

SOUTHBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council meeting of Southborough Town Council held on Thursday 27 January 2022 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) Blackwell, Evans, Elliott, Francis, Harris, Lewis, Munn, Prance, Poile and Wharton.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Tracy Kelly (Town Clerk) Paul Gosling (Finance Officer) and Kirsty Fox (Facilities and Events Manager)

Councillor Elliott spoke a few words in remembrance of Mike Scott having previously been a Town Councillor but had sadly recently passed away.

Members held a minute's silence in memory of Mike Scott and for all those who lost their lives during the Holocaust on this eve of the International Holocaust Memorial Day.

- 1. APOLOGIES AND REASON FOR ABSENCE** – Councillors Bullion, Clay, Kinghorn, Mrs Kinghorn, (Family Commitments) and Lane. (Work commitments)
- 2. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS** – none
- 3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION** – There were 7 Public in attendance. 3 Members of Public spoke in respect to minutes numbers 10(c) and 10 (e). No Press present.
- 4. MINUTES** - The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 16 December 2021 were **APPROVED**.
- 5. COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS** – Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the following meetings.

Planning and Transportation
Finance and General Purposes

No minutes as meeting not quorate.
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- 6. TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS** – Members **NOTED** the Chairman's recent engagements.
- 7. FAIRTRADE – SOUTHBOROUGH AND HIGH BROOMS-** Members **NOTED** that unfortunately the representative from the Tunbridge Wells Fairtrade Town Group could not attend due to ill health. It was hoped she could attend for the February Full Council meeting.
- 8. EMPLOYEES – CODE OF CONDUCT** – Members formally **AGREED** to the Employees code of conduct with the addition under Relationships of Councillors and Employees and the addition of Colleagues in the sentence beginning mutual respect.
- 9. SOUTHBOROUGH CIVIC CENTRE UPDATE-** Councillor Blackwell verbally updated the meeting with the following:

Project Board Meeting 27th March

Now that the leases been completed the Collaboration Agreement period comes to end and our March meeting was our last board meeting. Board members have

agreed that they three councils will continue to work together to resolve the last few remaining items.

Issues on the YTR Playing Fields

Board members visited the fields prior to the meeting, with officers, to survey the site and to understand where the water runoff is being displaced to. Local residents were also able to explain the nature of the problems they have been experiencing since the levelling of the playing fields.

In the meeting STC identified the steps already taken by our council, as recommended by insurers and the investigation work commissioned by BDR. TWBC and KCC have together, with STC agreed to share 1/3rd of the costs already incurred in the investigations. Both KCC and KCC have said they will consider the final scheme when the design is completed and are willing to engage with further discussion on funding.

Crest Defects

The defect notices on the Crest footpath are still unresolved. KCC have proposed a possible solution where an aco drain is installed to cope with the puddling. Jonathan White to advise on costs – no decision has yet been reached. STC noted that the Crest pathway does not appear to have been laid properly as that it is prone to weeds - Jonathan White to investigate further.

VAT

We are still awaiting the final SDLT/VAT report. Jonathan White has now agreed that this will be completed once the VAT has been reclaimed. The report was due Dec 2021.

Library Site, Yew Tree Road.

Councillor Hill asked what the plans KCC has for the old library building. It is allocated for residential within the Local Plan, but KCC so far have not agreed to a sale. Concerns have been raised about anti-social behaviour on the site, confusion as the signage is still in place and the deteriorating fabric of the building that has now become another 'grot spot' in the town. The building has to be first offered to another organisation within KCC before it can be disposed of. It is understood that this process has not yet started. Cllr Mike Hill has said that he will follow up and report back.

Finances

The project has a final of £10k to be divided by the three councils. However, STC have already undertaken considerable additional costs for street lighting, staging, air conditioning, solar panels, power sockets, data terminal, wi-fi etc. There may still be additional expenditure.

Portacabin on YTR Fields

The cabin is to be removed from the field. The Town Clerk has contacted the Football Club to let them know. The trees that were removed to accommodate them will need to be reinstated. Jonathan White is to follow on what KCC are able to provide and feedback to STC.

10. 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: -

Full Council Meeting
Finance and General Purposes

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The Chairman called to extend the meeting at 9.00 pm for a further 30 minutes.

- b) **Southborough Framework** – Members **AGREED** to the supplied legal Framework document. This will now move to the next stage of advertising the Framework on the required sites.
- c) **Unauthorised structure Yew Tree Playing Fields** – Members discussed the unauthorised structure that had been placed on the playing fields by the Football Club. Members unanimously **REFUSED** permission for the netting structure. Points discussed included the risks involved in a permanent structure in a public open space and the lack of proper permissions being sought from both the Town Council and the boroughs Planning Authority.
- d) **Civic Centre/Events Proposals** – Members **AGREED** to holding two Events in the upcoming year at the Civic Centre. These being for the Queens Jubilee on Saturday 4 June 2022 and the Winter Festival on 3 December 2022. The proposals surrounding the Community Panto needed further investigation over costs. The Facilities and Events Manager would take up these discussions with the company proposing the Panto.
- e) **Civic Centre Marketing** – Members **NOTED** the report of the Facilities and Events Manager. Members **AGREED** to budgetary provision for advertising and the setting up of separate social media sites for the Civic Centre.

The Chairman called to extend the meeting at 9.30 pm for a further 15 minutes.

- f) **Staffing Matters** – Members **AGREED** that during the current ASB it is experiencing that two members of staff should be on duty during evening bookings. This would be reviewed should there be a change in the ASB Problems.
- g) **Southborough Civic Buildings Confidential Matters** – Members discussed the confidential matters.

The Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.41pm

CHAIRMAN