

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

PRESENT:	Councillor	S Flunder – Town Mayor
	“	Cllr Beavan
	“	P Davy
	“	Mrs V Gladwell
	“	Mrs P Goldsmith
	“	R Jarvis
	“	Dr J Miller
	“	M Palmer
	“	Mrs V Redington
	“	R Temple
	“	M Wells

Also present: The High Steward, The Town Clerk. SCC Cllr M Ladd.

1. a) **Apologies:**

*To note/approve apologies for absence.* Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sutton. Noted.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

a. *To receive any declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests regarding the agenda.*

All Councillors declared a disclosable pecuniary interest re 40A High Street.

Cllr Temple declared a disclosable pecuniary interest re The Red Cross Hut.

b. *To receive Declarations of Other Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Cllr

Goldsmith declared an interest in property matters in view of her employer.

c. *To receive Declarations of Non-Registerable Interests regarding the agenda.* Nil.

d. *To note the decision of the Town Clerk regarding requests for dispensations relating to this agenda.* Nil.

e) *To note to update the Register of Interests with changes as they occur.* Noted.

2. **Minutes:** (i) *To approve and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024.*

**On the proposal of Cllr Wells, seconded by Cllr Miller it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024. All agreed.**

4. **Public Section**

a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan.*

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

ESC Cllr Beavan – at their last meeting ESC added ecological emergency to climate emergency. Biodiversity net gain added to planning.

ESC cannot at present see the benefit from SCC devolution deal.

Reydon Copperwheat Avenue will go to reserved matters next month. Will be affordable homes and principal resident clause will apply.

ESC is still talking to SCC on the Fire Station site on behalf of Hastoe Housing.

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

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

SCC Cllr Ladd – devolution deal consultation to 26<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

SCC is not keen on directly elected leader part of devolution. There are though many advantages to the devolution deal - especially financial.

Final part of Gull Wing bridge has been installed. Will be largest rolling bascule bridge in the world.

SCC received £7m to roll out for additional electric vehicle chargers.

Library consultation received 400 replies of which Southwold had 63 replies. Tender process now starting. 85% of respondents = satisfied or very satisfied with the library service.

*Q re devolution*

If people are not in favour of a directly elected leader for the SCC devolution deal what is the alternative?

SCC Cllr Ladd – a directly elected leader is not supported by many therefore SCC are hoping that this is what the responses to the consultation will be saying so that it can be fed back to national government.

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).*

Nil.

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

Members were advised that having a quorum has been difficult for some of the committees – therefore matters cannot get progressed quickly. Planning needs a quorum every 2 weeks. The Mayor asked that members consider joining Leisure & Environment, and Planning cttee.

***Planning and Development Committee***

a) *To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024. No Recommendations. Noted and agreed.*

b) To consider the Town Council response to the following planning applications.

Cllr Temple explained the applications;

i) *DC/23/4599/FUL – Re-consultation – Single storey front extension, two storey side extension with carport, rear single storey kitchen extension, roof conversion and internal alterations, Churchill, 20 Hotson Road. No response now required.*

ii) *DC/24/0450/FUL – New front porch and bay window, side and rear two storey extensions and internal alterations, Churchill, 20 Hotson Road. A Design & Access statement has been provided and this is now a better application. No objections.*

iii) *DC/24/0785/FUL – Change of use from A1 shop with conditions to Class E, 40A High Street. No comments to be provided.*

iv) DC/24/0609/LBC – Listed Building Consent – Replacement, repair and improvement of windows to the front and rear elevations, 21 Park Lane. In view of the Conservation Officer response, it was suggested that STC support the application. Agreed by all.

v) DC/24/0826/FUL – First floor extension above the existing ground floor single storey extension, with no increase to the footprint, 20 Pier Avenue. Applications within a Conservation Area need to enhance the Conservation Area. In this application there is a new west facing window which will overlook people in the vicinity. Agree by all to support the ESC officers thoughts on this application.

vi) DC/24/0864/FUL – Repairs and minor alterations to balustrading to east and part north elevations, The Craighurst, 11-13 North Parade. The reasons it is required was noted. No Objections. Unanimous.

### Trees

- DC/24/0728/TCA – Proposal: 1 x Tamarisk (Tree) – Fell, Marlborough Court, Marlborough Road. Noted.
- DC/24/0913/TCA - 1 x Holly – Fell, Compass Point, Cumberland Road. Noted.

c) **Landlords Cttee** – To receive the report of the meeting of the Landlords Committee held 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024. *Recommendations in relation to property repairs, submission of planning applications, vacant properties.*  
The supporting paper was presented by Cllr Flunder.

**Recommendation - Flat 7 Hurren Terrace – Fire upgrade requirements for an HMO are considerable - a second quote is being obtained. Whilst this might be a longer-term ambition for the property it will take some time to take forward should Council wish to.**

**It is recommended therefore that in the short term the property be let under Option a) above – rent to be ascertained from NPS and agreed, and property then to be advertised for short term let both locally and through SCC Ukrainian refugees team who might have a family who would be interested.**

**At the same time a business case for an HMO to be worked through for the longer term.**

**Recommendation – Flat 7 Hurren Terrace. Proposed to accept by Cllr Gladwell, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. All agreed.**

Cllr Gladwell spoke about the need to make sure the gutters are cleared.

Flat above Little Gems – EPC improvements to be considered.

d) **Roads Cttee** – *No meeting held.*

*To note temporary closure of Southwold Footpath 007 for maintenance works.*

Footpath 007 – maintenance works on Walberswick side to be noted – these are now going to be done on a flexible basis.

6. **To receive reports from Working Groups (task and finish) Groups;**

a) **Leisure and Environment Cttee** – *To receive the notes of a working group meeting of the L and E Cttee held 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Recommendations – Play areas/ Town Sign/ stocks.*

*Recommendations*

**Stocks from Bartholomew Green** – The old stocks were deemed a hazard and have been removed and being held with Cooper and Denny who have assessed them and advise that new ones will need to be made as these are irreparable. Quote £2865.70. SCC Cllr Ladd has offered to fund £1k from his Locality Budget for 2024.2025. Recommend to proceed. STC to allocate £1865.70 from the L and E Budget to this project.

Agreed with 1 abstain.

**Play area repairs** – over the past 12 months one piece of play equip has been removed from Tibbys play area and the tunnels now need full repair. Cost £2493.17 agreed as an emergency repair.

Proposed Cllr Goldsmith, seconded Cllr Miller. Agreed by all.

**Town Sign repairs** – The Town Sign has been removed from Electricity Green due to the post and sign having rot which needs repair. Posts are on order and will be installed in due course. Quote received for the restoration of the Sign and making good - £750 including materials. Other quotes to be obtained. L and E request budget of £1k from the L and E Budget to select and proceed with project.

Proposed Cllr Goldsmith, seconded Cllr Miller. Agreed by all.

b) **NSIP working group.** To receive update from the NSIP working group.

*(Including Lionlink / Sizewell/Anglia One//Sealink, and North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project)*

Cllr Davy spoke re Lionlink latest announcements. Pressure groups is objecting to substation. Judicial review of substation will be known in due course. Cllr Davy suggested at some stage STC makes contact and gets information from these groups.

7. **Lionlink** – *To consider the draft Town Council response to the Lionlink consultation.*

There are 2 options for landfall – Walberswick or Reydon (Southwold). The EIA Scoping Report is over 700 pages. STC is a statutory consultee. NSIP working group has drafted a response for Southwold which is specific to Southwold (Reydon and Walberswick are doing their own). Council considered draft report. Statutory deadline is 4<sup>th</sup> April.

Cllr Gladwell advised that landowners have been contacted about the need for bird surveys to be completed.

Proposed by Cllr Temple, seconded by Cllr Wells to approve the draft response.

Unanimous. Copy to be sent to other parishes and to go onto website.

8. **To receive reports from the Town Council representatives on other bodies/organisations, of meetings attended and any training events 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 Wells.* Committee are considering the lessons learnt from last year. They noted that some High Street shops did not contribute much to the event.

b) *HMC/SAG/ Harbour Users – Including Vision Setting consultation - Cllr Beavan/ Cllr Gladwell.*

Cllr Beavan re HMC – see Harbour Vision consultation. Cllr Gladwell suggested that the consultation should have an option 5 and not that many were disappointed to learn that there is no longer a £11m budget for trailing arm. Cllr Beavan replied that it had been expected in as a grant and will hopefully be back in the budget soon.

Cllr Beavan advised that the harbour is being run by ESC and James Milnes is the new Manager. Discussion around fees charged by ESC in recharges.

Cllr Beavan advised that ESC can break down the recharges for anyone who wants to see them.

Members were advised that the Harbour Order consultation will also be out soon.

Sailing Club is holding an event at the end of June. Members were advised that STC has met the Sailing Club and Arts Festival group who will not now go for road closure on York Road but will try and direct parking to the car parks. Both groups are now working together and STC will be meeting with them again on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Harbour Vision – STC will require a working group to form a response - Cllr Davy/Cllr Jarvis/Cllr Goldsmith/ Cllr Palmer and Cllr Redington volunteered to consider the consultation and come back to council. Agreed by all.

c) *Southwold Walberswick Flood Board – including Potters Bridge – Cllr Beavan spoke re the arrangements to clear the road. Reed bed on Easton broad has the most bitterns in the country but it is becoming tidal. Thatchers are losing reeds from the broad. Natural England are designing a bund to go above the bridge. Real time water depth signs might be required. Flooding could happen again anytime.*

9. **Enterprise Hub** *to receive progress update from meetings with Project Board, construction team, and operators. \*\**

Project Board took place on Monday – robust meeting to ensure contractors keep to the required timescales. Due to lift installation with Stannah lifts scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – keys likely to be handed over 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024. CCF funding deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024 – letter going to Mixbrow to ensure they complete by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

Project Manager and Employers Agent will continue to monitor completion date.

Operator lease has been exchanged - waiting for completion of construction and the appropriate period thereafter for the tenant to take possession.

Hub project is on budget.

Hurren Terrace gable end works are being delayed until all the party wall agreements for the Hub works have been discharged.

Shop/Flat are being advertised. Discussion on how to assess applications. It was suggested that the Landlords cttee take this forward and meet applicants and consider business plans etc.

10. **Business meetings** *to note that the next meeting for businesses/traders is to take place on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – venue to be confirmed.*

Next one 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Spring met the leaders of the business groups yesterday to discuss the website.

11. **Town Marshes** – *drainage. To receive update.* Level of water has reduced and there is a big improvement in water levels. Health & safety executive have advised that there is a need for fencing either side of the footpath and the farmer is progressing this.
12. **Financial Matters**
  - a. *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Cttee – To receive report from meeting 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024.*  
*Recommendations include, policies, submittal of planning applications, donation requests,*  
Members noted that reserves will reduce due to projects starting.  
Skatepark has started.  
**Electric Vehicle Charging points have been purchased and await meter to be installed. It was suggested that Finance Committee be given delegated power to approve the final decision on fee to be charged.**  
**Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Miller. All agreed that delegated powers be given to the Finance Committee.**

### **Donations**

**Tennis Club has advised that their request to draw down their pledge of £5000 is now required – agreed by all to pay.**

**Old Hospital Canteen request – further information has been supplied as requested previously. The Canteen operates under a subsidiary limited company which include the Nursery. There is a community aspect which connects both of these entities as well as the library – with visitors to all using the Canteen as part of their visit. Finance Cttee propose that a £1000 donation be made to The Canteen for their request for audio sound proofing, due to the community benefit element that the nursery and library receive from the Canteen. Donation to come from allocation 2024.25.**

**Discussion about the proposal. Town Clerk to check request is still outstanding and been covered by other grant providers and return request to Council if it is still required.**

**Literary Festival have requested a donation of £1000 to increase marketing of the Literary Festival – split between £604 for the leaflets with the remainder being a contribution to the costs of delivery of the leaflets. Discussion re the accounts and request. It is not clear what reserves are held by the festival and what these are being used for.**

**It was agreed that any event which brings people to Southwold is good for the economy of Southwold. Finance Cttee proposed that STC supports the cost of printing of the leaflets for delivery and that these should include the logo of the Council. It was agreed to recommend that a donation of £604 therefore be made to the festival for this purpose and that the donation be allocated from the donations budget 2024.25.**

**Proposed by Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Temple to provide a donation of £604 as per the above recommendation. Agreed by all.**

### **Quotes**

**Planning applications: Casino new windows – Quote £800 to submit listed building application for replacement windows. Proposed by Cllr Goldsmith, seconded by Cllr Redington. Agreed by all to approve.**

**Red Cross planning application – Council has already confirmed approval of costs for pre planning at £13,500 whilst asking that the costs to get to full application be ascertained. These have been estimated at a further £13500. Discussion about costs. It was suggested that at this stage Council commit to the pre planning only and review once the planning response has been received. It was recommended that costs for pre planning only to be agreed at this stage. Agreed with 1 abstain.**

**‘Previous Mayor’ pin badges – other Councils provide their outgoing Mayor with a civic pin badge to honour their Mayoral tenure. The cost is in region of £16 per badge. In view of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of local Government and celebrations proposed in this regard for Charter Lunch, it was suggested that it would be appropriate for STC to honour previous Town Mayors with such a civic badge. 35 to be ordered for previous and future Mayors – civic budget to cover costs of approx. £560 to be proposed. Proposed by Cllr Redington, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith. All agreed.**

### **Policies**

**Reserves and investment policy – discussion around the policy which also includes a reserve statement in 5.2. It was felt that these should be 2 separate documents. Note also that reserves as a percentage of book valuation to be updated to 5% (from 3%). (Book value to be updated as part of the budget process in 2024).**

**Following discussion, it was suggested that 6 months of salaries be included within the calculations as well as 5% of book valuation in 2024 budgeting. Proposed by Cllr Redington, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed.**

**Internal Control – para 7.1 – change from ‘the Chair of the F and G cttee completes ....’ to ‘a member of the F and G cttee completes .....’ In addition, a separate list of the checks required will be attached to the policy. Proposed by Cllr Redington, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed.**

**Statement of Independence of internal auditor – the Council confirms that the internal auditor does not have involvement in or responsibility for the financial decision making, management, or control of the authority or for the financial controls and procedures. The internal auditor is not personally connected to members and does not provide the software for Council accounting. The Council thereby confirms the independence of the internal auditor. The letter of engagement sets out the responsibilities and roles of the internal auditor in which Council considers that the statutory requirements for internal audit are met. Proposed by Cllr Redington, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed.**

**Grants/ donation Policy – It was suggested that Council take out reference to a donation of £250 – and replace with ‘at the discretion of Council’. Proposed by Cllr Redington, seconded by Cllr Wells. All agreed.**

b. *Accounts for Payment - To receive the management accounts/bank reconciliation and balance sheet for March 2024.*

See attached.

**On the proposal of Cllr Jarvis, seconded by Cllr Wells it was agreed by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for March 2024. All agreed.**

c. *Investments – To receive update on investments and balances held. Received and noted.*

13. **Forthcoming Meetings/ Events for Council/Councillors**

2-day volunteering course CAS – Cllr Wells attending.  
Play area course – Cllr Palmer attending.

14. **Town Mayor updates including.**

a) *Events attended;*

Commonwealth Day 2024.

Suffolk Justice Service Choral Evensong – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

b) *Upcoming engagements.*

Annual Town Meeting Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Official Opening of Southwold Pier/interview Radio Suffolk – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Lions 50<sup>th</sup> Charter Anniversary Dinner – Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

c) *Town Mayor volunteering project – verbal update.*

15. **Consultations for council and individual consideration**

- Street Trading Policy – consultation extended to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
- Lionlink consultation to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 - Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping for the LionLink Multipurpose Interconnector Project – see above.
- Suffolk County Council Devolution Consultation to May 2024 – draft response to be sent by 26<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
- Southwold Harbour Vision Consultation awaited. See above.

16. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7.30pm

**\*\*Note: Discussions above may need to be considered as confidential as appropriate and dealt with in the agenda item 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 will 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.

*Cllr Goldsmith did not take part in this discussion.*

- *Property/ legal updates if any.*



To consider, and if agreed approve basis of property marketing for 1 Strickland Place - 250-year lease and principal resident clause covenant to be included in lease. Quotes from agents received.

Agreed by all to market through Durrants.

*Cllr Goldsmith returned for the next discussion.*

Fire and Police Station Site. Agreed by all to continue with research on these sites.

- *H R Updates* – To consider and if agreed approve recommendation of the Employment working Group. *See report from meeting 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024*  
**It is proposed that the admin asst rate of pay be increased to LC1 Scale 17 wef 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Agreed by all.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed .....

Dated .....