Roz Barnett

Saxmundham Town Council

Town Council 14 March 2022

**Item 3: Minutes of the Previous Town Council Meeting**

**Appendix 1: Minutes the Meeting of Saxmundham Town Council 7.00pm Monday February 14, 2022, Market Hall, Saxmundham**

**In Attendance - Councillors**

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| Councillor Di Eastman (Vice Chair) |  | Councillor Nigel Hiley |
| Councillor John Findlay |  | Councillor Tim Lock (Arrived 7.14) |
| Councillor John Fisher |  | Councillor James Sandbach (arrived 7.25) |
| Councillor Charlotte Hawkins |  | Councillor Jeremy Smith (Chair) |
| **Apologies** Councillor Roger Hedley Lewis, | | |

**Also present:** Roz Barnett (Town Clerk)

**Open Forum**: Three members of the public attended the meeting and raised their concerns about the Carlton Park Industrial Estate development proposal.

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| 134/21TC | **Apologies and approval of absence.**  Apologies were received from Councillor Roger Hedley Lewis  **RESOLVED: The Town Council noted and approved the absence.** |
| 135/21TC | **Declarations of interest and considerations of requests for dispensations**.  Cllr Di Eastman declared a non-pecuniary interest as she is a trustee of IP17 Good Neighbour Scheme.  Nigel Hiley also declared a non-pecuniary interest as he is involved in Sax Music Fest. |
| 136/21TC | **Minutes of the Previous Town Council meeting.**  **RESOLVED: It was unanimously resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2022 with the addition of Cllr Roger Hedley Lewis in attendance.** |
| 137/21TC | **County Councillor Report.**  County Councillor Richard Smith reported that the planning inspectorate has requested an additional time to make their recommendations on Sizewell C and that the earliest that Minister will decide will be the end of May. He reported that there will be eight overnight trains travelling through Saxmundham to Sizewell. Councillor Hiley asked whether a quieter road surface would help with noise reduction on the A12.  The County Councillor gave a short update on the 2022/2023 budget.  The Chair asked whether the Town Council could be notified of emergency road closures and the County Councillor agreed to ask whether this was possible.  Councillor Lock asked whether the County Council could consult further about the heritage designs on the replacement lampposts. The County Councillor agreed to follow up on this request. |
| 138/21TC | **District Councillor Report.**    District Councillor Fisher reported that East Suffolk have launched a Community Governance Review and this could be used to reshape the boundaries of the Saxmundham Parish to take in the Garden Neighbourhood. |
| 139/21TC | **Chair’s Report.** None made |
| 140/21TC | **Carlton Park Industrial Estate Development Proposal**  Johnathon Clogg gave a short presentation on the planning application at Carlton Park industrial estate DC/21/5742, representing the applicant RSH Ltd  Members of the public, Giles Battersby, Jackie Quilley and Nigel Battersby raised some questions on the development at Carlton Park. They raised reservations about.   * The height and size of the buildings within the development. * Traffic generation to the site especially retailers with frequent customers * Increases in van and HGV traffic. * Visual impact on the landscape and countryside.     They explained that they were in favour of light industrial and office use.  Councillors, although in favour of the new employment opportunities for the Town, raised questions and made the following comments about the development:   * How would the traffic system be enforced to keep additional traffic from accessing the site through Saxmundham? * They would like to see units targeted at small and medium size entreprises. * The scale of the warehousing element and management of litter. * The management regime for the grass and natural areas * That the development should include measures to encourage green travel corridors and cycle storage. * Concern about possible impact of noise and light pollution on the nearby Caravan Park. * What would the landscape impact be on the area? * That there is a need for a cumulative assessment of the multiple developments in and around Saxmundham.   The presenters explained that all the structures would face each other and that low level timed and tasked lighting would be installed across the site. The buildings and their locations had been designed to mitigate the noise and all activities must take place within the buildings. The area will be screened by a 20-metre natural landscaped boundary although the larger buildings will not be hidden. The tenants will pay a service charge to cover road and landscape maintenance.  The Chair thanked the public and the presenters for attending the meeting. |
| 141/21TC | **Minutes of the previous committee meetings.**   1. The Town Council received and noted the draft minutes of the Market Hall Committee held on 26 January 2022. 2. The Town Council received and noted the draft minutes of the Resource Committee held on 31 January 2022. 3. The Town Council noted that the Planning and Development Control Committee (PDCC) meeting of 2 February 2022 was not quorate and therefore could not make formal decisions. |
| 142/21TC | **Financial matters.**   1. **RESOLVED: That the Town Council received and ratified the payments and receipts for the Town Council and Market Hall up to 31 of January 2022. (Appendix A)** 2. The Council received and noted the budget report to the 31st of January 2022, which is showing a projected healthy outturn. |
| 143/21TC | **Standing Orders**  A motion to reduce the specified maximum meeting time from three to two hours was defeated as Councillors were concerned that the shorter time may constrain debate. The Chair however agreed to work towards two-hour meetings wherever possible.  **RESOLVED: That the Town Council reviewed the Standing Orders and agreed that no change was required.** |
| 144/21TC | **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** - To consider potential projects and allocation of the Community Infrastructure Fund. The Council discussed the potential projects for £79,000 for CIL expenditure for the Town.  Councillors discussed the proposed projects for CIL infrastructure projects. Councillor Lock suggested that more money was needed for the Memorial Field and the Gannon Rooms. The Chair suggested that once the Council has agreed the purposes for the CIL money the Council should propose and agree projects for funding.  **RESOLVED: That the Town Council agreed an indicative allocation of funding for Community Infrastructure Consultation (CIL)** **spending for purposes (with potential projects) as listed below:**  **Purpose 1-** Improving access from new housing areas to town centre for pedestrians and cyclists - **£15000**  Improvements to paths from Hopkins Estate to centre; routes from other estates (e.g. to west of town) to town centre.  **Purpose 2 -** Enhancing children & young people’s recreational facilities - **£6000**  Improvements to Seaman Avenue, Memorial Field facilities and Adventure Playground (£2000 already allocated)**.**  **Purpose 3 -** A more attractive & successful town centre to meet needs of growing population - **£10,000**  Environmental improvements such as urban trees; improvements to Fromus Square, parking **.**  **Purpose 4 -** Improving community, entertainment, and cultural facilities in town - **£27,000**  Capital contribution for improvements to Market Hall, Gannon Institute etc. £15,000 Market Hall,  £10,000 Gannon Rooms, £2000 Fromus Centre.  **Purpose 5 -** Improving facilities for non-fossil fuel transport modes - **£6000**  Create new bicycle storage facilities, electric charging points  **Purpose 6 -** Developing new or improving existing open or green spaces for the community - **£10,000**  Memorial Field  **Purpose 7 -** Developing sports and recreational facilities - **£5000**  Improvements Carlton Park  **Total CIL Allocation £79,000** |
| 145/21TC | **Electrical Charging Points**  The Council considered the Amenities Committee recommendation to defer the installation of electrical charging points at the Town House and decided that the £5,500 costs of installation were excessive. The benefits to the Town would not warrant the expenditure, especially as there are 6 chargers at the Fromus Centre. The Council agreed to assess the potential revenue to see if this would be sufficient to offset the costs. Councillor Hiley offered to provide information on the different types of electrical charging points.  **RESOLVED: That the Council agreed to defer the installation of the electrical points at the Town House until capital funding was available from Suffolk County Council or income from their use would justify the costs of the installation.** |
| 146/21TC | **Planning Committee Member**  Councillor Lock agreed to join the Planning and Development Control Committee. Councillors discussed their disappointment with the withdrawal of the option to hold official council meetings via Zoom. Councillors asked the Clerk to write to the MP and point out that government are not making reasonable adjustment for councillors who have a disability, to attend meetings.  **RESOLVED: That Councillor Lock be appointed to the Planning Committee.** |
| 147/21TC | **To consider grant request**  Councillors discussed the Sax Music Festival Grant application and agreed to set up an earmarked reserve at this stage, noting the need to be reasonably sure that the Festival was able to proceed before making payments from the reserve.  **RESOLVED: That the Council agreed to set up an earmarked reserve of £9000 for the 2022 Sax Music Festival.** |
| 148/21TC | **750 Celebrations Programme**   1. **RESOLVED: That the Council agreed the outline programme and indicative budget of £15000 for the 750 celebration events in 2022.** 2. **RESOLVED: That the Council agreed to delegate the decisions on the events programme and budget to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Events Working Group.** |
| 149/21TC | **Asset of Community Value**    The Council noted that the Queen’s Head was now open and agreed to defer this item until discussions had taken place with the current tenants. |
| 150/21TC | **Correspondence**  The Clerk apologised that the correspondence list was not included and agreed to circulate at a later date. |
| 151/21TC | **Reports from Councillor representatives on other organisations.**  Councillor Eastman reported that the footpath bridges have been repaired and replaced.  Councillor Fisher reported that ESTA is having a public meeting in Woodbridge. |

**Meeting ended at 9.23pm**

**Roz Barnett, 28/02/2022 Clerk to Saxmundham Town Council**

**Item 7: Appendix 2: Community Governance Review**

Date of report: 9 March 2022

*By: Jeremy Smith, Chair*

**Recommendations:**

(1) To support in principle a change in the parish boundary between Saxmundham and Benhall, so that the proposed new South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood and related development would fall within Saxmundham parish, based on the map attached as annex to this report;

(2) to submit this report to East Suffolk Council as our submission to its consultation on Community Governance Review, while indicating that we wish to discuss the proposals with Benhall Parish Council, and may if appropriate make a further submission following such discussion;

(3) to send this report to Benhall Parish Council, which meets next on 30th March;

(4) to publicise the points set out in this report and invite any views from Saxmundham residents and businesses.

**Background**

1. A Community Governance Review (CGR) is a legal process whereby Principal Authorities (which include East Suffolk Council) can consider the following:

* creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes,
* the naming of parishes and the style for any new parishes,
* the electoral arrangements for parishes, i.e. the ordinary year of election, council size, the number of councillors to be elected to the council and parish warding,
* grouping of parishes under a common parish council or de-grouping parishes.

A CGR must reflect the identities and interests of communities and should take into account the impact of community governance arrangements on cohesion and the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

2. At our meeting on 13 December 2021, and in the light of the district council’s Local Plan policy for the 800 dwelling South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood, the Town Council resolved to “invite Benhall Parish Council to work together with a view to making a joint approach to East Suffolk Council requesting it to instigate a Community Governance Review, and to that end, to draw up jointly agreed draft terms of reference and new parish boundary lines to propose for such Review”.

The resolution also authorized the Council’s Chair, Vice-Chair and Chair of Resources Committee , together with the Town Clerk, to undertake discussions with Benhall Parish Council and to report back.

3. However, in January 2022 East Suffolk Council announced that it was carrying out a Community Governance Review of the whole of its area. This was not known to us in December. The deadline given us for making submissions is Friday 1st April 2022.

**Review instigated by East Suffolk Council**

The Review includes all aspects of community governance arrangements of existing parishes, including [my emphasis]:

* To consider the name of existing parishes/parish councils
* **To consider the boundaries of existing parishes** and whether existing parishes should be split or amalgamated to constitute new parishes or if any new parish councils should be created **along with the number of parish councillors to be elected for any parish council, whether new or existing.**
* **To consider whether any new or existing parish council should be divided into wards** (or continue to be divided into wards), including the number and boundaries of any such wards, the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward and the name of any such ward.

East Suffolk Council must among other matters ensure that community governance within the area

* reflects the identities and interests of the communities in the area,
* is effective and convenient and takes into account any other arrangements for the purpose of community representation or engagement in the area.

4. The proposed timetable is as follows:

Table

Description automatically generated **Issues for Saxmundham**

5. The new South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood (SSGN), which is a strategic policy of the Local Plan approved by East Suffolk Council in September 2020, allocates land for the purpose which straddles Saxmundham and Benhall parishes. The proposed site for the main built environment part of the Neighbourhood, under the policy, is mainly between the railway line and A12 bypass. The housing and other facilities would adjoin Saxmundham (close to the Free School) and are required to be well connected to the town and its facilities. Saxmundham is defined in the Local Plan as service centre for the surrounding district (See policy SCLP 12.28).

Paragraph 12.305, for example, underlines the need for the new community to be integrated with the existing town:

“The area to be masterplanned is in close proximity to established areas of residential development, Saxmundham Free School and the town centre. Fundamental to the success of any masterplan is to ensure that the local community can access existing services and facilities as well as those which will be created over the plan period. Taking a comprehensive approach to facilities and ensuring that links connecting the new developments are attractive to use, well designed and implemented at the start of the development will be beneficial to creating a successful community.”

6. The Local Plan policy for the SSGN also includes land to the west of the A12, for employment uses; the site is close to Saxmundham parish boundary but falls within Benhall. It is necessary to take into account also that the developer, Pigeon, has proposed a site to form an effective part of the overall development, to be located to the west of the A12 and to the south of the land allocated for employment. This site is to proposed to be a service centre for motorists and lorry park, we understand. Pigeon, in the only consultation carried out to date, proposed that the roundabout crossing the A12 from and to the main housing etc. site of the Garden Neighbourhood should be to this area, which would then be linked by road to the employment site to its north.

**Saxmundham Town Council’s approach**

7. While much of the built development of the new Garden Neighbourhood is proposed to be within what is currently the parish of Benhall, it is not connected to the village of Benhall in any meaningful way (it touches Kiln Lane with a very small number of individual dwellings to the west of the railway line). On the other hand, the SSGN will be physically joined to the built settlement of Saxmundham, and will draw on the town’s public, private and voluntary services and facilities. This is reflected in the proposals in the Local Plan for CIL contributions to be made e.g. to an expanded medical centre, the library etc., as well as for physical connections e.g. enhanced cycle and footpaths to the station, town centre and residential areas. The new primary school and under-5s centres may or may not be located in Saxmundham parish (this is not clear) but will serve the existing town as well as new community.

8. The population of the SSGN community, when it is built, is likely to be around 2,000 persons. This compares to Saxmundham’s estimated population of 4,723 in 2020 (ONS estimate), which will now be close to 5,000 given further new housing to the east of the town. The population of Benhall (also for 2020 estimate) was 585.

9. It is proposed that the Town Council supports in principle a change in the parish boundary between Saxmundham and Benhall in order that the new development of the South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood, and related development proposed by the developer, falls wholly within the parish of Saxmundham.

The attached map showing the proposed new boundary line between the parishes, drawn up for this purpose by Cllr John Fisher, reflects (a) the Local Plan allocated site for the SSGN, together with (b) the additional land proposed by the developer Pigeon to the west of the A12 and connected to the employment land, forming therefore the full proposed site of the development.

10. The changes to the boundary line would, it is submitted, be the right way to properly reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government, in line with government guidance – see paragraph 15 ‘Guidance on community governance reviews’ (2010):

“In many cases making changes to the boundaries of existing parishes, rather than creating an entirely new parish, will be sufficient to ensure that community governance arrangements to continue to reflect local identities and facilitate effective and convenient local government. For example, over time communities may expand with new housing developments. This can often lead to existing parish boundaries becoming anomalous as new houses are built across the boundaries resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours.”

Also, paragraph 26 of the same document:

“A review may need to be carried out, for example, following a major change in the population of a community or as noted earlier in this chapter (see paragraph 15) to re-draw boundaries which have become anomalous, for example following new housing developments being built across existing boundaries.”

11. It must be in the interests of good governance and good administration not to make such changes retrospectively, but to plan properly for change now. Otherwise, the real-world town of Saxmundham will be divided into two separate administrative entities at the most local level, making no sense at all, and fragmenting what should be integrated communities. While Benhall Parish Council will reach its own view, were the new SSGN ‘community’ to fall within Benhall parish, its scale will wholly change the traditional character of the village and its community.

12. Finally, one cannot and should not ignore the financial, property and service-related impacts. The development of the new SSGN community will:

(a) lead to CIL payments by the developer part of which will be allocated to the relevant parish or parishes to use for local physical and community infrastructure purposes, to meet the pressures caused by development. Those pressures will undoubtedly be greater for Saxmundham as local service centre town.

(b) be reflected in parish/town council services, budgets and precept requirements. It must surely be appropriate that Saxmundham as service centre town should take on both the burden and benefit, i.e. the additional costs to provide services for a population that will have grown by around 40%, and increased income from council tax resulting from the large increase in dwellings.

(c) As regards property matters, there is (as I understand it) no property in the area that would be affected by the parish boundary change that belongs to Benhall Parish Council, so no transfers of property would need to take place.

**Consequential changes – size of Town Council, whether to divide into wards**

13. If the new community of the SSGN were to fall within Saxmundham parish boundaries, as we propose in this report, the population size, including infants, would be around 7,000. This falls within a band of 2,500 to 10,000 for which East Suffolk Council allocate between 9 – 16 members. Saxmundham currently has a maximum of 11 members, reduced from an earlier 14. In the last parish council elections (2019), only 4 persons stood as candidates, though there was a contested election on the previous occasion (2015). It is suggested that we seek a modest increase to a maximum of 12 councillors, if our proposed boundary changes are accepted.

14. As to the issue of whether to divide Saxmundham into wards is concerned (for Town Council elections), it is proposed not to put this forward, but to maintain Saxmundham as a single electoral entity. This would better help to create the sense of a single Saxmundham town entity, comprising the current and new settlements.

15. The SSGN is due to be developed in stages, so the full change in population will occur also in stages. This means that there is unlikely to be a major impact on the district council ward structure for the district elections in 2023 or 2028. Saxmundham is estimated to have 3,504 voters in 2023, and the new development when complete would add around 1,500, we may surmise, making a future total of 5,000. This would at some stage be too large for a single member ward, and too small for a 2 member ward, given the current average of 3,670 electors per district councillor. However, this can be taken into account in future reviews, as appropriate.

**Annex – map showing proposed revised boundary (dotted red line)**

Diagram, schematic

Description automatically generated

**Item 8. Appendix 2a: Carlton Park Industrial Estate**

Date of report: 10 March 2022

*By: Jeremy Smith, Chair*

**Recommendations:**

To consider the draft policy position in this report, and decide whether to adopt it (with any agreed amendments)

**Background**

1. At our meeting on 14 February, the Town Council received a presentation from representatives of RSH Ltd, who are seeking planning permission to extend the industrial estate at Carlton Park. We also listened to the criticisms or objections from three nearby residents. Their main points are set out in the minutes of the last meeting.

2. The proposed development is not within the parish of Saxmundham, but in Kelsale-cum-Carlton. Nonetheless, the development could be of importance for the town, both in terms of possible jobs created but also with some potential impacts, in particular heavy traffic, if not adequately controlled. It is therefore proposed that, without seeking to undertaker a detailed analysis, the Town Council adopts a policy position in relation to the application. The draft position, for councillors’ consideration, is in the next section of this report.

**Draft policy position**

Saxmundham Town Council, having received a presentation on behalf of the applicant, and listened to objections and concerns from local residents,

(1) notes that the Local Plan defines the site of the Industrial Estate including the present proposed extension as an Employment Area (Policy SCLP12.36) comprising “some 8ha of employment land. 3ha of land remains vacant. The site contains lawful uses within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8. Proposals for development of B1, B2 and B8 uses will be permitted” subject to (a) a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment; (b) An investigation into any potential contamination of the site; (c) Where appropriate, measures to assess and manage any heritage assets on the site; and (d) proposals that generate a significant amount of traffic movements from the site will be required to provide a Transport Assessment, assessing the impact on the local highway network.

(2) notes that the Local Plan policy also recognizes that it is “the largest employment site close to Saxmundham and well related to the local transport network, encouragement will be given to those uses which have a high employee to floorspace ratio.”

(3) supports the development in principle (on the basis that all of the above policy requirements are met), in particular on the basis that it is likely to provide a significant number of new employment opportunities for local people, but subject to the following points being properly addressed,

(4) underlines the importance in particular of ensuring that transport to and from the site is strictly regulated and in particular avoids HGV transport through Saxmundham,

(5) emphasizes the importance of effective and attractive green buffer zone between the site and nearby residential occupiers, also for noise reduction purposes,

(6) further emphasizes the necessity of high quality design of buildings and landscaping within the new development, taking account in particular of the views from St Peter’s Church and the wider area around Carlton Park

(7) considers it necessary that there be excellent cycle and pedestrian links to and from the site to Saxmundham and Kelsale and Carlton, to minimise local motor travel,

(8) endorses the desirability of maximising uses that have a high employee to floorspace ratio, for example, including small start-up units,

(9) insists that any café or retail outlets on the site be strictly controlled and limited as to times of operating, to ensure that they are genuinely a facility principally for those working at the site or visiting it for work purposes, and do not generate nuisance or disturbance. It would be preferable that any café retailer not be located on the frontage

**Item 9. Minutes of Previous Committee Meetings**

**Appendix 3: Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities & Services Committee, 6.00 PM 21 February 2022 at Saxmundham at the Town House**

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| Chair of Meeting | Tim Lock |
| Also Present | Roz Barnett |

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| Attendees: | Councillor D. Eastman  Councillor C. Hawkins  Councillor R. Hedley Lewis |

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| **72/21AS** | **Apologies for absence**  No Apologies were received. |
| **73/21AS** | **Pecuniary/Non-Pecuniary Interests**  Councillor Eastman declared a non- pecuniary interest as a trustee of the IP17 Good Neighbour Scheme |
| **74/21AS** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  **RESOLVED: It was unanimously agreed to approve the minutes of the meeting 15 of November 2021 and the action notes from the informal meeting 17 of January .** |

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| 75/21 A | **Storage at the Town House and repairs to the Town House wall** |  |  |

Discussion:

* The Clerk reported that IP17 GNS have installed a new shed, cleared out the back cupboard and moved the fridges out of the Town House.
* The Committee agreed for the Clerk to install the Town Council memorabilia, parish map, and councillor and staff pigeonholes somewhere in the Town House.
* The Clerk reported that the Town House Wall had been fixed by the gentleman that had knocked it down at no cost to the Council. To prevent this happening again the Committee agreed that bollards should be installed with light reflective strips.

#### **Resolved: That the Clerk will arrange the installation of 4 bollards at the entrances to the Town House carparks at a maximum cost of £500 in consultation with Councillors Lock and Hedley Lewis.**

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Arrange for a large parish Map to be displayed | Clerk | March 2022 |
| * Arrange for the additional chairpersons named to be added to the wooden boards and to track down trophy cabinet. | Clerk | April 2022 |
| * To arrange for pigeonholes and noticeboards to be installed in Town House. | Clerk | April/May 2022 |
| * Arrange for bollards to be installed in carpark | Clerk | April/May 2022 |

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| 76/21 A | **Report on the Environmental Co-ordinator’s Activities** |  |  |

#### Discussion:

* The Clerk reported that seed sowing workshop was well attended, and the wildflowers will be grown for displays within the Town. There will be a plant swop event at one of the April Wednesday markets to encourage sustainable gardening in the Town
* Cllr Hedley Lewis asked that the Seamans Avenue dog walk be considered.
* Councillors raised the issue of the fencing at Chantry Rd which the Clerk had reported to Network Rail.

#### **Resolved: That the Environment Co-ordinator will plant the Jubilee Oak on the Memorial Field adjacent to Rendham Rd. (ensuring it fits with entrance design plans).**

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Tree and hedge planting will take place on the 20th of March at the Memorial Field | Environment Co-ordinator | March 2022 |
| * That the 750 trees be promoted on noticeboards and newsletter. | The Clerk | March 2022 |
| * Clerk to seek quotes for removal of fir trees and replacement fencing at Chantry Rd | The Clerk | March 2022 |

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| 77/21 A | **Updates on Improvements to the Market** |  |  |

#### Discussion:

* The trader’s pack was discussed, and improvements suggested.
* The risk assessment was discussed, and improvements suggested.
* The Market survey will be promoted to gain feedback from people in the Town
* Councillor Hedley Lewis asked that the surfacing in the Market Place be reported to the County Council.
* The design for a new sign for Fromus Square was discussed.
* A business plan is to be developed for the Market for 2023-2024 once the regeneration has been completed.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Welcome Pack and risk assessment updated * That the Market Survey be promoted | Town Centre co-ordinator  Town Centre co-ordinator | March 2022  March 2022 |
| * Banner for Fromus Square, designs to be drafted and permissions sought | Town Centre co-ordinator | March 2022 |
| * Cllr Hedley Lewis asked in the Market Place surfacing be reported * That a new attractive layout be created in consultation with local businesses and shops. * Business Plan for Market be developed | Town Clerk  Town Centre co-ordinator  Town Centre co-ordinator | March 2022  March 2022  Autumn 2022 |

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| 78/21A | **Memorial Field Landscape Project** |  |  |

#### Discussion: The committee needed to wait for the designs from the garden designer before pursuing options for the gate, signage, and memorial stone.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
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| * Meeting with Designer | All | March 2022 |

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| 79/21A | **Maintenance Management Tenders** |  |  |

#### Discussion:

The Clerk reported that only one tender had been received by the deadline. The Committee agreed to extend the deadline to the 25th of March 2022.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
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| * Clerk to inform potential bidders about extension to deadline. | Clerk | March 2022 |

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| 80/21A | **Town Gateways and speeding** |  |  |

#### Discussion:

#### The Clerk expressed her frustration in getting a quote for the gateways from Suffolk Highways.

#### The Committee discussed options for speeding survey and agreed to place tubes at South Entrance which would collect speed, volume, and classification. The cost of this survey is slightly higher than anticipated at £410 + VAT.

#### Resolved: That the Clerk will commission a traffic survey at South Entrance at a cost of £410.

| Action items | Person responsible | Deadline |
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| * Cllr Lock to contact Suffolk Highways to discuss quote for the design of gateways | Cllr Lock | February 2022 |
| * Clerk to commission Traffic Survey | The Clerk | February 2022 |

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| 81/21A | **Review of Charges** |  |  |

#### Discussion:

The Committee discussed charges for open spaces and the Market and agreed to no changes due to the current economic conditions. The Committee agreed to review this in January 2023 once the business plan for the Market had been produced.

#### Resolved: That the charges for the Market and open spaces remain the same for the next year.

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| **82/21A**  **83/21A** | **Street Furniture Requests –** None Received  **Correspondence –** None Received |  |  |

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Roz Barnett Clerk to Saxmundham Town Council, Old Police Station, Approach Road, Saxmundham, IP17 1BW Tel: 01728 604595

**Item 9**

**Appendix 4: Minutes of the Resource Committee Meeting Monday, 28 February 2022 at 2pm In the Town House**

**Committee Members:**

Councillor Di Eastman

Councillor John Findlay (Chair)

Councillor John Fisher

Councillor Nigel Hiley,

Councillor Jeremy Smith

**Also Present**: Rosalind Barnett (Town Clerk)

**Public Forum:** There were no members of the public present.

Please note all documents related to these minutes can be found in the committee pack <http://www.saxmundham.org/council/template1-3/>

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| **170/21R** | **Apologies for Absence**  No apologies were received |
| **171/21R** | **Declarations of Interest**  Cllr Eastman and Cllr Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 174/21R as they are trustees of Saxmundham and District Community Interest Company. |
| **172/21R** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  **RESOLVED:** The minutes of 31 January 2022 were adopted as a true and accurate record. |
| **173/21R** | **Operational Issues**   * 1. To consider tender for Health and Safety Consultant   Councillor Eastman had reviewed the 3 lowest tenders and recommended WorkNest to the Committee. The Committee noted that since the comparison report was produced, links to the further information required had been provided by WorkNest and the Clerk was satisfied that they could deliver the service at the level required. The Clerk informed the Committee that she had also sought verbal references on the two lowest quotes and WorkNest references were better that their nearest competitors for health and safety services.  **RESOLVED: That the Council appoint Work nest as the Town Council’s Health and Safety Consultant for a 5-year period at a cost of £2269 for year 1 and £2484 for years 2-5.**   * 1. To consider additional technical support for the website.   The committee discussed the recent WordPress update that had caused a lot of problems on the website. Staff had to spend additional time restoring information and links that had disappeared from pages. Whilst Herringbone Design provide design advice on pages and layout the Council does not have technical support. Design Folk who created the website resolved some of the issues and have offered to provide ongoing support at a cost of £45 per month. The Committee agreed to this arrangement on an interim basis on the condition that the Clerk reports the detail of what will be provided for the monthly fee.  **RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to pay Design Folk £45 a month for technical support to the website as an interim arrangement.**   * 1. Energy usage and contracts   The Clerk reported that because of the situation in Ukraine, Smartest Energy had refused to accept the contracts for supply at the Market Hall and Town House. The situation on the energy markets is so volatile the company that has been managing our contract swich has advised that the Council wait for the market to settle.  **RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to delegate the decision on the energy contract providers to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Resources Committee.** |
| **174/21R** | **Finance**   1. **RESOLVED: That the Committee note and ratify the payments for January for the Town Council.** 2. **RESOLVED: That the Committee note and ratify the payments and receipts for January for the Market Hall.** 3. The Committee received the February payments list and approved the additional payment of£288 to Red Dune for Software for new laptops.   **RESOLVED:** **That the Committee noted the list of February payments and approved the additional payment of £288 to Red Dune for Software for the new laptops.**  Questions were raised about the water bills from Wave and Everflow and the Clerk explained that she had not received a final invoice from Wave Water and was still paying the £40 direct debit.  The overpayment to the Adventure Playground of the test £5.00 was noted by the committee and it was agreed that if they continue to report they did not receive it, the £5.00 should be written off. |
| **175/21R** | 1. **To consider arrangements for year end and 2021-22**     1. To review revised asset register   The Committee reviewed the asset register and asked that the Clerk add some additional dates to the asset register, the grit bin at Tennyson Rd and review some of the sub-totals.  **RESOLVED: That the amended Asset Register be recommended to the Town Council**   * 1. To review financial regulations   The Committee reviewed the financial regulations and agreed the proposed changes to the financial regulations with the inclusion of the suggested wording from Councillor Smith.  **RESOLVED: That the amended Financial Regulations be recommended to the Town Council**   * 1. To review insurance cover.   The Committee noted that the Council are currently within the 1st year of a 3 Year Long Term Agreement with BHIB at a cost of £2158.97 Including Insurance Premium Tax.  **RESOLVED: That the Committee reviewed the insurance cover and agreed that the cover was sufficient.**   * 1. To review management risk assessment   The Committee reviewed the management risk assessment and suggested some amendments to the wording. The Clerk was asked to circulate the Yoxford emergency plan.  **RESOLVED: That the amended Management Risk Assessment be recommended to the Town Council** |
| **176/21R** | **Small Grants -** To consider any applications under £5000).   1. Grant request from Men’s Sheds   **RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed a £446 grant for a band saw for the Men’s sheds to help them with their community projects.**   1. Grant request from St John’s Church   **RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed a £350 grant for a community event for the St John’s Church.** |
| **177/21R** | 1. **RESOLVED: A motion was passed to exclude the public under the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the following business being transacted.** |
| **178/21R** | 1. **Staffing Matters**    1. To receive a verbal update on staffing arrangements   The Clerk reported that the Environment Co-ordinator had successfully completed her probationary period. She also informed the Committee that the two new Town Centre Co-coordinators were settling in well and were working on the website and revitalising the Market.  The Committee discussed the whether the Town Clerk hours should be reduced to 30 to allow for appointment of the Finance and Administration Officer for 10 hours a week. The Clerk was asked to explore whether changing the day for Full Council meetings would allow for additional Clerking support. The actual days working days for the Clerk would be dependent on the working patterns of the other staff.  **RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed that a report on the proposals be presented to Full Council.**   * 1. To review job description and advert for the Finance and Administration Officer   **RESOLVED: That the Committee agreed the draft job description and advert for the Finance and Administration Officer with some minor changes.** |

Meeting finished 3.18 pm

**Roz Barnett Clerk/RFO**

**Appendix A: February Payments**

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**Item 9**

**Appendix 5: Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning & Development Control Committee 6pm on 9th February 2022 by ZOOM.**

**Councillors:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Cllr. John Fisher (Chair) |  | Cllr. Roger Hedley-Lewis |
| Cllr Nigel Hiley |  |  |

**Also Present:** Jenny Morcom,(Assistant Town Clerk (ATC).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **127/21PD** | **Apologies for absence**  There were no apologies for absence. |
| **128/21PD** | **Pecuniary/Non-Pecuniary Interests**  None declared. |
| **129/21PD** | **Minutes of the meeting held 19th January 2022 and 2nd February 2022**  **The Committee RESOLVED to approve both sets of minutes.**  The Chair will sign these when he is next in the office. |
| **130/21PD** | **Open Forum**  No members of the public had joined the meeting. |
| **131/21PD** | **Planning Applications**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | DC/22/0076/FUL | 32 High Street | Replace current building with 3 dwellings this time retaining the shop but with living accommodation on first floor. |   T**he Committee RESOLVED to recommended that the town council support this application, but to highlight the following in its response to the district**   * We welcome the retention of the shop at the front of 32 High Street, and we note that the original large shop window has been replaced by two windows. * There does not seem to be room for private gardens for the three dwellings, although there are parking spaces, bin store, and a cycle store. we feel that some kind of small shared green space/seating area would improve the general amenity of the development. * with parking at the back of the dwellings, we are concerned about the number of cars entering and leaving via the pedestrian walkway that joins the High Street to Fromus Green Park. The walkway meets a narrow part of the High Street and is already used to access a parking bay for the building next door. This gives a potential for six cars entering and leaving. * -We would like to see the 'shop-style' frontage respected in the design in keeping with other premises along the High Street. * We would like the development to include environmentally friendly and sensitively angled lighting to the pedestrian walkway at the side of the development, as well as improvements to the surface of the walkway. * -We are also concerned about congestion and problems for shop deliveries on the High Street during the build and hope that construction methodology will minimise this.  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | DC/22/0137/FUL | 5 St Johns Road | Single storey rear extension and relocation of first floor window |   T**he Committee RESOLVED to recommended that the town council support this application.**  **ATC to seek ratification from the rest of the Town council for these recommendations.** |
| **132/21PD** | **Recent Planning Decisions.**  The Committee noted the following decisions by East Suffolk Council.  ;   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | DC/21/5265/FUL | Park Lodge , 32 South Entrance, Saxmundham, IP17 1DQ, | To build a 4x8mt in ground outdoor swimming pool in our back garden. | permitted | | DC/21/5625/FUL | 19 Bittern Rd, IP17 1WT | Front porch extension | permitted | |
| **133/21PD** | **The next meeting will be held on 9th March 2022 at 6pm in the Town House.** |

**The meeting closed at 6.29 p.m.**

**Jennifer Morcom, Assistant Clerk to Saxmundham Town Council**

**The Town House, Station Approach**

**Saxmundham, IP17 1BW**

**Item 10: Appendix 6: Town Council Payments February 2022**

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**Item 10: Appendix 7: Market Hall Payments February 2022**

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**Item 10: Appendix 8**

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**Item 10 Appendix 9**

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**Item 11: Appendix 10: Asset Register**

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**Item 11: Appendix 11: Financial Regulations**

**Financial regulations** Document hyperlink [FRs-amended-May-2022.docx (live.com)](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.saxmundham.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2022%2F02%2FFRs-amended-May-2022.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)

**Current Wording**

6.3. All payments shall be effected by cheque or other instructions to the Council's bankers, or otherwise in accordance with a decision of the Council or Resources Committee.

6.4. Cheques or orders for authorised payments drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two members of the Council duly authorised by the Council as signatories and accepted by the Bank. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

**Revised Wording**

**6. THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS**

6.1. The Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the RFO shall arrange for payments to be made in accordance with this Regulation.

6.3. All payments shall be made by internet banking, by cheque or other instructions to the Council's bankers, or otherwise in accordance with a decision of the Council or Resources Committee.

6.4. Cheques or orders for approved payments drawn on the bank account shall be signed by two members of the Council duly authorised by the Council as signatories and accepted by the Bank. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6 Internet banking instructions for approved payments drawn on the bank account shall be authorised by two members of the Council duly authorised by the Council as signatories and accepted by the Bank. A member who is a bank authoriser, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be an authoriser of the payment in question

6.6. A list showing all payments made since the previous report shall be provided to the Resources Committee at each meeting. This list of payments shall be available to any member of the Council on request.

6.7. If thought appropriate by the Council or Resources Committee, payment for utility supplies (e.g. energy, telephone, and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates or other regular periodic payments provided for in the budget and approved for this purpose by the Resources Committee may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to Council or Resources Committee as made.

6.8. If thought appropriate by the Council or Resources Committee, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker’s standing order provided that the instructions are signed or otherwise evidenced by two members, are retained and any payments are reported to Council or Resources Committee as made.

6.9. If thought appropriate by the Council or Resources Committee, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to Council or Resources Committee as made.

6.10. If thought appropriate by the Council or Resources Committee, payment for certain items, including salaries, may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.

**1 – BACs Payment Processes**

**Online Banking Users**

1. The Town Council in taking advantage of online banking shall establish two classes of user:

CLASS A - user rights only to view balances and create payments.

CLASS B - user rights only to view balances and authorise release of payments.

1. The Town Clerk and Finance and Administration Officer shall be CLASS A users.
2. The Council’s bank signatories shall be CLASS B users.
3. No other users shall be permitted on the council’s online banking system.
4. Class A users are not permitted to authorise the release of payments.

**Making BACs Payments**

1. The Finance and Administration Officer shall prepare a schedule of payments using the Rialtas accounting system.
2. The Clerk will check the payments list and create within the council’s banking system the payments for approval by two authorised signatures.
3. The Finance and Administration Officer shall provide CLASS B users with an approved schedule of payments for reference when authorising payments
4. Two CLASS B users shall authorise payments for release. No payment shall be released without two CLASS B users having authorised the payment.

**Item 11 Appendix 12: Risk Register**

**Risk Register**

| Item 7b  Subject: | No. | Risk identified | Potential impact  (H/M/L) | Level of risk  (H/M/L) | Management/Control of risk | Review/Assess/Revise |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Business continuity |  | Council unable to continue business as a result of an unexpected or tragic event | H | **L** | All files and recent records are retained at the council’s office. There is a secure, cloud-based IT system for digital records. Paper documents, both current and archived, are filed in the Saxmundham Town House. | Review regular updating of user passwords.  Personnel files are stored in locked, metal filing cabinet. All other paper-based documentation has been reviewed but historical documentation is yet to be logged and archived appropriately.  Assistant clerk and clerk share information about each other work. |
| Business continuity |  | Town Clerk temporarily absent or otherwise unable to carry out duties. | H | M | In the event of the clerk being indisposed the assistant town clerk will provide clerical support. An operational plan is in place including temporary clerical support. Appointment of Finance and Administration Officer to ensure financial continuity | Ensure that both members of staff have reasonable day-to-day experience of all systems to ensure continuity.  Council to revert to using cheques in an emergency. |
| Business continuity |  | Council records: Loss through damage, fire, or theft | H | L | IT system files are backed-up using a cloud-based system. This occurs at file creation and updating. See Business Continuity 1. | Also refer to Business Continuity 1.  Provide an emergency contingency plan. |
| Business continuity |  | Access to confidential information by non-authorised personnel. | M | L | Only the Town Clerk, the Assistant Town Clerk, and the IT administrator have access to HR confidential information. | Password updating procedure in place with our IT support.  Contact IT support if access is required.  See Financial Regulations.  Cabinets/Offices to be locked when Clerk/Assistant Clerk not present. |
| Business continuity |  | Meeting location adequacy: Health and Safety | H | L | Full Council meetings are normally held in the Market Hall. Committee meetings are normally held either in the Market Hall or Saxmundham Town House. The clerk and assistant town clerk hold keys/acc­ess codes to both. The premises are considered satisfactory providing all statutory health and safety obligations are observed. | Statutory health and safety obligations for both the Market Hall and the old police station reviewed and will be continued Relevant documentation retained in STC Office.  Clerk has arranged for Town House door code to be reset.  When the Council has locally based key holders, they may want to consider alarm systems for the buildings. |
| Freedom of Information Act (FOA) |  | Policy Provision | M | L | The council has a model publication scheme for local Councils in place. The Town Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives it may necessitate additional hours of work. The council is able to request a fee if the work will take in excess of 15 hours to complete. The request can be resubmitted in sections to negate the payment of a fee. | Monitor any report and potential impacts made under the FOA.  Review files for any previous information requests.  On receipt of an FOI, the Chair and Vice-Chair should be informed. |
| Data Protection |  | Failure to comply with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) 2018 or later regulations | H | L | Follow good administrative practice for securing personal and GDPR related data | Audit and action sheet completed 2019 officers to review risks on an annual basis.  Ensure all software packages are compliant with GDPR  Clerk and administration staff to receive online update training. |
| Finance |  | Precept adequacy | H | L | Sound planning and budgeting process to support the annual precept requirement. The process should take account of each committees’ recommendations. The Resources Committee reviews the planned budget in October/November with recommendation/agreement by Full Council each January. | Minute to be made on budget, submission of precept request and receipt of precept payments.  Copy of the approved budget to be sent to all members. |
| Finance |  | Budgetary control | H | H | The RFO to regularly provide the council with regular updates regarding receipts and expenditure against each budget category. | Part of Financial Standing Orders Section 4. Budgetary Control and Authority to Spend. Financial Regulations reviewed 2020 and will be reviewed reported to Resource Committee & Council annually  Resources Committee to receive regular budget/forecast detailed update. Full council to receive regular updated summary budget sheet. |
| Finance |  | Insurance adequacy | M | H | Statutory requirement: Employers’ Liability, Public Liability, Fidelity Guarantee. Annual review completed. Part of annual audit. | Asset Register to be reviewed annually or updated more frequently as required.  Market Hall to have a separate asset list.  RFO to report to Council on general adequacy of insurance. |
| Finance |  | Banking: Adequacy of checking procedure | L | L | The council has agreed Financial Regulations which determine the procedure. Annual independent audit. | Review Financial Regulations annually and as required.  Online banking mandate to be reviewed by Full Council, when necessary. |
| Finance |  | Cash: Control to prevent loss through theft | H | L | Regular reconciliation of bank statements prepared by RFO. Checked and signed by designated Councillor. Two authorised signatures required for cheques.  Annual internal and external audits completed.  For internet banking payments will be initiated by the clerk and approved by an authorised signature. | Part of Financial Standing Orders. Review as required.  Review procedure for on-line banking and on-line payment authorisation. On-line banking mandate to be reviewed and agreed by Council  Move banking to facilitate 2 councillors approving online payments.  Organise card facility to minimize funds to councillors and officers. |
| Finance |  | Approval of expenditure: authorisation levels | H | L | Any financial decision must be resolved and clearly recorded prior to any commitment. This usually takes place at Committee meetings.  All income and expenditure must be detailed in quarterly reports presented to the Resources Committee and Full Council.  Financial Regulations have been reviewed and specific limits specified. | Monthly Payment report contains authorisation notes to be completed by Clerk and presented to Full Council.  Internal auditor to randomly sample minute numbers and check financial decisions.  The clerk will send out a copy of the monthly reconciliation and budget report to all councillors on a monthly basis. |
| Finance |  | Fraud | H | L | Internal procedures are observed. Fidelity Guarantee insurance must be in place. | Monitor adherence to Financial Regulations.  Annual check of fidelity insurance. |
| Finance |  | VAT & other Taxes | H | L | The council has Financial Regulations which define the requirements for VAT recovery which is completed on a quarterly basis.  PAYE tax & NI paid as defined by HMRC regulations. | Council to review the VAT in relation to the Market Hall before embarking on major refurbishment. |
| Land and Property |  | Don’t have key documents of ownership and possession. | L | L | Clerk to review all documents and seeing information from Land registry where there are gaps | Council to consider whether to pursue registering any unregistered property/land. |
| Land and Property |  | Licenses and Leases | L | L | Resources Committee to review all licences and Leases on an Annual Basis. | Council to have all leases reviewed by a solicitor. |
| Liability |  | Damage to building assets, street furniture, IT equipment, play equipment and other equipment | M | L | An Asset Register is maintained, and insurance is held at the appropriate level for all items. Regular checks are made on all equipment by the appropriate service providers and members of the council.  Capital Replacement Fund now in place. | An inventory of equipment is required, and a central log should be maintained for any items of equipment or documentation which are lent out. This to include a signature by the borrowing party.  See comments on Asset Register and Insurance Cover. |
| Liability |  | Legal Powers: Illegal activity or payments  Legal powers: Working Parties taking decisions | H  L | L  L | All activity and payments made within the powers of the Town Council (not ultra vires) are to be resolved and clearly recorded in the minutes.  Terms of reference are in place and agreed for Committees and Working parties. | Include details of powers being used by Council in the minutes and papers. |
| Liability |  | Agendas, minutes, and statutory documents: Accuracy and legality and/or non-compliance | L | L | Agendas and minutes are produced in the prescribed method and adhere to legal requirements.  Minutes are approved and signed at the next meeting where possible.  Agendas and minutes are displayed according to legal requirements.  Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chairman according to Standing Orders.  (Covid -19 has impacted on signatures) | Existing procedures adequate.  Undertake adequate training to ensure adherence to procedure.  Members to adhere to Code of Conduct and Standing Orders.  Review Standing Orders at least annually to ensure relevance. |
| Liability |  | Public Liability: Risk to third party, property, or individuals | H | L | Insurance is in place. Risk assessment of any individual event is undertaken. Separate insurance is taken for one-off events. Health and safety risk assessment, training and instruction routinely completed. | Existing procedures adequate. An annual review of insurance cover to be completed at the start of each financial year. |
| Council Reputation |  | Conflict of interest  Register of Members’ Interests | L  L | L  L | Councillors have a duty to declare any interest at the start of a meeting or when an interest becomes apparent during a meeting. Councillors with a pecuniary interest must leave the meeting while that item is discussed.  Register of Members’ Interests form to be reviewed at least annually. | Existing procedures are adequate. Reminder to be issued regarding updates to the Interest Register at the start of each financial year.  Members to take individual responsibility to update the register on-line. |
| Council Reputation |  | Councillors and Staff: Bringing the Council into disrepute | M | L | Councillors understand and receive training on the Code of Conduct. A professional approach is undertaken for all Town Council matters.  An e-mail protocol policy is available. | Members to identify training requirements.  Clerk to issue a reminder covering available training at the start of each financial year.  Review e-mail protocol policy and update as required. |
| Health & Safety |  | Accident/injury public and staff | H | H | Staff have risk assessments and regularly monitor the Health & Safety risks Councillors have undertaken annual sites visits to record health and safety and Maintenance issues. | The Council are considering appointing an external body to be the competent body for Health and Safety for the Town Council. |
| COVID-19 |  | Sustained disruptions to service and budget.  Public health risks to staff and public | H | H | Specific risk assessments in place which are constantly reviewed considering government guidance. | Budget to include contingency for responding to unexpected events.  Staff & public welfare to be considered by relevant Committee in the event of a changing situation. |
| Emergency Plan |  | Sustained disruptions to service and budget.  Public health risks to staff and public | H | L | Council to consider developing Emergency Plan. | Emergency Pan to be reviewed annually to ensure information is UpToDate. |

**Item 15 : Appendix 13: Communications Policy**

**Saxmundham Town Council - Communications policy**

**1. Statement of Policy**

**1.1** This policy is intended to set out guidelines for how the Town Council communicates internally and externally. It is intended to help Councillors, staff and affiliated volunteers make appropriate decisions about the way in which they communicate both in their official capacity and personally. It covers all means of written, verbal, and visual communications including, but not limited to: websites, social media, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, videos, message boards, forums etc.

**1.2** This policy outlines the standards the Council itself intends to adopt, as well as that which is required by Councillors, staff and volunteers when communicating internally and externally; the circumstances in which the Council will monitor its operation and the action to be taken in respect of any possible breaches of this policy.

**1.3** This policy supplements and should be read in conjunction with all other policies and procedures adopted by the Council.

**2. Who is covered by this policy?**

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels within the Town Council. This includes paid staff members and elected councillors and volunteers.

Within this policy “Members” refers to anyone affiliated with the Council, either as elected Councillors, staff or volunteers.

**3. Scope of policy**

**3.1** The Council has overall responsibility for the effective implementation, operation and monitoring of this policy. All members are protected by and expected to comply with this policy at all times. Its aim is to protect the reputation, privacy, confidentiality and interests of the Council, its services, employees, and community.

**3.2** Behaviour required by the Members’ Code of Conduct shall apply to online activity, written and verbal communication. Members must be aware that inappropriate conduct can still attract adverse publicity, even where the Code does not apply and be mindful of their conduct when communicating both in their official capacity and personally. Content and communications published in any official capacity should be objective, balanced, informative and accurate. Members should bear in mind that their profile as a Councillor means that it is more likely they will be seen as acting in an official capacity when networking or sharing content online.

It must be remembered that communications on the internet are permanent and public. When communicating in a ‘private’ group it should be ensured that the Council would be content with the statement should it be made public. Councillors are expected to be honest and open, and to be mindful of the impact their contribution might make to people’s perceptions of the Council.

**3.3** All employees, members and volunteers should ensure that they take the time to read and understand this policy. You are personally responsible for content you publish. Any breach should be reported to the Town Clerk.

**3.4** Questions regarding the content, scope or application of this policy should be directed to the Town Clerk.

**4. Tone of communications and appropriate language and terminology**

**4.1** Communication with the public should be undertaken in a variety of different methods, acknowledging that members of the community will have differing access and preferences when it comes to consuming information. The Council should make efforts to reach a range of ages and demographics in the methods they employ to communicate.

**4.2** All external communications from the Council should be factual and transparent. Statements on council decisions and policy should be written in a formal tone with precise and technically accurate language. Council communication should remain professional, clear and situation appropriate.

**4.3** The Council should make every effort to consider their audience at all times: The Flesch Reading Ease score may be considered in order to make documents for public consumption suitably accessible.

**4.4** More informal, friendlier language is accepted for promoting events or communication intended for under 18s.

**5. Visuals – branding**

**5.1** The adopted font of Saxmundham Town Council is: Raleway or Calibri (Body), where possible, efforts should be made that all written communications are written using this font.

**5.2** Where an appropriate logo, letterhead, or document format is available, it should be used for official Council communications.

**5.3** Emails from official Council addresses should be signed off with a standardised Council email signature.

**5.4** The Town Council’s adopted colours are:

* Duck egg colour is 55c 9m 28y 0k
* soft red is   9c 76m 49y 1k
* Business blue is 92c 59m 29y 8k
* Community blue is 37c 5m 7y 0k

Where possible these pantones should be used in all visual media (ie posters, web pages etc)

**6. Channels of communication**

**6.1** The public’s first point of contact for communication with the Council is normally the Town Clerk. The Clerk will either act on or distribute incoming correspondence to relevant Members in a timely manner.

**6.2** Members may share general information relating to the Council and their role, but statements on council policy and committee business should be approved by Clerk in conjunction with the appropriate committee chair.

**6.3** Members should feel confident to share information and promote Town Council activities, without prohibitive red tape. As long as the interests of the Council are considered, and the guidance included in this policy is followed; Members do not have to seek approval for communications which occur as they carry out their duties.

**6.4** Proofreading and editorial control of communication is down to the individual sending or publishing it, unless otherwise stated below.

**Means of Communication**

**Minutes:**

**What:** Required for formal Council Committees

**Who takes the Minutes:** Clerk or Assistant Clerk

**Notes:**

* The minutes must record the names of Members present at the meeting and the existence and nature of any interest declared by Members. The minutes are not a verbatim record of debate at a meeting but must accurately reflect the resolutions made and record voting if this is requested by a Member at that meeting.
* Minutes should be produced and circulated to members as quickly as possible after the meeting. It is good practice to circulate minutes within 10 working days of the meeting. A draft copy can be produced pending finalisation. It is acceptable for draft minutes to be published on the council website or notice boards as long as it is recorded prominently to the effect “Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting” or by using a “DRAFT” watermark.
* If changes are made to minutes by the council or committee before acceptance and signing, the wording changes should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting that agreed the changes and the original minutes must be amended to reflect the changes. The copy signed by the Chair will contain the alterations, recorded in longhand, with the changes signed and dated.
* Decisions taken at meetings are effective immediately, and not dependent on the minutes being approved at the following meeting.
* Signed minutes should be retained by the clerk for council archives.

**Reports**

**What:** Normally required for Councillors in order that councillors can take informed decisions.

**Who:** Reports may be prepared by the Clerk or other employee. Occasionally, reports may be made by a Member or Councillor, for example when reporting back to the council or committee on an event attended or research done at the council’s request.

**Notes:**

The council’s decisions can be set aside by a court if due regard has not been had to relevant information or irrelevant considerations have been applied.

Some matters may require Councillors to consider a variety of facts or documentation. It is important that such information is provided to Members in advance of the meeting in the form of a report.

Reports should be circulated at the same time as the agenda and made available to the public, unless they include confidential matters that would justify the exclusion of the press and public at the meeting. This enhances the transparency of the council’s decision making and improves local knowledge of its activities. It greatly improves the speed of handling business at a meeting if all the relevant information is made available to Members in a report that assists their grasp and deliberation of a matter before the meeting. The vast majority of county and district council business is dealt with in this way.

Reports should be written as concisely and clearly as possible; ambiguous language particularly should be avoided when composing reports.

**Annual Report**

The Town Council publishes its annual Report in May which is distributed at the Annual Town Meeting.

**Notice board**

**What:** The notice board should display:

* The full title of the parish council
* The name, address, telephone number and email address of the clerk
* The council’s website address
* A list of Members of the council with contact details (address, telephone number, email) and their political group, if this is relevant locally
* Venues, dates and times of meetings for the year
* Agenda for forthcoming meetings
* Details of where the minutes, the code of conduct and other public documents may be inspected

**Who:** The Town Clerk and a nominated representative of the Amenities Committee is responsible for keeping the Town Council noticeboard up to date

**Notes:**

It is essential that notice boards are kept up to date and notices replaced regularly. Councils can make arrangements with other bodies for joint use of notice boards. A community notice board that meets the needs of public bodies and local groups, as well as providing useful information for residents and visitors, is an economic means of achieving several objectives.

**Website**

**What:** The website may be used to:  
• Post notices and minutes of meetings  
• Advertise events and activities  
• Post good news stories  
• Link to appropriate websites or press page if those sites meet the Council’s expectations of conduct provided that their terms and conditions of that website permit it  
• Advertise vacancies  
• Share information from partners i.e. Police, Library, district council, etc. if permitted to do so.  
• Announce new information appropriate to the Council.  
• Post or share information promoting bodies for community benefit such as schools, Scouts, sports clubs and community groups  
• Post other items as the Council see fit.  
• Promote business and economic growth within the town.

**Who:** The Clerk will appoint a nominated officers, councillors and occasionally volunteers to maintain and update the Council Website. These people do not need to seek pre-approval for publishing content to the website that is in line with their duties.

**Notes:**

The Council recognise that the Internet is a significant and powerful means of communication. The Council is dedicated to providing an informative and user-friendly website which can provide a variety of information to the community.

The overall content and structure of the website is decided by the Communications Working Group.

It is essential that the website is kept up to date on a regular basis; displaying up-to-date and relevant information, and that older documents are archived. This is a joint responsibility of all nominated Members, monitored by the Town Clerk and the Communications Working Group.

A good website can say a lot about the efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance of a parish council. All content should follow the suggestions set out in this document for branding, tone, and good use of English.

Members who wish to have an item published to the website may submit it to the Town Clerk

Suggested edits or changes to the website should be sent to the Town Clerk

**External communications (letters, emails, Press relations, Posters, publicity etc)**

**What:** This section sets out the policy in relation to Council Correspondence.

**Who:** Anyone with a Council email address is responsible for using it appropriately, and that their communication falls in line with the code of conduct.

**Notes:**

Councillors are personally responsible for any online activity conducted via their published e-mail address. Councillors are advised to use the Town Council email address for Council business.

The official point of contact for the parish council is the Clerk, and it is to the Clerk that all correspondence for the parish council should normally be addressed. The Clerk should deal with all correspondence and refer it to the appropriate committee of the Council.

A copy of all outgoing correspondence relating to the council or a Councillor’s role within it, should be sent to the Clerk, and it be noted on the correspondence, e.g. “copy to the Clerk” so that the recipient is aware that the Clerk has been advised. Where correspondence from the Clerk to a Councillor is copied to another person, the addressee should be made aware that a copy is being forwarded to that other person (e.g. copy to XX). E-mails from Councillors to external parties should be copied to the Clerk

No individual Councillor or Officer should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the parish council, a committee, sub-committee or working party. Councillors and Officers do not have a right to obtain confidential information/documentation unless they can demonstrate a ‘need to know’.

All official correspondence should normally be sent by the Clerk in the name of the council using council letter headed paper or their official Council email address.

If Councillors receive a complaint from a member of the public, this should be dealt with under the Council’s adopted complaints procedure, or via a council agenda item.

You can expect a response from officers of the Town Council within seven working days. If you require an urgent response this should be clearly stated in the email.

The Clerk should clear all press reports, or comments to the media, with the Chair of the council or the Chair of the relevant committee. Press reports from the council, its committees or working parties should be from the Clerk or an officer or via the reporter’s own attendance at a meeting.

Unless a Councillor has been authorised by the council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who are asked for comment by the press should make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view. Unless a Councillor is certain that he/she is reporting the view of the council, they must make it clear to members of the public that they are expressing a personal view.

Any promotional posters, leaflets or booklets must be signed off by the Town Clerk before going to print.

**Newsletters (email and physical**)

**What:** The Council commits to distributing three physical newsletter each year. There may also be additional email newsletters distributed among relevant groups. The frequency of these is to be determined by the Council member leading that department or initiative.

**Who:** Editorial control for printed newsletters is normally held by The Clerk in consultation with the Communications Working Group. All Council members are welcome and encouraged to submit pieces for newsletters.

Where e-newsletters are sent out; the sender is responsible for the content and presentation of the newsletter. Before setting up a mailing list, and introducing an e-newsletter for their department, they must first obtain approval from the Town Clerk. They are not required to have their work approved by the Chair or Town Clerk but are responsible for any outcomes from the communication. The Town Clerk may request to review past or current content or may call for the cessation of communications via e-newsletter at any time, but only where there is reasonable cause.

**Notes:** Please refer to section 4 & 5 for guidance on content, writing style and aesthetic.

Edits may be requested from authors of newsletter content if it does not meet the guidance in section 4, if it is factually incorrect, grammatically incorrect, or breaks any Council rules on Members’ code of conduct, though autonomy should be allowed wherever possible.

**Social media**

**What:** social media is an excellent method of communicating events, Council-related news, governance information and of gathering views and input from the community. Social media may be used to support the website and the information contained on it.

**Who:** The official Saxmundham Town Council social media accounts are administered by select representatives; namely Jeremy Smith (Chair), Roz Barnett (Town Clerk), and Jess Palmer (Town Centre Coordinator). Other members may submit content to the named representative to be posted on their behalf.

Each Member is responsible for the content they post on their personal social media profiles; ideally it should adheres to the code of conduct: This is especially important where they have identified their affiliation with the Council.

**Notes:**

Members may post about and promote events and news relating to their role within the Council using their personal profiles. There is no requirement for pre-approval, though Members should take care, when identifying themselves on social media as a representative of the Council, that content posted is factually correct and suitable for public consumption (ie events and dates have been confirmed, and represents the views and remit of the Council and in no way damages the reputation of the Council.

The Clerk and nominated members of the Communications Working Group will act as moderators. The moderators will be responsible for monitoring of the content on council pages, ensuring it complies with the Social Media Policy. The Clerk will have authority to instruct members to immediately, without notice or comment, remove any posts from the Council’s social media pages, or where they have stated an affiliation to the Council, if they are deemed to be inflammatory or of a defamatory or libellous nature. Such post will may also be reported to the Hosts (i.e. Facebook) and also the Council for its records.

Members should not allow their interaction on any websites or blogs to damage their working relationships with others, or make any derogatory, discriminatory, defamatory, abusive, obscene, or offensive comments.

If Councillors share content on social media personally, and not in their role as a Councillor, they must not act, claim to act, or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of the Council. They should not include web links to official Council websites as this may give or reinforce the impression that they are representing the Council.

Where Members are posting with reference to, or on behalf of the Council, they should:

* Be responsible and respectful; be direct, informative, brief, and transparent.
* Disclose their identity and affiliation to the Council.
* Avoid making false or misleading statements.
* Not present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment. They should always aim to protect the good reputation of the Council.
* Be mindful of the information posted on sites and make sure personal opinions are not published as being that of the Council.
* Keep the tone of comments respectful and informative, never condescending or “loud.” Use sentence case format, not capital letters.
* Refrain from posting controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks. Language that may be deemed as offensive relating in particular to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, or religion should be avoided.
* Avoid personal attacks, online fights, and hostile communications.
* Not post comments that you would not be prepared to make in writing or face to face.
* Never name an individual third party unless you have permission to do so.
* Seek permission to publish original photographs or videos from the persons or organisations in the video or photograph before they are uploaded. You must check that there is parental permission before photos of children are used.
* Respect the privacy of other Councillors, staff, and residents.
* Never post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate laws or regulations, such as libel and copyright.
* Do not upload, post, or forward any content belonging to a third party unless you have that third party’s consent.

Never disclose commercially sensitive, personal, private, or confidential information. Never publish anyone else’s contact details. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with the Town Clerk or nominated Moderator.

Anyone who feels that they have been harassed or bullied or are offended by material posted or uploaded by elected and co-opted Councillors, volunteers or officers should inform the Town Clerk or the nominated Moderator.

Every effort should be made to check posts for grammar, spelling and good English.

**Monitoring use of social media websites.**

Members should be aware that any use of social media websites (whether or not accessed for council purposes) may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken

Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give risk to legal liability against you and the Council.

Residents and councillors should be aware that communication through social media is not the formal way of raising an issue with the Town Council and not al comments will be responded to.

If a matter raised in any form of social media needs further consideration by the Council it may be raised at either the Public Question Time or as a full agenda item for consideration by a forum of Councillors. Any response agreed by the Council will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Points for further consideration may be brought to the attention of the Council by any Member, not just the Moderator. The Moderator, or any nominated social media Administrator may invite members of the public to re-raise points or comments made on social media through official channels with the Town Clerk. The Council are not obliged to make any definitive response to any comments left by members of the public on social media channels; it is preferred that the commentors are instead directed to the official channels (ie, emailing their points with the Town Clerk.)

Reports of any concerns regarding content placed on social media sites should be reported to the nominated Moderator or Town Clerk for referral to the Council as required.

All social media sites in use should be checked on a regular basis to ensure the security settings are in place.

**Public participation sessions**

All meetings of the Full Town Council are open to the Press and Public and these guidelines are for those attending and speaking at meetings.  
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​Speaking at a Meeting

The Town Council meeting has a section called ‘Public Participation – Have Your Say’, where you can get involved and speak, tell the meeting something or ask questions. It is usually at the beginning of the meeting

**Speaking Guidelines**

* Please let the Chair know before the meeting starts that you want to speak – you can phone or email in advance or tell the Chair at the meeting.
* Tell the Chair what topic(s) you want to cover.
* You are not restricted only to topics that are on the agenda.
* If you don’t get a chance to do this, the Chair will ask if anyone else wants to speak.
* The Chair will invite you to stand or sit at the table.
* Please give your name which will not normally be recorded in the minutes
* There is normally time limit of 3 minutes per person to speak.
* You can speak on more than one topic during this time.
* If there are similar questions or statements about one topic then the Chair may ask one person to speak on behalf of the others.
* Councillors may ask you questions for clarification.
* The Council may respond to you at the meeting or may write to you.

**Review period**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. The next date for review is: March 2025

**Item 16 Appendix 14: Correspondence**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Correspondence Log January February 2022 | | | | |
| Item Number | Correspondence received. | Action Taken | Outcome |
|  | Resident requested that a defibrillator be installed in the Market Hall | Clerk referred to Market Hall Committee | Ongoing |
|  | Three residents contact the council about the Carlton Park industrial development. | Discussed January Town Council | Ongoing |
|  | Notification from East Suffolk that we have been offered 4 benches from the Welcome back fund | Clerk referred to the Amenities Committee | Ongoing |
|  | Sizewell C communities team offered a meeting to discuss developments | Clerk Responded | Ongoing |
|  | Saxmundham have been invited to nominate a citizen to take part in the Suffolk Platinum Jubilee Torch relay | Clerk circulated to councillors | Ongoing |
|  | Two residents reported fallen trees after recent storms | Clerk responded | Resolved |

**Item 19 Appendix 15: Staffing Matters**

**SAXMUNDHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

**Job Description**

**Job Title:** Finance and Admin Officer

**Place of work:** The Town House, Saxmundham

**Hours of work:** 10 hours of work per week – (Normally worked Monday and Tuesday)

**Salary:** (SCP scale 6 point 19)

**Pension** Option to join the NEST pension scheme

**Responsible to:** Town Clerk

**Objective:** The post holder will assist the Town Clerk in the management of the finances for the Town Council, Market Hall and Gannon Rooms as well as completing general administrative activities

**Key Tasks:**

* To review invoices for payment with the RFO and confirm that the work, goods, or services to which each invoice relates has been received.
* To check invoices for arithmetical accuracy.
* To enter all payments and receipts into Rialtas software by the end of every month.
* To record cash and cheque receipts ensuring they are banked in a timely fashion.
* To attend the monthly Resources Committee and take minutes as required.
* To provide monthly Rialtas reports to the Resources Committee and Town Council.
* To reconcile all payments and receipts on the first week of the month.
* To initiate payments in the absence of the Town Clerk.
* To use the Hallmaster software to issue invoices and track rent payments for the Market Hall and Gannon Rooms.
* To keep an overview of income received through online ticket sales.
* To complete quarterly VAT returns
* To keep financial and related records including contracts.
* To work as part of the Town Council’s administrative team, dealing with general enquiries from members of the public and others.
* To ensure all assigned tasks and duties are completed in a safe manner and comply with safety rules/procedures.
* Be prepared to undertake any other duties as directed by the Town Clerk.

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| --- | --- |
| **PERSON SPECIFICATION** | |
| **ESSENTIAL** | **DESIRABLE** |
| **Qualifications & Training**   * Accountancy qualification such as ATT/ACCA/ACA or demonstratable relevant experience undertaking a similar role or tasks. | * CILCA qualification |
| **Knowledge and Experience**   * Experience of managing budgets/accounts * Experience of creating and using excel spreadsheets. * Experience of using accounting software eg Rialtas, Sage or Scribe. | * Competent in Rialtas Omega Accountancy software. * Experience of working in the public sector. |
| **Skills / Abilities**   * Excellent communication and a friendly and welcoming demeanor. * I.T skills enabling use of word, excel and databases good numeracy, literacy, and presentation skills * Able to work under pressure |  |
| **Personal Characteristics**   * Methodical and tenacious. * Be a team player. * enthusiastic with a willingness to learn. | * Attention to detail and have an ability to proofread communications. |

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Saxmundham

Town Council

is seeking A

Finance and Administration Officer

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| --- | --- |
| **Finance and Admin Officer**  10 hours of work per week (£13.21 per hour pay award pending)  Hours could be worked during the School Day.  Saxmundham Town Council have a part-time vacancy in our small and friendly team for a Finance and Administration Officer.  We are looking for an individual that can undertake the financial administration duties of the Town Council.  The Council would like to recruit an individual with excellent IT skills and experience of using accounting software packages. | The closing date for this vacancy is Friday 7th of April 2022.  Please contact the Town Clerk for full details of the post and an application form  Email [townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@saxmundham-tc.gov.uk)  Tel 01728 604595 |