

SOUTHBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Virtual Full Council meeting of Southborough Town Council held on Thursday 26 November 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Lewis (Chairman), Ms Hill (Deputy Chair), Backhouse, Blackwell, Bullion, Elliott, Francis, Harris, Kinghorn, Lewis- Grey, Munn, Prance, Poile and Wharton.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Tracy Kelly (Town Clerk) Paul Gosling (Finance Officer)

The Chairman spoke a few words in remembrance of Gérard Tancre from Lambersart who had played a large part in the local Twinning Association SHDOFA and had sadly recently passed away.

Members held a minute's silence in memory of Gérard Tancre.

1. **APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE** – Councillors Clay, Evans, and Lane (work commitments) and Mrs Kinghorn (ill health)
2. **DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS** – No interests were declared.
3. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION** – No Members of the Public or Press were present.
4. **MINUTES** - The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 29 October 2020 were approved with the amendment to the spelling of Salomons Grove.
5. **COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS** – Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the following meetings.

Planning and Transportation	02 November 2020
Finance and General Purposes	19 November 2020
6. **TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS** – The Chairman updated Members on his most recent engagements. Members **NOTED** the update.
7. **MEETING DATES 2021 – 22** – Members **NOTED** the dates.
8. **SECTION 137 GRANTS** – The Deputy Mayor updated Members on the application received on behalf of the St Matthews Community Larder. Members **AGREED** to the grant of £300.00 being awarded.
9. **OUTDOOR WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATIONS** - Members discussed the possibility of placing a water bottle filling station at the new Hub Development. It was **AGREED** that this matter would be revisited when Councillor Bullion had more information on the costs involved.
10. **COMMUNITY HUB LEAFLET** – Members discussed the production of a leaflet to be sent to local residents. It was **AGREED** that Councillor Blackwell put together the leaflet in conjunction with the Communications Working Group, Southborough Ops and Advisory Working Group's and return it to Full Council for final approval.

11. SOUTHBOROUGH COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE- Councillor Blackwell verbally updated the meeting with the following:

Southborough Hub Update 26th November

There have been no board meetings this month. The last meeting took place in September. The next meeting is now scheduled for 1st December.

Hub Progress Build Meeting 24th November

As of last week, Baxhall are still approximately 5 weeks ahead on the build schedule even with the tighter COVID restrictions.

We were informed last month that Baxall had been contracted to supply the additional 100 chairs for the hall. The 3k allowance for these chairs has now been reallocated into the main FFE budget so that all the chairs match.

Work on the Toucan crossing at the end of Western Road across to the Hub site has now commenced with most of the work being completed at night and only footpath work during day. Completion is expected before the end of December.

The retractable bleacher seating for the community hall is now in manufacture.

Concerns were raised again over Crest Nicholson's non action on the previously raised defect notices.

On completion of build the Hub will return to STC and Baxhall will supply us with an electronic manual and rabbit model manual on memory sticks so we have all information connected to the build.

Tasks are ongoing between Rosemary Jones/Baxhall/David Mounter on the service charges and operating costs.

The Clerk of Works reports shows the rapid progress that has been made on the Sports Pavilion and Groundsman's store in recent weeks.

Jonathan White is following up on the signage and has been given a copy of the Southborough Crest for the transfer on the large atrium window.

Also, this month, Jonathan White has requested the updated estimates for the Business Plan which we have been discussing within the Ops Group and the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Cllr Francis has shared our current forecasts and we expect to be able to share this with the public once confirmed with the Board. As previously reported, it is our intention to pursue all options with regards to generating income from the building, including if possible, with short term lets to business and education providers if Covid prevents other hirers from operating.

STC Ops Group

The Ops Group met with representatives from the Hub Advisory Group on Tuesday 24th November and have recommended that would ideally like the Opening Weekend to take place on the 26th and 27th June 2021. The opening date will need to be confirmed later by Full Council. It was felt that the better weather and the ability to use the Town Square would allow the maximum numbers of residents to participate in the proceedings. The HAG will continue to now join us for these sessions and work on developing a programme of events and involving local groups and residents. It is intended that the theme of the weekend will be "Southborough Past, Present and Future". Nell Price and Rebecca Clow have volunteered to help in contacting groups and organisations within the town and asking for their involvement

We are still awaiting an up-to-date Risk Register which we expect to share with the public as soon as it is received on our website. The last published Risk Register is now over two years old.

12. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was proposed that during the consideration of the following items, the public and press shall be temporarily excluded (Standing Order 3 (c)): -

These items are considered confidential for the following reason(s)
Information relating to the financial and personnel affairs of the Council.

- a) **Confidential Council and Committee Proceedings** - To approve the following confidential minutes: -

Full Council Meeting	29 October 2020
Finance and General Purposes	19 November 2020

- b) **Southborough Community Hub Confidential Matters** – Members discussed the ongoing hub operations and future requirements. Councillor Blackwell updated Members on the confidential matters surrounding the Southborough Hub.

- c) **Southborough Hub Finances** - Members discussed the finances and Councillor Blackwell updated Members over the recent financial matters surrounding VAT and SDLT.

This matter was first brought to the attention of the Project Board in November 2019. A paper had been circulated by STC in the summer outlining how this situation came about and ways in which this can be rectified. Despite numerous commitments made in previous Hub Board Meetings not much progress appears to have been made with this issue.

We have asked that advice be sought retrospectively with a view to finding a way forward. Unfortunately, KCC have been unable to support us in achieving this. STC have therefore had no choice but to seek out their own independent financial advice on this matter.

The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and then closed the meeting at 8.05pm

CHAIRMAN