

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Sandwich Town Council held Monday 28th January 2019, in the Council Chamber, Guildhall, Sandwich at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors: The Mayor, Cllr Ms Liote (in the chair)

**HJ Bragg
PI Carter
RA Daw
Mrs J Dunay
Ms C Felton
JE Franklin
D Friend
JEM Gisbey
PG Graeme
MJ Holloway
JO Sneller
Ms L O'Donoghue
JJ Watts
DMA Wood**

Officer: Miss L Fidler

13.01.19 MAYOR'S OPENING COMMENTS

The Mayor reminded everyone that her Italian Evening is taking place on the 13th February and the last few tickets are available. This will be the last fundraising event before donations are given out at the Community Awards Party.

14.01.19 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Moorhouse due to a family commitment.

15.01.19 DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

16.01.19 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Ordinary Town Council meeting held on 17th December 2019 were received.

RESOLUTION: The Minutes were approved as accurate and signed.

17.01.19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

(i) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting, held on 20th December 2018 were received.

RESOLUTION: The Minutes were approved as accurate and signed.

(ii) The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting, held on 21st January 2019 were received.

RESOLUTION: The Minutes were approved as accurate and signed.

18.01.19 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting, held on 14th January 2019 were received and the Recommendations were considered.

RESOLUTIONS:

The Minutes were approved as accurate and signed. The following recommendations were approved:

(i) That Mrs K Palmer should pursue the implementation of AdvantEdge Finance and Facilities Booking Software with the aim of setting these up to start functioning on 1st April 2019. [Please also see Minute 22.01.19(iii)]

(ii) The attached draft budget be approved. The precept required is £189,515.50, which is £27,413.67 higher than the 2018/19 precept amount. This is a 17.2% increase on the Council Tax Charge, taking the charge to £98.84 (a rise of £14.52 from the 2018/19 charge of £84.32) for a Band D property for the year.

A full half year review of the accounts should be undertaken, with a report to Council in September 2019.

(iii) A working group to consider “Guildhall Management” should be set up consisting of Cllr Graeme, Cllr Holloway, Cllr Carter, Cllr Bragg and any other Councillors that would like to join. Officers should be requested to join if required.

19.01.19 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The schedule of payments, totalling £14,556.63, was received, approved and signed.

20.01.19 PUBLIC RIGHT TO SPEAK

(i) Councillors considered a request from a local resident of Potter Street that members of the public should be able to ask and have questions about decisions of the Council answered in this section of the meeting.

RESOLUTION: The Advisory Committee will consider this request.

(ii) Ms C Quinn spoke in support of the grant request by Deal Area Foodbank for funding from Sandwich Toll Bridge Fund. Ms C Quinn confirmed that funding for the foodbank comes from grant aid, small financial donations and stock donations. From April to October 2018 99 vouchers, equating to 169 adults and 123 children were used at Sandwich Food Bank.

(iii) Mrs C Illsley spoke of the need for the Guildhall’s Forecourt to be refurbished – both as a local business owner who wants to see increased visitor numbers to the town, and as someone who has had a serious accident on the Forecourt due to the uneven surface.

(iv) Mr Richard Ralph spoke on behalf of the Town Team to urge the Councillors not to let the proposal for the Forecourt (incl. improved bus layby) delay, as there is a risk of this being another project that goes no where. A great deal of time, consultation and money has been spent to get the project this far. The town council should show leadership and self confidence by driving this project forwards.

21.01.19 POLICE

Councillors considered an email from Cllr Carter in relation to the offer of a police office at the Guildhall.

RESOLUTION: Chief Inspector Weller will be informed that we want to see the improved resources (as secured by the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC)) in Sandwich, with a Police base. This letter will be copied to the PCC. And members of Sandwich Town Council will offer to attend the PCC’s office to explain the need for this increased provision.

22.01.19 FINANCE

(i) Councillors received the Sandwich Town Council Statement of Accounts as at 31st December 2018.

RESOLUTION: That this information be noted.

(ii) Councillors received confirmation from the Cllr Veronica Liote, the Mayor, that the account balances given in the above statements match the corresponding Natwest bank statements.

(iii) Councillors received a report from Miss L Fidler, Town Clerk, relating to the proposed accounts software.

RESOLUTION: An extra-ordinary meeting of the Finance Committee will be arranged to consider what improvements need to be made to the financial reporting, which will help inform if/what software is required.

23.01.19

PROJECT WORK

Councillors received a written progress report from Ms A Hollobon-Baxter on matters relating to: The Sandwich Sprucer; Accessibility; Finance; "A New Vision for Sandwich; The Open 2020; Sandwich Town Guides; The Visitor Information Centre; Litter; Working with outside bodies; Spar Lorries; Town Team and the Drill Hall.

RESOLUTION: The following actions were considered and approved:

(i) Sandwich Town Council should facilitate the grant application form required to apply for funding from Cllr Mrs Chandlers 'Members Grant Form' in order to pay for KCC officers time to progress the highways element of the Forecourt Project. No funding is required from Sandwich Town Council.

(ii) The following requests from the Town Team were approved for action:

(a) Insurance companies will be asked to remove the flood status from Sandwich;

(b) The Tourism Committee will be asked to consider formation of a new cycle route from Deal, via Betteshanger Sustainable Parks, to Sandwich incorporating the Delf Stream walk; possibly in conjunction with Cycle Friendly Deal.

(c) The Council will ask the CCT to clean the bells at St Peters Church and provide a cover to protect the clock going forwards;

(d) National Rail will be asked to look into whether the overgrown land at Sandwich train station could be repurposed for additional car parking to alleviate parking issues nearby;

(e) The Council supports blue, or equivalent, plaques being erected to mark notable properties. It was suggested that the Sandwich Society should also be approached about this matter.

(iii) This report was noted.

24.01.19

SANDWICH PORT & HAVEN COMMISSIONERS

Councillors were asked to consider appointing two commissioners for Sandwich Port & Haven Commissioners. Information was received from the Clerk suggesting that clarity needs to be obtained first as to the personal liability of the commissioners.

RESOLUTION: To defer this matter until confirmation can be obtained as to if/what personal liabilities the Commissioners have.

25.01.19

SILT FROM THE DELF STREAM

Cllr Daw reported that the Environment Agency has confirmed that if contamination in the silt from the Delf Stream is below a certain level the EA will permit this silt to be deposited on Cow Leas Meadow, which would save a tremendous amount of money over having to deposit the silt out of the town.

RESOLUTION: If and when silt is removed from the Delf Stream this can be deposited at Cow Leas Meadow, however, the silt must be levelled and deposited in a controlled manner.

26.01.19 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

(i) Councillors considered a motion from Cllr Carter that action needs to be taken to prevent cars from parking at the junction of Deal Road and Dover Road.

RESOLUTION: KCC will be asked to install double yellow lines at the junction of Deal Road and Dover Road.

(ii) A letter from a local resident of Sandown Road regarding an accident and speeding on Sandown Road was considered.

RESOLUTION: KCC and the Police will be asked to re-evaluate the speed and current signage for Sandown Road. The Town Team's working group for traffic will also be asked to consider this matter.

27.01.19 UPDATES FROM TOWN COUNCILLORS REGARDING OUTSIDE BODIES ON WHICH THEY REPRESENT THE TOWN OF SANDWICH

(i) Councillors received the Minutes from the "Big Conversation Working Group – Dover" Meeting that took place on the 21st December 2018. Cllr Friend attended this meeting, and a subsequent one, and provided an overview of the plan.

RESOLUTION: This information was noted.

(ii) Cllrs Carter & Gisbey attended Sandwich Local History Society AGM. Over 1000 visitors have been guided around Sandwich in 2018, who are then encouraged to visit the Museum. Work has also been done with the local schools to assist with the curriculum.

(iii) Cllr Wood reported that the Sandwich Christmas Lights Committee accounts for 2018 have been completed and he has resigned as treasurer. The Committee didn't apply for a grant in 2018 but may well do so in the future. Cllr Wood asked whether hall hire charges at the Guildhall could be reconsidered for the town events.

(iv) Cllr Gisbey attended the opening of Discovery Park "CommunityLab" and reported that this is a superb opportunity for local schools to access industry standard laboratories and equipment. Cllr Gisbey reported that this provision should lead to more work and improved skills for local young people.

28.01.19 REPORT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLORS ON MATTERS DIRECTLY RELATED TO SANDWICH

Cllr Holloway reported that:

- Tickets for the DDC lottery will be available soon. Part of the money raised will go to supporting voluntary groups, of which 42 have signed up so far. The first draw will be on the 2nd March.

- DDC has very ambitious plans to increase investors and visitors by marketing the district nationally and internationally. The town council will be invited to a networking meeting about this on the 7th March.

- A number of recently reported incidents have been taken up with Chief Inspector Weller and a detailed response was read out.

Cllr Carter reported that:

- Fifteen new dog waste bin bag dispensers are going to be installed across the district.

- Parking charges will remain unchanged for the 2019/20 financial year, the last increase in charges was February 2016.

- DDC continue to be amongst the best performing councils in Kent on waste & recycling achievement targets.

29.01.19

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Sue Chandler reported that:

- Sandwich Library will not close; the proposed changes are designed to keep the libraries across the county open. However, reduced hours are a possibility. Sandwich Library Guild has written against any reduction of service and the comments from this organisation have been included within DDC's response to the consultation.
- A new app has been launched called "Staying Alive : Grassroots Suicide Prevention" that is aimed at young people with mental health issues.
- KCC Cabinet has approved the appointment of five new drainage engineers, which is a well needed extra provision.
- Cllr Mrs Chandler is happy to assist with enquiries relating to Sandown Road (Minute 26.01.19(ii)).
- Further information about the "Big Conversation" proposal for Dover was provided.

30.01.19

REPORT FROM MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Councillors received the notes from the "Sandwich Traffic Summit" arranged by Craig Mackinlay MP from Friday 7th December 2018.

RESOLUTION: This information was noted.

31.01.19

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

(i) 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 they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

(ii) Councillors received and considered a HR report from Ms A Hollobon-Baxter.

RESOLUTIONS: This information was noted.

(iii) Councillors considered a response from Mr Aziz, Chief Executive of Dover District Council, in relation to the East Kent Audit Report on Sandwich Historic Boatyard.

RESOLUTION: A meeting between Councillors and Mr Aziz will be arranged to discuss this matter further.

(iv) Information relating to staffing salary changes was received; this document was for reference only in relation to budget setting (Minute 18.01.19).

(v) The latest version of the draft lease for the Drill Hall was considered.

RESOLUTIONS:

a) The tenants should provide access to their disabled toilet when the disabled public toilet is closed.

b) The "sub-committee" mentioned in the lease should provide a written report to the Council on a quarterly basis on all business activities of the tenant.

32.01.19

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 25th February 2019, at 7pm, in the Council Chamber, Guildhall (Quarterly Meeting).