

# **Southwold Town Mayor's report**

including Town Council meeting on March 26th 2019

The Council meeting on March 26th was attended by 10 members of the public.

## **Neighbourhood Plan**

The Neighbourhood Plan is being revised in light of the feedback from the consultation. It will then go out for the final formal consultation of stakeholders and agencies, prior to submission to the District Council, who will submit it to the Examiner. The final referendum on the Plan should take place towards the end of 2019.

## **Leisure and Environment**

A report was given of an inspection of the Buss Creek marshes (west of the old railway line) with representatives of Natural England and the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Parts of the marsh are evolving into a rather special nature reserve area and we saw abundant lapwings and redshanks. We discussed how to enhance and preserve this area and felt this could be done without affecting the opportunity for summer grazing.

The status of the two cannons whose carriages are awaiting refurbishment at Blackshore was discussed. The Town Clerk will chase up the order for these and also ask that the cannons be stored carefully. When this work is complete all the Town's cannons will have been repaired or refurbished in the past few years.

It was agreed that the bus shelter on Mights Road by the BT exchange will be replaced. We will also consult locally about whether a second shelter is needed on the Fire Station side of the road, perhaps near the Millenium Car Park.

## **Southwold Harbour**

A brief report of the historic joint meeting of Southwold Town Council and the Waveney District Council cabinet was given. Both Councils voted unanimously to set up a Harbour Management Committee, with the safeguards that had been asked for by Southwold Town Council and other local organisations.

## **Town Ball**

The Town Mayor's Spring Ball seems to have been a success and enjoyed by all. The Golf Club's catering and the Austin Beats Band were excellent. Thanks to the generous donations of prizes by the businesses and shops of the Town, and the enthusiastic bidding of the attendees, the Silent Auction raised over £2000 for the Mayor's charities, the Southwold and Reydon Recreational Development Council and the Mayor's Science Outreach Project.

There will be a 'Town Mayor's Sports Day' event at the Pavilion on Monday May 6<sup>th</sup>, 11am-3pm, with many different sports represented. Children and young people will be especially welcome to try their hand at different sports.

As this was probably the last meeting of the Council before the May 2<sup>nd</sup> elections, the Mayor thanked Councillors for all their work over the past four years, and for their support during the current year. He also thanked the public for their attendance, which as always was much appreciated by Councillors.

## **Town Clerk's Grading and pay**

In the confidential section of the agenda, the Personnel Committee reported recommendations on the grading and pay of the Town Clerk. This had not been reviewed for over 10 years. Town clerks are remunerated on a pay scale defined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, with criteria defined for the different grades. Town clerks in towns in this region are generally on grade 3 or 4, depending on a wide range of criteria, including numbers of committees and working groups, number of staff supervised, and the total budget of the Council, as well as other special circumstances. Southwold is small in terms of population compared with local market towns, but has 1.4 million tourist visits per year, who generate their own needs and requirements. In terms of total budget, Southwold is on the large side, only slightly smaller than Sudbury, Lowestoft and Haverhill Town Councils, and 2.4 times larger than Woodbridge, and 3.6 times larger than Beccles. A special circumstance in Southwold is that the Town Clerk manages the Council's 28 properties, with a portfolio value in excess of £10m. The Personnel Committee found that on balance the Town Clerk's responsibilities tilted towards grade 4, and they therefore recommended a regrading to the bottom spine point of grade 4. This was agreed by Councillors by a vote of 10-1.

**Cllr Michael Rowan-Robinson**  
**(Southwold Town Mayor)**