



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Saxmundham Town Council held on Monday 9th October 2023 at 7:30 pm at the Market Hall, 29 High Street, Saxmundham

Attendees: Cllr Di Eastman (Chair), Cllr John Findlay (Vice-Chair), Cllr John Fisher, Cllr Jeremy Smith, Cllr Benjamin Gulliford, Cllr Elizabeth Clark, Cllr Tim Lock, Cllr Charlotte Hawkins and Cllr James Sandbach

Also present: Sharon Smith (Acting Town Clerk/RFO) and two representatives from EDF's Sizewell C Community Relations Team

81/23TC **Apologies and Approvals of Absence**

Cllr Marianne Kiff and County Cllr Richard Smith

82/23TC **Declarations of Interests and Consideration of Requests for Dispensations**

None.

83/23TC **Public Forum**

- a) The Council received a briefing from EDF's Sizewell C Community Relations Team about the latest developments with the project. A question-and-answer session followed.
- b) The Council received the following report from District Cllr John Fisher:
 - i. the District Council is seeking views on 'Our Direction 2028' which builds on work undertaken by the previous administration and has four main themes: Environmental Impact, Sustainable Housing, Tackling Inequalities, and a Thriving Economy. The consultation ends on 15th October 2023;
 - ii. the District Council is also consulting on a Supplementary Planning document until 18th October 2023 and is undertaking a Polling Station Review until 30th November 2023; and
 - iii. the District Council is relaunching its Warm Rooms initiative as a Warm Welcome and funding will be available to support projects to operate year-round.

84/23TC **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was unanimously RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2023 as a true and accurate record.

85/23TC **Minutes of the Previous Committee Meetings**

The Council received and noted:

- a) the draft minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 5th September 2023.
- b) the draft minutes of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held on 30th August 2023.

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- c) the draft minutes of the Amenities and Services Committee meeting held on 13th September 2023.

86/23R **Neighbourhood Plan**

- a) The Council received a report from the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group regarding:
- i. the upcoming meeting with representatives of Pigeon Investment about their development proposals for south-west Saxmundham;
 - ii. the issues relating to Community Infrastructure Levy payable in relation to development in the 'new' area of the parish;
 - iii. the planned discussion with East Suffolk Council planning officers to cover options for a future Neighbourhood Plan (either a new version for the transferred area or a modification of the existing version) and the CIL issues; and
 - iv. the recommendation from the Steering Group to invite the Council to apply to East Suffolk Council for the designation of south-west Saxmundham (the area recently transferred) as a 'neighbourhood area'.
- b) **It was unanimously RESOLVED** to authorise the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council and the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, to designate south-west Saxmundham as a neighbourhood area for the purpose of Section 61G of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, the area to comprise the area transferred from Benhall parish to Saxmundham parish on 1st April 2023.
- c) **It was unanimously RESOLVED** to approve new terms of reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group as set out in Annex A to the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's report.

87/23TC **Reports**

- a) The Council received the following report from the Chair of the Council:
- i. the Chair has resigned as a Trustee of the IP17 Good Neighbours Scheme;
 - ii. the Chair attended the recent ESC Community Partnership meeting and informed the Council of its three new priorities of mental health and well-being, improving children's oral health care, and supporting community hubs. Funding of £4,000 is available for each category; and
 - iii. the Chair has joined the NALC network of Women Councillors who meet next week.
- b) The Council received a report from the Acting Town Clerk about the location of the Wednesday markets. It was agreed to invite the landowner to a meeting with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Acting Town Clerk to discuss ways to resolve issues arising.
- c) The Council received a written update from the Acting Town Clerk. It was agreed to swap the meeting room with the large office in the Town House to better accommodate the staff workspace.
- d) The Council received an Energy Projects report from the Acting Town Clerk.

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- e) The Council received a Crime Report from the Acting Town Clerk.
- f) The Council received an update from Cllr Jeremy Smith about the transfer of the High Street land.

88/23TC **Finance**

- a) The Council noted the payments and receipts for September 2023.
- b) The Council noted the bank balances as at 30th September 2023.
- c) The Council reviewed the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure report as at 30th September 2023.
- d) The Council received the External Auditor's Report and Certificate for the year ended 31st March 2023.
- e) The Council received a recommendation from the Resources Committee and **it was unanimously RESOLVED** to approve the annual Risk Management Strategy.

89/23TC **Admission to Meetings**

It was unanimously RESOLVED to exclude the public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

90/23TC **Staffing Matters**

The Council received a recommendation from the Resources Committee and **it was unanimously RESOLVED** to appoint Sharon Smith as Town Clerk with immediate effect. A proposal to increase the Town Clerk's hours will be tabled for consideration at the next Resources Committee meeting.

91/23TC **Next Meeting**

The Council noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 13th November 2023 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9:30 pm

Sharon Smith
Town Clerk/RFO

Signed _____ Date _____