

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held via Zoom at 6.30pm on Tuesday 25th August 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; 13 members of the public, the Town Clerk, and High Steward.

1. **Apologies:** *To receive apologies for absence.*
Apologies for absence – Nil
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 28th July 2020.*
On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Betts it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 28th July 2020.
4. **Public Forum**
 - a) *To receive a report from Waveney District Ward Councillor D Beavan.*
The Ward councillor will then take questions from councillors and electors.
ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that the monthly report had been circulated.
In addition, Cllr Beavan advised that residents appear to have some dispensation parking in limited parking bays at present. ESC parking services are making headway with civil enforcement, and the matter will be considered by the scrutiny cttee.
Toilets/ Bins – hopefully on top of the issues now.

Questions to ward Cllr.

Cllr Ladd asked whether the CPE Enforcement Officers were covering the High Street at weekends and whether this could be asked at Scrutiny when the matter is discussed.

The Town Clerk advised that ESC parking services had confirmed that the CPE Enforcement Officers will be in Southwold on the Bank holiday weekend.

Cllr Windell advised that there have been some complaints regarding the attitude of some of the Enforcement Officers.

A member of the public advised that the Enforcement Officers had been seen taking car registration number along North Parade – but this area is free parking – so why were they doing this? Cllr Beavan advised that he would find out.

Cllr Tobin asked for an update regarding Potters Bridge. Cllr Beavan advised that the outfall at the beach has been maintained. Trying to get a local contractor involved with keeping the outfall maintained and keep it open. E mail from Cllr Beavan to be sent to EA reminding them of the need to consider this before the winter.

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

SCC Cllr Ladd will then take questions from councillors and electors.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that significant decisions have been made regarding the Lowestoft Third Crossing – which will be called the ‘Gull Wing’ crossing. Costs have increased to £126.75m (including £19m contingency) with £73m of that sum being provided by the Department of Transport. SCC will borrow monies to complete this project which residents of Lowestoft have waited many years for.

Questions to ward Cllr

Cllr Jeans asked that thanks be passed onto SCC for the quality of the design of the bridge.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that the bridge would aid the economic regeneration of Lowestoft and it is anticipated that for each one pound spent it will create £3 of economic regeneration income once open. The bridge will be operational from 2023.

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 advised that the Southwold and Reydon Society had sent several letters to Council regarding the Station Yard redevelopment scheme and await a substantive reply.

A member of the public asked what safeguards had been put in place for tenants of Hurren Terrace.

A member of the public asked whether the Town Council has reworked the cashflow for the project in view of the post Covid world and whether the potential demand/new economic forecasts have been considered.

A member of the public advised the meeting that in view of speculation, they would wish to confirm that they have been in contact with Reydon Business Park regarding an available unit – but have been advised that there is no unit available and never has been.

They have also been in contact with EA who advise that they have never been consulted about the Station Yard project. They have sent to Council a number of e mails which they have received in support of the garage, in which people also state that they do not support the new build/offices.

Member of public asked about 'Don't be a tosser campaign' – why is Southwold and Reydon not taking this up? The Town Mayor advised that he was not happy with the language used in this campaign.

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 29th July, 4th August, and 18th August 2020. No recommendations.*

Cllr Jeans advised that the cttee has had issues with the various applications for the proposed development of a site adjacent to 11 Cautley Road – which might be considered as an attempt to wear down the cttee. The present application is for a one and half storey extension which will have significant impact on the guide hut – to which the applicant does not seem to be allowing access for maintenance.

Cllr Flunder advised that the work at the Harbour for the Sole Bay Fish Company was originally scheduled to take place in May but in view of the volume of visitors this was delayed. The architect would now prefer that this work be carried out in October and ESC is agreeable. Cllr Flunder advised that the works might assist the blue flag criteria. It was agreed by all that the works take place in October – letter of support to be sent.

b) *To receive the written report of the Sustainable Travel cttee meeting held 28th July 2020.*

Cllr Tobin advised that he has met with some providers of electric charging points looking at 3 sites in Southwold. Capital cost of units are approx. £24k. Cllr Tobin has advised the suppliers that the Town Council would prefer a lower/nil capital cost to then receive a lower month/annual receipt. Cllr Tobin will provide a full report for the next cttee meeting.

Cllr Windell advised that the cycle paths in/out town are not now sufficient for the demand and that these need to be improved. A pathway behind Southwold and Reydon would be ideal but at a minimum improvement to the existing cycle path are required. Could this be altered from an advisory to a compulsory cycle lane? SCC Ladd asked that concerns be sent to him in order that SCC can be asked to sort this.

Cllr Jeans advised that the cttee is prioritising signage as a means of improving traffic flow/parking.

Cllr Ladd re the Millennium car park – advised that this has been used as an overflow car park during the summer and that people do still drive around town first before parking there. Car volume ranged from 15 cars to 92 cars.

Previous front of town sign – is located at back of Scout Hut – this to be retrieved.

Cllr Ladd advised that he would try and set up a meeting with relevant officers at SCC to discuss how traffic flow might be improved within Southwold.

6. **Neighbourhood Plan Task and Finish Group.**

To receive verbal update from Chair of the Task and Finish Group.

Reg 16 consultation is the final step required before the N Plan goes to Inspection. ESC has raised concerns regarding the policy relating to community land – and amendments are presently with ESC to consider.

7. **Covid Community Group**

Cllr Tobin advised that the food bank is ready for when required.

Cllr Windell advised that the CO-OP is still collecting for the food bank.

Cllr Ladd advised that a survey has been carried out of the High Street one way pedestrian system – some 95% of the people in the High Street are observing the system. Many people have commented on the vibrancy of the High Street.

Cllr Goldsmith advised that Durrants have received several thank you comments from visitors who have said that they felt very safe whilst in Southwold.

8. **Asset of Community Value – Police Station site – Right to Bid**

To consider and if agreed approve commencement of a scoping report. Aim of scoping report is to enable Town Council to decide whether a bid should be submitted. Budget of up to £4k to be considered and if agreed, approved for the scoping report.

Cllr Jeans provided the background to the ACV on the police station site. This will last initially for 5 years. No change of use can take place during that period. This will therefore depress the value that could be obtained for the land.

To consider whether to make a bid, the Town Council will need to calculate the value of the land. Local Community Housing might be able to go on the land if it is considered vital as a means of providing the community facility. The residual land value is created by way of a formulae.

Discussion took place regarding uses for the site. Geography educational setting was suggested in the ACV application. Cllr Beavan advised that residents have suggested a swimming pool and asked whether this could go on the site.

Cllr Jeans advised that the initial priority is to try and acquire the land - and that use of the land can be decided if/when successful. Bids need to be submitted by 15th January 2021. Cllr Beavan advised that the value cannot be assessed unless the use is determined.

After full discussion it was PROPOSED by Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Ladd that the Town Council approve commencement of a scoping report. Aim of scoping report is to enable Town Council to decide whether a bid should be submitted. Budget of up to £4k to be approved for the scoping report. APPROVED by a majority of 10 in favour and 1 abstain.

9. **Station Road Redevelopment/ Enterprise Hub – Project Management and Project Board.**

Cllr Windell advised that the phase 2 of the contamination survey will take place in the courtyard area from 16th September.

Cllr Windell clarified that Chicks are the advisors on this matter and that they liaise with the EPO at ESC (not the EA). The EPO has made suggestions as to what the EA might advise re the tanks coming out. Chicks have offered to speak to any Councillor who would like further information about the surveys etc.

Cllr Flunder asked about the timescales for the lab work. Cllr Windell advised that this phase of the work should take 2 – 4 weeks. The actual contamination will not be fully understood until the tanks have been removed and Chicks advise that there is only a very small chance that the tanks will be able to stay in situ.

The paper regarding the Project Board was presented to the meeting by the Town Clerk. The Town Mayor confirmed that the Town Council were the landowners and therefore in charge of the project, whilst ESC is the Accountable Body.

Project Board

On the proposal of Cllr Tobin, seconded by Cllr Betts it was RESOLVED by a majority of 10 in favour and 1 abstain that the Project Board be set up as stated on the paper.

Project Manager/Director

Discussion took place about the appointment of a Project Manager for the redevelopment project. Cllr Beavan suggested that the contamination needs to be sorted out first, then a review of the project should take place before the decontamination remediation is undertaken, and then the appointment of a Project Manager.

Cllr Flunder suggested that the priority should be a review of the business case and cashflow, including consideration of the use of the police station site, and that the role as described is too large for one Project Manager. Cllr Jeans advised that a Project Manager will bring in other specialists as required.

The Town Mayor advised that as with any project at the moment, a post Covid review of the project would be undertaken, and that this will be included within the Terms of Reference for the Project Board.

With regards to a Project Manager, Cllr Jordan advised that the Town Council will need professional assistance on all aspects of the project and that a Project Manager should be appointed as soon as possible. Cllr Rowan Robinson suggested that the Project Board and Project Manager will need to assess the business plan post Covid and then deal with the remediation of the site and that a Project Manager should be appointed as soon as possible.

Cllr Ladd advised that with ESC on the Project Board they will be able to bring access to expertise from within the authority that the Town Council will need, and that ESC will not want the project to be a ‘white elephant.’ Cllr Ladd advised that the Town Council need assistance at a strategic level with the project.

Query raised as to who might be the Chairman of the Project Board. It was confirmed that the Board will nominate its own Chairman.

On the proposal of Cllr Jeans, seconded by Cllr Jordan it was RESOLVED by a majority of 10 in favour and 1 abstain; “To set up a Project Board as set out in the paper and move ahead with the hiring of a Project manager as quickly as possible.”

Discussion about the notice already given to tenants to vacate the site – query was raised as to whether this could be extended by 1 month.

Cllr Ladd advised that as himself and Cllr Beavan were on the Project Board, they could raise this matter with the Board.

10. **Financial Matters**

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

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

b) *To receive written report of Finance and Governance Cttee Meeting held 18th August 2020 Fin REP 08.2020.* To consider and if agreed approve recommendations in relation to Covid Community Fund.

Mayors Local Relief Fund and Farmiloe Fund – In view of the Covid pandemic and the need to assist the residents of Southwold, it is recommended that these sums be allocated to the Covid Relief budget and applied appropriately within this budget.

On the proposal of Cllr Ladd, seconded by Cllr Betts, it was RESOLVED unanimously to approve this recommendation.

11. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Provisional date - Tuesday 10th September 2020.

Signed

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