



Saxmundham Town Council

Market Hall

High Street

Saxmundham Suffolk IP17 1AF

Tel/Fax: 01728 604595

www.saxmundham.org

townclerk@saxmundham.suffolk.gov.uk

Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of
Saxmundham Town Council
**held at the Market Hall on Monday 19 SEPTEMBER 2016
at 7.15pm**

Present:

Cllr R. Plant
Cllr P. Dunnett
Cllr P. Ewart
Cllr J. Fisher
Cllr K. Howe
Cllr Ms P MacKay
Cllr Ms Trotter-Langlois
Cllr M Turner

In attendance:

Ms M. Gallop, Town Clerk
County Cllr Michael Gower
Sarah Shinnie
Rachel Rowe
31 members of the public

Cllr Plant invited Mr Neil Thomas, who had previously been in contact with the Town Council, to present his proposed plan for an alternative site on a strip of land at the Railway Station. (proposal attached)

In response the following points were made regarding the strip of land:

- We do not own this land, it is owned by Network Rail and leased to Abellio
- We do not have any money to purchase land plus we already have the Memorial Field to use
- The site is not suitable for a Skate Park as it is too small
- Section 106 monies are restricted to the Memorial Field or the immediate vicinity
- The land is already earmarked for a project by the Arts Station
- There would be environmental challenges with the close proximity to the railway lines
- Risks are too high

The Skate Park project has been running for many years. Cllr Ms Trotter-Langlois is the Chair of SAVVY and the Town Council requested them to take the lead on this over seven years ago. Cllr Miss Trotter-Langlois advised that leaflets were dropped in every household before the Mayflower Green site was built. This site was originally designated for commercial purposes. There were three public consultations regarding the Skate park and a period of 42 days during the planning consultations to enable anyone to have their say.

A new resident, Mr Albi Pearce, advised that he had moved into Saxmundham a couple of months ago onto Mayflower Green and thought the proposal for a Skate park on the Memorial Field was an excellent idea. As an ex Councillor and having liaised with a young mother and her

children, he thought that the Memorial Field was an ideal site for the Skate park. He had visited the Clerk and her Assistant the previous week and stated that they were a credit to the Council.

Rachel Rowe advised that the Town Council did not have to apply for planning permission but made a democratic decision to apply to enable everyone to have their say. Saxmundham Town Council received planning permission in April 2005 to erect lighting columns for a skate park which was well documented enabling anyone new to the area evidence that a Skate park would be erected in the future. Rachel went on to say that we do not need any further consultations - just action. There has been a 14 year period that this proposal has been discussed and on three occasions not obtained the required funding.

Sarah Shinnie advised that the Section 106 money that we are proposing to use for this project is allocated specifically for play facilities on or near the Memorial Field in order to be close to the development from which the funding has come. She advised that Woodbridge skate park was sited in its current position because it was the only available land owned by SDC. Sarah went on to explain that the best site for the proposed skate park is on the Memorial Field and is well within the necessary buffer zone regarding noise. A skate park is a structured activity and reduces anti-social behaviour.

AGENDA

4916. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

- To Receive Amendments to the Register – **None declared**
- To Receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda – **None declared**
- To Receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda – Cllr Dunnett and Cllr Fisher declared an interest as District Councillors regarding planning matters
- To Consider Full/Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared **n/a**

4917. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSENT TO ABSENCE: Cllr Mrs Eves, illness, Cllr Mrs Jardine, holiday, Cllr Sandbach absent

4918. TO CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVE SITING OF THE SKATE PARK: .

Cllr Ms Trotter-Langlois advised that the petition set up by SAVVY for siting the Skate Park on the Memorial Field had 189 signatures, far more than any objections received. The Arts Station currently have a project underway on the Railway Station which includes the usage of the piece of land which a resident would like us to use as an alternative site. We would not wish to sabotage any of the Arts Station proposals.

Cllr Howe advised he had been on the Council for 11 years and explained that the decision to use the Memorial Field for a skate park has not been made lightly but we are making use of the facility that we have. Cllr Plant advised that we value our youngsters and the original young people who wished to have a skate park are now adults themselves.

Cllr Dunnett has looked through all the documents very carefully. He admired Mr Thomas for attempting to use an alternative site but explained that the Memorial Field is the location for us to obtain Section 106 money. The land value would be much more than Mr Thomas had indicated because it is not agricultural it would be an amenity price.

Cllr Plant proposed we reject the other site as unsuitable for a Skate park. Seconded by Cllr Turner. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**

4919. TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CONTRACTOR TO BUILD SAXMUNDHAM SKATE PARK: .

The appointment of the contractor to build Saxmundham skate park was selected on construction technique and was what the young people wanted. Freestyle were the preferred contractors chosen by the young people. The second and third choices were Canvas and Wheelscape. The decision was made to use Freestyle a number of months ago having had a meeting with them on the 26th April. An enormous amount of work has gone into ensuring the contractor is financially secure due to the fact that Freestyle has been sold to a different

company within the family owned group and Freestyle Skatepark Ltd has been put into administration. Our solicitors have drawn up additional points if we use the chosen contractor. There are always risks involved as Skate park companies are a niche market making it difficult to become successful. Freestyle have recently restructured the company. Cllr Dunnett has researched Freestyle having spoken to both the Auditors and Solicitors at Suffolk Coastal who advised that if it was a District Council project they would not use Freestyle. Cllr Dunnett thought they are too much of a risk and would not agree to use them. Cllr Plant advised that the tender is as yet unsigned. We have a preferred bidder not a contract on the Freestyle specification. Cllr Ewart advised that the details of the contract are very important and a 100% Indemnity Bond would be needed. The meeting was closed to enable Sarah Shinnie to speak.

Meeting re-opened.

Cllr Fisher advised that we could set the terms ourselves to ensure that we have not paid for more than the value of the work completed.

Cllr Ewart explained that if the company do not have working capital they could leave the site with the project unfinished. Freestyle have not had their financial accounts signed off and Cllr Ewart is not comfortable with this. Cllr Plant read out the Director of Freestyle, Julian Lipton's response to our Solicitors ideas.

Cllr Ewart proposed that we use Freestyle, the chosen Contractor, on the basis that they build it and we pay for it on completion with a 5% retention. Seconded by Cllr Fisher.

Cllr Dunnett was not happy with this and voted against. Cllr Plant also voted against. Six Councillors voted for. **Motion carried on majority.**

4920. TO CONSIDER ROTATING THE SKATE PARK:

Cllr Plant advised that we had received an email from residents, Mr & Mrs Mcbrearty requesting that the skate park is rotated 90 degrees so that it is parallel to the Scout Hut and Youth Booth. This will mean it is placed in a North South direction rather than the East West direction of the original application. She claimed that SCDC would not need to pass this change, merely to be told as a matter of courtesy and that the change would outweigh any disadvantages. However if this rotation of the skate park took place Councillors felt that the sound would go directly towards the houses. Also site of the users would be far less visible if moved. Cllr Fisher rang Mr Pink the Environment Officer who explained that the rotation would not make any material difference to the noise from the Skate Park..

Cllr Mss Trotter-Langlois proposed that the Town Council leave the plan as it is, seconded by Cllr Ewart. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

SIGNED _____

DATED _____