

## 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 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

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

Also attending: The Town Clerk, 2 members of the public.

### **BUSINESS**

1. **Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from the Town Mayor, Cllr Tucker, Cllr Temple and the High Steward.
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 8(b).

Cllrs Betts, Doy, Horwood and Ladd declared personal interests in Agenda item 11(b) in relation to the Millennium Foundation.
  - 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 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017.* The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 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 has passed their budget for 2017/18. An increase in council tax has been set for the first time in approximately six years. WDC Cllr Allen advised that work has started at Duncans Yard and that an open afternoon had been held regarding the properties in Reydon. As a member of the WDC Planning Committee Cllr Allen advised that the planning application for the Swan Hotel as submitted by Adnams is likely to be considered by the WDC Planning Committee during March.

WDC Cllr Allen advised that Suffolk Coast & Heaths have a new area officer. WDC Cllr Ladd had nothing extra to add to the report.

*Questions from Councillors:*

WDC Cllr Allen was asked to refer back to the previous Town Council Minutes in which she had offered to provide more information to the Town Council on the Government Grant available for areas with high percentage of second home ownership. Cllr Allen confirmed that WDC would be putting in an application for funding to the Government by mid-March. As the grant is for those areas which have the highest percentage of second homes, the application will be submitted for Southwold and Reydon. Discussion took place as to whether it was appropriate for Southwold and Reydon to be considered together as Southwold would have a much higher percentage of second home ownership than Reydon (Southwold has statistically the highest percentage in England). WDC Cllr Allen advised that the WDC Ward is Southwold and Reydon for planning purposes and if there were no opportunities to build in Southwold then new facilities would need to be developed within the parish of Reydon. WDC Cllr Ladd confirmed that the percentage of second home ownership as a combined Southwold and Reydon area was still the highest in East Suffolk and therefore this would not affect the application.

Cllr Jeans asked that WDC ensures that there is a replacement for the present Design & Conservation Officer when she leaves her role in May as a specific resource who would be fully able to deal with the technical and specialist nature of issues in Southwold.

- 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 Suffolk County Council had set a balanced budget and that no council tax rises will take place for the ordinary budget however Suffolk County Council have set the maximum 3% social care precept.

SCC Cllr Ladd advised that a new speed limit of 40 mph will be implemented along the Wangford Road within the next 2-3 months. The 40 mph will commence at the end of the 30 mph through Reydon and will continue to the 30 mph at Wangford. The key principle for this speed reduction is that Wangford Road is part of the new Waveney cycle route strategy.

- 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*

A member of the public brought to the attention of the meeting that the new map boards installed by the Southwold & Reydon Society have an error in relation to Blackshore. Cllr Rowan Robinson advised that he would take this back to the Southwold & Reydon Society on behalf of the Town Council.

*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 on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 (see attached yellow papers). No recommendations.*

The reports were confirmed and noted.

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. No recommendations.* Cllr Windell advised that the Adnams applications had caused some confusion. The planning application recently received at the Town Hall for consideration at the February meeting was for a variation to the materials being used. A separate application has been submitted to WDC for discharge of conditions on a previously approved application, but that the Town Council had not been a consultee to the discharge of condition request as this is the responsibility of WDC to consider. Cllr Windell advised that emails had been circulating from interested parties regarding the discharge of conditions application and he felt that it was important that Councillors were aware of the full information.

Discussion took place regarding the work of the Planning Committee as it was noted that for the latter meeting in February only four of the six Committee members had been present. Members were asked whether Council could be open to challenge if only four members of full council had considered the planning applications on this date, however noting that four is a quorum for a Committee.

Cllr Windell as Chair of Planning advised members that the Planning Committee has delegated power to consider applications on behalf of the Town Council and to make recommendations to WDC who are the ultimate decision makers. Not to make decisions on planning applications. All Members were reminded that they are welcome to make remarks on planning applications either before or at a Planning Committee meeting and these will be fed into the deliberations of the Planning Committee when each application is considered.

Discussion took place as to whether the matter should be referred to the Finance & Governance Working Group to consider whether all planning applications should be considered by full Council. Members were advised that the consultation period for planning applications is only three weeks and that this would therefore not fit into the monthly Town Council meeting schedule. Cllr Windell as Chairman of Planning Cttee reiterated that all colleagues can consider planning applications before any recommendation is sent to WDC and encouraged everybody to attend the Planning meeting or to comment in advance. Cllr Windell advised that the Town Council meetings would become very lengthy should planning applications be part of the monthly Town Council

Agenda as each Planning Committee meeting lasted approximately 90 minutes and there were two per month. Members of the Planning Committee advised that if all planning applications were to come to full Council this would cause an incredible amount of work at the full Council meetings and that the timescales for responding to applications could not be met. Other members of Council who did not sit on the Planning Committee confirmed that they were satisfied with the process of delegation to the Planning Committee and saw no reason that there could be any challenge to the process. Cllr Ladd confirmed that he accepted all of the above and that the discussion above had provided comfort in relation to the soundness of the present system.

- c) *To receive the written reports of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 (see attached gold papers). No recommendations.* Cllr Allen asked for the report to be received and noted. All agreed. Cllr Jeans advised that fencing would be needed at the Ferry Road garden to keep out rabbits etc. and she will arrange for a cost quotation to be provided to the Town Hall.

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

- a) *To receive an update from the Neighbourhood Plan meeting to receive written report of meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017 (see attached lilac papers) and verbal report on any further updates. No recommendation.*

Cllr Bradbury advised that the consultants first draft will be made available at the next Neighbourhood Plan meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

- b) *Highways and Footpaths working group – no meeting held.*

- c) *To receive an update from the Parking Review task and finish group – no meeting held*

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* – Cllr Jeans advised that a Community Benefit Interest Company had been formed. Cllr Jeans will be a trustee. The head of IT at Adnams will be part of the management committee.

- b) *Coastal Community Team* – Cllr Ladd advised that approximately 150 people had attended the consultation at Buckenham Galleries. No analysis of the responses has presently been undertaken but these should be available for the next steering group meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> March. The analysis of those attending the consultation was provided to members. As the next stage of the process the steering group will draw out the main priorities arising from the consultation. The consultation is still available for completion online for which there is a link on the Town Council website.

8. **Southwold Business Rates** – *meeting hosted by Town Mayor with Dr Therese Coffey MP and some Southwold independent traders 17<sup>th</sup> February 2017. See report attached.*

Cllr Windell suggested that the Town Council should write to MP Therese Coffey to thank her for her efforts with regards to business rates and the particular issues being experienced within Southwold. Members acknowledged that the MP and Town Mayor have been actively involved in lobbying for Southwold to be considered as an exceptional case and recent press reports do seem to suggest that National Government will consider increased concessions for hotspots such as Southwold. **It was RESOLVED by all to send a letter of thanks to MP Therese Coffey as acknowledgement of the help being given by her, but asking that pressure continues to be exerted on Central Government on behalf of the traders of Southwold.**

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

*Spring Ball – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017.* The meeting was advised that all tickets have been sold.

10. **Annual Town Meeting – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7pm.** Guest Presenters – To receive presentation on the proposed management plan for the Open Space including Marshes/Common, and to receive presentation by Jo Metcalfe from Greener Growth on proposals for the land on Mights Road.

11. **Financial Matters**

a) *Accounts for Payment - To receive the accounts for payment for February 2017 (circulated to members).* **It was RESOLVED unanimously to approve the Accounts for Payment for February 2017.**

b) *To receive recommendation regarding a contribution to the Town Crier Art work – see papers attached.*

**RECOMMENDATION – In recognition of the service that John Barber has made to the Town Council and to the Town of Southwold, it is recommended by the finance working group that the Town Council ‘kick starts’ the public contributions by providing an interim contribution of £300 to the Southwold Millennium Foundation. Donation to be made from the 2016/17 donations budget (£4875 budget). Already committed £4000.**

Cllr Horwood noted that the Trustees of the Millennium Foundation had declared a personal interest and asked whether they could therefore vote. The Town Clerk advised that it was up to individuals to consider whether they wished to vote or not but that with reference to Code of Conduct on personal declarations, there was no regulation preventing them from voting on this subject .

On behalf of the Millennium Foundation Cllr Ladd advised that £60 has been received to date from community members and the plea for public donations will be heightened. Cllr Ladd advised that the portrait is likely to be offered to the Town Council by the Millennium Foundation.

Cllr Ladd also asked that it be noted that the Millennium Foundation had not made any donation request to the Town Council and that this recommendation had come purely from the Finance Working Group.

The Millennium Foundation has already purchased the portrait on behalf of the town but are looking for community donations as it is not part of the core activity of the Foundation to purchase such assets. Discussion took place between members as to personal donations to the community fund and the recommendation for the Town Council to “kick start” this process by making its own contribution. Discussion took place regarding the word “interim” contained in the recommendation and after due discussion **it was RESOLVED that the word “interim” would be removed from the recommendation as an amendment to the proposal.**

*Amended recommendation– In recognition of the service that John Barber has made to the Town Council and to the Town of Southwold, it is recommended by the finance working group that the Town Council ‘kick starts’ the public contributions by providing a contribution of £300 to the Southwold Millennium Foundation.*

*Donation to be made from the 2016/17 donations budget (£4875 budget). Already committed £4000.*

**On the proposal of Cllr Horwood, seconded by Cllr Windell it was agreed by a majority to make a contribution of £300 as per the amended recommendation above. 7 in favour, 1 abstain, 2 against.**

- c) *To receive recommendation that the budget for the purchase of a new shuttle bus be assigned to the Finance working group to enable their negotiation and purchase of a new vehicle. See papers attached.*

Lengthy debate took place regarding the shuttle bus. It was noted that the majority of users were from Reydon and the meeting was advised that Reydon Parish Council considered a donation at their last meeting and will be advising the Town Council in due course of the outcome of their discussions.

Discussion took place regarding the appropriate size of a new bus as it was felt that any vehicle with a larger wheelbase would have difficulties travelling around the town.

Cllr Ladd advised that the shuttle bus had scored highly on the consultation for the Coastal Community Team (CCT) and that those items deemed to be main priorities of the CCT could be eligible for funding. This opportunity may present itself for the shuttle bus but obviously could not be guaranteed. Cllr Ladd therefore suggested that the Finance Working Group continue to research and source a bus and that anything the CCT could provide would be an additional bonus.

Cllr Windell reminded members that it was Reydon residents who wanted a shuttle bus at the outset and that he would hope that they would be looking to support financially in future years. Discussion then took place about the increase in running costs which are occurring due to the increase in repairs required on the existing bus.

**Recommendation ; to enable a purchase to be made without further reference to full Council it is recommended that the Finance working group be provided with delegated power to enable the purchase/ lease of a new shuttle bus as soon as a suitable opportunity arises within the limits of**

**the Town Council budget for this capital expenditure. Budget of capital expenditure of £30,000 maximum to be permitted under this delegation, or a maximum lease agreement of £1000 per month over 36 months. To be taken from Capital Reserves 2017.18 as per budget discussions. On the recommendation of Cllr Horwood, seconded by Cllr Palmer, it was RESOLVED to approve the recommendation - unanimous.**

- d) *To receive recommendation that the Town Council approve the funding for the PCSO for Southwold for 2017/18. See paper attached. Recommendation: To ensure that a police presence is retained in Southwold it is recommended that the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk sign off the Service Level Agreement for the provision of a fully funded PCSO from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019.*

Members discussed the report provided and considered whether the resource of a PCSO was required in Southwold for 2017.18.

Council were asked to consider how police time could be more effectively and efficiently utilised - and it was suggested that perhaps an option would be to allow the police access to a dedicated mobile phone on which residents could send text messages advising the police of matters that needed to be brought to their attention i.e. with regards to parking. Discussion also took place regarding the shift pattern of the PCSO and whether this could be influenced to ensure their availability in Southwold over the summer months was over and above that in the winter months. Members noted that additional funds would need to be paid for Bank Holiday cover. Members noted the suggestion of monthly information being placed in the local magazines and it was considered that this would be extremely useful for residents. Cllr Windell confirmed that the police must be held to account as the Town Council will be fully funding the salary should the matter be approved. It was agreed that should the resolution be approved, then a press release would be sent out detailing the expenditure provided by the council on this police resource and highlight this service as an example of what the precept is being spent on. On the recommendation of Cllr Horwood, seconded by Cllr Bradbury **it was unanimously RESOLVED to approve that the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk sign off the Service Level Agreement for the provision of a fully funded PCSO from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

12. **To receive update from Town Mayor of events/ meetings attended including;**

*Future Events*

Commonwealth Day – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017. Affirmation to be read at 9.55am.

Unveiling of Southwold & Reydon Society Map Boards – date to be confirmed

13. **Correspondence.**

a) Police report February 2017 – received and noted.

b) To receive proposed public meeting dates for future PCC meetings – received and noted.

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.

Nil.

15. **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 2/2017 of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017 with recommendations in relation to a) Casino, and b) Police/Fire Station site (see attached pink papers).

It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the recommendation in LL2/2017 with regards to the Casino.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the recommendation in LL 2/2017 with regards to the Police/ Fire station site.

b) To receive the confidential written report and recommendation of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 in relation to Town Council assets (see attached pink papers).

It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the first recommendation in the report with regards to the Town council assets.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to defer the second recommendation in the report with regards to the Town council assets.

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

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017 at 7.30pm at the Town Hall.

\_\_\_\_\_ TOWN MAYOR 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017