



## Saxmundham Town Council

The Old Police Station, Station Approach, Saxmundham,  
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### Minutes of the Meeting of THE SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL at the MARKET HALL on MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020

**Present:**

Cllr J. Smith, Chairman	Cllr D. Eastman arrived at 7.45pm
Cllr J. Fisher, Vice Chairman	Cllr C. Hawkins
Cllr A. Reynolds	Cllr T. Lock
Cllr J. Findlay	Cllr J. Macro
Cllr N. Hiley	Cllr G. Watson

**In Attendance:**

Council Administration Staff  
Maddie Gallop, Town Clerk/RFO  
Mr Jonathan Clogg, Chartered Surveyor  
3 members of the public

**PUBLIC FORUM:** There were no matters brought to the Council

**REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR:** Apologies received from Cllr R. Smith, County Cllr who was attending another parish meeting.

**REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:**

Cllr J. Fisher advised that there was nothing to report locally to Saxmundham

#### AGENDA

		Action
5620.00	<b>TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:</b>	
5620.01	. To receive amendments to the Register – <b>None declared</b>	
5620.02	• To receive declarations of pecuniary interest in respect of items on the agenda: <b>None declared</b>	
5620.03	• To receive declarations of non-pecuniary interest in respect of items on the agenda: <b>None declared</b>	

- 5620.04 • To consider full/partial dispensations for pecuniary interests declared: n/a
- 5621.00 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSENT FOR ABSENCE.**  
None received
- 5622.00 TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES HELD ON THE 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2019.** Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried**
- 5623.00 CHAIRMAN'S/TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**  
5623.01 Cllr Smith said he had written to Greater Anglia regarding trains being cancelled. As yet there has been no reply.
- 5624.00 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.**  
5624.01 Cllr Smith reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had drafted objectives which had been circulated to Councillors. As yet there had not been any further communication from the Planning Inspector regarding the Local Plan and its proposed Garden Neighbourhood. Strengthening and regeneration of the Town Centre including the Station is ongoing work for the Steering Group. A shift in priorities will be promoted in the Plan regarding traffic management, street design and usage in favour of promotion of pedestrians, cyclists and those who have problems with mobility.  
5624.02 He moved the adoption by the Town Council of the objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan, which were unanimously approved. This will be reported back to the Steering Group.  
5624.03 Improvements to the area around Saxmundham Station, including the Old Police Station, are being considered and we have already received a written report from Mr Jonathan Clogg was invited to explain his findings.
- 5625.00 TO CONSIDER A REPORT ON THE SITE APPRAISAL OF THE OLD POLICE STATION BY MR JONATHAN CLOGG. (attached)**  
Mr Clogg gave an overview appraisal of the Old Police Station buildings and land on Station Approach Saxmundham. He had previously presented his findings to the Resources committee. His report and presentation were noted.  
5625.01 Mr Clogg proposed to the Councillors that the next steps would be to engage with Network Rail and Greater Anglia.  
5625.02 The task of the Neighbourhood Plan group would be to define a development site with agreement of the Landlords. Access to the other side of the railway track could be significant and will require contact with relevant land-owners.  
Cllr Smith thanked Mr Clogg for coming along to go over his report and Cllr Smith told him that the Council would keep him informed of further developments.
- 5626.00 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE.**  
5626.01 To receive the draft minutes of the Resources Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – these were noted.  
5626.02 To note the payments for the Town Council and Market Hall authorised by Resources Committee- these payments were noted.  
5626.03 To receive a report on the most recent bank reconciliations – Cllr D. Eastman confirmed she had checked the reconciliations and they were all correct.  
5626.04 To approve any new urgent expenditure items – these had been circulated (appended herewith) and were unanimously agreed for payment.  
5626.05 To receive and consider the 2019/2020 budget report to the end of December 2019, together with the projected outturn – the report in the form of budget table (including income and expenditure to end December and projected outturn) was considered and noted.

- 5627.00 **TO APPROVE THE 2020/2021 BUDGET.**
- 5627.01 The Chairman set out the main points of the proposed budget for the coming year. The income was almost wholly drawn from the Precept. A working party on the future of the market has recommended that the present policy of not charging stall holders of our weekly market for the remaining months of this current financial year be continued into the following year as the Market is seriously in decline. Discussions are being held on the way forward. The draft budget therefore includes only £1000 for market income, a reduction of income of £4500 on this year's budget under this head.
- 5627.02 Expenditure – The salaries budget is increased by over £4000 to £67,400 in part due to the salary for the new Town Clerk being put onto the next level on the NJC pay scale.
- 5627.03 Youth services expenditure will increase, in line with our agreement with Access Community Trust, by £2000 pa and the Christmas lights spend will increase by £1600 as it covers a bigger area.
- 5627.04 However, there has been a 3% growth in our underlying precept income due to more housing in the town, which will serve to reduce the level of increase in residents' council tax, which is around 5%. The budget has been discussed on a number of occasions and the final version had been previously circulated.
- 5627.05 Cllr Eastman proposed approval of this budget as set out at £225,650.00 for both income and expenditure, seconded by Cllr Hiley. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5628.00 TO DECIDE THE PRECEPT AMOUNT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/2021.**  
The Precept amount had been previously circulated and had been discussed thoroughly. Cllr Smith proposed the agreed amount of £224.500, seconded by Cllr Eastman. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5629.00 RECRUITMENT OF A NEW TOWN CLERK. Deferred to the end of the meeting**
- 5630.00 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE AMENITIES WORKING GROUP.**
- 5630.01 Cllr Lock, Chair of the Working Group, made a brief report.  
Since the last report a number of actions have been carried out around the Market Hall. 2 cracked roof tiles are noted as needing replacing after a drone survey had been completed.  
Youth Booth (YB) – Provision of improved heating has been agreed and STC will pay the cost. The Council has given its support for CYDS for creating a paved area to west of the YB with a youth shelter.  
Memorial Field – Finance has been in principle approved for new bins - Norse will inform us when work completed.  
Trees on Chantry Road Play Area - Work will be undertaken in the next two weeks.  
Old Police Station – an action list needs providing regarding a number of repairs.
- 5631.00 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP.**  
Written report received. Cllr Smith advised that he had been in a meeting with David Gillingwater, the website designer.
- 5632.00 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SALC REPRESENTATIVE.**  
There were no specific SALC matters to report.
- 5633.00 TO DISCUSS ANY PLANNING APPLICATIONS - None received**
- 5634.00 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS OTHER BODIES INCLUDING WORKING PARTIES.**

5634.01 Patients Participation Group (PPG)  
Cllrs Fisher and Hiley reported that they had attended a meeting of the PPG last Wednesday. Members of the PPG queried why the outdoor gym project had not proceeded – Cllr Hiley explained the reasons (a lack of a secure site, costs etc) and recommended that the PPG write to our Town Clerk requesting further information on this. In discussion on this report, Cllr Hawkins was invited to contact Angie Eves, who was previously leading this project, to explain the reasons. Cllr Smith recalled that the Council wish to invite members of the Doctor’s surgery to come to one of our STC meetings to discuss the future of health services in the town.

5634.02 Saxmundham Market Task and Finish group  
This Group, which was set up at the last meeting to discuss future options for the town market, had held a productive meeting involving several Councillors and County Cllr Richard Smith. The Group had concluded that it was important to give the existing Wednesday market another chance to gain success. The Group proposes fees for the stallholders be cancelled for the next year whilst the working party explore the possibilities of improving it e.g. through better signage, A frames, advertising, etc. The aim is to increase stallholders. It was hoped that two A boards will be purchased at a cost of £226 plus VAT; one will be located outside the Market Hall and the other one near the market itself. Cllr Macro was thanked for all his work on this project.

5634.03 Cllr Smith moved that members of the public now leave the meeting as the item on the process of recruitment in relation to the Town Clerk/RFO position might entail private and confidential data being discussed. This was agreed.

**5635.00 RECRUITMENT OF A NEW TOWN CLERK. (Item deferred from earlier on the agenda)**

5635.01 A written report from the Chairman with matters for decision had been circulated.

5635.03 Cllr Smith reported that, in the light of Ms Gallop’s forthcoming retirement as Clerk, he had contacted Jim Friend, Advice Manager at SALC and following this arranged a meeting with Karen Forster, who is Clerk of Heveningham and Huntingfield Parish Councils who had previously assisted at Bungay Town Council as Interim Town Clerk. She is CILCA qualified and has experience in the private sector, as a parish councillor and as Clerk. Cllr Smith thought it would be advantageous to engage her for six months to work alongside our own Town Clerk e.g. one day per week in February and 2 days per week in March, at a cost of around £4000. From the 1st April she would, if agreed by the Council, become the Interim Town Clerk for our Council, for a period he envisaged of around 6 months. This dual arrangement would give more time for the recruitment process for the permanent post-holder to be carried out, and involve less risk for the Council in particular in the transition period. He invited councillors’ views.

5635.03 Cllr Eastman thought this proposal was a good idea, and other councillors concurred. Cllr Smith proposed that, if the proposal is agreed in principle, a panel of Councillors should be appointed to meet up with and interview Karen Forster next week.

After discussion, and on the proposal of the Chairman, it was agreed

- a) To engage the services of Karen Forster to work alongside our Clerk prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March to help secure the effective transition, and to authorize expenditure up to £4000 in the current year for this purpose.
- b) also, to engage her as Interim Town Clerk for a period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 for a period of six months, which might be extended by agreement or shortened by due notice, within the agreed budget framework for the next financial year.
- c) To appoint a panel to interview Karen Forster, comprising Cllrs Smith, Eastman and Findlay, together with Cllr Reynolds, if available.
- d) The Town Council’s decision to make the respective appointment under a) and b) for the above purposes was conditional on the interview panel being fully satisfied that Ms Forster had the relevant skills, experience and qualities required.

- e) The Council authorised the Chairman and Town Clerk to make the detailed contractual arrangements for the engagement of Ms Forster's services, provided the interview panel was satisfied that the appointments should proceed.

**5636.00 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.**

The next meeting of Saxmundham Town Council will be on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7.15pm.

**Meeting ended at 2150 hours**

Dated.....10/2/2020..... Signed..........