



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;

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

In Attendance: Nick Rees (Town Clerk) County & District Cllr Tony Goldson, three members of the public.

Minutes

1. Apologies: None
2. Declarations of interest: To receive declarations for non-pecuniary interests: Cllr Chadwick for item 8
3. Minutes: The minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 4th December, 2020 was accepted as a true record
4. Matters arising from the Minutes:
5. Chair's Report: To receive a report for December: The Chair reported that the Covid-19 group had met last week and wished to emphasise to the members how serious the current situation had become with hospital admissions and infections continuing to rise. The Chair was aware that there would be questions regarding the vaccine rollout and this would be dealt with under item 8. District & County Reports
6. Public Session: [15 minutes on matters relating to the town] The Council had received 4 questions in advance from a member of the public; On the first question, regarding the Link cash points, this question had been answered via email by the Clerk, on the question regarding the revised Supermarket application the Clerk confirmed that ESC had considered that the revised plans submitted were sufficiently different from the original to necessitate a new application. On the matter of the accuracy of the housing needs figures, which had been reported in the press recently, the Chair of the Planning Committee reported that he would be investigating this further. Finally on the Farmer's Market relocating to the Rifle Hall; the question regarding the insurance would need to be answered by the Rifle Hall Trust and it was suggested that the member of the public who raised the question should contact the Chair, Tony Goldson. Michael Imison asked about the Tamsyn Imison award, the Clerk confirmed that he was reasonably certain there had only been one nomination so far but agreed to advertise it again and it was also confirmed that Mr Imison would be a judge on the panel, as agreed previously by the Communications Committee.
7. To receive written reports on meetings and events attended by Council representatives: The Council received and noted the report from Cllr Fleming on the Halesworth Blyth Valley Partnership latest news.

The Chair reported on the Covid Group meeting on Tuesday 5th January, 2021 and following discussions by the group regarding supporting the Community Larder now the original voucher scheme had been suspended the Chair proposed, 'that when asked by the Community Larder, HTC will fund fresh fruit and veg from the two most popular providers in the current voucher scheme (subject to their agreement) to a maximum total amount of £ 30 per family a week. The total spend in any one calendar month will not exceed £ 500 (the amount to be reviewed on a regular basis)'. Some members of the Council felt this arrangement was unnecessarily complicated and preferred the original voucher scheme. When put to the vote this proposal was defeated 7 voted to 4 with 1 abstention

The Council received and noted the People & Places draft document: Terms of Reference for HTC's People and Place Working Group and after agreeing it was RESOLVED that Cllr Lewis would join the group and that the Council approved the terms of reference.

8. District & County Reports: To receive any reports. Cllr Goldson confirmed that the two locations locally that were set up for Covid-19 vaccinations were Solebay Health Centre and Kirkley Mill Surgery. Cllr Goldson explained that the NHS had looked at the Patrick Stead Hospital but due to the restricted parking and waiting areas it was not deemed suitable. Cllr Goldson reported that those next in line for receiving the vaccinations would be contacted by letter but this was corrected during the meeting because as at the time of the meeting vaccinations were being arranged by phone. As regards to transport Cllr Goldson confirmed that there would not be any costs for anyone using the HACT Transport. Cllr Goldson had allocated £1,000 to HACT in support and on that note appealed to the Council to similarly assist financially if it was able to do so. It was then RESOLVED that the Council would set up an emergency support fund for HACT.
9. Financial Matters: To consider the following:-
 - a) The Council received and noted the report of the meeting held on the 21st December, 2020.
 - b) At the December Finance Committee, which comprised of 3/4 of the members of the Council; the Chair and Clerk had made a presentation, comparing other town's tax figures and detailing how the precept was calculated. The conclusion was that the only viable method of covering the increased costs in maintaining all the assets which East Suffolk Council proposed to transfer, was via a five year plan. This plan involved increasing the precept but offset and adjusted on an annual basis to account for the parachute payments from East Suffolk Council and the increase in the number of tax payers due to the new housing developments that was planned for the next few years. The Council members again received the presentation documentation to consider for this meeting. Cllr Thomas thanked Cllr Lewis and the Clerk for providing the information in such a clear method. It was then RESOLVED that the Town Council accepted ESC's offer to proceed with the transfer of the approved list of assets (subject to any adjustments or further negotiations) and that the precept for 2021/22 will be £139,927 on the basis of the five year projection, as recommended by the Finance Committee.

The Chair reported that he had been contacted by James Hewitt of the Southwold Railway Trust who had expressed an interest in utilising the verge in Bramblewood Way to show the historic railway line to Southwold. This verge area had previously been removed by the Town Council from the asset list approved for transfer. It was therefore an interesting proposition and could potentially be another tourist attraction. The Chair proposed an amendment to the previous resolution and it was then RESOLVED that the Town Council requested that this asset be reinstated on the list of assets to be transferred from ESC.

10. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group: The Council received and noted the minutes of the meeting held on the 16th December, 2020
11. Planning Committee: The Council received and noted the report on the meeting held on the 14th December, 2020

12. Environment Committee: The Council received and noted the report on the meeting held on the 18th December, 2020 and considered the following proposals:-
- a) Permission for the Community Garden Project (Swan Lane) to be given the go ahead (at no cost to the Council)
 - b) Permission for the tree warden to plant the saplings that will form the woodland garden. (These need to be planted to give them time to grow as the community garden develops) The trees will all be English native trees. (at no cost to the Council) These saplings will be mixed with larger trees provided by Emma's tree surgeons to give an immediate presence.
 - c) Permission to purchase a secure metal shed for the storage of equipment and shelter from the weather if necessary. (Cost to come from Environment Committee budget, or Greening of Halesworth budget)

After some debate it became clear that there were concerns about what happens if and when the enthusiasm for the project wanes and who would be responsible for the future maintenance and upkeep. Also, who would be the project leader and how would any produce be distributed. Some councillors also wished to consider reserving space for additional allotment gardens if the current demand remains high. It was agreed that the Environment Committee would review the proposals again with the Council's comments and then provide more information for the Council to consider at a later meeting.

Councillor Thomas reported that he had been conducting his own research and observations during the recent heavy rain and high river levels. Cllr Thomas had concluded that HTC had no legal responsibility to reduce the flood risk but did have an obligation to make efforts to engage those who were responsible. The immediate and serious threat was flooding to businesses and properties in the town and he proposed and it was RESOLVED that 'HTC investigates the possibility and cost of reinforcing and raising the river bank by at least by one to two meters between the area of the Thoroughfare Bridge and the end of Chediston Street to where the river turns North towards Mill Lane and to raise the wall in the underpass to prevent the footpath flooding and thereby blocking safe pedestrian access to the town park.'

Cllr Thomas had also been researching the history and ownership of the Village Green (part of the New Reach) and reported that his records indicated that the owner was registered as Halesworth Urban District Council in February 1974.

13. Communications Committee: The Council received and noted the minutes of the meetings held on the 14th December, 2020
14. Policy Documents: The following policy documents were provided; HTC Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment, Asset Register & CCTV Policy and these would be determined at the next monthly meeting in February.
15. General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012.

It was RESOLVED that the Council confirmed the following:-

1. That the number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected, whether at ordinary elections or at a by-election, is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council
2. That the clerk to the parish council holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration.
3. And that the Council passed the resolution to adopt the General Power of Competence (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 and this comes into force on the day after the day on which it is made.

16. Correspondence: The Clerk reported that he had contacted the owners of the land, SFC Developments, who were currently clearing the land adjacent to Saxon Way but had not received any response so far.
17. Maintenance: None
18. Items for the Website/Noticeboard/Newsletters/Library. It was agreed that the Clerk would announce that Halesworth had won the Town of the Year Award and thank the whole town in the next Community News and other media outlets. It was also agreed that the clerks would utilise the logo to help promote the town on signage which could replace some of the older Anglia in Bloom signs on the approach to the town and in other locations such as the Station.
19. Accounts for Payment: The following accounts were approved for payment

<u>4569.</u>	Halesworth Museum – Electricity (adjustment Jan 19 – Mar 20)	228.27
<u>4570.</u>	N Rees – Zoom monthly subscription (November) (LGA 1972 s111)	11.99 + vat
<u>4571.</u>	Joyce Moseley - Zoom monthly subscription N Plan (localism Act 2011)	11.99 + vat
<u>4572.</u>	Wissett Parish Council – VAS Insurance (LGA 1972 s111)	18.72
<u>4573.</u>	Sharprint – Service charge 20.06.20 – 20.12.20 (LGA 1972 s111)	242.55 + vat
<u>4574.</u>	Navigus – Neighbourhood Plan Invoice 5 (Localism Act 2011)	1050.00 + vat
<u>4575.</u>	BSA CCTV Invoice 2 (CIL) completion of installation	15,700.61 +vat
<u>4576.</u>	Pearce & Kemp – Arboretum Lantern (Parish Council's Act 1957 s3)	747.50 + vat

DD/Standing Orders:

<u>4577.</u>	Monthly salaries (LGA 1972 s112)	2623.39
<u>4578.</u>	Barclays Bank Charges (LGA 1972 s111)	7.05
<u>4579.</u>	Wave (NWG Business)– Saxon Allotment Water (6 months)*	148.59
<u>4580.</u>	Wave (NWG Business)– Swan Lane Allotment Water (6 months)*	172.24
<u>4581.</u>	Wave (NWG Business)– Bedingfield Allotment Water (6 months)*	69.28

*(Small holdings and Allotment Act 1908 s.23)

Bank & Cash Balances at 8th January, 2021

Current 728	£129,975.93
Unity Trust	£109,013.55
Community A/c	£5,296.20
Business Reserves 017	£92,699.93
Petty Cash	£71.83

The meeting was closed at 20.57pm