

8. Councillor meetings and Events

Town Council meetings and Civic event dates 2026 – see diary dates.

ESC Towns Conference – 26th February 2026 – High Lodge, Darsham – invite for 1 Cllr plus Town Mayor. Cllr Jarvis will attend.

9. Date of next Town Council Meeting: Tuesday 27th January 2026.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.30pm

