

## SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER of the TOWN HALL on **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Councillors Asker, A Coote (Chair), De Vries, Eke (until Min Ref FC042-20), Freeman, Gadd, Hawke-Smith, Light, Millward, Roberts and Toy

**Also Present:** Cllr John Moran, Essex County Council

**Officers:** Lisa Courtney, Town Clerk

FC 034-20	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs S Coote, Fairhurst, Frost, McLellan and Porch</p>
FC 035-20	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Cllrs Asker, A Coote, Eke, De Vries, Freeman and Light declared generic non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council (UDC).</p>
FC 036-20	<p><b>Public Speaking Time</b></p> <p>There were no questions arising</p>
FC 037-20	<p><b>County Councillor Update</b></p> <p>Cllr John Moran was present and spoke further on the following issues:</p> <p>(a) Update on works to the Slade Cllr Moran advised the trash screen works were scheduled for spring 2020 with repair works to the culvert in summer 2021. ECC were still considering how best to proceed regarding any obligations of riparian owners, noting that they did not have a complete list of riparian owners.</p> <p>(b) Highways Meeting held on 09.03.20 Cllr Moran provided a brief update on the meeting held earlier that day, noting that S106 monies were available for the creation of a pelican crossing on Thaxted Road to cross from the skate park to the Aldi site. Members questioned if a formal footpath should be installed from the skatepark and it was noted this would form part of the design and consideration process.</p> <p>Cllr Gadd raised a query regarding any developers' obligation to install a crossing and/or install traffic lights at Peasland Road. Cllr Moran agreed to review the S106 for details of developer obligations.</p>

Signed as a true and accurate record .....

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- (c) George Street Paving Repairs  
Cllr Moran advised that works scheduled to commence near George Street / Hill Street would commence in March 2020
- (d) Paving / surface by St Clare's Hospice shop  
Members expressed concern regarding the steep slope which was slippery even in fine weather and could become unpassable during icy weather. Cllr Moran undertook to speak further with ECC Highways Officers regarding these concerns and to consider possible solutions.
- (e) Pavement Parking  
Members expressed concern regarding the increase in parking on pavements and the problems and issues which this created for pedestrians, especially those with pushchairs / wheelchairs / walking frames or with sight difficulties. Cllr Eke advised this concern has been raised by the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) who were working with police to identify hot spot areas. It was noted that pavement parking is a criminal matter for the police to enforce and not under the jurisdiction of NEPP.
- (f) ECC Cycling Officer  
Cllr Moran agreed to follow up a meeting with the Cycling Officer and SWTC Members to progress cycling opportunities in and around Saffron Walden. It was noted that SWTC submitted details of potential cycling schemes some 4 years ago which were repeated more recently and details of any opportunities are still awaited from ECC.
- (g) Parking by the Roundabout at Hop Fields / Peasland Road  
Cllr Toy reported on the difficulties in navigating this roundabout, given the increased parking closer to the roundabout. Agreed that Cllrs Moran and Toy would meet on site to review further and to consider any remedy.
- (h) High Street Paving  
Cllr Moran advised that the paving should be replaced by the end of March 2020; he undertook to progress this further.
- (i) Audley End Road  
Cllr Moran advised that proposals to reduce the speed limit had previously been considered by the Local Highways Panel (LHP) some 3-4 years earlier and was refused (for reasons unknown at this meeting). Cllr Moran advised the appropriate process was therefore for an appeal to be made to ECC Cabinet and via the Members Meeting (likely April / May 2020). Cllr Moran undertook to progress further and to keep SWTC informed of any progress.
- (j) ECC Budget  
Cllr Moran advised that ECC is awaiting confirmation of the financial settlement figure from central Government; once this was received, he would forward a copy of the ECC Highways Budget to SWTC. Cllr Moran noted monies had been set aside for storm / drain repairs.

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	<p>(k) Stansted Airport Refusal Cllr Moran noted the recent refusal by UDC of the Stansted Airport planning application had initiated a country-wide review of airport applications and the need for compliance with climate emergency plans and strategies.</p> <p>Cllr Moran was thanked for his update and contribution and left the meeting</p>
FC 038-20	<p><b>Mayor's Communications</b></p> <p>The Mayor's communications were noted. The Mayor had attended a recent Toast Masters' meeting and highly commended attendance to those involved in public speaking.</p>
FC 039-20	<p><b>To verify the Minutes of the Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b></p> <p>The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.</p>
FC 040-20	<p><b>Committee Minutes</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the minutes from the following Committee meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Road Traffic 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (approved minutes)</li> <li>• Planning and Road Traffic 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (draft minutes)</li> <li>• Finance and Establishment 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (draft minutes)</li> <li>• Assets and Services 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (draft minutes)</li> </ul>
FC 041-20	<p><b>Mayoral Selection from May 2020 - Future arrangements for the nomination and election of Town Mayor</b></p> <p>Members considered the report as presented. Cllr A Coote suggested that the matter was taken as two separate items being:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(1) Nomination to the positions of Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor, followed by (2) Consideration of the creation of a Leader role</p> <p>This process was received favourably and progressed. On the matter of elections to the role of Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the Town Clerk advised that one nomination for each position had been received in accordance with the Town Council's Mayoral Selection Policy (readopted January 2020).</p> <p><b><u>Mayoral Nominations</u></b> Cllr A Coote proposed Cllr Asker to the position of Mayor from May 2020 for one year, this was seconded by Cllr Freeman. Cllr Asker confirmed she was content with the nomination, there being no other nominations, it was</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b></p>

That Cllr Asker be proposed for the position of Town Mayor, and that this be further formally considered and duly agreed at the Annual Meeting scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, in accordance with the LGA 1972, ss15 (2) and 34 (2)

**Deputy Mayor Nominations**

Cllr Freeman proposed Cllr Porch to the position of Deputy Mayor from May 2020 for one year, this was seconded by Cllr Gadd. Cllr Porch was not present at the meeting but had advised in email correspondence to the Town Clerk he was content with the nomination, there being no other nominations, it was

**Resolved:**

That Cllr Porch be proposed for the position of Deputy Town Mayor and that this be further formally considered and duly agreed at the Annual Meeting scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

**Position of Leader**

The Town Clerk summarised the report as presented, noting the report sought to clarify the specific roles and duties of the Leader, as opposed to those of the Town Mayor. The Clerk was thanked for her informative and detailed report.

Following considerable discussion and debate, it was

**Resolved:**

- (a) To adopt the new role of a Leader of the Town Council whose remit would be that as proposed within the report, save for deletion of the paragraph *“it is anticipated that the Leader of the Council will be a political position and will be held by the Leader of the largest political grouping on the Town Council, subject to the election process as out lined above”*
- (b) Paragraph (d) of the proposed Leader role, to insert the word “local”, thus to read *“To direct local, strategic policy and budget setting”*
- (c) That the term of office for the Leader would ordinarily be for a 2-year period but that for 2020, it be a one-year period only. This is to (i) allow a one-year trial of the process and (ii) to ensure that a leader from 2021 is postholder for the final two years of this current administration
- (d) That the election process for the Leader mirrors that of the Mayor (save for this first year when nominations will be taken at the Annual Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020)
- (e) That the matter of whether the Leader is an ex-officio member of Committees or not (as per the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) be determined at the Annual Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

	Cllr Eke offered his apologies and left the meeting
FC 042-20	<p><b>Citizens' Advice Uttlesford</b></p> <p>Cllrs Gadd and Hawke-Smith agreed to act as points of contact and to participate in update meetings with them.</p>
FC 043-20	<p><b>Quarterly Report and Update on the Town Council's Priorities</b></p> <p>Council reviewed the update report with thanks to Officers for progressing matters.</p>
FC 044-20	<p><b>Reports from other Meetings</b></p> <p>Council received a verbal update from the following meetings:</p> <p>(a) SW Youth Club - Cllr A Coote reported on the very successful Friday Night Youth Club which has been resurrected in the ECC building, adjacent to Fairycroft House. Cllr Coote detailed the great work being done at the Club which had the potential to be spoiled by a very small minority (some 5-6 young people) who do not attend the Club but instead act in a disruptive manner outside. The Police were aware of the incidents, including some criminal damage caused to Fairycroft Arts and Music Centre.</p> <p>Cllr Toy noted the need to build up a body of evidence for the police so that any future action or injunctions were supported by a portfolio of evidence. He undertook to speak further with those managing the Youth Club and Tim Atkinson, Fairycroft Arts and Music Centre.</p>
FC 045-20	<p><b>Additional Forthcoming Meetings</b></p> <p>Council received and noted details of the following:</p> <p>(a) HMS Lapwing Association – Saffron Walden Reunion – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2020 at 2.30pm. Members noted the need to meet in the Council Chamber for robing at 1.45pm for departure to Close Gardens at 2pm.</p> <p>(b) Velo Essex Ride - scheduled for Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September which would come through Saffron Walden.</p>
FC 046-20	<p><b>Urgent Information Items</b></p> <p>There were no matters for discussion or information</p>
FC 047-20	<p><b>Date and time of Next Meeting(s)</b></p> <p>Annual Meeting - Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 7.00pm followed at 7.30pm (or on conclusion of the Annual Meeting, whichever is the latest), Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saffron Walden.</p>

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.10pm

Signed as a true and accurate record .....

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