

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held via Zoom at 6.30pm on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

PRESENT:	Councillor	I Bradbury – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	Ms E A Betts
	“	S Flunder
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	Mrs J Jeans
	“	M Ladd
	“	M Rowan-Robinson
	“	J A Windell

Also present; 10 members of the public, the Town Clerk, the High Steward.

1. **Apologies:** *To receive apologies for absence.*  
Apologies for absence from Cllr Jordan.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
  - a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.*  
Nil.
  - b) *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests 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 be reminded of the requirement for them to individually update their Register of Interests as appropriate.*  
The Town Mayor reminded members of their legal requirements to update the Register of Interest online.
3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the minutes of the Meetings of the Town Council held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020.  
**On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020.**
4. **Public Participation**
  - 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 re Potters Bridge the outfall has been cleared.  
  
There were no questions from Councillors or residents.
  - b) *To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor M Ladd.*  
*SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors.*  
SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that the costs of Covid on the SCC budget will be in the region of £53m.

Cllr Ladd advised that he had the figures for the amount of roadway etc that SCC Highways look after – which includes 6270 miles of pavements, 1011 bridge structures, 6783 lanterns, 60000 columns, 230 pedestrian crossings, 142500 gulleys.

Cllr Flunder asked whether there is an update on repairs to the Bailey Bridge. Cllr Ladd advised that SCC is trying to get the long term future of the Bailey Bridge resolved and that engineers are considering how to do this to limit any closure impacts. This is to be funded through SCC.

Cllr Windell asked about the Covid impact on the SCC budget and whether this would result in job losses – Cllr Ladd advised that SCC does have reserves that it will utilise, and that there is no talk of job losses at the present time.

A member of the public asked about the muddy and slippery footpaths and whether there could be any agreement to putting a topping on some of the worst areas. Cllr Ladd advised that he was awaiting a response from the Rights of Way Officer.

- c) *To receive comments from Southwold electors on matters on the agenda (each elector will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes). (10 minutes will be allocated overall for this section- subject to Town Mayor discretion).*

A member of the public asked about the contamination survey for Station Yard redevelopment and the review of the business plan and advised that he has concerns about the costs of Ferry Road garden project and its future maintenance and has concerns about sculptures and signs within the footpath trail project.

The Town Mayor responded that the agenda includes a report from Project Board, and that the article in the Gazette details information about the footpath trail and how this fits into the Boating Lake project.

A member of the public asked about the work of the Sustainable Travel Cttee re parking etc. The Town Mayor advised that a cttee meeting is to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to which all could attend. The meeting was advised that information is awaited from ESC regarding their parking systems. ESC Ward Cllr Beavan offered to contact ESC if this information is not provided.

**5. To receive reports from Committees.**

- a) *To receive the written report of the meetings of the Planning and Development Committee held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November and Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020.*  
Cllr Jeans advised that 2/3rds of the town is covered within the Conservation Area Design appraisal and that the one for Southwold is now out of date. ESC has now confirmed that Southwold is top of the agenda and that a new appraisal is being commissioned – it may be Paul Bradley who is asked to carry this out.

Cllr Jeans asked for permission to allocate £500 from the planning fees budget to get assistance on the response to 24 Field stile Road to which the Planning cttee are opposed. Carter Jonas to be asked for professional support on this response.

**On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Windell it was AGREED by all to allocate £500 for the use of professional advisers to assist in a response to the LPA on 24 Field stile Road.**

Discussion took place regarding the ability of the Town Council to access case law themselves direct – Cllr Jeans advised that this cost approx. £3000 as the data is collected by private agencies who then charge to access it.

Cllr Windell asked whether ESC Ward Cllr Beavan could ask ESC if the ESC could obtain a licence which the Town Council and others could then access. ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that he will ask the LPA.

- b) *To receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee on any further planning/development matters including the following consultations.*
- i) *ESC Consultation 19<sup>th</sup> October – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – How do you want to engage with local planning?*
  - ii) *Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Doc 9<sup>th</sup> Nov – 21<sup>st</sup> Dec 2020.*

Cllr Jeans asked that any comments from members be submitted to her, and draft responses will then be prepared.

- c) *Leisure and Environment Cttee – to approve appointment of Cllr Windell to cttee.*  
**On the proposal of Cllr Rowan Robinson, seconded by Cllr Bradbury it was AGREED by all to elect Cllr Windell to the L and E cttee.**

*To receive the written report and recommendations of the meeting of the L and E Committee held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – see recommendation re Ferry Road Garden.*

Cllr Rowan- Robinson presented the report of the Land E cttee.

Re Ferry Road Garden – discussion re ownership. ESC confirms that despite previous assumptions that the title belonged to ESC, this does not now appear to be the case. STC to register ownership of the title as owners of the surrounding lands.

**It was proposed by Cllr Ladd, seconded by Cllr Jeans that the Town Council provides budget of £6000 to enable the area to be landscaped at a total cost of £8000.**

Discussion took place regarding this proposal.

Cllr Ladd advised that the area used to be maintained by the Borough and is in need of work. This project will restore a sensory garden and will enhance that area of town. As it fits several SCC priorities, as Ward Cllr, Cllr Ladd advised that he would be pleased to support the project with the £2000 balance required. Thanks, were extended to SCC Ward Cllr Ladd.

Members advised that the area beyond, onto the Sandlings footpath should also be cleared and be part of the project. Cllr Goldsmith advised that the AONB are willing to assist with clearance and that it will be made wheelchair friendly.

**On the proposal of Cllr Ladd seconded by Cllr Jeans it was AGREED by all that**  
**1) STC register title to Ferry Road Garden area and**

2) STC L and E cttee to allocate £3k this year and £3k next year for the Ferry Road landscaping project as detailed in the minutes of the L and E cttee.

**Further discussion - All of the title around this area belonging to STC should be registered. Agreed by all.**

Re path and Heritage Trail – information boards will be used to inform and support and will be limited in number. The funding might be available from the RDF bid which will also provide assistance for improvements for a path from the town to the Harbour Inn.

d) *Landlords Cttee – To receive the written report of the meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020. See report and recommendation re property works.*

Cllr Windell advised members of the various works taking place on the Town Council assets.

**The Golf Club have asked permission to lease longer term an area of pt. marsh 5 – on the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith this was agreed by all.**

Cllr Windell advised that Norse now wished to move their bins from the Pier car park on to the previous Household waste site as has been previously agreed.

Discussion re beach huts at the entrance to the boating lake and whether these are in accordance with the terms of the lease and with planning permissions. Landlords and Planning cttee to consider further.

e) *Sustainable Travel cttee – no meeting held – next meeting date 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.*

6. **To receive report from N Plan Task and Finish Group.** (*N Plan = as per Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022 c) encourage full time residency within the Town d) Preserve and enhance the natural and built environment).*

To receive update on the new and revised Reg14 policies for the emerging Southwold N Plan. Note Zoom stakeholder dates of 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that the Reg 14 consultation is taking place and that the zoom meetings are being held as advertised. As part of the consultation a presentation and discussion has taken place with the Southwold and Reydon Society regarding the new policies.

Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that Reydon PC has singled out policies from the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan for praise in their submission to ESC re the Affordable Housing consultation.

7. **Asset of Community Value Police Station Site - update on works being undertaken to assess residual land value** (*ACV = as per Town Council priorities 2019- 2022 c) work with organisations to enhance community assets)*

Members were advised that the report is expected for 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and that the concept plans being used to calculate RLV will include an Educational Environmental centre, a community launderette and cycle hire facilities.

Members were reminded that anyone can make a bid during this period and that if the Town Council wishes to make a bid this will need to be submitted in January 2021. The ACV status will apply for 5 years even if a bid is not successful at this stage. The Town Mayor reminded members that discussions around RLV will be subject to commercial confidentiality as they will form a part of the basis for discussions with the Police Authority.

Thanks, were extended to Cllr Jeans for her work on this.

Cllr Beavan asked whether Southgen would be involved in submitting a bid at all – Cllr Jeans confirmed that they would not be.

8. **To receive progress report from Station Yard Regeneration Project Board** (*Project = as per Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022 b) Diversify and enhance the local economy*).

Cllr Bradbury advised members that the Project Board had received a presentation from MENTA. The Board had been advised that there is a demand for managed workspaces 24/7 and that larger companies are now looking for smaller spaces.

Cllr Bradbury advised that the Project Board is proposing that a business review be undertaken of the original business plan – for which a budget of £5000 will be required to enable this to go ahead. It is anticipated that the output report from the review would be available prior to demolition being required. **It was proposed by Cllr Bradbury, seconded by Cllr Ladd that a budget of £5000 be provided for the review.**

Discussion. Cllr Ladd advised that in view of Covid, a review of the business case was now needed but had found it heartening that there was a demand for smaller workspaces and encouraging that some of the managed workspaces incorporate an element of retail too.

Cllr Jeans advised that Covid has accelerated the pace of change in the High Street, and the trends of people working away from larger cities. Members were reminded of the planning use classes that had previously been agreed by Council and that the review would also help determine any planning/design changes required.

Cllr Windell suggested that the review provides an opportunity to be imaginative – and that MENTA had provided some good ideas of how a mixed enterprise hub could work.

Cllr Flunder asked about changes that the business case might suggest and how these might affect the grant funding and the costs and the need for planning changes.

Cllr Beavan suggested that demolition might close off options.

Cllr Ladd explained that at the Board meeting ESC had confirmed that an extension to the grant spend had been agreed by ESC to April 2022. The grant has specific outcomes required relating to job creation and the outcomes cannot significantly alter. However, many of the details are now within the jurisdiction of ESC and that having them as part of the Project Board is therefore helpful. The flexibility of the workspace is considered key.

**On the proposal of Cllr Bradbury, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was unanimously agreed that a budget of £5000 be provided for the review of the business case.**

On the matter of contamination Cllr Windell advised that from the information available to date this does not appear to be as bad as it could be.

9. **Town Hall Disability Audit** – To consider way forward.  
Discussion took place on how to move forward with this. Cllr Ladd advised that a lift must be provided to adhere to the audit and that the stairlift should be removed.

Cllr Windell suggested that in view of meetings being held on zoom at present and for the immediate future, access to the chamber is not required and hence there is no need to rush any decision especially with other projects such as Station Road. Methodist Church could be used for meeting in the medium term should the need arise.

It was also mentioned that meetings could, if need be, be held in the ctee room.

In view of the varying opinions on this matter it was agreed to bring this back to Council on a bimonthly basis to consider.

10. **Potters Bridge** – to receive update from Environment Agency.

Cllr Beavan referred members to the letter from the EA and that a new pipe should be going in. Cllr Ladd advised that SCC is looking at long term solutions.

Cllr Bradbury suggested that the Town Council should keep pressure on the EA.

11. **Financial Matters**

a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for November 2020 (*circulated to members*).

**On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for November 2020. All agreed.**

b) *To receive verbal report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Meeting held Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020.*

**1) It is Recommended that the Southwold Town Council Standing Orders be amended to reflect the new statutory thresholds for contracts regulated by the Public Contracts Regulation 2015.**

**2) It is Recommended that the Southwold Town Council Financial Regulations be approved as per the draft attached with a further review to be scheduled for May/June 2021.**

**On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was unanimously agreed to approve that Southwold Town Council Standing Orders be amended to reflect the new statutory thresholds for contracts regulated by the Public Contracts Regulation 2015 and that the Southwold Town Council Financial Regulations be approved as per the draft attached with a further review to be scheduled for May/June 2021.**

*PCSO Service Level Agreement 2021/22. Council to consider provision of a PCSO for 2021/22 and 2022/23 at the November STC meeting once the views of Reydon PC are also known.*

Reydon PC has advised that it will not be wishing to utilise any of the services of the PCSO and thereby not contribute to such provision.

Discussion about the value of having a PCSO in the community and whether in view of the loss of parking duties the role should be full or part time.

**On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Betts it was agreed with 6 in favour and 3 abstain to budget for a PCSO for a 1-year term and to review the provision after a year to determine ongoing performance and need.**

c) *Audit completion 2019-2020 – to receive audit report for year end 2019 -2020.*

The Audit completion report and papers received by Council and noted the action required for future to ensure completion of the signatures on the reports in line with the guidance provided.

d) *Precept timescales – precept to be notified to ESC by 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2021. Noted.*

12. **Communication strategy** (*Project = as per Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022*

*g) Create and implement an improved STC communications strategy within and outside the Town).*

Establish working group to create Town Council communication strategy.

**On the proposal of Cllr Bradbury, seconded by Cllr Jeans it was agreed that a working group be established to create a Town Council Communication Strategy. Members as follows; Cllrs Bradbury, Goldsmith, Jeans, Ladd and Windell.**

13. **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) Christmas Lights – Cllr Goldsmith advised that the lights were going up.
- b) East Anglia One and Two – Cllr Flunder advised that there is strong opposition,
- c) Southwold Arts Centre – Cllr Goldsmith advised that she would like to resign as the Town Council rep as meetings are held during the daytime when she could not attend due to work. **Cllr Flunder offered to be the rep – agreed by all.**
- d) COVID Community group – Cllr Beavan advised that the next meeting will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

14. **Consultations – to consider Town Council response**

*Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) electoral review of Suffolk County Council boundaries – consultation to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020.*

*ESC Consultation 19<sup>th</sup> October – 30 November 2020 – How can we improve cycling and walking?*

Draft response to be compiled for Council by Cllrs Bradbury, Windell and Jeans.

15. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 6.30pm.

16. **Exclusion of Public and Press:** Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following.

*Property matters Station Road tenancy, 3 Strickland Place and 1 Strickland Place*

**On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Betts it was unanimously agreed that due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the above.**

*3 Strickland Place – members were referred to the decision made 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 regarding the prospective purchasers. The option to proceed with the family moving to Southwold as noted in the minutes will now be taken up.*

*Station Road tenancy - CONFID FIN REP 11.20*

*Discussion on the proposals outlined in the report regarding financing an asset for the tenant for their new unit. Amendment proposed to the resolution relating to payments to the Town Council.*

*Cllr Beavan left the meeting.*

**On the proposal of Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was unanimously agreed.**

**That the Town Council purchase in its name the 4-post lift and accessories at a total cost of £20,995 plus VAT**

**That the Town Council purchase in its name the 2 Post lift and accessories at a total cost of £3,295 plus VAT**

**That the Town Council provide a form of ‘licence to use’ the equipment, to the garage. Garage to have all guarantee warranty, servicing and repair and insurance liabilities etc.**

**That the ‘licence to use’ includes a form of payment to the Town Council for permitted use of the equipment. See amended report CONFID FIN REP 24.11.20 for details of repayment terms**

*1 Strickland place*

*It is suggested that before Landlords consider the quotes to convert – an analysis of the costs of conversion vs the income potential be undertaken to ensure that there is a viable business case to support the potential conversion. **Recommended action – prior to further architectural works being undertaken NPS Norwich to be asked to quote for undertaking an analysis of potential conversion costs vs expected income.***

**On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was unanimously AGREED that prior to further architectural works being undertaken NPS Norwich**



**to be asked to quote for undertaking an analysis of potential conversion costs vs expected income.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.40.

Signed .....

Dated.....

DRAFT