

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held on Tuesday 5th May 2020 at 3pm via Zoom

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

Also present; 6 members of the public, the Town Clerk, and Council administrative asst.

Before the meeting started members paid their respects to Cllr Tucker who had passed away since the last Town Council meeting. Thoughts were sent to all of her family and friends at this time.

RESPONSE TO COVID 19 AGENDA

1. **Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of interest:**

a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.*

Cllr Rowan-Robinson declared a personal interest in matters relating to the Arts Centre.

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 complete a Register of Interest online.

3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 10th March 2020.

On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Betts it was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of 10th March 2020.

Public participation – a member of the public asked about the issues that had been reported about track bikes being used on the Common – this has been reported to the police.

A member of the public asked about progress in relation to fencing around some of the lower parts of the marshes – this is being dealt with by the L and E Cttee.

4. **Covid 19 response**

Report from ESC - Ward Cllr Beavan – Cllr Beavan advised that green bin collections will start from 25th May 2020.

Report from SCC - Ward Cllr Ladd - Cllr Ladd advised that Covid 19 will have a significant impact on the SCC budget.

To date the county has dispatched significant PPE including 250,000 pairs of gloves, 170,000 aprons.

6000 masks 12500 gloves and 10000 aprons are being used per day.

County Highways have been able to undertake many more repairs as the roads have been less busy.

The County Council are now having meetings online.

Report from Southwold and Reydon Covid 19 community group – Cllr Bradbury thanked the community for coming together so well to help others in the community. Thanks were extended to ESC, SCC, and the VHC for their contributions. Cllr Tobin advised that the food store was working well – 5 deliveries have been made to people in need over the past 7 days. The Co-Op are taking in food from people who are willing to donate to the food store and thanks were extended to them. Members were advised that the community group continues to meet weekly to discuss any new issues as they occur.

Report from Town Council on both local and Council implications – Cllr Bradbury advised that the Town Council had adapted well to the new Local Government measures and thanked all Councillors for adapting so well to online meetings. This has enabled meetings to continue and the public are able to attend.

5. **To receive outstanding Cttee reports and recommendations**

Landlords Cttee report - March 2020 – Noted.

Cllr Windell advised that the planning application for the alterations to the flat at 21 Market Place has been submitted. Works are being scoped for 7 Hurren Terrace but there is still no electricity at this premises and it is proving difficult to get UK Power Networks to attend at this time. Cllr Jordan advised that many builders are now seeking work so it should therefore be possible for works to be carried out quicker, especially on empty properties.

Planning Cttee reports - March and April 2020 – noted.

Cllr Jeans advised that planning applications continue to be received and some of these have caused concerns. Cllr Jeans advised that lessons have been learnt from the application in North Road which should help to achieve better results for the town.

Cllr Ladd advised that the lack of enforcement was becoming an issue on some building schemes – example given of a property on Pier Ave which appears to have works being carried out in excess of the planning application. Cllr Beavan was asked to take the matter up with ESC.

L and E Cttee report - April 2020.

Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that many of the L and E projects can still progress as they are outdoors and can be completed by adhering to social distancing.

Cutting of Alexander - help has been provided by volunteers and the L and E Cttee has allocated a sum of up to £2k to enable the cutting of Alexander across the town to be progressed.

Footpath by Bailey Bridge – Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that as per the report, the Cttee are looking into options for the fencing to enhance some of the marsh area, including the area by the Flash. The work on the dykes that has taken place should help to drain areas such as the allotments and Millennium field.

Cllr Jeans suggested that the project on the fencing should have a target date for completion by February 2021 i.e. prior to the nesting season. It was agreed that L and E would adopt this timescale.

Cutting of grass on the greens. Norse has advised that it will not be cutting at the present time in view of resources being diverted to Covid 19 duties. It was recommended that the Town Council agree to have one cut of these areas take place immediately to ensure that they are kept tidy and to help for when Norse return to cutting. Cost of £895 to be considered.

On the proposal of Cllr Flunder, seconded by Cllr Rowan Robinson, it was agreed by all that the Town Council would cover cost of up to £895 for one cut of the greens. Town Clerk to liaise with Kerry Blair at ESC.

6. **To receive reports and recommendations from Finance and Governance cttee**

- To receive and confirm Accounts for Payment for April 2020 (*circulated to Members*). **On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Goldsmith it was RESOLVED by all to approve the accounts for payment for April 2020.**
- **To receive outstanding cttee report and recommendations March 2020.**

Quotes for Council grounds works – 3 quotes had been received for the grounds works required by the Town Council as set out in the report.

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Windell, it was approved by all that Quote C be accepted.

Quotes for pavement cleaning -

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Windell it was agreed by all that the quote for £660 be accepted for the cleaning of pavements outside Council retail properties. Clerk to ensure that Bank Alley is included at the same time.

Delegated authority provided to the Finance and Governance Cttee in June 2019 to spread max £800k balances across other accounts and bonds. The CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund is open to all public sector investors and invests in around 30 AAA rated banks and institutions and is acceptable within the Investment Policy. CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund has been opened with initial investment of £300,000. Further £300k to be deposited, if appropriate, once considered against other accounts/ bonds.

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was RESOLVED by all to approve the initial investment of £300k, together with a future deposit of up to £300k.

Re LATCO – Cllr Ladd asked that Council continue to research the engagement of a property management firm for the management of Council properties. Agreed by all.

- **To receive report from Cttee meeting 1st May 2020**

New legislation – Emergency scheme of delegation noted and approved retrospectively by all.

As the ability now exists to hold Cttee meetings and full Council meetings by audio/video for a temporary period of up to a year, then this should enable decisions to be made in this way in the future and the scheme of delegation should therefore no longer be required.

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Jeans, it was agreed by all that the Scheme of Delegation should no longer be required.

Terms of reference for the Covid 19 emergency fund to be considered by the Cttee. Council to be asked to approve an initial fund of £5000.

Discussion took place regarding the situations/matters that might require funding. Cllr Jeans suggested that monies should be made available for matters that would assist the businesses in the town. Cllr Ladd suggested that this might include help for projects aimed at regenerating the High Street including social distancing measures.

Discussion about the terms of reference/ criteria of the funding.

Cllr Jeans proposed that the recommendation be altered to ensure that the terms of reference be approved prior to allocation of budget. There was no seconder for this proposal.

Cllr Ladd proposed that as funds might be required quickly, as an emergency measure, any request for expenditure from the Covid 19 emergency fund of £5000 could be delegated to Chair of Finance and the Town Mayor for approval.

On the proposal of Cllr Ladd, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was agreed by all to approve an initial emergency Covid 19 fund of £5000. Any request for expenditure from the Covid 19 emergency fund of £5000 to be delegated to Chair of Finance and the Town Mayor for approval.

Standing Orders - The ability to hold remote meetings is part of new Government legislation, and supersedes existing legislation, and forms part of the Council standing orders with immediate effect. Council to note.

Noted by all.

Mayors Charity Funds - Monies raised by Cllr Tucker during her term as Mayor to be released to contribute to the purchase of the projector for the Arts Centre as previously explained.

Cllr Rowan Robinson did not take part in the discussion nor vote.

On the proposal of Cllr Betts, seconded by Cllr Jordan, it was RESOLVED by all to release the Mayors Charity money raised by Cllr Tucker (£5203.44) to the Arts Centre to contribute to the purchase of the projector for the Arts Centre as previously explained

- *To approve the emergency scheme of delegation April 2020* – Noted as above
- *Future meetings – to confirm that a meeting schedule will be drawn up for May and June for Cttees and Council.* Noted

Revised Budget for 2020- 21 to be prepared for consideration by the Finance Cttee within 14 days.

- *Annual Council meeting – see Coronavirus 2020 legislation* – note the amendments re the annual Council meeting. Recommend that the situation be reviewed in September 2020.

On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Windell it was RESOLVED by all that in view of Covid 19 the present Chairman and Vice Chairman would remain in their roles as per Regulation 4 of the Act. To be reviewed September 2020.

7. **Other updates**

- *BEP - to note circulated report* – Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that a report would be circulated for a future meeting.
Cllr Flunder advised that the Harbour consultation, that is presently out for consideration, would affect both the Blyth and the Harbour – Council response to be considered at the next meeting.
- *Approval of nomination of Asset of Community Value – Southwold Police station site.*
Cllr Jeans advised that there are 2 opportunities for the police to appeal the approval of the nomination. There is a total period of 16 weeks for this to occur.
The actual planning application is still being considered by ESC.
Discussion about the implications of the approval and what might happen to the site.
Cllr Jeans advised that the ACV nomination lasts for 5 years. Discussion about the valuation of the site – it was agreed that Council would wait to see if there was an appeal and whether the police will be valuing the site themselves.
Cllr Flunder advised that the Finance Cttee would need to consider best value for the project/ site.
- *To receive Town Manager report* – received and noted.
It was noted that the business community have been pleased with the introduction of the role and the assistance being given with signposting to Covid 19 funding.
Assistance is being provided to the businesses as a collective community which has been lacking in the past.
Cllr Jeans reminded members that it was Cllr Tucker who had come up with the idea of a town manager and that Cllr Tucker should be attributed for this forward-thinking project.
Cllr Ladd advised that many other towns that would like a similar resource.

8. **Date of next Council meeting** – 26th May 2020.

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;

Rent and lease requests – **on the proposal of Cllr Windell seconded by Cllr Bradbury it was RESOLVED by all to approve the recommendations of the Confid Legal Sub Cttee meeting of 30th April 2020.**

Meeting closed 4.45pm.