

MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING HELD BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE

In accordance with (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020)

Present: Councillors;

Tony Allen, Annette Dunning, Peter Dutton, Anne Fleming, Rosemary Lewis, Karen Prime, Jill Reece, David Thomas, Maureen Took, David Wollweber (Chair), Jackie Wagner.

In Attendance: N Rees (Town Clerk) District Cllr Alison Cackett, 0 members of the public.

Minutes

- 1) Apologies: Cllr Ben Chadwick, District and County Councillor, Tony Goldson
- 2) Declarations of Interest: None
- 3) Minutes: The minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 2nd March, 2020 were accepted as a true record.
- 4) Matters arising from the minutes. Cllr Dutton raised questions on the Miles Ward Court and East Suffolk Council's temporary review panel for determining applications. The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted Mr Perkin (Chief Planning Officer) regarding Miles Ward Court but they were still awaiting an acoustic assessment from the applicants so there had been no decision made at this stage. The Clerk confirmed that the last East Suffolk Council's temporary review panel would meet this week and thereafter it would revert to the normal process that was in place before the emergency, albeit via video conferencing. District Cllr Alison Cackett also confirmed that the last temporary referral meeting was taking place on Tuesday 19th May, and she offered to help the Town Council or anyone who wished to make representations at any future ESC Planning Committee meetings.

Cllr Fleming asked whether there had been any further response from Lloyds over the complaint about pollution from the Mobile Bank. The Clerk understood that there had been discussions about moving the Mobile Bank to the Angel North car park, which would solve part of the problem but he would need to talk to Cllr Goldson to find out more. Cllr Cackett offered to chase up East Suffolk Council.

Cllr Dunning asked whether the Plastic Free Halesworth proposal had been brought to the Council. Cllr Reece (Chair of the Environment Committee) confirmed that the proposal had been complicated by the close association with the Green Party and furthermore it was not clear what support was required.

- 5) Chair's Report. The Chair wished to convey his frustration at how decisions taken by the Covid-19 group were being seemingly questioned by a minority of Councillors. He explained that HTC were one of four represented on this group and when the group made decisions he had to think about what the majority of Town Councillors would be happy with, in

regards to its actions. The sole purpose was to help all those most in need during this crisis and keeping Halesworth safe and sometimes decisions needed to be made quickly.

The Chair thought it was important to refocus on Town Council matters that have been drifting since the virus struck, He suggested that a meeting be organised in 2 weeks' time on 'Zoom' to revisit the 4 year plan and work out which parts can be taken forward in the current crisis. It was RESOLVED to hold this meeting in approximately two weeks' time; date to be confirmed.

- 6) Annual meeting of the Council: To consider the proposal that the Annual meeting of the Council is postponed until May 2021. It was RESOLVED that the Annual meeting of the Town Council would be postponed until May 2021 with all current Chairs, Vice Chairs and reps on outside bodies retaining their positions until that time but that membership of the working groups and committees would be reviewed at the next meeting.
- 7) Audit: To receive and approve the following:
 - a. The Council received and noted the 'End of year executive summary'
 - b. The Council received and noted the Internal Audit report: conducted by SALC for 2019- 2020. The Clerk confirmed that there were no recommendations that required action but the Finance Committee would be reviewing the report in more detail at a later meeting and would take note of any comments made.
 - c. It was RESOLVED that the Council approved Section 1: (Annual Governance Statement) of the audit submission for 2019 – 2020 to PKF LittleJohn LLP Accountants and this would be delivered to the Chair for signing.
 - d. It was RESOLVED that the Council approved Section 2: (Accounting Statements) of the audit submission for 2019 – 2020 to PKF LittleJohn LLP Accountants and this would be delivered to the Chair for signing.
- 8) Finance: The Council received and accepted the report of the Finance meeting held on the 22nd April, 2020
- 9) Grant Applications: To consider the following grant applications:-
 - a. Halesworth Dementia Carers Fund. It was noted that HDCF had requested £10,000 which was twice the amount provided last year. It was noted that the organisation would have experienced difficulties in raising money via its usual events during the emergency. However, it was generally accepted that this was too much for the Town council to provide for one organisation. It was initially proposed to provide a £5,000 grant but on an amendment it was then RESOLVED that the Council approved a grant of £7,500 with 7 for, 3 against and one abstention.
- 10) Draft Minutes: To consider the proposals that all draft minutes are drawn up and submitted to all those Councillors in attendance at the meeting for their information within a week of a meeting taking place. The Clerk confirmed that he had no issues with circulating draft minutes but wished to note that initially the draft minutes are sent to the Chair (of the meeting) for comment in the first place and after it was received back it could then be circulated. So the time period was reliant on this exchange between the Clerks and the Chairs and one week was often not sufficient. After some debate it was then RESOLVED to amend the proposal; that all draft minutes are drawn up and submitted to all those Councillors in attendance at the meeting for their information within two weeks of a meeting taking place.
- 11) Communications Committee: The Council received and noted the report of the Communications Committee meeting held on the 5th May, 2020. There were no proposals to consider at this stage but the Committee were hoping to arrange regular weekly meetings for all councillors to attend if they wished to do so. These meetings would be informal for discussion on any news items in the town. Cllr Dunning informed the Council that currently the Committee had not been given any further matters to discuss.

District Councillor Alison Cackett gave apologies for having to leave to attend another meeting.

- 12) Environment Committee: The Council received and noted the report of the Environment Committee meeting held on the 11th March, 2020. Cllr Reece reported that the Committee were currently working with the tree warden to produce a map of all the significant trees in the town in order to try and preserve them.
- 13) Committees, working groups and reps on outside bodies:-
 - a. To receive any verbal reports of any other meetings attended by councillors:
Cllr Allen reported on a positive meeting that he and the Chair had attended with Stephanie Baxter; ESC Housing Enabler Officer. The purpose was to explore options on how the Town Council can be involved with encouraging or facilitating affordable housing for rent or purchase in the town.
Cllr Reece reported that she had received very positive feedback on the list of businesses, produced by Cllr Dunning, that were providing services during the covid-19 lockdown.
 - b. To consider any amendments to the list of committees, working groups and reps on outside bodies for approval at a later meeting. The Chair requested that all councillors should consider the list of committees, working groups and reps on outside bodies and inform the Clerk of any changes they wished to make.
- 14) Correspondence: Mr Clarke – cycling. It was accepted that the correspondence from Mr Clarke had been unusual in that he had directly contacted most of the Council but had omitted the Clerk and two other councillors. Cllr Allen had duly responded as the questions raised were of interest to the Neighbourhood Plan and Cllrs; Dunning and Thomas had also replied directly to Mr Clarke. Cllr Dutton asked whether there should have been one response from the Council as a whole. However in this particular case it was noted that Mr Clarke had written to councillors individually and therefore some had felt obligated to reply individually. There was then some debate on how this correspondence might have been handled differently and it was agreed that the Communications Committee would review the process and also look at adding each councillor's responsibilities on the website which may help with similar enquiries in the future.

As a result of Mr Clarke's letter, the Clerk had contacted SCC Highways and County Cllr David Ritchie to ask again whether there was any practical way a cycle way could be incorporated along Saxon Way. This was something that the Highways Working Group had explored in the past. On this occasion they had seemed to be more receptive to the idea and had since contacted Cllr Goldson who had in turn contacted the Clerk to request a formal proposal because SCC/Cllr Goldson may be able to fund it. It was then RESOLVED that the Council agreed to the investigation and implementation (if it were possible and subject to the details being agreed) of a Cycle Lane along Saxon Way which utilised the existing pavement.

- 15) News Items & Voucher update: To consider any items for the website/newsletters and an update on the voucher scheme. The Clerk updated the Council on the number of vouchers issued and the amount that had been spent in the local shops so far. The follow up postcards detailing the scheme would be distributed to all households in Halesworth in the next couple of days.

The Clerk had received a flag, provided free from East Suffolk Council, which said 'thanks to the NHS, key workers and volunteers' and the Council agreed that the Clerk could hoist it from the park flagpole.

- 16) Accounts for Payment: The following list of accounts was approved for payment:-

<u>4282.</u>	SALC Internal Audit (LGA 1972 s111)	355.80 + vat
<u>4283.</u>	SALC – E learning for GDPR (Data Protection Act 2018)	28.00 + vat
<u>4284.</u>	Navigus – Neighbourhood Plan support (Localism Act 2014)	280.00 + vat

DD/Standing Orders:

<u>4285.</u>	Monthly salaries (LGA 1972 s112)	2623.39
<u>4286.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 2 (Food Act 1984 s50)	31.00
<u>4287.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 3 (Food Act 1984 s50)	25.00
<u>4288.</u>	EDF Electricity – Market Place no 1 (Food Act 1984 s50)	9.00
<u>4289.</u>	LGPS Pension Scheme (LGA 1972 s112)	997.73

Bank & Cash Balances at 30th April, 2020

Current 728	£129,951.28
Unity Trust	£94,811.86
Community A/c	£5,293.92
Business Reserves 017	£92,659.92
Petty Cash	£114.49

The meeting was closed at 5.40pm