

**Minutes of Sandwich Town Council Heritage and Townscape  
Committee Meeting held in the Council Chamber on:  
Thursday 12th January 2023**



**Chair:** Cllr C Ungerson  
**Councillors:** J Franklin, D Friend, N Gray, K Heaven, D Marie, H Sampson, D Sivrikaya and C Wiles

**Officer:** A Nigol (Acting Town Clerk)

HT.01.23.1	<p><b>Chair's introduction:</b> The Chair welcomed Councillor members and the members of the public and introduced a new temporary part time clerk who was minuting this meeting. The Chair also mentioned in her opening remarks that Cllr Nicolas Gray will be resigning from this Committee in order to make way for a newly co-opted Councillor Vicky Tomlins.</p>	
HT.01.23.2	<p><b>Apologies for absence received:</b> Apologies were received and accepted from: Cllr D Friend (DDC work commitments); Cllr D Sivrikaya (family commitment). Cllr Jeff Franklin was not present.</p>	
HT.01.23.3	<p><b>Declarations of interest:</b> None</p>	
HT.01.23.4	<p><b>Public Participation:</b> None</p>	
HT.01.23.5	<p><b>Tree Planting</b> Members received a report about tree and hedge planting in Sandwich written by Cllr Ungerson, plus an attachment written by the Volunteer Tree Warden Nikky Warden. Some Councillor members of this Committee had previously looked at some of the areas for tree planting in particular on Cow Leas Meadow at the rear of Malcolm Waites garage. The Tree Warden suggested planting a native mixed hedgerow, approx. length 50m. in length along the fence at the rear of the garage. Planting of this hedge would be low cost and its maintenance similarly expected to be low. The Committee agreed that this proposal be recommended to the full Council, but that a map should be presented together with the proposal. A request for a budget of £1000 should go to the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to be held on January 16th. Recommendations: i) That the Committee supports this proposal and recommends it to the full Council. ii) That the Committee recommends that the budget of £1000 is made available by STC in the financial year 2023/24 to fund the project. Proposed by Cllr Sampson seconded by Cllr Gray and all members voted in favour.</p>	<p><b>Attach 1a + 1b</b></p>

<p><b>HT.01.23.6</b></p>	<p><b>Tourist information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Cllr Wiles gave an update on two recent Tourist Information Working Group meetings. The minutes of the first of these meetings were presented as Attachment 2 to the Committee agenda. The second meeting had been well attended by about 23 people, including business people and residents. In addition a letter had been distributed to local businesses in Sandwich town. The main issue concerned the tourist information centre and its location.</li> <li>ii) Cllr Wiles had also visited the Sandwich leisure park and met the owner. During the peak season there are about 1000 people staying at the park, which could have a huge income potential for Sandwich town.</li> <li>iii) Next Tourist Information Working Group meeting is taking place within the next couple of weeks and the group will report back to the Council sometime in March with some recommendations and ideas useful for the new tourist season.</li> <li>iv) In discussion, Discovery Park, the Golf clubs, the Aqua Park, as well as the Leisure Park were mentioned as key points where tourist information should be made available. Similarly the red phone boxes owned by the council could be used as a tourist information hubs.</li> <li>v) Committee also discussed a possible Blue Plaque scheme. Cllr Wiles mentioned that the Town trail signage is about to be revamped. Cllr Wiles agreed to invite the members of Chamber of Commerce to the next meeting.</li> </ul> <p>The minutes of the first Tourism Information Working Group were noted by the Committee, proposed by Cllr Sampson seconded by Cllr Marie and all members voted in favour.</p>	<p><b>Attach 2</b></p>
<p><b>HT.01.23.7</b></p>	<p><b>Sandwich waterways</b></p> <p>The committee received a verbal update from the working group chair Cllr Heaven. The first meeting of the working group will be January 19th. The working group was formed as local residents were concerned about the look of the water, mosquitos, algae and lack of wildlife caused by the very slow-moving water. The working group is hoping to present its report in a couple of months. Cllr Heaven stated that the key organisation is the Environment Agency. But STC should have an opinion as to actions to improve the flow of the water and impress that opinion on the Environment Agency. Cllr Sampson proposed that we note the verbal update, seconded by Cllr Wiles, all members voted in favour.</p>	
<p><b>HT.01.23.8</b></p>	<p><b>Bowling Street Lighting</b></p> <p>Cllr Ungerson mentioned that the committee has not received any update from KCC. The committee agreed that this item needs to stay on the agenda until it's solved. The Committee resolved to ask to have a meeting with KCC and to talk to the Cllr Chandler. The Chair said she would write to Cllr Chandler asking for such a meeting.</p>	
<p><b>HT.01.23.9</b></p>	<p><b>Empty buildings in Sandwich</b></p> <p>Cllr Ungerson highlighted three outstanding empty buildings in Sandwich: The Limes in New Street, School house next to the Infants' School and Wayfarers.</p>	

	<p>i) The Limes. There has been very little action from the owners, although some Councillors had noted that something seems to be going on at the moment. It was agreed that Cllr Ungerson should write to Cllr Friend and Councillor Chandler asking for an update.</p> <p>ii) School house. The infant school would like to use School house. Cllr Wiles mentioned that School house has been empty for 4-5 years and will need a bit of work. Cllr Ungerson agreed to write to Cllr Chandler to talk about the possibility of a discussion with the portfolio holder and see what are the options. Cllr Sampson said he is a school governor and will raise the issue at the next governors' meeting.</p> <p>iii) Wayfarers. Local residents have noticed that some works are going on there. Cllr Chandler had written to Cllr Sivrikaya saying that the works were to deal with some vandalism and that a preferred bidder had been identified. The committee suggested (though not unanimously) that Cllr Ungerson write to Cllr Chandler for an update whether it's been sold and if so who are the new owners. She should also suggest while the building stands empty it could be used by Social Services to help with bed blocking in hospitals, or housing for refugees and asylum seekers.</p>	
<p><b>HT.01.23.10</b></p>	<p><b>Public Conveniences on the Quay</b>  Members received a report from Responsible Finance officer which outlined the income and expenditure over a number of years of running the toilets on the Quay. The issue is that access to the toilets is not satisfactory and the automatic system of entry using bank cards often fails. People are entering the Bell Hotel to have the access to the facilities because they are unable to access the toilets at the Quay. These toilets were refurbished in 2021. When the toilets were run by paid staff, the cost was between £23,000 and £25,000 a year. Running the new system by using the bank card access is around £16,500. The difference is about £7,000 a year. The Council needs to consider the impression Sandwich gives to visitors. Cllr Marie suggested the toilet facilities should be free. Cllr Sampson and Cllr Gray stated that there were organisations operating at the Quay that might be able to help with time and money because it was in their interest that the toilet facilities are of high quality and accessible. There needs to be a dialogue with the Heritage Harbour group, DDC, the P22 Trust and the Medieval Trust to see what they could contribute.  <b>RECOMMENDATION: To set up a separate working group to address this issue. Cllr Sampson agreed to lead and chair the working group. Cllr Marie said he would like to be a member of the working group and that Sandwich Events would be very much interested.</b></p>	<p><b>Attach 3</b></p>
<p><b>HT.01.23.11</b></p>	<p><b>Priorities for the Heritage and Townscape Committee for 2023</b>  Cllr Ungerson suggested that the committee should start thinking about topics to be discussed this year:</p> <p>i) There are two vision plans, the 'New Vision for Sandwich' and the report commissioned by DDC on the future of the Quay. In discussion it was suggested that</p>	

	<p>the Committee invite Councillor Oliver Richardson to talk about the vision for the Quay.</p> <p>ii) The Heritage Harbour plans. In discussion it was agreed that Cllr Gray be invited to talk to the Committee about what was happening.</p> <p>iii) Fellowship walk. It was agreed this would go on the next agenda.</p> <p>iv) Sandwich South has many problems. We should particularly discuss traffic management in the area.</p> <p>v) Pedestrianisation. Will be discussed at the Planning Committee but should be discussed at this committee too</p>	
<b>HT.01.23.12</b>	<p><b>Co-option of Members to the Heritage and Townscape Committee.</b></p> <p>Cllr Ungerson said we can now appoint co-optees to this committee. There are three options:</p> <p>i) the committee can choose not to have any co-optees</p> <p>ii) to have co-optees who represent particular Sandwich organisations that are interested in Heritage and Townscape.</p> <p>iii) to have members who, as individuals, can offer relevant expertise.</p> <p>It was agreed that Councillor members would send suggestions to the Chair and that, on the basis of that list, decisions as to who to invite as co-optees would be made at the next meeting</p>	<b>Attach 4</b>
<b>HT.0123.13</b>	<p><b>To discuss and set dates for forthcoming Heritage and Townscape Committee meetings.</b></p> <p>Proposed Dates of next Heritage and Townscape Committee Meetings:</p> <p>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February</p> <p>Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March</p> <p>Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April</p> <p>Those dates were accepted by the committee members.</p>	

Meeting closed 19:45

A Nigol

Acting Town Clerk