



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of Saxmundham Town Council held on
Monday 10th June 2024 at the Market Hall, High Street, Saxmundham at 7:00 pm.

Minutes

33/24TC Attendees

Cllr Di Eastman (Chair)
Cllr John Findlay (Vice-Chair)
Cllr John Fisher
Cllr Jeremy Smith
Cllr Geraldine Barker
Cllr Charlotte Hawkins
Cllr Elizabeth Clark

Apologies

Cllr James Sandbach
Cllr Tim Lock
Cllr Marianne Kiff
Cllr Benjamin Gulliford

Also Present

Sharon Smith (Town Clerk/RFO)
2 members of the public
County Cllr Richard Smith

34/24TC Declaration of Interests

None.

35/24TC Open Forum

- a) The Director of the Art Station thanked the Council for supporting the Arts Fest and extended an invitation to all Councillors to attend a review meeting on 27th June 2024.
- b) A member of the public identified herself as a High Street business owner and provided positive feedback about the Arts Fest. The Chair thanked the member of the public for her views.
- c) County Cllr Richard Smith reported that he was unable to attend the Arts Fest but he commended it in his next article for the Sax News newsletter. Cllr Richard Smith advised that, due to the pre-election moratorium period, he would say very little, but he was happy to attend and hear any concerns from the Council. Cllr Richard Smith advised that due to a Cabinet reshuffle he has regained responsibility for the finance portfolio, and he is the new Deputy Leader of the County Council as County Cllr Richard Rout is focusing on his campaign as the parliamentary candidate for the Waveney Valley constituency. In response to a question from Cllr Jeremy Smith, Cllr Richard Smith confirmed that further consideration of the devolution deal has been suspended until after the General Election. Cllr Richard Smith also informed Cllr Jeremy Smith that County Cllr Chris Chambers had taken over his previous portfolio responsibilities.
- d) District Cllr John Fisher thanked everyone for the success of the Arts Fest. Cllr John Fisher reported that District Cllr Katie Graham was appointed as Chair of the Aldeburgh, Leiston and Saxmundham Community Partnership and he had been appointed as Vice-Chair. In response to a question from Cllr Jeremy Smith, Cllr John Fisher reported that Ben Woolnough became Head of Planning with effect from 1st June 2024 and Philip Ridley is covering other matters including energy projects.

36/24TC Minutes

Signed _____ Date _____

- a) It was **unanimously resolved** to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 13th May 2024 as a true and accurate record, following acceptance of an amendment to item 24/24TC proposed by Cllr Jeremy Smith.
- b) The Council received the minutes of the Resources Committee meeting held on 4th June 2024.
- c) The Council received the minutes of Amenities and Services Committee meeting held on 16th May 2024.
- d) The Council received the minutes of the Events and Communications Committee meetings held on 2nd and 31st May 2024.
- e) The Council received the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held on 4th June 2024.

37/24TC Reports

- a) The Chair read out her written report. Highlights included the Arts Fest, the General Election Hustings at St John's Church, and an update from the recent meeting of the Aldeburgh, Leiston and Saxmundham Community Partnership which included a presentation from the Suffolk Community Foundation with regard to administering the Sizewell C Community Fund. The Chair also reported that she attended the successful D-Day 80th anniversary commemorative event.
- b) The Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group reported that the NPSG had a tripartite meeting with representatives from Pigeon and the District Council's planning department. The meeting was useful and helped to lay the ground. Pigeon have engaged professional consultants to draft the masterplan for the South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood. Pigeon have requested two further meetings with the NPSG. Cllr Jeremy Smith will shortly circulate the suggested dates. Pigeon's proposed public exhibition of the masterplan for the Garden Neighbourhood has been delayed until mid to late August 2024. Cllr Jeremy Smith has circulated dates for a meeting with the consultants who will assist with drafting policies for the new Neighbourhood Plan area and revising existing policies to address the proposed energy projects. Cllr Charlotte Hawkins noted that August may not be ideal for Pigeon's public exhibition due to the summer holidays. In response to a question from Cllr Geraldine Barker, Cllr Jeremy Smith responded that he did not know the subject matter for the proposed two meetings with Pigeon, but he assumes that the next version of the draft masterplan will be presented.
- c) The Council received a report from the Town Clerk. The crime statistics for April 2024 were not available.
- d) The Council received a report from the Chair of the Energy Projects Working Group. Cllr Geraldine Barker also reported that residents living within 200m of the railway line had not received letters informing them of the recent works. She raised this at the Sizewell C Southern Transport Forum and was informed by EDF that Network Rail sub-contracted this work to another company who subsequently went bankrupt. EDF promised to put this right. Cllr Geraldine Barker also reported that, according to the County Council's website, National Grid's application for a Development Consent Order for Sealink is likely to be delayed until the first quarter of 2025. The County Council is exhorting National Grid to ensure Lion Link shares cable trenches with Sealink.

38/24TC Finance Report

- a) The Council noted the payments, receipts and bank balances as at 31st May 2024.

Signed _____ Date _____

- b) The Council noted the budget versus actual income and expenditure report as at 31st May 2024.
- c) Following a proposal by Cllr John Findlay, which was seconded by Cllr Di Eastman, it was **unanimously resolved** to accept the Resources Committee's recommendation to approve the Internal Audit Effectiveness Review for the financial year 2023-2024.
- d) The Council noted the Internal Audit Report for the financial year 2023-2024 and following a proposal by Cllr John Findlay, which was seconded by Cllr Di Eastman, it was **unanimously resolved** to accept the Resources Committee's recommendations to address any recommendations therein.
- e) With reference to item 27/24TC from the meeting held on 13th May 2024, the Town Clerk explained that it was necessary to reconsider the Annual Governance Statement after consideration and approval of the Internal Audit Effectiveness Review. Following a proposal by Cllr Jeremy Smith, which was seconded by Cllr Di Eastman, it was **unanimously resolved** to accept the Resources Committee's recommendation to approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- f) Following a proposal by Cllr Jeremy Smith, which was seconded by Cllr Di Eastman, it was **unanimously resolved** to accept the Resources Committee's recommendation to approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- g) Following a proposal by Cllr John Findlay, which was seconded by Cllr Di Eastman, it was **unanimously resolved** to accept the Resources Committee's recommendation to approve the appointment of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils as internal auditor for the financial year 2024-2025.

39/24TC Policies and Procedures

Following a proposal by Cllr Jeremy Smith, which was seconded by Cllr Di Eastman, it was **unanimously resolved** to approve the correction to the Standing Orders recommended in the internal audit report.

40/24TC External Bodies

Following a proposal by Cllr Geraldine Barker, which was seconded by Cllr Elizabeth Clark, it was **unanimously resolved** to appoint a Cllr Charlotte Hawkins as representative to the Saxmundham Surgery Patient Participation Group.

41/24TC Communication

The Town Council noted the correspondence received since the last meeting.

42/24TC Next Meeting

The Town Council noted the date and time of the next meeting which is scheduled for 8th July 2024 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 8:00 pm.

Sharon Smith
Town Clerk/RFO

Signed _____ Date _____