



## Saxmundham Town Council

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### Minutes of the Saxmundham Town Council Meeting held on Monday 08 July 2019 at 7.15 pm

**Present:** Cllr J Smith, Chairman  
Cllr J Fisher, Vice Chairman  
Cllr J. Sandbach  
Cllr N Hiley  
Cllr J Findlay  
Cllr Mrs D. Eastman  
Cllr Dr C. Hawkins  
Cllr Mrs A. Reynolds

**In Attendance:** Council administrative staff:  
Maddie Gallop, Town Clerk (TC/RFO)

26 members of the public

#### **PUBLIC MEETING ON SAXMUNDHAM RAILWAY STATION.**

The Town Council Meeting was preceded by a Public Meeting on the state of our Railway Station. Notes of this meeting are appended to these Minutes for information.

#### **OTHER PUBLIC SESSION MATTERS.**

Cllr Smith asked the public if they had any other queries that they wished discussed. A member of the public asked whether there was a Police Beat Officer as indicated in the June Council meeting. In response it was confirmed that two Police Officers were checking the area on Sunday evening.

#### **REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR.**

Cllr Richard Smith had previously sent his apologies due to his attendance at other parish meetings.

#### **REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR.**

Cllr Fisher said that the new Leader of East Suffolk was eager to visit all wards in East Suffolk and will be coming to Saxmundham in early August. He asked anyone who wished him to raise any particular issue to get in touch with him.

#### **AGENDA**

- 5431.00 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**
- 5431.01 To receive amendments to the Register.  
**None declared**
- 5431.02 To receive declarations of pecuniary interest in respect of items on the agenda.  
**None declared.**
- 5431.03 To receive declarations of non-pecuniary interest with respect to items on the agenda.  
**None declared**
- 5431.04 To consider full/partial dispensations for any pecuniary interests declared.  
None declared.
- 5432.00 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSENT FOR ABSENCE:**
- 5432.01 All Councillors present
- 5433.00 TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019.**
- 5433.01** Cllr Findlay proposed these as a true record, seconded Cllr Fisher. Unanimously agreed.  
**Motion carried.**
- 5434.00 TO CONSIDER AND DECIDE ON ANY CO-OPTIONS TO THE COUNCIL.**
- 5434.01 Cllr Smith explained that three people had come forward as potential councillors; Tim Lock, Jonathan Macro and Georgia Watson. Cllr Smith said that there had been a further expression of potential interest at the weekend from a local man who however was unable to attend this evening. Cllr Smith, after seeking councillors' views, proposed that at this stage we consider the three candidates to date, and invited the candidates present to say a few words about themselves and their interest.
- 5434.02 Each candidate introduced themselves and explained why they were interested in becoming a Town Councillor.  
Cllr Findlay proposed that all three be co-opted to the Town Council with effect from
- 5434.03 the end of the meeting. Seconded Cllr Fisher. Unanimously agreed.  
**Motion carried.**
- Cllr Smith welcomed the three new councillors.
- 5434.04 **The TC will complete the necessary paperwork, and the Assistant Town Clerk (ATC) will prepare an induction pack** **TC and ATC**
- 5435.00 CHAIRMAN'S/TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**
- 5435.01 Cllr Smith advised that at the Sizewell C Community Forum on 3 July, EDF Energy announced a further round of consultation on specific matters. This Stage 4 consultation will take place from 18 July to 27 September 2019. Councillors Hiley and Sandbach offered to take the lead in drafting a response for consideration by the Council.
- 5436.00 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND LOCAL PLAN.**
- 5436.01 (a) To receive an update report, including the Household Survey Questionnaire.  
Cllr Smith informed that we had now received over 500 completed questionnaires, advised that a young man is in the process of inputting much of the data from the questionnaire and volunteers are also assisting with this.

- 5436.02        **(b)** To confirm the Town Council's participation in the Local Plan public examination. This includes the proposed 800 dwellings South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood. Cllr Smith proposed that the Town Council wishes to be represented at the public examination in order to make oral representations, and to make written representations. Seconded Cllr Mrs Eastman. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5437.00        **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND AGREE THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW:**
- 5437.01        **(a)** To receive the draft minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Cllr Smith proposed these were received, seconded Cllr Findlay. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5437.02        **(b)** To note the bank reconciliations for Saxmundham Town Council (STC) and Market Hall (MH) for May 2019. It was felt that copies of the bank statements were unnecessary. However, until there has been a meeting to discuss the Financial Regulations the current system remains.
- 5437.03        **(c)** To authorise listed payments for STC and MH. Cllr Smith proposed authorisation of these payments, seconded Cllr Mrs Eastman. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5437.04        **(d)** To approve in principle the incurring of expenditure in relation to additional Christmas lights and related matters. Some of the business owners along the High Street raised the issue of the gaps in the Christmas lights. We have consulted Target Animations and Lighting, who hold the current contract for our Christmas lights, and they advise that creating a continuous run of lights on both sides of the High Street would cost an additional £1600.00 plus VAT per year for each of the remaining two years of the contract. The price allows for replacement of all the lights used in the High Street so that will look uniform, but this additional sum is not presently budgeted for. Also written permission will be necessary from landlords to attach addition fixings to various shops. Cllr Smith proposed the Council express agreement to this in principle and refer back to Resources Committee.
- 5437.05        **(e)** To approve expenditure in relation to the household survey questionnaire, including contracted data inputting and analysis work, and to identify and agree any necessary virements. Cllr Smith gave thanks to Bob and Lyn Jardine for their assistance. He proposed that the Council agree additional spending for this purpose of up to £500 and within this, a further short period if necessary for contracted data inputting and analysis work to be paid on receipt of weekly invoices for £126 per fourteen-hour week and agree any necessary virements from the Consultants budget. Seconded Cllr Findlay. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5437.06        **(f)** To defer consideration of requests for grants to voluntary organisations to the September Town Council meeting and to publicise an invitation for applications over the summer. Cllr Fisher proposed agreement to this, seconded Cllr Smith. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried.**
- 5437.07        **(g)** To note the decision of the Resources Committee to establish a working group to review the Financial Regulations. Unanimously agreed. **Motion carried**
- 5438.00        **TO CONSIDER AND AGREE/AMEND THE DRAFT RESERVES POLICY.**
- 5438.01        Councillors noted the report, which however would need to be updated, and felt this needs simplifying.
- 5439.00        **TO AGREE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT.**

- 5439.01** To receive and note the contents of the report from the Internal Auditor.
- 5439.02** To decide on the recommendations in the report:
- 5439.03** **Payment Controls** the Resources Committee have set up a working group to review the Financial Regulations to address the issues raised with regard to payment control.  
**Risk Management** Insurances must be approved and minuted by full Council to confirm that they are adequate
- 5439.04** **A specification for the Internal Audit should be approved by the Council**
- 5439.05** A review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit must be minuted as being carried out annually.
- 5439.06** **Asset control**
- 5439.07** Annual items in the register need to be scheduled for review within each financial year.

**5439.08** Cllr Findlay proposed that the Council receive and note the Internal Auditor's report and accept its recommendations, seconded Cllr Mrs Eastman. Unanimously agreed.  
**Motion carried.**

**5440.00** **TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS REPORT ON 32 HIGH STREET.**  
 Cllr Smith stated that the building is now boarded up, and it had been hoped that a sale would have taken place by now of the property, from the current Gibraltar registered company to one based in the UK and which offers a realistic chance of more positive redevelopment. However, the legal processes were, he understood, taking longer but hopefully the change in ownership would proceed shortly. He proposed to keep this item on the agenda for the next Council meeting.

**5441.00** **TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

DC/19/2334/ FUL	Mr James Coward	4 Harpers Lane IP17 1BP	Remove conservatory and build single storey sitting room extension.	The Town Council gave their support to this.
DC/19/2438/ LBC	Mr and Mrs Sanders	Beech House, North Entrance	Listed building replacement of poly carbonate roof with natural slate tiles.	The Town council unanimously proposed support
DC/19/2146 & 2147	Ms G Harris	Flat 7, 26 High Street, Saxmundham	Replacement of 3 PVCU framed double glazed windows with 3 timber framed double glazed windows. Listed building consent needed too.	Town Council gave authority to the Town Clerk to respond after consultation with Cllr Fisher

- 5441.01** The Clerk advised that a late application had been received from the Former County Primary School Site in Fairfield Road for Variation of Condition 2 for DC/19/2595/VOC.
- 5441.02** Town Council gave authority to the Town Clerk to respond after consultation with Cllr Fisher.
- 5441.03** An update on the application from Saxmundham Free School  
 The Clerk informed that a Planning Officer was concerned about the Southern Boundary, and the matter had been referred back to school for amendment of their application.

**5442.00 REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES INCLUDING WORKING PARTIES.**

Representatives on other bodies will be decided in September.

**5442.01** To nominate the Town Council's representative to Leiston and Saxmundham Citizens' Advice. Unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Sandbach. **Motion carried.**

**5443.00 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

**Meeting closed at 9.25pm**

**APPENDIX**

**NOTE OF THE PUBLIC MEETING ON SAXMUNDHAM RAILWAY STATION HELD MONDAY 8 JULY 2019 AT 7.15 PM**

Cllr Smith recalled that Greater Anglia met with our MP Thérèse Coffey last November and was advised that re-building would commence in late March (though not full restoration of the old building). Sadly, nothing has happened to date. Cllr Smith, our Chairman, wrote a lengthy letter to both Abellio Greater Anglia and Network Rail last week and put this on the Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan website. This letter will also be put onto our own Town Council website. Cllr Smith was highly critical of the inaction to date but offered the Town Council's co-operation in scoping and drawing up a plan to improve and regenerate the whole station area. The next day East Suffolk received a planning application from Greater Anglia. Cllr Smith contacted East Suffolk Council's Principal Planning Officer to discuss the application. Our MP responded to a resident on the 18<sup>th</sup> June and informed them that Greater Anglia state that they would retain the ground floor with the existing platform. The Town Council would like a meeting with Greater Anglia, Network Rail and East Suffolk and would support them.

Members of the public raised a number of questions and made comments and suggestions e.g.

- Why has it taken so long before work has commenced?
- Why can't both the County and District Councils put pressure on Greater Anglia and Network Rail?
- It was felt that the owners could use their insurance to pay for the full re-build – but apparently they self-insure
- Saxmundham is the gateway to the rest of Suffolk
- The site is very important to the town
- It should be aesthetically pleasing, efficient and a safe place for all
- A regular user of the train complained that there is no cover when it rains, not much seating, and was concerned about whether the platform would be smaller
- The south-bound platform has some cover, but the north-bound platform has a tiny bus shelter with no other cover
- It should be restored to its previous state
- A great opportunity for this part of the town – a commercial opportunity with the Old Police Station opposite
- A member of the public suggested having a café at the Police Station, but a regular train user felt that there often was not time to cross the station to purchase a coffee and get back to catch the train
- Very wide concern regarding the Railway Station

- The District Council did give retrospective planning after the day of the fire regarding the unsafe state of the chimneys. They have limited powers over Greater Anglia who originally wished to have the whole building taken down
- No-one wishes to take responsibility
- The planning application that has been put in is not formal nor complete and there is no mention of the car park. Railways have their own powers and do not have to get planning agreement for all work.
- A campaign is essential and media coverage will be necessary as nothing has been done
- With the Old Police Station opposite and if the Railway Station was properly restored this could be a good development
- Saxmundham Town has lost a great asset as there is no legal duty to restore
- The Chairman proposed we seek to organise a meeting with Greater Anglia, Network Rail and East Suffolk, supported by all Councillors present.
- Responding to questions about delay, the Chairman said that after the fire the Town Council were assured that work would commence at the end of March. Colleagues sent out a press release at the time. The current Town Council only began in May with only 4 members and this issue has been taken up as soon as we are able.
- Over 3500 people use the trains every week and a member of the public suggested an online petition could be started. Volunteers will be welcome to assist particularly with obtaining signatures and opinions from train users by meeting them at the railway station or liaising with Tesco's and Waitrose customers
- Stations that have been updated have often been taken over by community groups
- Saxmundham Town Council will write again to the railway operators to keep the pressure up
- Cllr Smith will also put this on What's happening in Sax, and the Neighbourhood Plan website. The Clerk will place this on the STC website and a volunteer (Ms Watson, now co-opted Councillor) will create a specific Facebook page for the Station campaign.
- Contact to be made with Aldeburgh Music and Snape Maltings as a number of people use the railway when participating in various concerts
- Cllr Findlay re-iterated the need for an immediate media campaign
- The Town Council will follow this up at the September meeting