



Saxmundham Town Council

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**Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Saxmundham Town Council held on
Monday 29 July 2019 at 8.15 p.m. following a public meeting on Saxmundham Railway Station
which started at 6.30 pm**

Present:

Cllr J Smith, Chairman	Cllr J Fisher, Vice Chairman
Cllr N Hiley	Cllr J Findlay
Cllr Annabelle Reynolds	Cllr Diana Eastman
Cllr Charlotte Hawkins	Cllr Georgia Watson
Cllr Tim Locke	Cllr Jonathon Macro

In Attendance:

Maddie Gallop, Town Clerk (TC/RFO)
Jenny Morcom, Assistant Town Clerk (ATC)
Cllr R Smith, Suffolk County Council

In attendance for the public meeting:

Mr Alan Neville, Head of Customer Engagement, Abellio Greater Anglia
Ms Joanna O'Donnell, Head of Projects, Abellio Greater Anglia

Approximately 80 members of the public

PUBLIC MEETING ON SAXMUNDHAM RAILWAY STATION.

The Town Council Meeting was preceded by a Public Meeting to discuss the planning application for a new Station building submitted by Abellio Greater Anglia. Cllr J Smith gave a short presentation about the Station, followed by presentations about the plans for the new station building from Mr Neville, Head of Customer Engagement and Ms O'Donnell, Head of Projects of Abellio Greater Anglia. The meeting was attended by over 80 members of the public who addressed questions and comments to Mr Neville and Ms O'Donnell.

A record of the Public Meeting is attached as an Appendix to these minutes and is available on the Town Council Website www.saxmundham.org

The Extraordinary Town Council meeting began at 8.15 pm.

REPORT FROM THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR:

Cllr R Smith endorsed some of the views expressed at the public meeting saying that he lived close to the Station and that charging for the Station Car Park would impact on the levels of on-street parking and be hugely detrimental.

He gave an update on progress at the County owned buildings in Street Farm Road. Staff are being relocated from the old buildings with Adult and Community Services Staff moving to Leiston and the library moving to a portacabin. Health clinics will move to the Fromus Centre and the new building will provide modern premises for SADCIC who will be given a 99-year lease. Cllr R Smith noted that a planning application for the demolition of the Registry Office to make room a new building on part of the site was on the agenda for tonight's meeting, and said that he felt the proposals would be beneficial for the community and he hoped the Town Council would give it their support.

Cllr R Smith advised that EDF had launched a Stage 4 consultation on Sizewell C, which closes on 27 September and encouraged the Town Council to respond to this. (A group of Town Councillors are already working on a response).

REPORT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR:

Cllr Fisher said that residents had asked whether wild-flower verges could be planted at the start of Rendham Road. Cllr Fisher has raised this with East Suffolk Council who are responsible for the three verges concerned and is awaiting a response.

AGENDA

		Action
5444.00	TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:	
5444.01	To receive amendments to the Register – None received.	
5444.02	To receive declarations of pecuniary interest in respect of items on the agenda. – none received.	
5444.03	To receive declarations of non-pecuniary interest with respect to items on the agenda. Cllr J Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest with respect to Item 7. DC/19/1663/OUT as a Director of SADCIC.	
5444.04	To consider full/partial dispensations for the pecuniary interests declared – none declared.	
5445.0	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND CONSENT FOR ABSENCE:	
5445.01	Apologies were received from and consent to absence granted to Cllr Sandbach who is on holiday.	
5446.00	TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8TH JULY 2019.	
5446.01	Cllr Smith proposed that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on 8 July be deferred until the next ordinary meeting of the Town Council on 9 September 2019. The notes of the public meeting on 8 July should form an annex to the formal meeting and once these have been moved, the minutes should be published in draft form.	TC

Seconded Cllr Findlay.
Unanimously agreed.
Motion carried.

5447.00 **CHAIRMAN’S/TOWN CLERK’S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

5447.01 Cllr Smith mentioned that he had drafted a short article for Saxmundham News inviting applications for small grants. The invitation to apply for grants should also be published on the Town Council website. **TC**

5448.00 **TO AUTHORISE LISTED PAYMENTS FOR TOWN COUNCIL AND MARKET HALL.**

5448.01 Cllr J Smith proposed that the payments listed be authorised with the exception of the payment for electrical testing for the Market Hall which is higher than the sum quoted. He also proposed that the Town Clerk should be authorised to pay the electrician if councillors are satisfied after consultation with the reasons for the higher payment.

Seconded Cllr Fisher.
Unanimously agreed.
Motion carried.

ATC to contact the electrician for an explanation.

ATC

5449.00 **TO DISCUSS THE PLANNING APPLICATION FROM ABELLIO GREATER ANGLIA FOR SAXMUNDHAM RAILWAY STATION.**

5449.01

DC/19/2685/FUL	Abellio Greater Anglia	Saxmundham Railway Station, Station Approach.	Remodelling and weather proofing of the station building including the construction of a new flat roof to the single-storey brick structure and replacement of new doorways and windows at Saxmundham Railway Station.
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Cllr Findlay proposed the following response with respect to planning application DC/19/2685/FUL:

Saxmundham Town Council welcomes the opportunity to discuss with Abellio Greater Anglia the redevelopment of Saxmundham Station and, in particular, the wider area around the Station.

We also fully share the objective of an early, well-designed Station Building for Saxmundham and will work constructively towards it.

The Town Council nevertheless has serious concerns about the current application and therefore opposes it.

Our grounds and concerns include:

- The proposed building design, which does not meet the required standard or scale for the location and heritage of the building
- The absence of provision in the application for community and/or passenger-serving uses of the building, such as a café or shop

- The large size of the space reserved for 'operational purposes', and the consequent smallness of the waiting room
- The need for adequate shelter and seating on platform two, which, although not part of this application, should be designed as part of the Station as a whole.
- The absence of provision of WCs
- The need to design the Station Building in the context of the wider site, including any landscaping, to be sympathetic to and consistent with its Conservation Area status, and the potential for the future regeneration of the wider area.

Our concerns, and points related to other aspects of the proposed development of the site, are further detailed in the Annex to be attached, which forms an integral part of our representations.

Seconded Cllr J Smith.
Unanimously agreed.
Motion carried.

Cllr S/TC

Cllr J Smith will draft the response letter and Annex and Town Clerk will send this to East Suffolk Council.

5450.0 TO DISCUSS OTHER PLANNING APPLICATIONS

DC/19/1663/OUT	Concertus	County Buildings, Street Farm Road.	Outline permission to demolish the Registry Office building and ancillary adjacent linked buildings at the front of the site, to be replaced with a single dwelling.
DC/16/2595/VOC	Mrs J. Hannon Fielden Ltd	Former County Primary School Fairfield Road	VOC for DC/16/0709/ARM to improve practicality of layout to plots 5,6, & 7

5450.01 DC/19/1663/OUT.
Cllr Hiley raised concerns about the erection of a dwelling house in the floodplain. Cllr R Smith confirmed that the building would be above the floodplain.

Cllr Findlay proposed that the Town Council should support the planning application.
Seconded Cllr Fisher.

Nine in favour and one abstention, Cllr J Smith who had declared a non-pecuniary interest.

Motion carried on majority

5450.02 DC/16/2595/VOC.
Cllr Smith proposed that the Town Council should not object to the planning application.

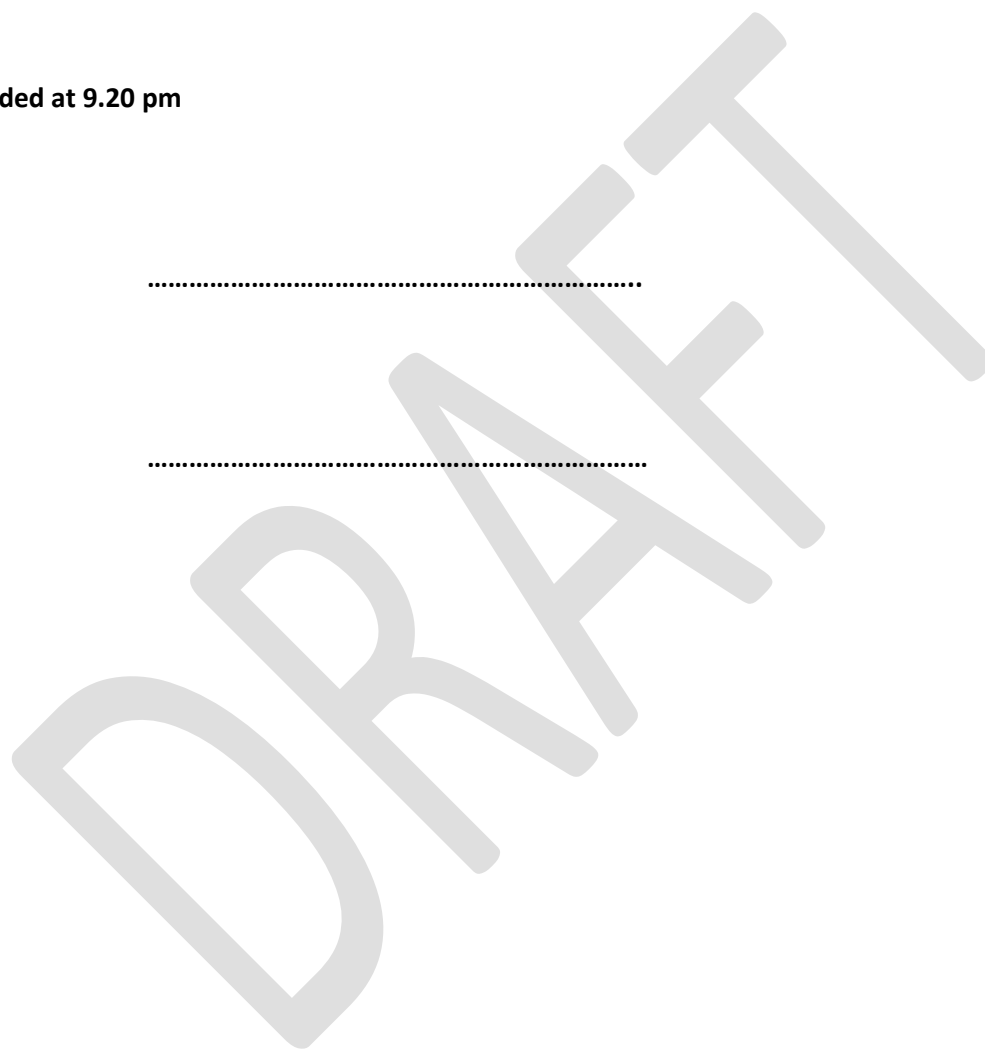
Seconded Cllr Eastman.
Unanimously agreed.
Motion carried.

5451.00. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 9 September 2019 at 7.15pm

Meeting ended at 9.20 pm

Signed

Date



APPENDIX

Note of the issues raised at the public meeting on Saxmundham Railway Station held 29 July 2019 at 6.30pm.

Cllr Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr Neville and Ms O'Donnell of Abellio Greater Anglia. Cllr Smith gave a very short presentation showing Saxmundham Station when it was first built and before the fire in February 2018. Mr Neville explained that Abellio Greater Anglia had a nine-year franchise on the Station until 2025. Ms O'Donnell explained the planning application for a single storey station building. She also explained that Abellio

Greater Anglia have further plans to refurbish platform two and extend the car park to 51 spaces and include CCTV, Wi-Fi, number plate recognition and charges.

After the welcoming remarks and presentations, members of the public raised the following questions and comments:

- Before the fire the Art Station had just taken occupation of the waiting room after negotiating with Greater Anglia for almost three years. This is an amazing opportunity and the Station could be a central part of a programme of regeneration for the whole town.
- Why is the waiting room only 26 square metres while the area reserved for operational use is 127 square metres? Why can't we have more of the available space for these or other community facilities?
- Many people spoke about the need for a café area and toilets.
- The Station could be an asset to Greater Anglia as well as the Town.
- If the operational area were to become a community or commercial facility, surely it would have toilets.
- Shouldn't the ticket machine be outside the waiting room in case the waiting room needs to be locked for some reason.
- This is a Victorian building in a conservation area, and it should be in keeping with the style of similar stations at Woodbridge, Melton and Wickham Market.
- What happened to the insurance from the fire? Why can't you reinstate the building as it was?
- Platform two is in a terrible state and we welcome the plans to refurbish it, but we need a better shelter and more seating.
- I am a signaller for Network Rail, at the moment we have two staff parking spaces. Will there be provision for us?
- Abellio Greater Anglia have not communicated well so far with the local community – we hope it will be better going forward.
- The architects plan doesn't give us enough information. We need an artist's impression of what the station and car park will look like.
- I think it's great that Abellio Greater Anglia are here tonight and are putting money into the station. Your own literature mentions Saxmundham as a jumping off point for places like Snape and Aldeburgh. Saxmundham is a gateway to the entire area and for this reason it deserves special attention. Also, Saxmundham is an interesting place in its own right.
- If I didn't shout out of my office window there would be more vandalism, there needs to be someone on site.
- What is the timetable for the works?
- There are no manned stations between Ipswich and Lowestoft, wouldn't it make sense to man Saxmundham station – what if someone is taken ill?
- Why won't the car park be free. Charging for the car park will cause congestion on the surrounding roads. There are no parking charges at Wickham Market and Melton stations.
- The Railway Heritage Trust have given £100,000 towards the refurbishment of the Station Can you assure us that this money will be used to improve the Station in ways that are not already imperative within a conservation area?
- We want the Station fully restored as it was.
- We are working towards wider regeneration of the area around the station. It will be important that any earlier works on the Station form a good base for further work.

Responses from Abellio Greater Anglia.

- Mr Neville said that despite having 167 Stations to look after he is willing to come to Saxmundham at any point. He promised to work closely with the Town Council.

- Putting toilets on stations where there are no staff is problematic as they get vandalised. Some communities have solved this problem by developing a community rail partnership to look after WCs and other facilities.
- The area marked for operational use will be the site offices for the construction of the car park and platform. Once the work is complete there may be a commercial use for it.
- The ticket machine will allow access to an operator 24/7 who can take over the transaction if anyone is struggling with touch screen operation. There will also be help points that will get through to a local operator.
- The refurbishment of platform two will include the shelter and seating but there is a limitation on how long the shelter may be.
- We will have to find out about the plans for parking for Network Rail staff.
- Mr Neville said he would personally speak to the Community Rail Partnership about Saxmundham.
- The Station will remain operational throughout the building works which are expected to take 12-13 months.
- Our train guards are trained in what to do should a passenger become ill.
- We will charge for car parking; otherwise the car park will be filled up by non-rail users.
- The Railway Heritage Trust money will be invested in the Station and will improve some of the finishes. We have worked very hard to be able to replace the Station at all and strictly speaking we didn't have to. There was insurance for the Station but it in no way covers the cost of full reinstatement.
- We will get you some artists impressions.

Undertakings.

Abellio Greater Anglia said they would:

- Come back for further dialogue
- Contact the community rail partnership
- Get artists impressions
- Make sure the ticket machine is outside the waiting room.

Saxmundham Town Council said they would:

- Take account of the issues raised tonight in our response to the planning application for the station building.

Mr Neville and Ms O'Donnell left the meeting at 7.45 pm. Cllr Smith thanked them on behalf of the Council and meeting for their participation.

After a short break the discussion continued, and the following points were made:

- There is plumbing in place for WCs. We really must have WCs.
- Could the WCs be accessed through the waiting room using a ticket?
- If this is network rail land, do they need planning consent to demolish? – I believe they don't.
- I'd like to see a brand new stylish modern station building. Are we paying a premium to keep the original walls?
- I would like the Station to be rebuilt in its original style.

This part of the public meeting ended at 8.05pm