

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at 7.00pm on Tuesday 25th February 2020

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

Also present; 7 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 M Tucker.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
 - a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.*
There were no Declarations of Personal Interest.
 - 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 Meeting of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 18th February 2020
On the proposal of Cllr Ladd, seconded by Cllr Windell it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18th February 2020.

Matters arising – discussion took place regarding the resolution made at the end of the meeting and the interpretation of the word ‘aspects.’

Cllr Ladd was asked to confirm the intended meaning as contained within the proposal, and explained that ‘aspects’ could mean such things as considering possible uses for the new buildings at the front of Blyth Road, and/ or considering the Clancy’s part of the build. Various councillors advised that they had assumed that ‘aspects’ referred to ‘usage’ of the building. Cllr Windell confirmed that the agreed planning application has approval for ‘mixed use’.

Discussion continued about potential usage. Cllr Beavan advised that in his view ‘aspect’ could mean retaining Clancy’s in its present premises and keeping a garage. Cllr Flunder advised that in his view ‘aspect’ was a conciliatory motion that could refer to the design as well. Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that in his view ‘aspects’ was usage – not a change of design nor a completely new planning application.

Cllr Ladd reflected that on 18th February the council could have rejected the alternative proposal for Station Yard redevelopment, but instead chose to consider ‘aspects’ of it, which would give the opportunity to discuss various options arising from the alternative proposal to see if they might be possible.

Cllr Windell advised that to put in a garage at the site would require a new planning application and this in itself would delay matters, and a delayed start would have the potential to create the loss of the CCF monies.

The Chair advised that there would be further consideration over the next few days, in line with the resolution, and that another Town Council meeting would be held in early March.

4. **Public Forum**

- a) *To receive a report from Waveney District Ward Councillors; Cllr D Beavan.
The Ward councillor will then take questions from councillors and electors.*

ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that there would be a 3% rise in the council tax but that there would not be any severe cuts.

Cllr Beavan advised that it has been established that there are approx. 354 holiday let premises in the town. The meeting was advised that the police station planning application may go to planning cttee on 10th March 2020.

Rural Mobility Fund – Cllr Beavan advised that he is trying to get ESC and SCC interested in creating a connection to Darsham and applying for a money for a pilot project – expressions of interest close in April 2020.

Questions from councillors

ESC Ward Cllr Beavan was asked about the 50% pay rise that ESC councillors unanimously resolved to approve for themselves. Cllr Beavan advised the meeting that there were now less ESC councillors so the overall funding budget required would not increase. However, with less councillors, those remaining had an increased workload and it was felt that it was important to encourage a range of people to stand as a councillor, including younger people who may need the higher monetary incentive. Question was raised to Cllr Beavan about the absence of information of this matter on social media and Cllr Beavan explained that it had not been a specific campaign.

Questions from the public

A member of the public asked about the monetary sums paid to ESC ward councillors. Cllr Beavan advised that the 50% increase would take ESC ward councillors payments to approx. £7000 p.a.

b) *To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor M Ladd including SCC response to application relating to East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two Offshore Windfarms.*

The ward councillor will then take questions from councillors and electors.

SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that the SCC council tax rise would be 2% and 2% for social care.

Cllr Ladd advised that there will be a Suffolk 20/20 fund relating to climate emergency.

The SCC climate emergency panel are looking into the street lighting – and the SCC Cabinet has agreed to invest in LED street lighting for any remaining lights that have not yet been converted (approx. 43,000 lights).

Questions from councillors

Cllr Windell thanked Cllr Ladd for the trees planted along the A12 by the River Blyth.

Cllr Ladd advised that SCC Cllr R Smith had been keen for this to happen and had used his highways and locality budget to enable this to happen.

Cllr Tobin asked for an update on Potters Bridge. Cllr Ladd advised that there was a meeting being set up with all the partners present i.e. SCC/ ESC/ EA to try and come up with a longer term plan to resolve the issues.

Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that he had written to SCC and requested that the lights be capped at the top to prevent light pollution into the night sky. SCC had confirmed that they will do this.

Questions from public

A member of the public asked whether they would be able to attend the meeting regarding Potters Bridge. Cllr Ladd advised that he would let them personally know the date and time of the meeting.

A member of the public asked about the state of the roads especially the extent of potholes. Cllr Ladd advised that the response from Kier is much better now and that the online reporting tool is working better. Kier are now looking at retarmacing parts of roads, instead of doing individual potholes which may be close to one another.

A member of the public advised that they reported individual potholes on the reporting tool but that Kier still send someone to look at them first rather than repairing them straight away.

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 whether the town council consultant had set up yet the project plan timescales for the Enterprise Hub and the CCF grant. The Chairman advised that the consultant is doing work for the town council on this.

Public participation closed.

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

- a) To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committees meeting held on Tuesday 28th January 2020, Tuesday 4th February 2020, and Tuesday 18th February 2020. **(See yellow papers)**. *No recommendations.*
- b) To receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee on any further planning/development matters to be brought to the attention of the Council including police station site.
Cllr Jeans advised that the ‘community policy’ may apply to the police station site – this will be decided upon by ESC planning officer Philip Ridley. Cllr Jeans also advised that a meeting had been held with Walberswick P C to listen to their issues on planning which seem to relate to concerns over ESC decision making/ communication.
- c) To receive written reports from the Leisure and Environment Committee meeting. *No meeting held.*
- d) To receive the written report of the Landlords Committee meeting REP LL 2.2020 held on Wednesday 12th February 2020. **(see lilac papers)**.
Cllr Windell updated the meeting on the works that have been booked in/ taking place. The meeting was advised that the structural repair report on the Casino is awaited.
Cllr Windell advised the meeting that 2 quotes had been received for repairs to the doors in the Chamber. Quote A £1752. Quote B £1763. On the recommendation of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Jordan it was RESOLVED unanimously to approve Quote A.

Strickland Place properties – several of the properties have lost roof tiles in the storms. Emergency repairs will cost in the region of £1000. On the recommendation of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was RESOLVED by all to approve the expenditure as an emergency measure. No further quotes to be requested as works are urgent.

Discussion as to whether these would be an insurance claim – the clerk advised that in view of the excess that may need to be paid and the potential loading of the premium following any claim, it might be appropriate not to claim.

- e) To receive the written report of the Highways and Footpaths cttee – *no meeting held.*
- f) To receive verbal report of harbour jt cttee – next jt cttee meeting Monday 3rd February 2020 at 2pm at Stella Peskett Hall.
Cllr Windell advised that it had been a good meeting. Ashford’s were present and their recommendations had been passed i.e. that the independent members of the management cttee will be selected according to skillset from a panel which will include the Town Council.
Cllr Flunder advised that the skillset selection will also apply to the ESC members of the management cttee and that the members of the cttee must work for the benefit of the harbour and not for individual agendas. However, it was noted that since the meeting there has been no update but some of the stakeholder groups had requested an update and a timeline from ESC.

Cllr Tobin asked for confirmation that there will be a clause to prevent a sale by ESC.

Cllr Windell advised that there will be a Memorandum of Understanding and this will be included in this document.

Cllr Beavan advised that the 1933 Order will need to be amended and that the ESC representatives on the management cttee do not all have to be cabinet members/ councillors.

Cllr Rowan Robinson asked whether the Town Council will have any representation on the management cttee - Cllr Windell advised that councillors with the required skillsets could apply but that in view of the Harbour Revision Order that is required it is not acceptable for all of the cttee to be elected members – hence the need for an advisory panel with whom the management cttee will have a statutory duty to liaise.

Cllr Ladd confirmed that this will be a Strategic Board – hence the need for particular skills.

6. **To receive reports from Working Groups/Task and Finish Groups.**

a) *Neighbourhood Plan Task and Finish Group – to receive verbal update from Chair of the Task and Finish Group.*

Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that the Regulation 14 consultation comments are now being considered and revisions will then be incorporated in the Plan. This will be published shortly along with the Consultation Statement.

Cllr Jeans advised that the holiday lets research had revealed that there are 74 extra holiday lets in 2020 than there were in 2016 – many of which are conversions of use from residential. 80% of the holiday lets do not have off street parking and some properties now have up to 14 people staying in them.

b) *Parking Management Task and Finish working group. No meeting held.*

Cllr Flunder requested that electric charging point be considered as the town is lacking these and hence falling behind other towns and tourism may suffer. It was suggested that the Millennium Car park consider installing some as they develop their new parking facilities.

c) *Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group – no meeting held.*

7. **To consider the Town Council priority projects for 2020 and the action required to take them forward.**

The Chairman advised the meeting of those priorities within the Town Strategy that are designated at present for consideration by full council, as opposed to individual committees.

Discussion took place regarding parking and the impending change to Civil Parking Enforcement and the effect that this would have on the town. Cllr Windell advised that the PCSO is concerned about its effect on a practical basis especially with regards to carers/ lifeboat crew having access to their vehicles as at present. It would appear that the instructions being provided under Civil Parking Enforcement will mean that the East Suffolk Council parking officials will not have any authority to react to local circumstances. The Chairman advised that the Town Council has placed articles in the local publications, on its website, and at Town Hall advising of the change in enforcement and highlighting the SCC FAQ and the responses.

It is expected that there will be many complaints about the lack of flexibility of the new system once it has been introduced by ESC on 6th April.

Cllr Beavan advised that residents parking will be required as part of this process and that there are concerns that the mobile bank will not be able to park on the High Street where it does at present.

Cllr Ladd advised that council is working through the priorities. With reference to the Town Development Manager the second interviews for this role will be taking place tomorrow with an appointment to hopefully commence on 1st April.

Cllr Jeans suggested that the main priority to focus on initially will be that relating to expanding the Town Council rental portfolio and suggested that properties such as those as Corporation Cottages would be ideal. Discussion about whether ESC is still selling these or whether they had all been sold. Cllr Beavan to find out more information.

8. **Camping Field Ferry Road**

Cllr Beavan advised that the Town Council had written to ESC and that he is chasing the matter with ESC.

ESC appear to be stating that the matter will now be for the Harbour Management Cttee to decide upon.

Cllr Windell advised the meeting of the history behind these discussions and the legal registrations that have been placed on the various parts of the lands.

Cllr Bradbury advised that the matter is not connected with the Harbour Management Cttee nor with the caravan site.

Cllr Windell, Cllr Bradbury and Cllr Beavan to continue discussions with ESC on this matter.

9. **Asset of Community Value – to consider nomination of Scout Hut.**

Cllr Beavan asked whether the Town Council could consider nominating the Scout Hut as an Asset of Community Value.

Discussion took place regarding the information required and the viable alternative uses that the application could consider for the site.

Cllr Jeans advised that an alternative viable community use had been stated in the planning application response for the police station site, and as such that may be a possible viable use for the Scout Hut if the police station site planning application is accepted for housing as being requested by the Police Authority.

On the proposal of Cllr Beavan, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was RESOLVED unanimously that Cllr Jeans explore the matter of nominating the Scout Hut as an Asset of Community Value and report back to a future meeting. This to include discussing the situation with the Scouts. All agreed.

10. **Financial Matters** (see cream papers).

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

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Windell it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Accounts for Payment for February 2020.

b) *To receive written report of Finance and Governance Meeting held Wednesday 12th February 2020 Fin REP 02.20. Recommendations relating to; a) PCSO, b) pre-paid cards, c) Complaints Policy and Sickness Policy*

- a) PCSO – Service Level Agreement expires March 2021. Discussion took place regarding the role of the PCSO post CPE and whether there was a need to retain the PCSO once parking enforcement transfers to East Suffolk Council on 6th April.

Cllr Tobin advised that the PCSO undertakes many initiatives other than parking, and that the loss of parking enforcement duties would mean that the PCSO could concentrate on the wider community initiatives. Cllr Windell confirmed that the PCSO undertakes many community visits and that he would be very keen to do more of these once he has the available time to do so.

Cllr Ladd advised that the PCSO is also used by other parts of the police authority to undertake local knowledge research, such as Border Force when there have been issues at the Harbour, and Drugs squad when there have been issues related to drugs within the town.

Cllr Rowan Robinson asked whether ESC would need any additional resource to assist with parking enforcement. Cllr Ladd advised that the PCSO will be able to assist with traffic management, but that ESC will be fully responsible for parking enforcement. ESC will need to ensure that they have the correct level of resources available throughout the year to service the needs of all towns and parishes, and especially tourist towns such as Southwold and Aldeburgh in the summer months. Concern was expressed that ESC have underestimated the level of resource that Southwold will require during the summer – Cllr Beavan to take this matter up with ESC.

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Windell it was unanimously RESOLVED that; a) Southwold Town Council continues funding the role of the PCSO until expiry of the SLA (31.03.2021) and b) That Southwold Town Council works with the Suffolk Police Authority to amend the PCSO priorities set out within the SLA to include other initiatives after CPE. These initiatives to be reviewed after 6 months.

Cllr Windell asked that council also consider the ongoing need for a PCSO in 2021 once the SLA expires - such discussions to be held autumn 2020.

- b) Pre-paid cards

On the proposal of Cllr Betts seconded by Cllr Windell it was RESOLVED to approve that one pre-paid card be made available to the staff for purchases requiring payment by card such as online purchases, and that the card have a prepaid sum of £200 allocated to it. Agreed by all.

- c) Sickness Policy and Complaints Policy

Revised Nalc Sickness policy had been circulated. No alterations to the Complaints Policy.

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Tobin, it was RESOLVED by all to a) approve to adopt the revised Sickness Policy, and b) to readopt the existing Complaints Policy and to review this again in 24 months.

Cllr Ladd asked to draw members attention to the section in the report relating to the shuttle bus. Cllr Ladd advised that the Finance and Governance cttee will be considering this service in respect of usage and cost and will bring the matter back to council at a future meeting.

Cllr Bradbury advised that the geography field trip pupils need to travel from Darsham to Southwold on a regular basis but that the shuttle bus cannot presently accommodate them as the shuttle service is a regulated service and no private hire licence is held.

11. **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) BEP – Cllr Rowan Robinson – no meeting has taken place.
- b) Christmas Lights – no update.
- c) Harbour Users – Cllr Jordan advised that she had attended her first meeting and that most of the discussions had been about the Harbour management cttee.

12. **To receive update from Town Mayor of events attended/ matters to report including:**

Events attended.

Southwold Arts Festival Launch – 17th February 2020

East Suffolk Community Partnership - 19th February 2020

Future Events

Commonwealth Day Flag Raising – 9th March 2020.

Cllr Bradbury advised that the Community Partnership meeting had concentrated on ‘young people’ and had not discussed the other priorities of transport and loneliness. Cllr Ladd advised that as Carlton Colville is the biggest town/ parish within the community partnership area, the discussions had seemed to concentrate on the matters of concern to them and that the £10k funding is likely to be around projects for young people. Cllr Beavan advised that for Southwold it may be appropriate to consider the improvement of the facility of the skatepark at the Klondyke as part of the project. Cllr Beavan advised that the issue of rural transport is likely to be considered at a higher level.

13. **Town Mayor organisations - 2019/20.**

To receive details of the events specifically being held to support the Town Mayor’s Spring Ball – 28th March 2020.

The Town Mayor advised that the Spring Ball will not be going ahead on this date and apologised to the chosen charities for the cancellation.

14. **Urgent Business:** to act upon any matter of a non-financial urgency, within the meaning of the Standing Orders, which may be brought to the attention of the Town Council with the consent of the Town Mayor previously obtained.

Cllr Funder advised that the windfarm legal process has now started and that the first meeting is on 24th March 2020. There are separate processes for each scheme, and each have a 6 month term. Concern had been highlighted about the substation at Friston and Cllr Flunder reminded council that it will need to make the necessary representations at the appropriate stages. Cllr Flunder will attend some of the meetings and will keep the town council appraised of the matters requiring consideration and the due dates. Cllr Flunder and Cllr Bradbury are discussing the issues with Reydon Parish Council.

Discussion took place about the various stakeholders and how often they liaise – Cllr Ladd advised that ‘Suffolk Energy Coast Board’ consists of all of the stakeholders and that they meet on a quarterly basis chaired by the MP.

15. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 10th March 2020.

On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Betts it was agreed by all to suspend standing orders and to continue the meeting in excess of the 2 hours.

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 - See confidential Landlords Legal sub cttee report and recommendations
Rep Legal sub cttee L2/2020. Recommendations relating to leases/ rents on various town council properties.

- a) ***Leases/Rents/ empty properties - Strickland Place properties - On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was unanimously RESOLVED to adopt an overall strategy for the Strickland Place Properties in respect of retention/ maintenance/potential sale/potential alterations. Further legal and professional advice to be sought for the way forward/ options on each to enable an overall strategy to be formalised.***
- b) ***Tenders - Nil***
- c) ***To consider Professional Legal advice relating to Station Yard redevelopment. A motion was received requesting delay of the enactment of the recommendation contained in Rep Legal L2/2020 for a period of 2 weeks. Cllr Beavan left the meeting. The motion fell - 2 in favour, 7 against, and 1 abstain. It was RESOLVED by a majority of 8 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstain to Approve the recommendation contained in Rep Legal sub cttee L2/2020.***

Signed

Dated.....