

SOUTHBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Virtual Extraordinary Full Council meeting of Southborough Town Council held on Thursday 11 June 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

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

In attendance: Kent County Council Councillor Peter Oakford

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

- 1. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE –** None
- 2. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS –** No interests were declared.
- 3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION –** One Member of the Public was present who had asked to speak on Agenda item 6.

The Chairman brought forward agenda item 6 to enable an early discussion

Councillor Clay entered the meeting at 7.20 pm.

- 6. REPLACEMENT FENCE – RIDGEWAYE FIELDS –** Members discussed the various points of concern that had been raised earlier by the resident. Members **AGREED** that this matter reviewed when more information was available.

The Chairman brought forward agenda item 8 to enable an early discussion

- 8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE –** Kent County Councillor Peter Oakford reported on the current running operations surrounding Kent County Council during the Covid -19 pandemic and then took questions from Councillors. The Chairman thanked Kent County Councillor Oakford on his attendance and for the information he had supplied.

- 4. MINUTES -**The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 27 February 2020 were approved
- 5. COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS –** Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the following meetings.

Planning and Transportation

3 March and EO 18 May 2020

- 7. VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOLS –** Members **RESOLVED** to accept the protocols.
- 9. TEMPORARY OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR COMMITTEES DURING COVID- 19 –** Members discussed the Committee operating procedures and **RESOLVED** to place matters relating to the Open Spaces and Environment Committee direct onto the Full Council Agenda during the current crisis. **This matter is to be regularly reviewed.**

10. PENNINGTON GROUNDS REOPENING – COVID 19 REQUIREMENTS –Members discussed the reports received from both the Councils Insurers and H&S Consultant and **RESOLVED** to continue with the closure of the grounds at the current time. **This matter will be reviewed regularly together with any alteration in the Governments advice.**

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

Meetings

Hub Board Meetings 5th March 2020 (cancelled due to flooding)

Build Progress Meetings, 10th March; 22nd April; 3rd June 2020 (attended by TK (Town Clerk))

Hub Design Meeting 6th May 2020

There have been no Hub Boarding meetings since our last Full Council meeting. We have however repeatedly requested a meeting in particular to address outstanding VAT issue and the Medical Centre lease. At present we are still waiting for the board to commission tax advice. Both our Chair of Finance and our Clerk have repeatedly emailed the Project Officer/Board to get further clarification and movement on these issues.

The newsletter which would have been circulated in advance of our now postponed Annual Town Meeting is on hold until such a time as we can safely commit to this course of action. We await guidance from National Government on when we will be able to resume public meetings with social distancing in place. It may be that we need to investigate how we can deliver this remotely via Zoom depending on how the long the lockdown continues for.

Progress on site

Activity on the Hub site ceased with the commencement of the lockdown. We were fortunate that Baxall were able to secure the medical centre building cassette and roof so that it was structurally safe before leaving the site. Although supply chains have during the lockdown been inconsistent. Baxall report that NHS E have been extremely supportive in assisting with the supply of building materials and our project has been privileged where supplies have been in short supply.

Baxall have now returned to the site albeit operating under social distancing with a reduced workforce and 50-70% operational. They are estimating that they are approximately five weeks behind on their schedule but that this may change. The large crane used to assemble the Strei panels is back on site although some key staff from Germany have been unable to travel due to the restrictions.

Much of the groundwork is now complete. The ground slab for the main Hub building had to be relayed due the exceptional May temperatures. The cycle path out to Bonfield Close is completed and now open to the public.

The Hub Operation group has met weekly over the last couple of months and Cllr Harris, our chair, will update the Finance committee at our next meeting in more detail.

We have however responded to the report produced by Nell Price and her Hub Advisory Group and used to this to inform discussions on a number of areas including the kitchen provision, audio visual, potential hirers and facilities management. We are also looking at comparable facilities within Kent and Sussex in order to inform our operations management plan. The HAG report will be tabled for our next Full Council meeting.

We are now looking at space within the building where we can permanently display the town's artefacts from our friends in Lambersart. In addition, it was felt that that

involvement of town in the naming of the Hub and its rooms, through a competition, possibly run in conjunction with the Southborough Society would be a way of engaging the local community. We also discussed the possibility of a site-specific artwork that could be produced by local children to be installed within the building on its opening.

Internal Finishes Redesign

The comments and recommendations made by our council on the interior finish have been relayed to Baxall and HMY architects and they have reworked the decorative scheme. It was felt that a laminate door finish in a solid colour would be more enduring and cost effective in the long run as opposed to a painted finish. The cost of the redesign will be borne by the project. Please note there will be an extra cost as most of the internal paint is now coloured rather than white as it was in the original scheme.

The current interior colour scheme proposals for the Hub have been developed with very close reference to the colour palette provided by Southborough Town Council. Using the colour palette, it was possible to compare it to the colours and finishes available in the various flooring, cladding and paint colours that could be potentially used for the project.

The primary rooms of hall and library have a green theme with dark green feature walls in the library and dark green ceiling in the hall. To create contrast and interest the seating and furniture in the hall and library is proposed in shades of red and will potentially include some bright greens.

It was decided that the doors should have a laminate finish and it was suggested that these should have a colour that 'pops', so we have proposed a gold coloured laminate for main circulation doors and an olive colour for toilet doors.

Again, in community rooms and the STC office we are proposing green feature walls with contrasting coloured furniture.

Brynn Williams, HMY

The shutters for the workmen's sheds, the EV charging points and the power to the town square have been all been agreed and signed off.

HMY are looking at how we can install a water fountain outside off the Hub building. This would be a drinking fountain where member of the public could fill up their bottles and would be adjacent to the cycle path. It would not be large grand water feature in what is a comparatively modest town square.

We have been advised that in principal TW Planning would not object to the removal of the wave pattern within the town square. HMY are looking to deliver this element within the original budget and using a similar combination of materials.

The Chairman called to extend the meeting at 9pm for a further 15 minutes

Travellers

On the 4th June, as you will be aware, we had a group of Travellers who gained access to the fields via the Crest Nicholson site. Thanks to the swift work of our clerk and our colleagues at the borough they were swiftly evicted, but not without cost to our ratepayers. We have had to clean and remove waste form the fields and the incursion caused anxiety to nearby residents and allotment holders.

The temporary heras fencing on the Crest site should have been replaced, as a planning condition, with a permanent wooden fence. The lack of this fence and the vulnerability of the site had already been raised by both our clerk and I earlier on the same day and the issue flagged with our Project Board for inclusion on the risk register. Our Mayor has now written formally to Crest asking for notice of when the required work will be carried out.

HMY are also producing alternative designs for the external signage. It is hoped that we can remove the 3D super graphics and install something at ground level that identifies the building and what the building contains.

We have now formally written to the Theatres Trust to initiate the Advisory Review. We had agreed that we would do this once we have gathered the responses from our community via the Hub Advisory Group. The focus of the review will be to seek further guidance on the internal use of the space, the operations management and the business plan.

I have contacted our Project Manager to see whether we can access the recently announced additional Government funding announced in May to promote the use of Electric vehicles. The initial response is that we are not able to but it has been referred to KCC officers for more advice.

We have looked at the possibility of adding additional parking meters and EV charging points along the Salomon's Grove parking strip. JW has responded that we should be able to do this in the future with the existing infrastructure.

The Chairman called to extend the meeting at 9.15pm for a further 15 minutes

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 – Members RESOLVED** to approve the following confidential minutes: -

Full Council Meeting

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- b) Southborough Community Hub Update Confidential Matters – Members** discussed matters relating to drainage issues that had been previously highlighted. Members declined the offer made by Baxhall surrounding fencing. Members **AGREED** to the planting of 400 tree whips in the autumn by Baxhalls at various locations around the Ridgeway Playing fields. Sites to be agreed at a later stage.

- c) Southborough Hub Finances – Members AGREED** to the additional charges for the revision to the internal colour scheme.

The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.25pm

CHAIRMAN