



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Saxmundham Town Council at Saxmundham Market Hall on Monday 9th March 2020 at 7.15pm.

Present:

Cllr Jeremy Smith, Chair	Cllr Tim Lock
Cllr John Fisher, Vice Chair	Cllr Nigel Hiley
Cllr Annabelle Reynolds	Cllr John Findlay
Cllr Charlotte Hawkins	Cllr Di Eastman
Cllr J Sandbach	Cllr G Watson

In Attendance:

Maddie Gallop, Town Clerk (TC)
Jenny Morcom, Assistant Town Clerk (ATC)

AGENDA

Action

- 5654.00 OPEN FORUM** – no members of the public attended.
- 5655.00 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**
5655.01 Apologies were received from Cllr Macro who is unwell.
- 5656.00 COUNCILLORS TO DECLARE ANY PECUNIARY OR NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS.**
5656.01 Cllr Hiley declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12 as a member of SMARTCIC.
5656.02 Cllr Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 9 as a member of SADCIC.
- 5657.00 District Councillor report**
5657.01 Cllr Fisher reported that he would be meeting with interested members of the public and an officer from East Suffolk Council to discuss changes in the grass cutting to allow for wild-flower verges.
- 5658.00 TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 10TH FEBRUARY 2020.**
5658.01 The minutes were unanimously agreed and signed.
- 5659.00 CHAIRMAN AND TOWN CLERK'S REPORT.**
5659.01 Cllr Smith explained that this was Maddie Gallop's last meeting after many years as Town Clerk and thanked her on behalf of the Council. Maddie's more formal leaving event will take place at the Annual Town Meeting on 27th April 2020. Maddie thanked councillors for their support.
- 5660.00 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.**

5660.01 Local plan: The provisional report by the Planning Inspector has been published in the form of a detailed letter. With respect to Saxmundham the Inspector has recommended changing the town settlement boundary to exclude the land to the east of the railway line (including The Layers) which should be clearly designated as open space or suitable alternative natural greenspace (SANG), and not as housing development. This is in line with our representations. He considered it possible to build 800 dwellings (the Garden Neighbourhood) on the site between the railway line and the A12.

We understand that East Suffolk Council have accepted the points made by the Planning Inspector in the main.

5660.02 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group met on 24th February and is currently focussing on the Town Centre, and transport and movement. We hope to commission a study to help us masterplan the Town Centre and we are considering different sources of funding.

5661.00 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

5661.01 Cllr Smith presented a report outlining the following priorities for this year's funding:

Purpose 1: improving access from new housing areas to town centre for pedestrians and cyclists

Purpose 2: enhancing children & young people's recreational facilities

Purpose 3: a more attractive & successful town centre to meet needs of growing population

Purpose 4 – reviving the Market Hall as community & entertainment facility

Purpose 5 – enhancing community centre facilities

Purpose 6 – enhancing community arts facilities

Purpose 7 – improving facilities for non-fossil fuel transport modes

There was broad agreement that improving the paths in particular from Hopkins estate to town centre was an immediate priority. There was some discussion about additional lighting for some of the foot paths as some residents are keen to see this.

It was agreed that additional lighting should be deferred to the second tranche of CIL funding expected later in the next financial year, as there are environmental as well as cost issues to consider and some residents may not want more lighting. In the meantime, **Cllr Lock will research the cost of a streetlight from Highways (SCC).**

Cllr L

Cllr Findlay proposed the adoption of the list of priorities and this was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Sandbach joined the meeting at 7.55 pm.

5662.00 Financial matters.

5662.01 To authorise any new, urgent expenditure.

Cllr Fisher declared a pecuniary interest in purchases from Fishers Iron mongers and sought agreement for a permanent dispensation in relation to this as the relationship is indirect. He was advised to write to the town clerk with this request.

The Town Council agreed the items of expenditure as set out by the Town Clerk.

Cllr F

5662.02 To adopt the amended Financial Regulations.
Cllr Findlay proposed that the amended financial regulations should be adopted.

Seconded Cllr Hiley
Unanimously agreed.

5663.00 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP.

5663.01 Cllr Findlay explained that our Area Partnership comprises Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and surrounding areas. Partnerships across East Suffolk have £10,000 each to be committed by 31st March 2020 and then £25,000 per year for the next three years.

We have bid for money for new signs in the Town Centre and expect a decision to be taken on Monday 23rd March 2020.

5664.00 TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE MINUTES AND WORKING PARTY NOTES.

5664.01 Resources Committee held 2nd March 2020, minutes and recommendations:

- a) The minutes of the Resources Committee were noted.
- b) The expenditure agreed by the Resources Committee is to be circulated to all Councillors. TC
- c) **A donation of £10,500 to SMARTCIC for the annual summer music festival was agreed subject to the following conditions:** TC
 - a. STC should be allowed, if they wish, to send a representative to the SMA meetings.
 - b. The budget for this year's event should be produced for Council by end of April.
 - c. There should be a report on the event after it has taken place
 - d. There should be accounts produced and passed to Council after the event has taken place.
- d) **The reviewed and updated Assessment of Management Risks 2020 was adopted.**
- e) **The following changes of the bank mandate and other banking arrangements were proposed by Cllr Findlay and unanimously agreed:** RFO
 - a. Remove signatories who are no longer councillors from the bank mandate.
 - b. Retain Cllrs Smith, Fisher and Findlay.
 - c. Add Karen Forster as a full signatory.
 - d. Proceed to online and telephone banking and delegate the Resources Committee to ensure proper internal controls are put in place. A procedure is being developed based on SALC guidance. Signatories will need to apply for pin sentry machines so that they are able to authorise payments according the new procedure.
 - e. Arrange a debit card for the Market Hall bank account.

5664.02 Amenities Working Group (AWG):

- a) Cllr Lock proposed the purchase two benches and a picnic table for the Memorial Field at a cost of £2,724 plus VAT, in part funded by CIL money as earlier earmarked. **This was unanimously agreed.**
- b) Cllr Lock also reported that we are chasing Norse to attend to the work on play areas identified at RoSPA inspection. The additional bins for the Memorial Field have arrived and will be in place soon.
- c) Work has begun on costing works needed to the Old Police Station, in particular replacement windows.
- d) The new boiler will be installed in the Market Hall week commencing 23rd March.

- e) Cllr Hawkins gave a brief update on the Outdoor Gym: We are aiming for a small number of pieces of equipment at Carlton park aimed at cardiovascular health and if these prove a success we will aim for further equipment for older people aimed at balance and core strength for the Hopkins Park. We are yet to apply for grant funding.

5664.03 Communications Working Group (CWG).

- a) Cllr Eastman reported that the CWG is recommending a .gov.uk domain name and council email addresses for Councillors.
 b) The CWG has arranged Wi-Fi for the Market Hall 23rd March, a new laptop, replacement photocopier/printer and projector for the office.
 c) CWG is working a short Annual Report in time for the Annual Town Meeting.

5664.04 Market Working Group:

We are arranging a meeting between Market Traders and members of the group on Wednesday 18th March at 9 am in the Market Place.

5665.00 DOMAIN NAME.

5665.01 The following proposals were unanimously agreed:

- a) A domain name of saxmundham-tc.gov.uk
 b) Councillor email address format of firstname.surname@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk.
 c) A monthly payment of £52.00 to EBE to cover the cost of the email addresses and additional support.
 d) A one-off payment to EBE of up to £250.00 to set up each individual councillor with their email address.

5666.00 SIZEWELL C.

5666.01 This item was deferred to the May meeting of Saxmundham Town Council. **Cllr Fisher will prepare a report with the 2013 decision on this matter set out in full.**

Cllr Fisher

5667.00 TODISCUSS AND AGREE THE COUNCILS RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

5667.01 **The council agreed the following responses:**

DC/20/0835/FUL - not to oppose.

DC/19/3412/FUL – oppose as per the original application as it is for building a separate dwelling in back garden. TC

DC/20/0553/FUL – not to oppose

DC/20/0675/FUL – not to oppose (Cllr Hawkins abstained from the vote)

DC/20/0679/LBC – not to oppose.

5668.00 TO RECEIVE ANY REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES.

5668.01 Cllr Hiley explained that he would be attending the Patient Participation Group (PPG) this week and it was hoped that Dr Havard would give a run down on the Corona virus.

5668.02 Cllr Smith reported that Saxmundham town council had joined the Rural and Market Towns Group. There is an opportunity for council representatives to receive regular updates from the Group. Agreed: these should be councillors on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Cllr Hiley. **ATC to arrange.**

ATC

5669.00 DATES AND TIMES OF NEXT MEETINGS

5669.01 a) The Annual Town Meeting is on Monday 27th April 2020 doors open at 6pm with the formal part of the meeting beginning at 7.15pm.

b) The next meeting of Saxmundham Town Council is on 11th May 2020 at 7.15pm.

5670.00 PERSONNEL MATTERS (no members of the public had attended the council meeting)
5670.01 To decide on the recommendation of the Resources committee to increase the budget for consultancy services to 31 March2020.
The Council agreed to increase the budget to £5,300

5670.02 To engage the services of Ms K Forster as Interim Town Clerk.
As these arrangements had changed the Assistant Town Clerk left the meeting at 9.45pm

The Chairman informed councillors that, for personal reasons, Ms Forster did not now seek to become Interim Town Clerk as from 12th April as planned, but has agreed to continue provision of her consultancy services for the purpose of securing an effective transition, on a rolling month to month basis on the same terms as hitherto. For this period, she agreed to be the Council's Responsible Finance Officer, pending the new permanent Town Clerk taking office. He proposed that the Assistant Town Clerk be invited to be Acting Town Clerk for this period, with effect from 1st April.*

The Council unanimously agreed these arrangements.

**At the time of preparing these minutes, due to the Coronavirus emergency, this item has evolved. Karen Forster has agreed to continue in the role of Interim Town Clerk as well as RFO, until such time as a permanent person can be appointed in the future.*

The meeting ended at 9.55pm

Signed

Date



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Meeting held at Saxmundham Market Hall on Friday 20th March at 4.00 p.m.

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

Also Present: Maddie Gallop, Town Clerk, Karen Forster, Interim Town Clerk & 9 members of the public.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed the public. He explained that this extra-ordinary meeting was called in order to ensure that the Council could continue to function effectively in the current Coronavirus emergency.

He also explained that Maddie Gallop (Clerk to the Town Council) would be retiring slightly earlier, due to the emergency, and thanked her for all her services to the Council during her time with them. He introduced Karen Forster who would now be taking over as the Interim Clerk.

19/01 Apologies:

Apologies received from Cllrs. N. Hiley & G. Watson

19/02 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in The Fromus Centre which may be raised in item 9.

19/03 Arrangements for Council during the Coronavirus emergency

The Chairman read through the items on the agenda relating to the arrangements for Council during the Coronavirus emergency. After a few small changes the Council **unanimously RESOLVED to approve the following:**

- To expand the Terms of Reference of the Resources committee to increase the number of members to 11 (the whole of council) so as to enable a quorate meeting with people available and able to make decisions.
- To give powers to the Resources Committee to act on all matters not reserved by law to the full council.
- To delegate to the Resources Committee the power to authorise and approve expenditure up to £10,000 excluding VAT and override the Financial Regulations.
- In the exceptional circumstances, whereby the Resource Committee is unable to meet in a timely manner, to delegate to the RFO the power to authorise and approve expenditure on items up to £10,000 excluding VAT with the concurrence of 2 of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Resources Committee. These decisions will be recorded by the RFO.
- All the above to apply until the AGM of the Council.

During this item, Cllr. Sandbach joined the meeting.

19/04 Future meetings

It was agreed that all future meetings will be minimised/cancelled until further notice.

19/05 Annual Town Meeting (ATM)

The Interim Clerk reported that NALC are discussing, with the Government, delaying the ATM as well as changing the dates for the Audit deadlines and the AGM. It was agreed that the Annual Town Meeting is unlikely to happen in April.

Signed _____

Date _____



Saxmundham Town Council

19/06 Clerk/RFO and Assistant Clerk roles

The Chair clarified that Maddie Gallop will be leaving the Council earlier than planned and her last day will be Tuesday 25th March due to the Coronavirus. Cllr. Findlay proposed a round of applause in appreciation of her service.

Karen Forster will be taking over as the new interim Clerk/RFO as of 23rd March 2020 under the previously agreed service terms. Jennifer Morcom will take over as acting Clerk in the case of the interim Clerk being unavailable. **NOTED**

19/07 To authorise the Interim Clerk/Asst. Clerk to cancel Town Council events/activities including bookings in the Market Hall after consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair of Council as appropriate.

It was **unanimously agreed that the Interim Clerk/ Asst. Clerk be authorised to cancel events as above.** It was recommended by Cllr. Sandbach and Cllr. Eastman and agreed by Council that the general approach to letting the hall should be exception only. **NOTED**

19/08 Bank Authorisations and Mandate change.

The Interim Clerk explained that there were only 3 signatories and that, so far, there was no on-line banking set up for Council. In order to change quickly, it was necessary to add anyone who currently banks with Barclays and then, subsequently, add additional Councillors, as well as to proceed with on-line banking for current signatories. **It was unanimously RESOLVED to add Cllr. Macro and Cllr. Reynolds as signatories as soon as possible and to add additional Councillors in the next few weeks. It was noted that Cllr. Eastman will not become a signatory as she reconciles the bank statement.**

The mandate changes will be reviewed at the next AGM.

19/09 AOB

The Chairman introduced this section of the agenda with a recognition of the number of groups and individuals currently working to support others in the town during the Coronavirus emergency. He proposed that the Council set up a town co-ordination group to facilitate liaison between these groups and that money from Council could be set aside to support these efforts as an emergency fund. He also proposed that someone could be appointed to work for the Council as the co-ordinator for (as a suggestion) 12 hours per week for the next 4 weeks and that this person would be paid by the Council. He then opened up this item for comment and discussion from the Council and the members of the public.

The discussion continued for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour. The main points were:

- The Churches group were already working with 90 households and had capacity to expand the services to more people. They would welcome working with other groups.
- The Fromus centre was still open, although most groups had stopped meeting, however the NHS midwives were still operating from there. The representative said that he agreed there was a need for a co-ordinating group and could offer the Fromus facilities as a meeting point.
- A newly formed group "IP17 Good Neighbours Scheme" handed out information about what they had set up already including a website and phone as well as support from Kelsale Parish Council. They have posters and leaflets prepared.
- Access Community Trust representative stated that their building was now closed to the public however could be made available and that there was a need for cohesion. They have resource that could be available to assist with the Co-ordination role.

Signed _____

Date _____



Saxmundham Town Council

- Cllr. Findlay & Cllr. Sandbach stated that a co-ordination group set up under the umbrella of the Town Council would enable the Councils' statutory powers and authority to be deployed. This would not apply if solely done through a voluntary group.
- There were concerns about the availability of information from the District and County Councils.
- Other groups, such as Citizens Advice, Food Bank, DIS and similar should be invited to be involved.
- Methods of communication need to be set up.

After this discussion, the following was agreed:

A co-ordination group will be set up linked to the Council. Cllrs. Eastman and Sandbach will be the Councils representatives on this group. Finance requirements will be identified and the possible employment of a resource to head the co-ordination for Council will be pursued. Access Community Trust will look to provide a full-time resource. All the groups represented at the meeting and the others identified will be invited to be involved.

A meeting to be held Saturday 21st to set up the co-ordination group, enable communications and agree the focus.

The meeting closed at 5.40 pm.

Karen Forster
Clerk to Saxmundham Town Council

Signed _____

Date _____