



# Saxmundham Town Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of Resource Committee on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2020 at 11.00 by Video Conference

### Committee Members:

Cllr. John Findlay (Chair)  
Cllr. Jeremy Smith,  
Cllr. Di Eastman  
Cllr. Nigel Hiley  
Cllr. James Sandbach (arrived at end of the meeting)

Also Present: R Barnett (Town Clerk)

Please note – all documents will be signed at the first opportunity as this was a Zoom meeting.

**56/20R** Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

**57/20R** Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

**58/20R** Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was unanimously RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> of November and these will be signed at the first opportunity.

**59/20R** Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

**60/20R** Finance

- a) It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the November payments presented to the Town Council with the addition of two late payments of £1025 for the business Christmas trees and £600 for the IP17 co-ordinator.
- b) It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the November payments for the Market Hall.
- c) The balances of £16,877.44 in the Market Hall Account and £ 198,118.82 in the Town Council account were noted. Cllr. Eastman stated that she had completed the checks on the bank reconciliations up to the end of October. The Clerk apologised for not providing an up-to-date statement for the Cambridge Society savings account and confirmed that there had been no transactions against this account since the September meeting.
- d) The reports on performance against budget for both the Town Council and the Market Hall were reviewed. Councillors noted the overspend to the IT budget due to the new email addresses for councillors, the purchase of finance software and the new IT support contract. It was also noted that the agency fees had been overspent due to the locum clerk costs.

The clerk suggested the following virements.

- Vire £1,500 from Staff salaries to Agency to cover locum clerk costs
- Vire £1,200 from hire of hall for meetings and the remainder of the Town House cleaning budget to the IT budget line.

Concern was expressed that virements may mask how the council was spending the budget. It was agreed to approve the virements and to include an explanatory note in the revised budget to show the overspends and how funds have been moved to address them.

Signed

Date

21.04.21

Councillors agreed that the allocation of £7k CIL funds previously agreed would be transferred to the Market Hall account to contribute to the overall refurbishment budget.  
Councillors also agreed to allocate £1500 as match funding towards the town centre signage project to cover additional permission costs. The actual budget code would be agreed at the next meeting.

**61/20R**      **Proposed Budget**

Councillors expressed their strong desire not to increase the precept in 2021-22 as they were very conscious of the hardship Covid-19 is causing the residents of the Town. Due to the careful management of the finances by the current council and historical raises in the precept of the previous council the goal to keep the precept at the current level is achievable. The proposed budget will allow the council to make the necessary improvements to the Town and provides an additional £10,000 for Covid-19 community cohesion projects.

This proposal is subject to East Suffolk confirming the tax base figures in early January. Councillors expressed a wish to use reserves if there is a shortfall in the budget as a result of the January announcements. The clerk suggested that a press release should be considered, and it was agreed to do this in January when figures are confirmed.

**It was unanimously RESOLVED to recommend the draft budget to full council for approval.**

**62/20R**      **Alde & Blythe Radio Station**

Councillors were extremely enthusiastic about the idea of a new radio station being based in Saxmundham. They also noted their general support for the Alde and Blythe Radio station using the Webster room at the Market hall for an initial period of a year. The Market Hall committee however would need to be consulted on their next meeting on December the 21<sup>st</sup>. The clerk was authorised to conduct initial negotiations with the radio team.

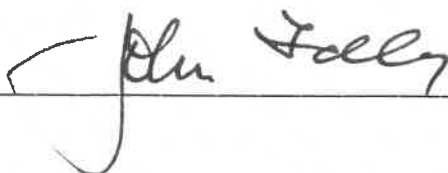
**62/20R**      **A motion under the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussions regarding personnel matters and contract hours was unanimously RESOLVED.**

Councillors reviewed a paper produced by the clerk as a framework for considering staffing levels for the future. Cllrs requested that the clerk amend the paper to mirror the strategic aims already approved by the council. The clerk explained that she would use the amended document to consult with staff and councillors to map out the future operational requirements of the Council and would bring a more detailed paper to the December Resources Committee

Cllr. Smith reported that the council has now agreed to Access's request to end the Service level agreement which will officially terminate on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January. The council has paid for the service until the end of December 2020 and councillors noted that there would be a saving for January-March. The committee noted that the Youth Provision contribution has been reduced to £9000 for 21-22 budget.

**Roz Barnett  
Clerk/RFO**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



Date \_\_\_\_\_

21.04.21