



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council 7.55 PM 1st June 2020 by Video Conference

Councillors: Cllr. J. Smith Cllr. J. Fisher Cllr. J. Findlay Cllr. D. Eastman
Cllr. N. Hiley Cllr. G. Watson Cllr. C. Hawkins Cllr. A. Reynolds
Cllr. J. Macro Cllr. J. Sandbach Cllr. T. Lock

Also Present: K. Forster (Town Clerk/RFO), J. Morcom (Assistant Town Clerk (ATC)),
County Councillor R. Smith MVO

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.

01/20TC Apologies for Absence

There were apologies from Cllr. A. Reynolds. **NOTED**

02/20TC Declarations of Interest

There was a declaration of Interest from Cllr. Eastman as a trustee of the IP17 GNS Charity.

03/20TC Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, 9th March 2020 and the extra-ordinary meeting of 20th March 2020 were presented for approval. There were no points raised. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the minutes of 9th March 2020 and 20th March 2020.** The Chair will sign at the first opportunity.

04/20TC County Councillor's Report

EDF

County Councillor Smith MVO reported that EDF had submitted their application to the planning inspectorate despite being requested by both the County Council and the District Council to withhold from doing so during the Coronavirus. He doubted whether the Inspectorate would find that they had not held sufficient consultation.

He registered that he is opposed to Sizewell C. In response to a question from Cllr. Sandbach, he stated that he thought the best grounds on which to oppose the application is the siting Sizewell C in an AONB and the congestion that will be caused to the roads during the development. He believes it is a major concern for all local communities.

The Chair stated that an item regarding how to respond to the application should be included on the next Full Council agenda.

CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY

The County Councillor stated that he was very impressed by the work being done by the IP17 GNS group. The County Council was collecting and distributing PPE to care homes and a number of Council workers had been retrained to assist with the emergency. For instance, Fire Officers were retrained to help on ambulances.

There has been issues with testing however Ipswich test centre is busy.

Leiston Household Waste recycling centre was now open by appointment.

Cllr. Hiley asked why there had been a high incidence of the virus in Ipswich Care homes. County Councillor Smith MVO stated he was unaware of this.

Cllr. J Smith asked if there was a breakdown of the cases and deaths in East Suffolk. County Councillor Smith MVO was unable to provide however Cllr. Watson has a link that she will forward from the EADT.

Signed

Date

14/7/20

05/20TC District Councillor's Report

Cllr. Fisher, as District Councillor reported that he was very strongly opposed to Sizewell C and he considered that a sound reason to object is that the site is not big enough, as recognised by EDF. The officers at East Suffolk District Council (ESDC) had been managing the response to COVID 19. Cllr. Fisher stated that the cutting of verges had been discussed at previous meetings and it had been agreed that this would be left for the time being. He had received a complaint from one resident regarding the grass cutting on Fromus walk which is District Council land.

06/20TC Chair's Report

The Chair opened his report by thanking the staff of the Council for the work they had been doing in keeping the Council running and the clearing out and redecoration that had been undertaken in the OPS building.

He also welcomed the work being carried out by IP17 GNS.

He has concerns about how the High Street will enable people to achieve social distancing as it starts to reopen. It is not possible in certain parts of the town to walk safely on the pavements when passing someone without stepping into the road. A small Whatsapp group had discussed options to safely open the High Street. There may be opportunities to instigate a pedestrianised area, widen the pavements or one-way system. Additionally, there could be a one-way system on the pavements or reduction in speed to make it safer for pedestrians. The Chair proposed that a group of Councillors and members of the Neighbourhood plan steering group could meet to lay out some ideas.

Cllr. Sandbach raised the point that the ESDC were providing funding to assist with the safe reopening of the high streets. The Clerk confirmed that she is attending a virtual meeting on Tuesday to hear the detail and would pass this on. She also confirmed that the one-way pavement project in Southwold had been very successful despite initial doubts from the shop keepers.

County Councillor Smith MVO stated that he was concerned that Highways would be able to respond quick enough and therefore could Council ensure that they work through him to make these requests. The Chair stated that he had received information regarding a temporary policy from Highways to speed through proposed temporary changes.

07/20TC Clerk's Report

The Clerk had circulated a brief report of the activity during the Lock Down.

The Clerk asked for the following decisions, taken through the lockdown to be ratified by Council.

- Confirmation of acceptance of the quotation from Norse for Grass Cutting
- Authorisation to Pay List 30th April 2020
- The List of Authorised and Regular payments list for year 2020/21
- Funding for the IP17 GNS, B. Peall and the Website Co-ordinator & support
- Upgrade to Rialtas Accounting Software
- Payment of the Insurance due in April.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to ratify the above decisions.

08/20TC Finance

- a) The Internal Control Review had been completed by Cllr. Eastman as a non-signatory and had been circulated. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to accept the Internal Control Review.**
- b) A list of Direct Debits had been circulated. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the list of Direct Debits.**
- c) The List of Payments & Required Authorisations for the Town Council for May had been circulated, including the £4,000 grant previously discussed for the Boiler to the Market Hall. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to authorise the payments.**
- d) The List of Payments & Required Authorisations for the Market Hall for May had been circulated. At this point, Cllr. Fisher declared a non-pecuniary interest in the payment to Fishers as he is one of the landlords to the store. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to authorise the payments.**

Signed



Date

14/7/20

- e) The Clerk had circulated a brief report regarding the year end accounts. The main issue had been the Asset register which had not been reviewed for 2 years. Consequently, the internal auditor had marked this down for attention. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk are reviewing the asset register, alongside the insurance, to present to Council in July and the Clerk has prepared an explanation about this for the External Auditor. **NOTED**
- f) The Clerk had circulated the Accounts detail versus budget for YTD. There were no questions. She stated that the first ½ of the precept had been received 1st May. **NOTED**.
CIL monies of £2,246 had been received in April. **NOTED**.
The Bank Balance as at end of May stood at £ 217,176.52. **NOTED**. The Clerk is looking for alternative accounts so as to transfer some of the funds to be prudent and safeguard funds. **NOTED**

09/20TC Audit

- a) The Council discussed the impact the Coronavirus had had on the Councils finance notwithstanding the extra-ordinary meeting that was held in March to organise a response before Lockdown. It was noted that £10,000 had been transferred to an emergency fund to support the IP17 GNS group, from an expected grant to the music festival which was no longer to happen. The situation is being continually reviewed and will be discussed again at the next Resources Committee meeting.
- b) **Internal Audit Report:** The Chair read through the recommendations from the internal audit report and noted the internal auditors report as part of the AGAR. The Chair proposed that the recommendations are noted and accepted. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to note and accept the recommendations.**
- c) The Chair read through each of the Annual Governance Statements. Every statement was answered Yes. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement.**
- d) The Chair confirmed that all members had received a copy of the accounting statements. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements.**

Cllr. Sandbach asked it be minuted that Council thanked the Clerk in providing the comprehensive information behind the audit.

10/20TC Coronavirus Emergency & the Work of IP17 GNS

A report had previously been circulated by Cllr. Eastman (appendix (i)) from which she highlighted some of the points.

Cllr. Sandbach additionally stated that it had been a successful initiative however the relationship between the Council with IP17 NGS after the lock down needs to be considered as it had been very successful in getting communities and volunteer groups to work together.

Cllr. Eastman proposed that the Co-ordinator B. Peall be extended on the current contract until the end of July and this would be reviewed at that point. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to extend contract for the Co-ordinator of IP17 GNS until end of July.**

It was also unanimously agreed that B. Peall had done an excellent job and that thanks should be extended to her from Council.

At this point, County Councillor R. Smith MVO left the meeting.

11/20TC Local and Neighbourhood plan

Cllr. Smith reported that the Inspector had reviewed the local plan and given the go ahead for the 800 dwellings Garden Neighbourhood but had stated that it should not include the Layers or any part of the East of the Railway as this should be designated as a green space.

There is a consultation on his findings and the District Council's proposed revisions until early July.

Cllr. Findlay stated that the Neighbourhood plan group needs to develop its plans further so as to go out to the community and ESDC. **NOTED**

12/20TC Draft minutes of the Resources Meeting

It was unanimously RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Resources Meeting 17th March 2020.

Signed



Date

14/2/20

13/20TC Temporary Website

When the Clerk moved over to the new computer, it was not possible to transfer the access to the old website. As there is a new one planned, the Clerk has set up a temporary website using the CAS facility which will be made public this week. It will have links to the old one and the Market Hall Website.

NOTED

The Chair thanked all members of the Council and Staff for attending this long session of meetings on Zoom and looked forward to seeing everyone in the near future.

The meeting closed at 9.28 p.m.

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

Signed  Date 14/7/20

**Appendix (i) Report on IP17 NGS by Cllr. Eastman
REPORT TO SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL ON THE WORK OF THE IP17 GOOD NEIGHBOUR
SCHEME ('IP17GNS') UPTO 31.05.20**

Background

As you know, IP17GNS is a charity which was formed to support the residents of Saxmundham, Kelsale, Carlton, Benhall and Sternfield through the Covid-19 emergency. At the Town Council Meeting held on Friday, 20th March, it was agreed that Cllrs Eastman and Sandbach would represent the Council's interests in support of IP17GNS. Cllr Eastman was subsequently selected as the Lead Co-ordinator, with Cllr Sandbach as Deputy Lead Co-ordinator. Reporting directly to Cllr Eastman, Bryony Peall was appointed as Operations Co-ordinator, with her costs being paid by the Town Council, as well as Olly Hill in respect of website and data management system costs. Cllr Eastman was also appointed a Trustee of IP17GNS. IP17GNS was launched with the distribution of a flyer delivered to every household in Saxmundham and Kelsale, which doubled up as a poster that residents could put in their windows if they were self-isolating. A much smaller targeted flyer (200) was delivered to areas of the Town known to house older and more vulnerable residents, specifically advertising our frozen meals and essential supplies service. As an update to residents, an IP17GNS newsletter has been drafted and is currently with Leiston Press for printing and will be delivered to all households by next weekend.

Our objective has been to support all residents including the shielded, vulnerable, infirm, those in isolation through illness and people suffering financial difficulties because of the lockdown. The following table lists the number of cases logged as at week ending 31/5/20:

SERVICE	No of cases
Food:	
- food parcels	35
- essential shopping collection & delivery*	10
- free essential supplies drop off*	10
- 'click & collect' orders*	10
- emergency food bags*	66
- foodbank referral	12
- frozen meal delivery**	12
Sub-total	152
Prescriptions:	
- Magnox collect and drop off (doctors)	1982
- Volunteer collect and drop off (chemist)	48
Sub-total	2030
Phone Buddy Calls:	65
TOTAL	2247

% of cases by location:

65% Saxmundham
21% Kelsale
11% Benhall
3% Others

% volunteers by location:

65% Saxmundham
14% Kelsale
7% Benhall
14% Others

*w.e.f. 1st May

**w.e.f. 12th May

The prescription service and the phone buddy service have remained largely unchanged throughout the Covid-19 emergency. However, the food provision service has changed from being initially an 'on request' parcel food delivery service, when residents were struggling to buy essentials due to the panic buying, to a much broader service comprising the following:

- Collection and delivery of essential shopping if residents cannot get out;
 - Dropping off free essential supplies where residents are unable to pay by card or facing financial difficulties;
 - Deliver 'click and collect' orders from Waitrose, Saxmundham;
 - Set up 3 emergency food collection points where residents can help themselves
 - in Saxmundham (outside Town Council Office (Old Police Station); Kelsale (opposite the bike shelter at the primary school; Benhall (in phone box opposite the school).
- Foodbank referrals are made for residents who are in need;

Signed 

Date 14/7/20