

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 6.30pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

PRESENT:	Councillor
	“ D Beavan
	“ P Davy
	“ S Flunder
	“ V Gladwell
	“ C Hurr
	“ R Jarvis
	“ J Miller
	“ V Redington
	“ R Temple
	“ M Wells
	Vacancy

Also present: The Town Clerk, SCC Cllr M Ladd, the High Steward and 4 potential councillors.

Thoughts were relayed for previous councillor Martin Palmer who passed away on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

1. **Apologies:**

*To receive and approve apologies for absence.* Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Goldsmith. 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) *Councillors to review their Register of Interest.* Nil.

3. **Minutes:** *To approve and sign the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.*

Amendments to note - Cllr P Davy attended. Cllr V Gladwell had sent apologies. NSIP page 3 e) – amend details to read ‘After exam closes there is 3 months to make a recommendation and then 3 months for a decision.

**With these amendments it was proposed by Cllr Davy, seconded by Cllr Miller and agreed by all to approve the minutes of Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.**

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 electors.

ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that Potters Bridge has settled down and should be fine for the summer.

LGR – unitary for Southwold will reach from Lowestoft – Stowmarket. ESC is in purdah presently whilst waiting for SCC elections.

*Questions to ESC Cllr Beavan*

Cllr Redington – re inspection of Potters Bridge – SCC Cllr M Ladd to respond.

b) *To receive a report from Suffolk CC Ward Councillor M Ladd. Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors.*

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he was attending his last council meeting as SCC Ward Councillor. Cllr Ladd advised that he had done 13 years as an SCC Cllr, 33 years as STC Cllr, and 10 years as WDC Cllr.

Thanks were extended to SCC Cllr Ladd for all his hard work.

Cllr Ladd advised that there was not much going on as SCC is in purdah.

98% of school children have received their first-choice school.

SCC has provided £4m to improve public rights of way networks and structures.

LGR – has been confirmed that there will be 3 Unitary for Suffolk.

SCC Cllr Ladd attended Endeavour House last week - Concerns at SCC surround the change of system for;

1) Adult Social Care

2) Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service and where the responsibility for the fire service will go.

Question to SCC Cllr Ladd regarding the timescales for the inspection of Potters Bridge - SCC inspection is due in April.

SCC Cllr Ladd thanked STC too for their assistance over the past 13 years, with special thanks to the Town Clerk and admin asst.

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

Question was asked as to what is “Station Road Express”. Cllr Wells advised that it is the shop on the corner of Blyth Road.

5. **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 report from meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026, Cllr Temple*  
Minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026 received – no updates.

b) *Landlords Cttee – To receive the report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee held 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026. Including opening of Station Rd Express. Cllr Gladwell*  
Members commended the Landlords Committee for what they are doing and for now being on top of issues.

c) *Leisure and Environment Cttee –no meeting held.*

d) *Roads Cttee –To receive verbal report and update from meeting today. Cllr Beavan.*

Cllr Beavan advised that the cttee had met this morning. 20mph in High Street should start Q1 next year. Cllr Flunder asked whether LGR would have an effect on the 20mph scheme. Cllr Beavan advised that the finance is all there so the scheme should go ahead.

*e) NSIP Working Group – Cllr Davy –*

*To receive update on National Energy Projects – Lionlink/Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/ and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project - Sealink DCO*

*ESC project update has been circulated.*

Sealink – deadline for submission = tomorrow. ESCEP has sent in a submission. Major concern is that National Grid have not answered all the issues raised.

Re Benhall Railway Bridge – not suitable for the loads needed to go over it.

Health and wellbeing of Friston and Saxmundham residents is a concern.

Cumulative impact is not being considered i.e. traffic, travel, tourism.

Exam closes on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026. 3 months for a recommendation, 3 months for Ed Miliband to make a decision.

*Feedback from meeting re Sizewell Community Fund was provided.*

Cllr Davy and Cllr Wells met Sizewell C regarding effect on tourism. Data is showing a 17,000 drop in footfall this year and data from businesses on the weekend of the A12 road closures show 20% loss of business at these times.

Cllr Davy has provided a draft letter for STC to approve.

Cllr Flunder – had a question re the draft letter – what does “Festival” mean? A = can be whatever STC wanted.

Cllr Davy advised STC to address the combination of events in the town and see how STC can help and how STC can help on events i.e. facilitation of groups, to have more influence on how Sizewell regards events in Southwold.

Anything that benefit the Sizewell work force would be liked by Sizewell.

Cllr Wells advised that they said that they would be interested in corporate membership.

Cllr Hurr asked about the jetty that they are putting out at sea. Cllr Beavan – will find out and reply.

Cllr Davy letter – It was Proposed by Cllr Miller, seconded by Cllr Redington to send Cllr Davy letter with a few amendments. Thanks to Cllr Davy for the letter.

*f) Emergency Plan working group – to receive update. Cllr Wells/ Hurr.*

Cllrs Wells and Cllr Hurr are going to Melton tomorrow and meeting ESC on Friday.

Emergency Plan contacts are being updated.

6. **Councillor Vacancy** – to receive update.

The Town Clerk provided an update – and advised that there were 4 applicants who will be asked to introduce themselves to council next week.

7. **Town Hall Project** – Cllr Davy

*To receive notes from Steering Group meeting 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026 – see attached.*

*To receive update from Heritage Focus Group meeting 16<sup>th</sup> April 2026.*

Notes have been circulated from both the Project Brief and Heritage Focus Group.

Timing is of the essence to progress with approved planning application.

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

a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for April 2026. (*circulated to members*).

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

b) *To receive and consider* management accounts/ budget/ and balance sheet for year end March 2026.

Cllr Jarvis advised that these are a very good year end account. Approximately £50k received in interest from CCLA. Balance sheet – as expected at £1.2m. Sale of 1 Strickland Place is in the offing and needs to be considered.

c) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee* meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026 – including year-end accounts 2025 - 2026, risk review, and donation request - *Cllr Jarvis*

Risks added to the risk register include cyber and AI.

**Recommendations;**

**Suggested that approved maintenance limit for ESS be £200 per month for routine inspection repairs and maintenance of the 2 play areas– approve for 12 months.**

**Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Temple. All agreed.**

**Local Councils are being encouraged to convert their websites to .gov.uk. STC will need to purchase a new domain name from ‘.gov.uk’ and the web consultant will then transfer the site over to the new domain. Budget £300 required (£150 consultant and £150 for domain – from Website budget) Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Hurr.**

**It was agreed to recommend offering the bank signatories an appropriate antivirus package if required. Budget £500 to be approved for this purpose. (From I T Budget) Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Flunder. All agreed.**

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

a) SAG / HMC – *Cllr Flunder/ Cllr Beavan* – SAG no updates. Cllr Beavan – HMC meeting is due very soon. There is a person to run the caravan site project. The improvements will create income to keep the harbour going.

b) SRS – *Cllr Gladwell* – Sandcastle competition July 2026. SRS are doing well on footpath walks and will reprint copies of their walks. SRS advise that they will support organisations who need help.

c) East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA)- *Cllr Flunder* - Cllr Flunder attended.

Downsizing is now referred to a “right sizing”. Target for new building is very high and there are not the contractors to build these. LGR may affect planning applications. NPlans – should be referred to at all times. Cllr Beavan advised that the direction of government on planning is a concern i.e. officers having sole decision making on planning.

10. **Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor updates including:**  
 Opening of Station Road Shop – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026  
 Countess of Euston Retirement Service – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2026  
 Hadleigh Guided Walk & Roast – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026
11. **To receive feedback from Annual Town Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026.**  
 The annual meeting clashed with a museum meeting, and it was suggested that STC try to avoid clashes being made in future.
12. **To receive notes from business discussion with ESC Economic Devel** – see attached.  
 Town Clerk advised that some of the suggestions put forward are already being dealt with. The remainder will be considered by the relevant group/ individual.
13. **Forthcoming Events for councillors**  
 Charter Fair opening – Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
 Charter Lunch – Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
 Civic Songs of Praise – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026 11.15am
14. **To receive LGR update** – Cllr Jarvis advised that there is no new update, but polls are showing Reform having most councillors at the SCC election. Reform do not like LGR and may try and delay actions. Could be chaotic and therefore STC will be in the firing line and there could be complaints about services suffering. Autumn 2026 = statutory change process. – STC will need to engage heavily with unitaries.
15. **Consultations to consider**  
 East Suffolk Call for Sites – *consultation date to be announced.* See list.
16. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:**  
**Annual meeting of the Town Council - Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7pm**  
**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 6.30pm**

Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

*\*\*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 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\*\*

**Legal / Professional – 1 Strickland Place – recommendation as per Savills e mail.  
 Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Davy – guide price £800k. All agreed.**

Fire Station Site - Hastoe position is becoming clearer. Look at again in May 2026.

Bright Light Award Working Group – STC received the nominations.

