

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.30pm on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

PRESENT:	Councillor	I Bradbury – Town Mayor
	“	Ms E A Betts
	“	S Flunder
	“	Mrs J Jeans
	“	M Ladd
	“	M Rowan -Robinson
	“	S Tobin
	“	Mrs M C Tucker
	“	J A Windell

Also present; 20 members of the public, and the Town Clerk, and High Steward.

1. **Apologies:** *To receive apologies for absence.*  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Beavan, Cllr Goldsmith and 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 their Register of Interest online.
3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019.  
**On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Tobin it was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019.**

Matters arising; query was raised with regards to a statement contained in the minutes – see item 6 for details.

4. **Public Forum**
  - a) *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).*

Question was raised with regards to the Southwold Development Team as to whether there was a business plan for this element of the project and what their objectives would be.

Query was raised with regards to the costs detailed within the business plan and whether these were reasonable. Specific attention was brought to the sums allocated for contamination of the site, build costs, and for existing tenants. The design of the building was not considered appropriate for the area.

Resident congratulated the Town Council/ consultant for the presentation provided at the public meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November but felt that the question and answer session had not worked as well.

Resident advised that they applaud any initiative which improved communication about the work of the Town Council and asked that it be pro-active rather than passive. It was suggested that a task and finish group be set up to consider how best to achieve this and how to inform public of projects from start to finish, and gain feedback along the way. Mention was made that this might be through the website. Resident advised that they had not received the recent Town Flyer and hoped that the redevelopment project would be paused for a while.

The Town Mayor advised that a Town Flyer has been published which includes a page at the back asking for the details of those who might wish to receive regular communications from the Town Council.

*Public participation closed.*

5. **5. Station Yard Redevelopment Project - immediate next steps**

a) *Communication strategy – to consider the appropriate methods for continuing communication with stakeholders about the project, prior to the appointment of a project manager.*

Discussion took place regarding general communications from the Town Council, as well as specific communication re the Station Yard redevelopment project.

It was suggested that a committee, including members of the public, could be set up for the future. Members agreed that having any additional expert help from members of the public would be much appreciated – especially with the website.

Re website - mention was made that this had been greatly improved over the past year but that there were still further improvements that could be made. The webmaster also undertakes the website for Framlingham, and it is hoped that in time, the Town Council site could become as user friendly as that of Framlingham.

It was noted that as the redevelopment project had been discussed for over 2.5 years, and the planning application had been approved in January 2019, redevelopment should not have been a complete surprise. It was acknowledged by members that comms can always be improved and that it is easy to forget that others do not know as much about projects as the councillors who are engrossed in it all the time.

Use of social media was discussed. It was felt that it was important to understand how different audiences access information and to understand how to reach out to them.

The possibility of a further public meeting was mentioned – a member suggested that it would not be helpful to have another meeting such as the one on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

Members were reminded that the draft Town Council Strategy for 2019 -2023 does include a comms strategy, which had not been included in the previous Strategy document. Impact of comms on resources/ time/cost was highlighted – and the costs to improve/establish a new website would need to be ascertained and then considered, if this was felt to be required.

It was also suggested that condensed notes of each Town Council meeting could be drafted within 24 hours of the meeting having been held, to then put out into the public domain.

The Town Mayor referred to the Town Flyer, a new style newsletter which has been compiled with help from members of the public, which has been delivered to every house in Southwold and which offers a page at the back which the public can complete and return to be kept updated. Mailchimp was mentioned as a means of regular communication.

Front window at Town Hall, as well as section in Tardis at Electricity Green were mentioned as being available for use to display information.

It was agreed by all to ask members of the public present at the meeting for feedback re the comms discussions above;

Mention was made by a member of the public that if ‘Southwold’ was put into Google, the Town Council website did not appear.

A member of the public referred to an e mail to which they were awaiting a response. It was acknowledged that in view of the volume being received at present these are taking longer than usual to respond to.

A member of the public suggested that information put out by the Town Council should be interesting and amusing.

Members of the public in the audience were then asked if they would consider assisting with future deliveries of the Town Flyer.

- b) *To receive verbal update from Coastal Community Team regarding; Enterprise Development Team roles, and the recruitment of the Enterprise Development Manager.*

Cllr Ladd provided background information relating to the Coastal Community Team, and what it was set up to achieve. The CCT is led by a steering group of members from the community including the councils of both Southwold and Reydon, and the Southwold and Reydon Society, as well as local businesses.

Cllr Ladd advised that a CCT meeting had been held today which received a presentation regarding the possible projects for which funding might be applied for at the boating lake. Total wish list totals £1.2m some of which might be suitable for funding applications.

Cllr Ladd advised that the job advert for the Enterprise Development Manager would be going out, with interviews proposed for the week commencing 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019. One of the KPI's for the role will be to achieve external funding for continuation of the role after the full funding ceases.

Cllr Ladd advised that the CCT Economic Summary has enabled a significant amount of external funding to be brought into the town including; £50k parking project, £15k for boating lake feasibility, £35k for the Arts Centre, £995k for the Enterprise Hub and 3 jobs.

Thanks were extended to the CCT for all their hard work in this respect.

- c) *Project Manager – to set up a group to define the brief for the appointment of a project manager, and to report back to the next full council meeting on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019.*

It was suggested that a Task and Finish Group be created to define the role/ job description of the project manager for the Enterprise Hub scheme.

It was agreed by all that Cllrs Tobin, Windell and Ladd would consider this further and report back to the next meeting of the Town Council.

- d) *Matters raised at presentation of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019, previously unidentified, which may also need to be included within the forward Project Management Plan.*

The following matters were discussed by members as below;

*Contamination of the site* – the meeting was advised that initial information has been sought as required by the application process and the planning application, but further information will be required. Members noted that as Town Council is landlord of the site, contamination issues will need further investigation by the Town Council now anyway – regardless of the project itself - to include both below ground, and above ground. Resulting information will then need to be incorporated into a Demolition Plan for the project itself.

*Planning* – those present were reminded that the planning application was approved Jan 2019. Subsequent changes of use may need permission, and this will be factored into timescales.

*Existing tenants* - Members noted that discussions are ongoing and that any alternative site for a garage will need to be agreed by ESC planning and ESC planning policy team. The Chair of the Planning cttee, Cllr Jeans, confirmed that the cttee will be looking at this further. The Chair of Landlords cttee, Cllr Windell, advised that discussions with tenants will continue, including all those along Hurren Terrace who are not affected by the redevelopment but are close to the site.

*Funding Gap* – This will need to be decided by full council. Budget setting meetings for council will commence Dec 2019/ Jan 2020.

*Design* – public comments were noted and will be considered to see if aspects could be altered in any way.

*Public meeting microphones* – Cllr Bradbury advised that the microphones at the meeting on Monday had had to be borrowed at the last minute as there were none available at the hall. Cllr Bradbury suggested that it might be appropriate for the Town Council to have its own roving microphones, speakers, sound system.

*Audience* – the Town Council has received e mails and communication from some members of the public who were present at the public meeting, who advised that they did not feel able, at the time, to speak in support of the whole scheme, in view of the atmosphere of the meeting.

*Lessons learnt* – Cllr Tucker advised that the Town Council would, as per the Strategy document, learn from the experience.

6. a) *Matters arising from the minutes;*

Cllr Flunder asked whether the statement in the minutes of 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019 regarding the transfer of the CCT funds was correct. The Town Clerk advised that the statement had been correct at the time that it was made at the last meeting, but that clarity had been sought since the last council meeting and it has been confirmed that the funding would now be sent to ESC, rather than to STC. Cllr Ladd confirmed that there is a surprising lack of clarity on some of the funding/ draw down information from the funders – and ESC Economic Development Team will seek to gain further information in this regard, to avoid such misunderstandings as above.

6b) *Other business*

The Town Council has been approached by BT regarding the withdrawal from commission of the pay phone on Pier Ave, (by the putting green). It was agreed by all that in view of lack of usage, there was no reason to object to the decommissioning. The Council then considered whether it would wish to apply for the phone box to be donated to the community for £1 if it was subsequently decommissioned. Agreed by all.

6c) Date of next Town Council Meeting: Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30pm.

Signed .....

Dated.....