

SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held via Zoom at 6.30pm on Tuesday 23rd February 2021

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

Also present; 9 members of the public, the Town Clerk, the High Steward.

1. **Apologies:** *To receive apologies for absence.*
Apologies were received from Cllr Betts and Cllr Jeans.
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 the Register of Interest online.
3. **Minutes:** (i) To approve and sign the minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 26th January 2021.

On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Rowan Robinson it was RESOLVED by all to approve the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 26th January 2021.

4. **Public Participation**
 - a) *To receive a report from East Suffolk Ward Councillor D Beavan.*
ESC Cllr Beavan will then take questions from Councillors and electors.
Report from ESC Ward Cllr Beavan had been circulated.

Multi agency partnership re Coastal erosion – ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that the first meeting of the partnership had been held and that stakeholders will be involved in due course.

Resident’s parking – ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that he had met with the ESC parking manager on this matter and felt that the position regarding the availability of

parking permits to second homes needed to be confirmed before a permit scheme was taken further.

Questions from Councillors

A Councillor asked about the registration of the Camp site area and Havenbeach Marsh. ESC Cllr Beavan advised that Godylls Will will need to be certified as part of the process and that a quote for solicitors' fees is awaited.

A Councillor asked about parking permit schemes and whether holiday lets are classed as second homes. Cllr Beavan advised that holiday lets are classed differently as they would pay business rates and would need business permits. Discussion took place about the kind of evidence required to confirm the classification of each property. An example of the classification used by Devon CC has been made available to the ESC parking manager.

The Town Mayor advised that ESC is looking at parking schemes in Lowestoft, Southwold, Aldeburgh and Framlingham at present as there is funding available to provide schemes in these 4 places.

ESC Cllr Beavan advised members that, as part of a pilot project by Plug in Suffolk, an Electric Vehicle Charger had been made available for Church Green and this would be installed free of charge. The provision of the charger could generate income of £1500 per year for the Town Council. Adnams are supportive of the provision.

Questions from the public

A member of the public asked about the potential parking chargers that will be introduced, as they usually park on the verges or on the Godyll Road car park. The Town Mayor advised that the issue of displacement was being considered. ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that the verges and car park are Town Council/Common Trust land – but that any charging on these might put pressure on the on-street parking which is ESC responsibility. Therefore, some residents parking will be considered.

A member of the public asked about the Station Road regeneration scheme and whether a decision had been made yet, and whether a garage would be part of the scheme. The Town Mayor advised that the garage had moved to Reydon and that the Town Council had previously turned down the proposal of an alternative scheme to retain a garage on this site. The Town Mayor advised that the Business Case Review should be available later in the week.

A member of the public advised ESC Ward Cllr Beavan about the coastal erosion work at Pakefield and mentioned the issues at Easton Bavents. ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that he would provide the relevant report and that Ann Jones is being invited to the next meeting of the group.

A member of the public thanked the Town Council for making funds available to assist the garage to set up in Reydon.

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

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

SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that the SCC Budget setting had taken place and that the budget for 2021-2022 includes an additional £41m on last year. Social care budget is

2/3rds of total budget. SCC precept will increase by 1.98% with social care at an additional 2%. SCC will utilise free reserves of £18.4m to assist.

Covid related matters - In 2020 SCC provided over 5 million pieces of PPE.

Regarding electric charging points – SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that Suffolk 2020 funding has been made available to provide over 100 charging points within the pilot – of which those at Church Green have been provided in Southwold.

SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that the SCC elections are taking place on 6th May 2021.

Bailey Bridge – no timetable has yet been set for the repair works – a stakeholders group meeting has been arranged for early March. SCC Ward Cllr Ladd has asked SCC about postponing the works for 12 months, but this seems unlikely as the repairs need to be carried out. SCC will work with stakeholders to try and establish assistance to cross the river. Danni Church is keen to help. Works will take approx. 3 months.

Questions from Councillors

A Councillor asked whether SCC Highways has checked the bridge again to ensure that the work is still needed this year. SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that he had asked that question. One suggestion is that scaffolding might be able to be used instead of pontoons – but the works will be needed to create a longer-term remedy.

Questions from the public

A resident asked about the problems at Potters Bridge. SCC Ward Cllr Ladd advised that the EA should be keeping the outlet clear – although it would be ideal to try and get the local farmer to be able to do it. A full feasibility report will be needed for 4-5 years' time to assess the options as water levels have risen rather than the road sinking.

Cllr Beavan advised that it would be good to have a form of auto warning system to advise drivers of how deep the water is before they drive through it. It was noted that the levels should drop during the summer.

- 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).*

The Town Mayor advised that the Station Road regeneration plan/grant is intended to create jobs - and that this is still the predominant output that is needed.

A member of the public advised that members of the community feel that the proposed design for the properties at the previous Fire Station site are awful and would want STC to closely consider the design.

A member of the public asked if there was a long-term plan for more charging points in the town. The Town Mayor confirmed that those at Church Green are for the public as well as for Adnams. ESC Ward Cllr Beavan advised that he is asking ESC to include EVC in their car parks.

A member of the public mentioned the internal works required at 25 Market Place. Cllr Windell as Chairman of Landlords Cttee advised that some problems have been exacerbated as the shop has been shut for so long with no windows/doors open. The

lime rendering does need to be repaired and a complete survey is taking place on the property in March.

A member of the public asked about the possibility of 20mph throughout the town. The Town Mayor advised that the Sustainable Travel Cttee are not recommending for this to be taken forward.

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

a) To receive the written report of the meetings of the Planning and Development Committee held on Tuesday 2nd February 2021 and Tuesday 16th February 2021. *No recommendations.*

On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was agreed to receive and note the minutes of the Planning Cttee.

b) To receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee on any further planning/development matters including the following consultations.

Members were advised that the cttee is working on the response to the appeal at 11 Cautley Road.

c) Leisure and Environment Cttee – To receive the written report and recommendations of the meeting of the L and E Committee. *No meeting held.*

d) Landlords Cttee (as per *Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022 priority c and e*) To receive the written report of the meeting held on Tuesday 15th February 2021. Recommendations relating to 25 Market Place inspection.

Cllr Windell advised members that the priorities for the Landlords cttee were to undertake maintenance at 2 Strickland Place, 7 Hurren Terrace and 25 Market Place.

Cllr Windell advised that the fire proofing had been carried out within the properties that needed it.

Recommendation on 25 Market Place - In view of water ingress and condition of property an updated full survey to be carried out on the property at 25 Market Place to establish the priority of all repairs required prior to North and Hawkins commencing the present scoping brief. Quote received for survey of this premises including drone survey of roof and chimneys - £2300 plus vat.

On the recommendation of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Flunder, it was unanimously AGREED to approve the recommendation above.

e) Sustainable Travel Cttee (*as per Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022 priority f*) *Improve access, parking and traffic flow within the town*). To receive the minutes of the Sustainable Transport meeting held on 11th February 2021. *No Recommendations*

Cllr Ladd noted the comments of the Cttee regarding the 20mph feasibility study whilst advising that this had been something that the Town Council had previously expressed a desire to consider.

Cllr Flunder asked whether employees had been consulted about the intended changes at the Godyll Road car park and whether a business plan had been prepared. Cllr Bradbury advised that both were being done.

The report from the Cttee was received and noted.

6. **To receive reports from working groups.**

a) **N Plan Task and Finish Group.** (*N Plan = as per Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022 c) encourage full time residency within the Town d) Preserve and enhance the natural and built environment*).

To receive update on the new and revised Reg14 policies for the emerging Southwold N Plan. To receive feedback from stakeholder, zoom meeting – Wednesday 27th January 2021 at 5pm.

Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that the Zoom meeting had 21 attendees and that many of them were second homeowners, some of whom felt that there had been hostility expressed about them over the past 12 months. A good discussion had taken place and attendees were advised that in the Town Plan and in the Neighbourhood Plan, comments from both residents and second homeowners had been virtually the same. Some changes are being made to the policies in light of the comments received. The consultation document will be completed, and the Neighbourhood Plan will then be submitted for the Reg 16 consultation. It was felt that a referendum in May might be an ambitious timescale and that August/September was more likely.

b) **Communication strategy** (*Project = as per Town Council priorities 2019- 2022 g) Create and implement an improved STC communications strategy within and outside the Town*).

To receive report of Comms working group meeting of 15th February 2021. See PowerPoint presentation in supporting papers. *No recommendations.*

The presentation was acknowledged and received.

7. **Southwold Fire Station Site** – to note online Hastoe consultation – see supporting papers.

The comments in the public section of the meeting were noted.

8. **Southwold Harbour** – (*Project = as per Town Council Priorities 2019 – 2022 d) Continue to work with ESC to ensure that the Harbour is maintained and operated in the interest of the Town and its stakeholders*) Joint meeting of STC and ESC Cabinet to consider and approve setting up of HMC - to note meeting date 2nd March 2021 at 5pm.

Members were reminded of the details of the joint meeting to be held on 2nd March 2021. ESC will set up the meeting online and any members of the public requesting to speak at the meeting are being asked to provide their details in order that they can be given details of how/when they are able to join in.

9. **Census 2021** – To note Census Day is Sunday 21st March 2021.

The meeting was advised that census details are being sent out centrally and that individuals have a responsibility to complete the census.

10. **Elections May 2021** – To note election timetable – see supporting papers. Details noted as per papers.
11. **Southwold Town Council Annual Parish Meeting** – Wednesday 14th April 2021 – Suggestions for a Guest speaker to be sent into the Town Clerk.
12. **Remote Meeting Legislation** ‘The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels Covid (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings Regs 2020’ – to note expiry of Remote meeting legislation 7th May 2021. To note the requirement for meetings to be in person after this date and the recommendations from NALC in this regard – see supporting papers.
Members noted the potential issues that this might cause.
Members were advised of the lobbying that was taking place from NALC, SALC to try and ensure that remote meetings could continue.
Cllr Ladd advised that he has raised the issue with the MP.
13. **Southwold Town Council – Annual Meeting of the Town Council**. To consider and if agree approve that this be held via Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 6.30pm. To note that Civic Sunday is scheduled for Sunday 23rd May 2021.
On the proposal of Cllr Windell, seconded by Cllr Ladd it was unanimously AGREED to hold the Annual Meeting of Southwold Town Council on Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021.
14. **To receive progress report from Station Yard Regeneration Project Board** (*Project = as per Town Council priorities 2019 – 2022 b) Diversify and enhance the local economy*).
- The Town Mayor referred to the responses provided within the public section of the meeting and reiterated that the Business case review is awaited, and it is hoped that it would be available by the end of the week. Cllr Flunder asked that Project Board members push for this to be received as soon as possible. The Town Mayor advised that the delay is not due to either ESC or STC.
The Town Mayor reminded members that the Finance Cttee will need to oversee the financial aspects of the project.
15. **Southwold Police Station Site** – (*Project = as per Town Council Priorities 2019 – 2022 b) Diversify and enhance the local economy and c) Consider expanding the Town Council property portfolio*). No update.
16. **Financial Matters**
a) *Accounts for Payment* - To receive and confirm the Accounts for Payment for February 2021 (*circulated to members*).
- On the proposal of Cllr Jordan, seconded by Cllr Flunder it was unanimously agreed to approve the Accounts for payment for February 2021.**
- b) *To receive report and recommendations of Finance and Governance Meeting 12th February 2021 FIN Rep 02.21 Recommendation in relation to modernisation of council practices - See supporting papers.*

Modernisation of Council Practices - It is the recommendation of the Finance Cttee that I Cloudy be asked to implement the Council modernisation process over the next 2 years as per their quote above – with Councillors to be involved in 2021 and 2022 if they wish to be, but with aim that all Councillors would be included within the system wef the 2023 Town Council elections.

On the proposal of Cllr Flunder seconded by Cllr Windell, it was unanimously agreed to APPROVE the recommendation.

17. **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) *East Anglia One and Two/ Scottish Renewable/ Sizewell* – Cllr Flunder advised that Friston is the matter of concern of the Scottish Power project. In relation to the Vanguard Project the substation has been overturned by judicial review and this will give more leverage to the cause. The substation could be built out at sea. On Sizewell C there will be issues affecting tourism which the Town Council should consider. Members were advised that SCC and ESC have concerns as above.
- b) *COVID Community group* – Cllr Beavan advised that the volunteers and NHS staff are doing a great job with the vaccine rollout. A hand sanitiser station has been provided by the Town Council. Cllr Windell advised that the food bank is still working well, and that people are still donating at the Co-op. The VHC is coordinating requests. Cllr Ladd advised that the Millennium Hall will be used as a community testing station from March 2021 providing lateral flow tests for those who cannot work from home.

18. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:** Tuesday 30th March 2021 at 6.30pm.

19. **Exclusion of Public and Press:** *Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodied (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.*

Nil.