



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council 7.00 pm 13th July 2020 by Video Conference

Councillors:

Cllr. Jeremy Smith (Chair)
Cllr. Nigel Hiley
Cllr. Jonathon Macro

Cllr. Di Eastman (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. Georgia Watson
Cllr. James Sandbach

Cllr. John Findlay
Cllr. Charlotte Hawkins
Cllr. Annabelle Reynolds

Cllr. John Fisher
Cllr. Tim Lock

Also Present: Karen Forster (Town Clerk/RFO), 1 member of the public joined during the meeting.

PLEASE NOTE, AS THIS MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY, ALL DOCUMENTS WILL BE SIGNED AT THE EARLIEST CONVENIENCE.

There were no members of the public present so there was no Open Forum.

The Chair welcomed all of the members to the meeting and hoped that the next meeting could be held in the Market Hall, which was agreed by all.

The Chair asked for agreement to move item 10. (New Windows and Doors for the Ops Building) to the end of the meeting as it would need to be confidential due to the commercial information.

014/20TC Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllr. Reynolds and Cllr. Watson. **NOTED**

015/20TC Declarations of Interest

There were non-pecuniary Declarations of Interest from Cllr. Eastman as a trustee of the IP17 GNS Charity and Cllr. Smith as a director on the board of SADCIC.

016/20TC Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the AGM 1st June 2020 and the Town Council meeting of 1st June 2020 were presented for approval. There were no points raised. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve both sets of the minutes.** The Chair will sign at the first opportunity.

017/20TC County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Richard Smith MVO had sent his apologies as he had to attend another meeting.

018/20TC District Councillor's Report

Cllr. Fisher, as District Councillor, had sent a report which had been circulated. He had nothing to add and there were no further questions. The Chair extended his thanks for the information.

019/20TC Chair's Report

The Chair updated Council regarding the recruitment of the new permanent Clerk/RFO. Cllrs. Smith, Eastman and Findlay had met, as agreed by the Resources committee, and confirmed the previously agreed Job Description and Person Specification were still valid. They had agreed the text for an advertisement which had been circulated, to be placed in the EADT and various local government websites. It was confirmed that the closing date would be mid-August with interviews to take place at end of August/beginning September. It was also noted that the interim Clerk had offered to stay on for a short while to support the new Clerk in the role of RFO.

20/20TC Clerk's Report

The Clerk had nothing to report.

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21/20TC Finance

- a) The Clerk confirmed that the mandate to remove the previous Clerk had been submitted. **NOTED.** The previous mandate change to add Cllrs. Macro and Reynolds had mistakenly been closed by Barclays. A new mandate to add Cllr. Macro had been submitted. **NOTED**
- b) The Resources Committee had recommended that a new account was set up with the Cambridge Building society so as to diversify the Councils finances. After some discussion, it was proposed that £50,000 is deposited initially and the RFO will present a cash flow forecast to the next Resources Committee to determine if this could be raised to £85,000. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to open the new account under the above proposal.**
- c) The Clerk stated that there was currently £205,431 in the Town Council current account and £ 7,773 in the Market Hall Account. The month end accounts of spend against budget had been circulated and there were no questions. **NOTED**
- d) The Clerk had circulated a letter from the Art Station regarding a donation from Council. Likewise, the Chair of SADCIC had contracted Cllr. Smith asking about a contribution towards their move to Street Farm road. The Chair stated that he recommended an agreement is drawn up with the Art Station regarding the monies being used for a community purpose and repaid if not able to achieve this. The CIL funds had previously been allocated to both projects to the sum of £4,000 each. **It was unanimously RESOLVED that, subject to a legal agreement, a sum of £4,000 was paid to the Art Station. Additionally, that the Chair of SADCIC is to be informed that £4,000 has been earmarked for their project, when they needed to call upon it.**

22/20TC Policies

It was unanimously RESOLVED to adopt the Reserves Policy and the Model Publications Policy as recommended by the Resources Committee.

23/20TC ESDC Community Partnership

Cllr. Findlay reported that, before the COVID pandemic, under the ESDC Community Partnership, STC had applied for £4,040 towards signage in the town. Recently, STC had been contacted to reapply, which had been completed, and was being supported by the Chair of the Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and villages Community Partnership, Cllr. Tony Cooper. **NOTED**

24/20TC COVID 19

- a) The Clerk updated the Council regarding the re-opening of the Market Hall. All required risk assessments had been completed, hand sanitisers had been installed, instructions regarding COVID restrictions had been created and issued to hirers and all wipes and cleaning materials were now available. The kitchen would not be opened. The first hirers will be the Church group on Sunday 19th July and a children's group will be held on Monday mornings during August. **NOTED.** The Chair added that the planned redecoration and refurbishment would be scheduled during August around the booked times.
- b) The Play areas had been re-opened following the risk assessments being completed. **NOTED**
- c) Following the announcement by ESDC in June of the funds to assist with re-opening the high street through enabling social distancing and similar, the Town Council had applied for a number of items such as signs, a temporary speed reduction and barriers at pinch points. To date, nothing has been received and the speed reduction and barriers has been rejected. This has been taken up with the Cabinet member for ESDC and for the County Council and the TC is awaiting a review. In the meantime, the Council has purchased signs asking motorists to drive slowly to protect pedestrians and introduced an advisory one-way pavement system using hedgehogs as indicators. This has attracted interest in the media and the Council has featured in an article in the EADT and a number of councillors were interviewed by BBC radio Suffolk. A competition for children to name and draw the hedgehog is to be launched. The Chair thanked all the councillors who have been involved in this project.
- d) Cllr. Eastman provided an update on the work of IP17 GNS. They have taken on extra work delivering prescriptions and will be running some fitness activities for young people and running small music events in care homes in August. The Co-ordinator has been retained until the end of September. A report will

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be compiled to review the work and strategy for the future and will be presented in September along with the results of a survey. Cllr. Hiley asked whether a further leaflet should be delivered. Cllr. Eastman suggested that it would be best to wait for the results of the survey. **NOTED**

25/20TC Local and Neighbourhood Plans

Further to the inspector's report on the Local Plan, the district council published their modifications. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group put together a report highlighting phrases which needed further attention in this report from ESDC, and it was submitted to the planning consultation. Cllr. Findlay thanked Cllr. Smith on his forensic analysis of the modifications and the response submitted. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to support the response to the Local Plan modifications.**

The results of the household survey, which attracted responses from 25% of the residents of Saxmundham, have been collated and will be published on the Neighbourhood Plan website. Paper copies will be made available.

At this point a member of the public joined the meeting but declined an invitation to speak.

26/20TC Creation of the Saxmundham Community Partnership Group

Cllr. Eastman had issued a proposal, previously circulated, to create a group of the local volunteer and community groups, who would meet twice a year with the Town Council to discuss their needs and their plans and share information. After discussion, **it was unanimously RESOLVED to support the proposal in principle and authorise Cllrs. Eastman, Sandbach and Hiley to approach the relevant bodies to agree the objectives and how it would function.**

27/20TC NALC consultation on the Code of Conduct

A consultation has been sent out by NALC on behalf of the LGA on strengthening the Code of Conduct for Councils regarding poor or inappropriate behaviour by Councillors. It was supported by a number of Councillors. The Clerk was asked to respond on the Councils behalf. **NOTED**

28/20TC Update on the flooding of the irrigated drive north of Waitrose

An email regarding the above had been received by the Clerk. The Chair explained that he was still trying to establish the owner of this land. Cllr. Fisher stated that he too had been researching this with the district council as he believed some of the strip was owned by them. This will be pursued. **NOTED**

29/20TC Sizewell C

A motion that Saxmundham is opposed to the development of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station, as proposed by Cllr. Hiley, was discussed. This was seconded by Cllr. Sandbach. The main issue was stated to be that throughout the consultation process, STC has raised concerns regarding traffic, noise, environment and accommodation. None have these has ever been addressed.

Cllr. Smith proposed an amendment to the proposal to state that Saxmundham Town Council is therefore opposed to the development of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power "as presently proposed".

It was RESOLVED by a majority vote to accept the amendment.

After further discussion and a few minor amendments to correct spelling and syntax, the following proposal was put to the vote:

Saxmundham Town Council's position on the development of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power

Saxmundham Town Council notes that EDF submitted application for the Sizewell C nuclear power plant for planning consent on May 26th, and that the UK Planning Inspectorate on 24th June accepted for examination the planning application for the Sizewell C nuclear power plant. Council is concerned about pursuing the application at a time when community engagement and consultation are difficult, and notes that:

1) The Town Council has taken part in all stages of the EDF consultation; at each stage we have raised significant issues about the unacceptable environmental and social costs to the town and area, but very

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little about the development proposals has changed, and there have been significant gaps of information in the documentation provided.

2) Other Councils and local stakeholders have raised similar concerns in respect of the environmental and social costs and risks, the huge disruption and burden on local services, the importance of preserving our unique heritage coast, the detrimental impact on wildlife and ecology particularly in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, and the potential damage to our existing local economy including tourism.

3) The national debate on energy has also moved on significantly since the project was first announced in 2009/10 with greater focus on the potential of renewable energy sources; this is also relevant given the long life-cycle of the project (projected completion and first generation dates of Sizewell C now being in the early to mid 2030s).

Saxmundham Town Council is therefore opposed to the development of the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station as presently proposed.

It was RESOLVED by a majority vote to accept the proposal.

It was noted that a letter from the Suffolk Coastal Friends of the Earth asking for a donation in funding expert scientific witnesses to write reports and speak for them in the infrastructure planning examination of the Sizewell C application. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to send £400 as a grant.**

30/20TC Offer of a tree from the W.I.

The WI have recently contacted the Council to offer a tree. After discussion **it was unanimously RESOLVED to accept the tree, to match it with another financed by the Council and to plant both in the front of the Town Council offices in Saxmundham so as to enhance the area.**

31/20TC Committee Meetings

The draft and approved minutes of the following meetings were noted:

- Resource Committee meeting – 29/6/20
- Planning & Development Control Committee meetings – 8/6/20 & 22/6/20 & 6/7/20
- Amenities & Services Committee meeting - 15/6/20
- Market Hall Management Committee meeting – 29/6/20

Cllr. Fisher is to follow up on the proposed variations to the station building.

32/20TC It was unanimously RESOLVED to accept a motion in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for the discussion of commercial matters.

In summary, the refurbishment of the windows and doors at the Old Police Station was discussed. This will involve the removal of the panels under and above windows which contain asbestos and the replacement of the windows, soffits, front doors and similar. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to award the contract for the window replacement to Waveney Windows and to set up a budget provision to remove the asbestos and other smaller works.** This budget provision will be monitored by the Clerk, the Chairs of Resources, Amenities & Services and the Vice Chair and will return to Council if there is the possibility that it will be exceeded. Once the quotations for the asbestos removal have been received, the contractor and value of the contract will be disclosed to the public.

The meeting closed at 9.08 p.m.

**Karen Forster
Clerk/RFO to Saxmundham Town Council
Old Police Station, Approach Road
Saxmundham, IP17 1BW**

Signed



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