

**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 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors Asker, Light, McLellan (Chair), Porch and Roberts.

**Officers:** Lisa Courtney, Town Clerk; Terry Frostick, Operations Manager and Georgia Arnold, Committee Clerk

**Public:** Representative of Walden Local Newspaper.

A & S 099-21	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Coote, de Vries, Freeman and Frost.</p>
A & S 100-21	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Cllrs Asker and Light declared non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council</p>
A & S 101-21	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting of the Assets &amp; Services Committee (September 2021)</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last Assets &amp; Services Committee meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.</p>
A & S 102-21	<p><b>Public Speaking Time</b></p> <p>There were no questions or matters arising from the public</p>
A & S 103-21	<p><b>Lime Avenue</b></p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the tree planning will take place on 27 November, these will be placed adjacent to the Slade. He noted that The Woodland Trust are no longer providing the trees and Essex County Council are instead. Final details regarding timings need to be discussed with the Chair and Town Clerk, once these are confirmed a press release will be issued asking for volunteers.</p> <p>The Chair noted that a unique tree planting initiative is being created to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, known as The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC). Committee agreed we should support this and it was confirmed we would have a specific tree to commemorate the occasion. Suggested names where considered; Jubilee Wood, Jubilee Plantation and Jubilee Copse.</p> <p>Cllr Light asked if fruit trees would be included and the Chair and The Operations Manager explained that they were considered but would not be included in the tree</p>

	<p>planning. This is because the trees chosen are the most suitable for the soil and fruit trees require more maintenance.</p> <p>The Operations Manager confirmed that hedges are due to be planted along the top fence and along the football pitches, to stop the balls from falling down the slope.</p> <p>The Town Clerk and Operations Manager explained that we are still waiting on Persimmon Homes for the utilities and final agreement documentation. This is due to the Town Council's requirement for indemnity cover, indemnifying SWTC against works carried out by Persimmon Homes and residents at the site, prior to transfer; this policy will protect SWTC in the future should issues arise.</p>
<p>A &amp; S 104-21</p>	<p><b>Town Centre Consultation</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk and Committee Clerk introduced the presentation explaining to Committee that pedestrianisation was first considered in a Planning Committee Meeting in 2017.</p> <p>Due to the Coronavirus outbreak road closures are in place to comply with legislation but it has given everyone the opportunity to experience the road closed on set days. An opportunity we might not have ordinarily been able to trial.</p> <p>The first phase of the consultation was carried out over the summer with varying forms of advertising carried out to engage with all age groups with two face to face consultation days on the Market.</p> <p>Committee were reminded that phase one of the consultation was required to establish behaviours and preferences, we did not specifically ask whether roads should be opened or closed.</p> <p>The provided PowerPoint was presented explaining that the ethics and bias slides were provided to confirm that the data has been anonymised.</p> <p>It was noted most responses were made by residents but unfortunately only 17% of town centre businesses responded, despite advertising and engagement.</p> <p>The statistics were presented and discussed but the two main results were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How we could improve the town had 523 responses asking for less motor traffic and a further 515 asking for more markets and food festivals.</li> <li>- And how respondents felt about car parking with 60% saying there is sufficient car parking provisions.</li> </ul> <p>Committee agreed with the recommendation to continue with phase two of the consultation with the following options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) complete pedestrianisation,</li> <li>(2) part pedestrianisation, with King Street open</li> <li>(3) Reopening of all streets.</li> </ol>

	<p>It was agreed that variables should be considered for options 1 and 2 which may limit road closures to certain days/times or periods of the year, for example April to October.</p> <p>The Town Clerk explained that if phase 2 only considered the favoured responses from phase 1, then re-opening of the roads would be discounted as this was only favoured by a small minority. It was however, recommended that the option to open all roads was included to recognise the low turn response from businesses and to address accessibility and mobility concerns (although notably option 2 (part-pedstrianisation) addresses those concerns).</p>
<p>A &amp; S 105-21</p>	<p><b>Update Events and Activities Organiser Post</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that a start date for late November has been confirmed.</p>
<p>A &amp; S 106-21</p>	<p><b>National Association of British Market Awards (NABMA)</b></p> <p>It was noted that SWTC won “The Market Team of the Year Award” for 2020/21 and committee congratulated officers and operatives for their hard work, particularly during covid, especially since the Market has only closed for one day when lockdown was first announced.</p> <p>The Operations Manager also noted that SWTC won two gold awards for the best and well-maintained play areas; Golden Acre and The Common, these were awarded by the Essex Playing Fields Association. It was also noted that the Saffron Walden Cricket Pitch by Anglo American Playing Fields also won an award for best kept pitch.</p>
<p>A &amp; S 107-21</p>	<p><b>Date and time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Noted and agreed as being Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall</p>

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm