

## SOUTHWOLD TOWN COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of Southwold, held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Southwold, at 7.30pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

PRESENT:	Councillor	Mrs M Tucker (Town Mayor)
	“	Miss E A Betts
	“	Mrs S Allen
	“	I R Bradbury
	“	Mrs S M Doy
	“	M G C Horwood
	“	M Ladd
	“	D J Palmer
	“	M Rowan Robinson
	“	J A Windell

Also attending: The Town Clerk, the High Steward and 1 member of the public.

### **BUSINESS**

1. **Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jeans and Cllr Temple.
2. **Declarations of interest:**
  - a) *To receive any declarations of Personal Interest regarding the agenda.*

Cllr Allen declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 (a) and (b) as a member of the WDC Planning Committee.

Cllr Doy declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 (a) and (b) as a member of the Southwold & Reydon Society.

Cllr Rowan Robinson declared a personal interest item 5 (a) and (b) as President of the Southwold & Reydon Society and item 14.
  - 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.*

Not applicable.
  - d) *Councillors to be reminded of the requirement for them to individually update their Register of Interests as appropriate.*

Noted
3. **Minutes:** *To approve and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017.* Cllr Allen advised that there were 2 alterations within her report contained within the previous Minutes. Page 2 section 4 4<sup>th</sup> line to read ‘regarding the Orbit properties....’ Page 2 section 4 2<sup>nd</sup> para to read .... Suffolk Coast and Heaths have a new estuaries officer ....’ With these alterations, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017 were confirmed and signed. Proposed Cllr Windell, seconded Cllr Bradbury. Unanimous.
4. **Standing Orders:** *to suspend standing orders for consideration of the following:*

- a) *To receive a report from Waveney District Councillors M Ladd, and S Allen. Cllr Allen and Cllr Ladd will then take questions from councillors and electors (maximum 5 minutes).* WDC Cllr Allen advised that she had no updates to report on.

WDC Cllr Ladd advised that the Economic Team had received the guidelines for the WDC discretionary relief on business rates. The WDC Officers will consider the report and will then update Cllr Ladd as to how the WDC mechanism will operate as per the budget proposals in the Government's spring budget. WDC Cllr Ladd will arrange for a copy of the document to be forwarded to the Town Clerk. The Town Mayor thanked WDC Cllr Ladd. The Town Mayor advised that the Communities Minister has been tasked to provide the formula for the rate relief and that the Town Council will therefore be very interested to see how this provides practical help for Southwold businesses.

- b) *To receive a report from Suffolk County Councillor Ladd. Cllr Ladd will then take questions from councillors and electors (maximum 5 minutes).* SCC Cllr Ladd advised that SCC are now in pre-election period and that there will be no further updates until after the May elections.

- 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).*

There were no comments from members of the public.

*Meeting reopened*

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

- a) To receive the written report of the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee meetings held – *No meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017- No recommendations.*

- b) To receive a verbal update from Planning and Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March and any further planning/development matters to be brought to the attention of the council. *No recommendations.*

Cllr Windell advised that there were no matters to report from the meeting this evening. WDC Cllr Allen advised that the planning application in respect of the Swan Yard entrance onto Victoria Street will be considered by the WDC Planning Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> March. The Town Council had not received any new application on this matter and Cllr Windell advised that the assumption was that the Town Council would not need to respond again.

- c) To receive the written reports of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee – *no meeting held. No recommendations.*

**6. To receive reports from Working Groups/Task and Finish Groups and Southwold Neighbourhood Plan Team**

- a) To receive a verbal update from the Neighbourhood Plan meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 and report on any further updates.

Cllr Bradbury advised that the Working Group had met on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 and that the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan Policies had been made available as a working document.

- b) Highways and Footpaths working group – *no meeting held.*
- c) To receive a verbal update from the Parking Review task and finish group meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017.  
Cllr Tucker advised that the Working Group had met twice to prepare a draft strategy document for parking in Southwold which will be shared with all Councillors over the next week.

7. **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) Southwold Hospital – *to receive verbal report*

Cllr Windell advised that Savills have put in a pre-planning application for 10 residential houses but do not seem to have considered the potential difficulties about change of use and parking etc. The WDC Planning Officer has advised that the property may need to be marketed for a period of 6 months before change of use may be considered and it would not appear that this has been the case. Cllr Windell advised that the Save Our Southwold Group consider that Propco should consult with the Town Council and the community before proceeding any further and it would not appear that this has been carried out. Cllr Allen advised that as part of the pre-planning application process WDC would advise Propco whether parking and change of use were appropriate. Cllr Windell suggested that the Town Council write to Propco and ask to be consulted over their plans. Cllr Bradbury asked that the Neighbourhood Plan Team also be included in this letter. **It was agreed by all that a letter be sent to NHS Propco.**

The Save Our Southwold Group are holding a public meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

The Group will also be meeting the WDC Planning Officer on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017 to discuss a pre-planning application of their own which they would like WDC to consider.

Cllr Ladd advised that there was a meeting scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 at Reydon regarding the proposed care home and that Propco may be attending this meeting. Town Councillors were encouraged to attend to give their own feedback on the consultation.

- b) Coastal Community Team – *to receive verbal report.* Cllr Ladd advised that the Team had met 2 weeks ago and that the economic plan must be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. The CC Team have suggested and agreed 14 priorities and the consultant is presently finishing off a draft document to be reviewed by the Steering Group before being submitted. A copy will be sent to the Town Clerk.
- c) Allotment Association – *to receive verbal report.* Cllr Doy advised that no action had been taken in relation to the car park by the allotment land as the

Allotment Association will wait to sign the lease before proceeding with any works on the car park area. The Association are holding a plant sale on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Cllr Doy was asked whether residents of Southwold are allocated plots in priority to those on the waiting list from other villages – Cllr Doy confirmed that this was the case.

- d) Blyth Estuary Group – *to receive verbal report*. Cllr Allen advised that she had nothing to report. Cllr Palmer advised that he had had contact with members of the Blyth Estuary Group and asked that Cllr Allen to clarify the role of BEG to at the next Council meeting and explain the work that BEG have been, and are, carrying out.

Cllr Allen advised that BEG were formed in 2006 and now only meet occasionally. BEG consists of members of SCC/WDC and local parish councils. The next meeting will take place in May/June to discuss the Walberswick bank.

Cllr Windell asked whether the EA are withdrawing from their present responsibilities and Cllr Allen advised that the EA will maintain the Walberswick wall until 2029 and the Reydon bank until 2019.

8. **Southwold Business Rates** – Update from Town Mayor.

The Town Mayor advised that despite a strong campaign, the outcome of the Government's budget provided only a small help to Southwold and may only help 6 businesses in the High Street. Many businesses will now be looking at their own business models and it could mean that the High-Street traders are under even greater pressure to adjust their business model. The Town Mayor advised that she hoped that WDC will be able to assist businesses in Southwold, and that the business development role would be key to bringing people into the town out of season. The Town Mayor advised that pressure needs to be maintained with the Government.

The traders have advised that they have had much support during the present campaign and that the profile of Southwold has been raised. Cllr Ladd advised that the campaign had been very good and that political lobbying had also been carried and that the national publicity had been very good for Southwold.

Cllr Ladd advised that one of the priority areas of the CCT economic plan does cover increasing activities out of season and that the CCT plan has also incorporated the business development manager as a key strategy.

Cllr Ladd advised that WDC have offered diagnostic model testing for businesses and was surprised that only 4 had come forward to take up the offer.

Cllr Ladd advised that it was disappointing that WDC had been asked to assist businesses suffering when the problem was made by a Central Government initiative.

Cllr Windell advised that although the campaign had been dynamic, there was already a sense of apathy about the issue.

9. **Mayor's report including:**

Spring Ball – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The Town Mayor advised that 125 tickets had been sold for the Ball and thanks were extended to all Councillors who were attending to support her.

10. **Financial Matters**

- a) Accounts for Payment - To receive the accounts for payment for March 2017 (*circulated to members*). **It was RESOLVED unanimously to approve the Accounts for Payment for March 2017.**
- b) To receive finance working group notes from the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 – *to consider recommendations as follows;*
- i) *donation £100 to Suffolk Accident and Rescue.* **It was RECOMMENDED that a donation of £100 be made to this charity for the work that they undertake on a voluntary basis. This to be made available from the funds remaining within the Donations budget for 2016/17.**  
It was RESOLVED by all to approve a donation of £100 to Suffolk Accident and Rescue.
- ii) *Finance and Governance Working Group to now be a Committee – It is RECOMMENDED that the terms of reference for the Finance & Governance ‘Working Group’ be amended to the terms of reference for the Finance & Governance ‘Committee’ – with no other changes being required other than admission of the public to the meetings by way of the working group becoming a cttee.* It was RESOLVED by all that the Finance and Governance Working Group become a Committee with immediate effect.
- c) To note Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2017/18 of £7.57 per elector. Noted.
- d) To note that Fidelity Insurance will be placed as appropriate to cover all balances held. Noted.
- e) To note the minimum living wage is £7.50 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. Noted.

11. **To receive update from Town Mayor of events/ meetings attended including;**  
Bellman’s final day – Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017  
Commonwealth Day – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
Unveiling of Southwold & Reydon Society Map Boards – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017

*Future Events*

- Spring Ball – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
Civic Sunday – Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2017

The Town Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for standing in on the Bellman’s last day. Congratulations were extended to the Southwold & Reydon Society for their map boards.

12. **Correspondence**

- a) *Police report March 2017 circulated* – Discussion took place as to whether the PCSO should offer a surgery twice a month at the library, and whether once a month would be more appropriate. It was suggested that the PCSO be asked to reconsider the amount of time he makes available for the surgeries, should the numbers of public attending start to dwindle.

The Town Mayor advised that parking outside the front of the Swan Hotel by contractor's vans had become standard practice and that the police are aware and will be moving the contractors on.

Cllr Allen advised that many vans are parking by the bottle bank opposite Church Green – Adnams to be asked if these could be parked elsewhere. It was noted that the police safecam van had been utilised locally and it was suggested that the results of this be requested.

*b) Letter from SCC re Queen Street Pharmacy. Noted by all.*

*c) Letter from Serjeant-at-Mace. Noted by all. The Town Mayor expressed her thanks for the work that the Serjeant-at-Mace had carried out over recent years. Letter of thanks from the Town Council to be sent.*

*d) Letter from Southwold and Reydon Corps of Drums. Noted. The Town Mayor expressed disappointment at the potential disbanding of the Corps of Drums and thanks were again made for all the work that they do to support the civic functions.*

13. **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 Ladd advised that planting has started at the Millennium car park and that a planning application had been submitted to take down the stables. The complete project will be carried out over the next 2 years.

Cllr Allen advised that she continue to seek a suitable result for the Botany marsh wall and will update Council as appropriate.

The Town Mayor advised that the Southwold Museum had asked for the renewal of the Town Council assets, held by themselves on loan. However, the Loving Cup will be required for the Town Council Civic Sunday event. The Town Council did not envisage any problems with the Museum retaining the cannon but suggested that the Museum should advise the Town Council of the length of time for which it requires the retention of any item.

The Town Mayor advised that a letter of resignation had been received from Cllr Temple, offering his resignation with immediate effect. The Town Mayor had contacted Cllr Temple who advised that his work commitments now make it difficult for him to offer time to the Town Council.

The Town Clerk was asked to explain the legal process that needs to be followed in relation to the vacancy.

Letter of thanks to be sent from the Town Council to Cllr Temple for all the work that he has carried out since being a Councillor.

14. **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;*

a) To receive the Landlords confidential written report LL 3/2017 of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 with recommendations in relation to a) Golf Club Practice Green (see attached pink papers). It was RESOLVED by all to approve the recommendation as detailed in LL3/2017.

b) To receive confidential information paper regarding marsh. No recommendation.  
(see attached pink paper).

15. **Date of next Town Council Meeting:**

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7.30pm at the Town Hall.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS. THE TOWN COUNCIL ABIDES BY THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT 2012.

\_\_\_\_\_ TOWN MAYOR 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017