

ASSET & SERVICES COMMITTEE
SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING in the Town Hall, Saffron Walden.

Date of meeting: **Monday 24th May 2021** at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Asker, Coote, Freeman, McLellan, Porch and Roberts

Officers: Lisa Courtney, Town Clerk and Terry Frostick, Operations Manager

Also Present: None

A & S 051-21	<p>Election of Committee Chair</p> <p>Cllr Coote nominated Cllr Freeman who accepted the nomination, this was seconded by Cllr Porch. There being no other nominations, Cllr Freeman was duly elected as Committee Chair for 2021/22</p>
A & S 052-21	<p>Election of Deputy Committee Chair</p> <p>Cllr Asker nominated Cllr McLellan who accepted the nomination, this was seconded by Cllr Coote. There being no other nominations, Cllr McLellan was duly elected as Deputy Committee Chair for 2021/22</p>
A & S 053-21	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs De Vries and Frost</p>
A & S 054-21	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllrs Asker, Coote and Freeman declared generic non-pecuniary interests as members of Uttlesford District Council.</p>
A & S 055-21	<p>Minutes of the last meeting of the Assets & Services Committee</p> <p>The minutes of the last Assets & Services Committee meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.</p>
A & S 056-21	<p>Public Speaking Time</p> <p>There were no questions or matters arising from the public</p>
A & S 057-21	<p>Lime Avenue / Tudor Park - Persimmon</p> <p>The Clerk provided a summary of activity to date with specific reference to the following matters:</p>

	<p>(a) The Agreement for Lease had been received at the Town Council offices earlier that day and, subject to review and verification that the document received accords with the electronic drafts already reviewed, the document will be signed and returned at the earliest opportunity to the Town Council's solicitors. The Agreement for Lease contains all of the outstanding matters for Persimmon Homes to remedy prior to completion of the transfer of land to the Town Council.</p> <p>(b) Temporary changing facilities are scheduled for installation 21st June 2021.</p> <p>(c) Town Council officers and representatives from the Community Football Club will review outstanding matters and requirements regarding the pitch and security measures for the temporary changing facilities.</p> <p>The Town Clerk and Operations Manager were thanked for their due diligence and professionalism in progressing this matter.</p>
<p>A & S 058-21</p>	<p>Area Fronting Close House, High Street</p> <p>The Clerk advised that quotes are being obtained from surveyors to prepare a quotation specification which identifies works required; this specification can then be added to Contract Finder to identify specific works costs further enabling funding streams to be established. The Clerk advised that some funding had been secured to pay for the surveyors' costs and Committee endorsed the process of appointing a surveyor in the preparation of a full schedule of works.</p>
<p>A & S 059-21</p>	<p>Bellway Development, Thaxted Road</p> <p>Committee considered the report as proposed, recommending the Town Council does not take over the future ownership or management of the public open space at this development. Whilst SWTC's general policy is to adopt public open space arising in new developments, adoption will not be at any potential considerable and significant cost/obligation to the Town Council or tax payers. The reasons for refusing the public open space are noted within the body of the report and are summarised as:</p> <p>(a) The cost, resourcing and knowledge required to maintain 4 x SuDS (b) The cost resourcing and knowledge required to maintain the entrance ways to the development (c) That the sum of £76,681 is an inadequate sum of money for the future maintenance of the above obligations (d) That SWTC objects to the location of the play area on the grounds that it considers it unsafe, although notably the planning inspector did not agree with this position.</p> <p>It was unanimously Resolved:</p> <p>(i) Not to adopt the public open space for the reasons as cited in the covering report and as summarised above (ii) That in addition, the Town Council should make its position known to future residents at this site so that there is clarity and certainty on the reasons why SWTC did not adopt the public open space. The public open space will therefore be adopted by a Management Company and the cost of this will be</p>

	recharged in a private contract between the Management Company and the residents; SWTC is not and will not be party to this private arrangement.
A & S 060-21	<p>The Common Slade Culvert</p> <p>The Operations Manager provided a brief resume of the current situation, noting that works have now concluded and the Environment Agency will be installed CCTV cameras to monitor the slade. The Operations Manager advised that negotiations and discussions continue with the Environment Agency and Essex County Council to ensure the Town Council is provided with the most appropriate equipment for future clearance of the trash screen.</p> <p>Town Council staff were thanked for the provision of the temporary footpath which had enabled safe pedestrian access across The Common whilst the footpath had been closed.</p>
A & S 061-21	<p>Town Hall Works</p> <p>The Operations Manager updated Committee with the remedial works taken to protect both the building and pedestrians as a result of some rendering falling from the Town Hall. It was confirmed that this rendering had not formed part of the Town Hall refurbishment works in 2015/16 and it was believed the rendering had been fitted circa 1980.</p> <p>It was Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To approve the actions of Officers to date with thanks (b) To engage Wilby & Burnett to draft specifications which will be used to obtain quotes for remedial and repair works. It was noted that any such specification would include necessary road closures to allow scaffolding to be erected. (c) That the Town Clerk and Operations Manager be authorised to proceed with any repair works as necessary, to a maximum of £30,000 and that costs should be met from the existing EMR monies set aside for long term maintenance of the Town Hall.
A & S 062-21	<p>Future Staffing Needs</p> <p>Committee noted the report as presented and were mindful of the need to resource the Council appropriately, especially given the increased actual and anticipated events and activities in town. Committee members were mindful that this particular resourcing need should be considered as part of an overall needs review. It was Resolved:</p> <p>To establish a Task and Finish Group consisting of Cllrs Coote, Gadd and Porch who would work with the Town Clerk to establish current and future needs. This Working Group would further report back to the A & S Committee in recognition that the proposed areas of work (for any new posts) are under the remit of this Committee. It was further acknowledged that Cllr Porch would report back findings to the F & E Committee and that there were no financial implications to any proposals given the current 2 vacancies in the Operations Team. It was agreed that the Task and Finish Group should meet at the earliest opportunity.</p>

A & S 063-21	<p>Urgent Information Items</p> <p>Cllr Coote noted a number of queries on social media (not on the Town Council account) in which a minority were querying the current grass cutting regime (those querying the process seek more frequent grass cutting). Cllr Coote undertook to forward details to the Town Clerk.</p> <p>The Clerk and Operations Manager noted that current cutting regimes were in accordance with the Council's Climate Change initiatives and the Council was also participating in the national campaign of "No Mow May".</p>
A & S 064-21	<p>Date and time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Noted and agreed as being Monday 28th June 2021 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall</p>
A & S 065-21	<p>Confidential Item – Exclusion of Press and Public (Part II meeting)</p> <p>It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
A & S 066-21	<p>Nat West Bank</p> <p>Committee considered the report as presented and the Operations Manager spoke further to meetings held on site to consider the future rental or usage opportunities for the empty unit.</p> <p>Committee considered the options as presented, it was unanimously Resolved:</p> <p>To progress with Option 2 (as per the report) to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) authority be granted to Nat West Bank to install a legally compliant staircase to the property, the cost of which will be met by the bank. Nat West will seek appropriate planning permissions; (b) To not unreasonably withhold agreement for Nat West to sublet the lease to a third party; (c) That subject to compliance of the above, future progression of this matter be delegated to the Town Clerk and Operations Manager. <p>Thanks were extended to the Operations Manager for his tenacity at progressing this matter on behalf of the Council.</p>
A & S 067-21	<p>New Office Accommodation</p> <p>The Town Clerk and Operations Manager provided a verbal update and report on opportunities being further explored. It was agreed that full and proper consideration should be given to any shared use of a community building and that there are a number of influencing factors in determining the best and most appropriate use of any</p>

	<p>community facility. It was noted that work to date was simply indicative and further consideration should be afforded to the location, style, design, purpose of any future new facility. It was Resolved:</p> <p>To authorise Officers to continue progressing with all opportunities and to report back to Committee at a future date.</p>
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The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm