

SOUTHBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Southborough Town Council held on Thursday 24 June 2021 at 7.00 p.m. in the Unity Hall, Southborough Civic Centre, 137 London Road, Southborough Kent TN4 0NA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Ms Hill (Chairman), Francis (Deputy Chair), Blackwell, Bullion, Elliott, Lane, Lewis, Munn, Prance, Poile and Wharton.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Tracy Kelly (Town Clerk)

- 1. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE** – Councillors Backhouse, Kinghorn, Mrs Kinghorn (Ill Health) Clay, Evans and Harris, (Family commitments)
- 2. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS** – No interests were declared.
- 3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION** – There were no Members of the Public present. No Press were present.
- 4. MINUTES** - The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 29 April 2021 the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting held on 7 May 2021 minutes were **APPROVED**.
- 5. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS** – Members **NOTED** the Chairman's recent engagements.
- 6. FINANCE MATTERS - a) Outstanding cheques** – Members **NOTED** the previously signed cheque lists.
- 7. COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETINGS** - Members **AGREED** to the ongoing postponement of face-to-face Council committee meetings until the Full Council Meeting due to be held September 2021. Members further **AGREED** to the continuation of delegated powers under S101 of the 1972 LGA and to informal Council Meetings being held until Face-to-Face meetings recommence to keep other Council Members aware of decisions taken under delegated powers.
- 8. SOUTHBOROUGH CIVIC CENTRE UPDATE-** Councillor Blackwell verbally updated the meeting with the following:

The Project Board were scheduled to meet in April. To date there has been no further meetings. I have written and expressed our concern that we urgently need to a meeting at the earliest possible date.

We are still awaiting the report on the Section 2, VAT and SDLT which was due in December 2020.

We are still awaiting a date for the meeting with STC, RSM and KCC including financial officers regarding the timings of the VAT transactions.

Fixtures and Fittings.

Equipment and furniture have now been delivered and installed. There are number of items where concerns have been raised.

The stage area is not the quick, dismountable option that we had been led to believe. It requires at least two people to handle the stage modules and will take between two and three hours to assemble. The assembly time will impact on the

turnaround time with booking and staffing. It is recommended that we invest in a purpose-built trolley system which will make moving the stage from the Unity Hall to the Green Room easier.

The round tables in Unity Hall are not fit for purpose and tip over when weight is placed on the edges. KCC have contacted the supplier who have agreed, and they are looking into how to resolve the issues reported. We had requested that we see a physical sample of the furniture before the order was placed but this was not followed up. The tables for the community rooms were delivered with a key component missing which meant they were not level. This has now been rectified. The changed layout to the office space which was agreed during the first lockdown period had not been followed through and signed off by KCC and staff are now having to deal with extension cables and multi points as the new floor sockets were not installed as instructed. The protective screen on the front counter had also not been ordered. There is also a lack of data points, which will require a further expenditure.

The KCC officer again did not follow up the most recent layout for the library space and power sockets that should have been mounted in the floor were not installed. This means that the Southborough Society cabinets, which were to be installed in the centre of the library, now need an alternative space. Currently one is on the area that is to be used for the 'café' when a production is on the Unity Hall and one is in our foyer where the drinks trolley and merchandise stall would be. Tracy has contacted the officer concerned to look at way in which this can be resolved. Space is at a premium and the library and hall are designed to be multi use. Now the placement of the cabinets reduces the use of the space.

Air Con

Already during June, the office space has been too hot for staff to comfortably work in. We had been told that the building would self-regulate the heat and that air conditioning would not be necessary. This is not the case and STC will now need to cover the cost of retro fitting air conditioning.

9. 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 APPROVED** the following confidential minutes: -

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- b) Financial Investment Proposals and Investment Strategy – Members AGREED** to the investment of the proceeds from the sale of land at Speldhurst Road Allotments be held on deposit with the CCLA Public sector Deposit Fund. Members further **AGREED** to the adoption of the investment strategy to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Item (e) Was moved forward at the request of the Chairman.

- e) Southborough Civic Centre Finances -.** Members **NOTED** the ongoing financial concerns and potential budgetary provisions.

- c) **Staffing Matters** – Members **AGREED** to Councillors Hill, Francis, and Harris to be the Members for the interview panel for the post of Business Development Manager. Members **AGREED** that staff currently only carry out the statutory requirements of the Council along with day to day or urgent matters but that no new projects be undertaken until staffing levels allow. Members to deal with any issues they currently receive direct from members of the public as much as possible without impacting further on staff time.

- d) **Southborough Civic Centre Confidential Matters** – Members **NOTED** Councillor Blackwell's verbal update on the confidential matters surrounding the Civic Centre, playing fields and the progress being made in respect to the lease agreements.

The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20.41pm

CHAIRMAN