

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.**

PRESENT:	Councillor	J Windell – Town Mayor
	“	D Beavan
	“	Miss A Betts
	“	I Bradbury
	“	S Flunder
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	Mrs J Jeans
	“	Mrs J Jordan
	“	M Ladd
	“	R Temple

Also present, The Town Clerk, the High Steward and 4 members of the public

1. **Apologies:**

*To note/approve apologies for absence.* Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Rowan-Robinson, agreed by all to approve this absence, and Cllr Sutton whose apologies were noted. Condolences recorded to Cllr Rowan-Robinson for his sad loss.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.* Cllr Temple declared a Personal Interest in Agenda item 13 re the Red Cross Hut

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.* Not applicable.

d) *Councillors to be reminded of the requirement for them to individually update their Register of Interests as appropriate.* Noted.

3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023.

**On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Betts it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. All agreed.**

4. **Public Participation**

a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan including updates on; Rural Cost of Living/Ease the Squeeze.*

*ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.*

Ward Cllr Beavan advised that Ease the Squeeze assistance is going well – with some applications from Reydon residents. Residents are urged to access the grants available. The meeting was advised that at full ESC Council a question was asked regarding a resident parking scheme for Southwold – it appears that a “plan” has been approved by SCC and ESC advises that it will go to consultation at some time in the future. Also, last

year a motion was placed regarding double council tax being used to give affordable housing to local people which came back this month and was passed.

*Questions from councillors.*

Cllr Jeans advised that Southgen received two of the Ease the Squeeze grants to help with meals and hot drinks. There is a Pay it Forward scheme too to assist the provision of community lunches.

Regarding social housing – Ward Cllr Beavan was asked if he could give his support regarding the funding proposal for the 2 shared ownership houses that are on the market – this is going to ESC next week. Ward Cllr Beavan advised that he will pursue this. ESC Cllr Beavan has shown the new CEO at ESC the houses at the Old Hospital and those at Hope Cottages. ESC have 4500 houses of which they retro fitted 36 in last year. More money is needed for insulation too.

The meeting was advised that 2 local families are 12th and 36th on the list for local ESC renting schemes and for which only a few houses come up locally.

The meeting was advised that there are 4 families in the Old Hospital properties – 2 work in Southwold and Reydon and 2 wanted to come to Southwold to access a better future for their children who do go to local schools.

*Matters from the public;*

A member of the public advised that a preapp for 26 houses on Green Lane is going into ESC with Orbit as a partner, to provide houses for local people, but that the initial response from ESC is that there are enough houses at present in the pipeline.

*b) To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor M Ladd.*

*SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from Councillors and electors.*

SCC Cllr Ladd mentioned that when Sue Allen was Housing at ESC she managed to get the Duncans Yard development completed for local people.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that SCC has not “approved” any residents parking scheme as this is not their role.

On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 SCC agreed the budget for 2023 - 2024. A carbon budget sits alongside the full budget, with an aim for net zero by 2030.

The meeting was advised that SCC has stopped ‘dangerous vapes’ being sold across Suffolk - some were giving “10k puffs” when the average number should be 600.

SCC has awarded a new highways contract for up to 20 years, which is worth up to £800m for works to roads/pavements/gritting etc. .

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that at the 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 SCC meeting the new SCC Chair introduced a Citizen Award Scheme. SCC Cllr Ladd received Certificate No 1 which was awarded to Cllr Jeans for her work on planning, neighbourhood plan and the Old Hospital Site. Certificate was handed over.

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

A class teacher at Southwold Primary School advised that she had noticed on the Reydon PC Minutes that there was discussion about the cost of living crisis and if/ how Reydon PC might be able to help the Reydon Primary school. The teacher asked whether the Town Council might consider the same with Southwold Primary School Cllr Jeans advised that a priority of the community work at Old Hospital is to work with the primary school on such projects and that they would therefore contact the school.

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

a) *Planning and Development Committee - To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023. See papers including;*

*To receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee on any further planning/development matters including;*

Application for 17 Market Place – Lloyds Bank. The applicant has requested conversion to residential, with one unit to holiday let and one to be a principal residence.

Need to apply holiday let policy from Neighbourhood Plan, and Neighbourhood Plan policies of converting from commercial to residential. Cllr Jeans explained the policy requirements regarding marketing and how this must be done. The meeting was advised that this is quite difficult process and that it provides opportunities for affordable housing.

Cllr Ladd asked whether the ‘retail zone’ planning policy in the High Street is still in place? The meeting was advised that it is still in place and that before an applicant can get a change of use they would have to robustly market for commercial use. The marketing campaign is set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and the applicant would have to prove they have complied with this.

*i) Southwold Conservation Area Appraisal Draft Document and Amalgamation – consultation to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 – to consider, and if agreed, approve the town council response. Cllr Jeans*

i) *STC Conservation Area appraisal.*

Cllr Jeans advised that parts of North Road and Pier Avenue are included within the new CAA but Article 4 is not being applied to this new part of the Conservation Area. This is a major point of objection for STC.

Ward Cllr Beavan was requested to ask why Article 4 is not being applied to new parts of the CAA.

**A draft response had been provided to all and Cllr Bradbury and Cllr Jeans will go through it again before it is sent off.**

**On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Bradbury, it was AGREED by all to approve the draft as the Town Council response.**

*ii) The Draft Coastal Adaptation Supplementary Planning Document - covers the coast from Holkham in Norfolk to Felixstowe in Suffolk – consultation to 8th March 2023 <https://eastsoffolk.inconsult.uk/draftcoastaladaptationspd2023>. To consider, and if agreed, approve the town council response. Cllr Beavan.*

Cllr Beavan advised that he has submitted his own response which refers to Easton Bavents i.e. loss of buildings on eroding costs and the need to make sure that people are dealt with fairly.

Cllr Beavan was asked if he could provide a copy of his response to assist the town council with their response – Cllr Beavan advised that it would not be an easy process

to extract his response but that the suggestions within the consultation all seem acceptable.

iii) *N Plan Policies – usage stats.* See graph attached from ESC.

b) *Leisure and Environment Cttee - To receive the written report of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 L and E Rep 1/2023. including Coronation Weekend national plans.*

Written report attached. Cllr Goldsmith advised that a meeting with Suffolk Wildlife Trust has been arranged to learn more about County Wildlife Sites. A meeting has also been arranged with the Community payback team to discuss possible projects for them.

c) *Landlords Cttee – No meeting held.*

6. **To receive reports from working groups:**

a) *Sustainable Travel Group – Verbal update Cllr Bradbury.*

The meeting was advised that discussions had been held with SCC regarding the provision of more electric charges in town, in both Gardner Road and the Millennium car park. Discussion about signage to advise motorists where the chargers will be. SCC Cllr Ladd advised that he would ask the highways team about signage. SCC Highways Officers have carried out some feasibilities for potential traffic improvements which would need signage too.

Cllr Beavan advised that they were finding it difficult to get people to fix the ones at Church Green when they go offline. Cllr Ladd advised that the new charges will be the most up to date ECV Charges for which SCC has funding from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

Cllr Bradbury advised that the electric chargers will be pay to use, and whilst the car park will be free to use, a donation box will be introduced which enables donations to be made online.

7. **National Energy Projects – Sizewell/Anglia One/Eurolink/Sealink, and Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project Update Briefing Invitation.** To receive updates *Cllr Flunder/Cllr Bradbury.*

National Energy Projects – Cllr Flunder advised that Sizewell C has still got outstanding funding issues.

East Anglian Windfarms – the meeting was advised that although judicial review on Friston failed there is a judicial review on the 2 projects. Letter from Therese Coffey was considered very useful so that people can support a petition for offshore converters.

Five Estuaries – coming onshore in Frinton. Again the question is why can they not have offshore converters? Need to prevent AONB being affected by cables.

8. **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) *Southwold and Walberswick Flood Board – Feedback from recent meetings - Cllr Beavan/Cllr Windell.*

Next meeting is on Friday and the group are now looking at engagement and how this will take place.

Potters Bridge – beach has breached for the second time. The reeds above the bridge need to be retained and the group is pushing for a sill above the bridge. Depth is still recorded every morning on Reydon One website.

Environment Agency and landowner still not tackling the matter together.

- b) *Resilient Coasts Project Board – Cllr Beavan* – Cllr Beavan explained that Southwold and Walberswick are the pilots for a Resilient Coasts Project Board.

Cllr Bradbury advised that a “mind map” – was being created to explain how harbour/ estuary/ Flood Board/ HMC etc are inter-connected. Cllr Beavan advised the meeting that there is a need for all the groups to discuss matters together.

(Cllr Bradbury also provided a draft of a “mind map” about Digital Towns Network and how all these projects are working together).

- c) *HMC Meeting/SAG meeting updates*– Cllr Flunder advised the meeting of the *report* from Royal Haskoning about estuary/harbour dredging. Key thing for the harbour mouth is risk to south wall. A rock break water could be the solution. Cost estimated at £11m and needs to consider the whole estuary. Blyth Estuary Group is looking at this.

There needs to be joined up thinking and information about where the money is going to come from. It is hoped that all the organisations can start to give clear direction.

Cllr Bradbury advised that HMC has good and bad ideas and wants to spend money that ESC do not have available.

Cllr Ladd suggested that if STC had got the harbour as some had requested, the matters above indicate what a complexity this would have been and the extent of funding required.

- d) *Christmas lights – feedback from community meetings* – Cllr Goldsmith advised that; at the latest meeting 14 people had attended (30 people at the first one). The project is being called “Light Up Southwold” A Facebook/Bank account set up. Looking at grants to apply for. Cllr Goldsmith is looking at public liability quotes and costs. The group is now focussing on fundraising events. 17<sup>th</sup> March there is a quiz at the Millennium Hall. Maximum 6 people per team. Adnams will provide the alcohol and a bar for this first event.

Cllr Ladd – date for switch on = 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Cllr Windell provided thanks to Cllr Ladd and the High Steward for helping the group be informed of necessary arrangements.

- d) *Station Road redevelopment* – Cllr Windell. *\*Some aspects might need to be discussed in agenda item 13 if the need arises.*

The meeting was advised that UKPN have finished their diversionary works. BT have started their works. Apologies from UKPN for the traffic issues at the weekend. Block/piling will start 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

It is thought that new power for development will be going in during May but request will be made that traffic control lights are not left up over weekends.

Carpets/finishes workshop being held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

9. **Finances including.**

a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for February 2023 (*circulated to members*).

**On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Jordan it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for payment for February 2023. All agreed.**

b) To receive report and recommendations of the Finance and Governance Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. Fin Rep 02.2023. *See recommendations in relation to Kilcock Toilets, and Teams calls licence.*

i) *Kilcock Toilets* - **It was noted that ESC policy on public toilets has changed from that of Waveney, and it does not now appear to be the policy to close such public facilities. In view of this, it was suggested that ESC be approached to maintain the Kilcock toilets, with no cost to the town, as part of their tourism offer, in the same way that they own and maintain the Pier, Harbour, and Ferry Road toilets. Recommend that Council take this forward with ESC.**

**On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Jeans it was agreed by all to APPROVE.**

ii) Teams call Licence

**Cost of an additional license to enable town coordinator to be added to online call system is £11.99 per month. It is recommended that a bolt on of one additional license be purchased, to negate need for town coordinator to use own phone for council business.**

**On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Jeans it was agreed by all to APPROVE.**

Donations Requests;

i) *Fridge Pantry £500.*

Cllr Jeans noted that the Town Co-Ordinator has been assisting, and that STC ought to be a joint partner on this project. Request that it is officially named as a joint project with Reydon and Southwold.

**On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was agreed by all to provide a donation of £500.**

ii) Southwold & Reydon Emergency Group - £758 requested to replenish the emergency boxes.

**On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Beavan it was agreed as an in principle sum. All agreed.**

10. **Election timetable** – see papers attached.

11. **Annual Parish Meeting** – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 at 6.30pm at the Cardinal Newman Hall.

12. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7.30pm.

13. **Exclusion of Public and Press if required during discussions:** Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was 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.

*Members of the public left the meeting at 8.45pm.*

*Cllr Beavan left the meeting prior to the vote on item 1*

1. ***Proposal for Town Council field*** – It was agreed by all to ask to meet ESC to discuss further.
2. ***Valuation of assets - 6 Strickland Place*** – See Conf report and Confid minutes. It was agreed to contact the tenant to commence discussion in line with the professional information provided. Agreed by a majority with one against.
3. ***Red Cross site.*** – See Conf report ‘other property matters’ . Information noted and it was agreed by all to carry out the suggestions in points 1 and 2 contained within the report.
4. ***Station Road Regeneration Project*** - See Conf report ‘other property matters’ and Confid minutes. Information noted and agreed by a majority with 2 abstain.
5. ***Water Tower site update*** - See Conf report ‘other property matters’ and Confid minutes . Information noted and agreed.
6. ***1 Strickland Place*** - See Conf report ‘other property matters’ . Information noted.