

SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Full Council Meeting

Date of meeting: Monday 9 October 2023 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Cllrs Abercrombie, Ahmed, Coote, de Vries, Eke, Frost (until FC 149-23), Freeman, Gadd, McBirnie and Reeve.

Officers: Lisa Courtney (Town Clerk), Terry Frostick (Operations Manager)

Public: None present

FC 133-23	In the absence of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor Cllr Eke chaired this meeting.
FC 134-23	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Asker, Curtis, Hawke-Smith, Jones, McLellan, Meloy, Porch and Shotropa.
FC 135-23	Declarations of Interest Cllrs Ahmed, Coote, Freeman, McBirnie and Reeve declared generic non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council (UDC). Cllr Gadd declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as County Councillor for Essex County Council.
FC 136-23	Public Speaking Time There were no questions arising.
FC 137-23	Updates from 3rd parties – for information only (a) Council noted the written update from Cllr Gadd as the Essex County Councillor. (b) Council received a verbal update from UDC Councillors, noting UDC also has a challenging budget.
FC 138-23	Mayor's Communications Cllr Eke noted he recently attended a meeting with Saffron Hall who reported 80% of their visitors are residents from outside of Saffron Walden.
FC 139-23	To verify the Minutes of the Town Council meetings The 11.09.2023 Full Council minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meetings and signed by the Deputy Mayor. One amendments was made being the removal of Cllr Gadd's declaration of interest as he was not in attendance.

Signed as a true and accurate record
Minutes of Full Council Meeting October 2023

FC 140-23	<p>To receive the Minutes of the Previous Meetings</p> <p>Council received and noted the minutes from the following Committee meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Transport 14.09.2023 • Finance and Establishment 18.09.2023 • Assets and Services 25.09.2023
FC 141-23	<p>Heritage Development Group (HDG) 1647 Memorial Sculpture Project</p> <p>Council noted the HDG is considering installation of a memorial sculpture to commemorate the 1647 democratic debates; the group is still considering the project but the current feedback from the group is positive and leaning toward pursuing with the project. The sculpture would be made of bronze and cost circa £75,000, which the HDG would fundraise for.</p> <p>Council considered the proposal and noted the HDG is also seeking for SWTC to insure the asset should the project proceed which would add to the council's insurance premium.</p> <p>Council unanimously resolved: To support the project in principle.</p>
FC 142-23	<p>Policies</p> <p>Council agreed to adopt the following policies with no changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Motion on Climate Change b) Green Initiatives c) Health & Safety d) Financial Regulations e) Co-Option f) Environmental Policy Statement
FC 143-23	<p>Uttlesford Local Plan – Regulation 18</p> <p>Council noted UDC is proposing to launch the Reg18 Consultation from 3rd November.</p> <p>Cllrs noted at first read of the draft Local Plan the policies included are positive, with some headline news being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 1280 dwellings proposed for Saffron Walden and a ring road from Thaxted Road to Radwinter Road. (b) Concerns were expressed about sports provision and a lack of specific funding and/or facilities but further noted the proposals are still a work in progress and may come forward at the Reg19 stage. (c) Proposed environmental policies were strong (d) A total of 5,800 new homes were required during the plan period (e) No new, large settlements are proposed (f) Provision for a community park in SW

	<p>The above points were simply early individual Councillor observations and the Council was yet to form its overall opinion and response to the draft local plan.</p> <p>Council Resolved: To appoint a working group formed with Cllrs Gadd, Freeman, Reeve, McBirnie and Curtis with officers to draft a response from SWTC which will be presented to Council at the November meeting for consideration.</p>
FC 144-23	<p>Essex County Council Draft Waste Strategy</p> <p>Council noted ECC is consulting on its draft waste strategy.</p> <p>Council resolved: To appoint Cllr Gadd with officers to prepare a draft response to the consultation which will be presented to Council for consideration at the November meeting.</p>
FC 145-23	<p>Community Governance Review (CGR) of Parishes</p> <p>Council noted UDC has begun the CGR process to extend the Saffron Walden border to incorporate the land forming planning application UTT/22/2509/OP currently sat in Swards End.</p> <p>Council unanimously resolved: To respond to the consultation in support of the proposal, aligning with previous conversations and decisions reached.</p>
FC 146-23	<p>Uttlesford District Council Budget 2024/25</p> <p>Council noted UDC has invited residents, town and parish councils to take part in this year's consultation on UDC's spending priorities for 2024/25.</p> <p>Council resolved: To delegate officers with responsibility of drafting the response and circulate with all members for comment prior to submission.</p>
FC 147-23	<p>Local Government Association and National Association Local Council's Corporate Peer Challenge</p> <p>Council noted SWTC has the opportunity to request a corporate peer review by NALC and LGA.</p> <p>Council unanimously resolved: The Town Clerk should proceed and request the LGA to consider SWTC for a corporate peer review.</p>
FC 148-23	<p>Equipment Purchase and Disposal</p> <p>Council noted the disposal and purchase of new operational equipment as detailed on the agenda.</p>
FC 149-23	Cllr Frost left the meeting

FC 150-23	<p>Uttlesford District Council Polling Stations Review</p> <p>Council noted UDC is seeking comments on the Castle Ward polling station, the mobile unit at Homebase car park.</p> <p>Council resolved: To respond to the consultation acknowledging the site is not the most accessible and other venues should be considered – this could mean ward polling stations being hosted together.</p>
FC 151-23	<p>National Association Local Councils (NALC) Star Council Awards</p> <p>Council congratulated the Town Clerk for being successfully named a Clerk of Year finalist for the NALC Star Council Awards 2023.</p>
FC 152-23	<p>Training</p> <p>Council was reminded to provide feedback on the councillor feedback provided in the summer.</p>
FC 153-23	<p>Reports from other Meetings</p> <p>Council noted the copy of the minutes provided from the recent UDC Local Council Liaison Form meeting held on 12.09.2023 as attached to the agenda.</p>
FC 154-23	<p>Additional Forthcoming Meetings</p> <p>Council noted the Remembrance Day service arrangements in Saffron Walden and that the Council is leading on event management matters, planning and is the formal event management lead.</p>
FC 155-23	<p>Urgent Items - No matters raised.</p>
FC 156-23	<p>Date and time of Next meeting(s)</p> <p>The Deputy Mayor reminded all that the next meeting is scheduled for 13th November 2023 at 7.30pm.</p>
FC 157-23	<p>Confidential Item – Exclusion of Press and Public (Part II meeting)</p> <p>It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
FC 158-23	<p>Public Open Space Transfer</p> <p>Council agreed with the recommendation as detailed within the written report and as recommended from the Assets and Services Committee.</p>

FC 159-23	<p>Budget 2024/25</p> <p>A verbal update was provided by the Town Clerk regarding various options being considered for the 2024/25 and advised a written update of proposals will be provided at the November meeting.</p>
FC 160-23	<p>Number 5 Market Place, former Natwest Bank</p> <p>Council noted the written update and passed on their thanks to the Town Clerk and Operations Manager.</p>

The Deputy Mayor closed the meeting at 9.30pm.