

## **SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of Full Council Meeting**

**Date of meeting:** Monday 13 November 2023 at 7.30pm

**Present Councillors:** Cllrs Abercrombie (Walker), Ahmed, Asker, Coote, Curtis, Frost, Freeman, Gadd, Hawke-Smith, McBirnie, McLellan, Meloy, Porch, Reeve

**Officers:** Lisa Courtney (Town Clerk)

**Public:** None present

FC 167-23	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs de Vries, Eke, Jones and Shotropa</p>
FC 168-23	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Cllrs Ahmed, Asker, Coote, Freeman, McBirnie and Reeve declared generic non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council (UDC).</p> <p>Cllr Gadd declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as County Councillor for Essex County Council.</p>
FC 169-23	<p><b>Public Speaking Time</b></p> <p>There were no questions arising.</p>
FC 170-23	<p><b>Updates from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties – for information only</b></p> <p>(a) Committee received a written update report from Cllr P Gadd as the Essex County Councillor who spoke further to the report, specifically:</p> <p>(b) It was noted the recycling centre consultation closes on 19 November. Council queried whether there has been an increase in fly tipping but it was noted if there was, this would be resolved by UDC and not necessarily fed back to ECC, therefore it was not possible to recognise any increase or decrease in fly tipping as any direct result of the civic amenity booking process.</p> <p>Cllr Gadd noted there had been a decrease in the volume of trips to the civic amenity site but again, no figures were available to see if this impacted on recycling volumes. Cllr Gadd advised he will progress statistics with ECC in an attempt to recognise the impact of the booking system.</p>

	<p>(c) Cllr Gadd noted he has the opportunity to 'nominate' 18 further potholes across his SW constituency and encouraged Cllrs to advise him of any specific queries, noting the use of 'What3Words' was useful in identifying the precise location.</p> <p>(d) A series of other highway matters were raised, Cllr Gadd noted these should be presented to ECC via the Town Council's P &amp; T Committee who would then subsequently submit any applications to the Local Highway Panel.</p> <p>(e) A discussion was had regarding anticipated problems in the installation of new traffic lights in Church Street/ High Street due to be provided by the Rosconn development; the lights were agreed by the Planning Inspectorate as part of the highway mitigation measures arising from the development. Concerns continued to be expressed at the proposals to install these, noting the emergency services have raised concerns around their installation. It was acknowledged this was an ongoing concern and the Town Council's objections to these lights was further acknowledged.</p> <p>(f) Committee received a verbal update from UDC Cllr McBirnie who noted UDC has started their Local Plan consultations.</p>
FC 171-23	<p><b>Mayor's Communications</b></p> <p>The Mayor noted -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Her thanks to Councillors and officers for their support in the Remembrance Day parade and all the arrangements involved. It was noted the Essex Police Chief Inspector passed on his praise to SWTC for the well organised event.</li> <li>• The forthcoming Christmas Market on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November where the Mayor will host a tombola stall.</li> <li>• Thanks was passed to Cllrs Curtis, Jones and Reeve for their support at the recent lantern workshops.</li> <li>• The forthcoming Late Night Shopping event (organised by the SWI) and that they continued to seek grant funding for this event.</li> </ul>
FC 172-23	<p><b>To verify the Minutes of the Town Council meetings</b></p> <p>The 9 October 2023 Full Council minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meetings and signed by the Mayor with one amendment to minute reference FC 143-23 (a) from 'ring road' to 'link road'.</p> <p>The 30 October 2023 Full Council minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meetings and signed by the Mayor.</p>
FC 173-23	<p><b>To receive the Minutes of the Previous Meetings</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the minutes from the following Committee meetings:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Transport 12.10.2023</li> <li>• Planning and Transport 26.10.2023</li> <li>• Finance and Establishment 16.10.2023</li> <li>• Finance and Establishment 23.10.2023</li> <li>• Assets and Services 23.10.2023</li> </ul>
FC 174-23	<p><b>Uttlesford Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation</b></p> <p>Council noted the working group and officers are due to meet in November to finalise a draft response to the consultation (closing 15 December), the draft response will be presented to Council at the December meeting for consideration.</p>
FC 175-23	<p><b>Accounts and Accounting Statements</b></p> <p>Council received and noted the following financial reports:</p> <p>(a) Receipts and payments for 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter</p> <p>(b) Aggregate receipts and payments year to date</p> <p>(c) Balances held at the end of the current quarter (to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023)</p>
FC 176-23	<p><b>Annual Governance Review 2022/2023</b></p> <p>Council noted the accounts for 2022/23 have been signed off by the external auditor.</p>
FC 177-23	<p><b>Energy Waste Strategy Consultation</b></p> <p>Council noted the attached written report with recommended responses prepared by officers and Cllr Gadd. Cllr Meloy had some additional comments which would be sent to Cllr Gadd and the Deputy Town Clerk for submission.</p>
FC 178-23	<p><b>Well Green Close</b></p> <p>Council noted the written report attached to the agenda. Thanks was passed to District Councillor Fiddy for her support and contact with the site owner, Taylor Wimpey, resulting in the land being transferred on a free of charge basis to the Town Council (save for SWTC meeting all legal fees associated with the transfer).</p> <p>A discussion was had regarding whether ward member monies should be utilised or not to support funding of the legal fees.</p> <p>It was agreed to progress with option 2 as follows, removing the specific request for Ward Cllrs monies to fund the legal fees:</p> <p><i>To pursue purchase of the land at Well Green Close at the offered nominal charge of £1, incurring the legal costs for SWTC and the current landowner.</i></p> <p>It was further agreed to utilise the SWTC legal and professional fees budget to fund the transfer – should ward members wish to provide funding this would be at their own discretion.</p>

FC 179-23	<p><b>Working Group – Public Right of Way (PROW) and Public Open Space (POS)</b></p> <p>Council noted at the October extraordinary Council meeting, it was requested to consider establishment of a working group to review areas in Saffron Walden which might require registering as a PROW or POS.</p> <p>It was resolved to appoint Cllrs Freeman, Gadd, McLellan, Meloy and officers as members of this working group with officers and to invite members of the neighbourhood plan working group who would understand the project, these being Mr Rapkin, Ms Roberts and District Cllr Fiddy.</p> <p>It was noted that most of the work would relate to the development off Cromwell Road. The financial strain which may be placed upon the Town Council to progress was noted, with a view that the costs would be met from the Council's 2024/25 budget.</p>
FC 180-23	<p><b>Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Precept Survey</b></p> <p>It was noted the PFCC consultation regarding their precept is live and members were encouraged to respond individually due to the subject nature of the questions.</p>
FC 181-23	<p><b>Reports from other Meetings</b></p> <p>Cllr Reeve noted he is attending a meeting at the Museum next week about its management.</p>
FC 182-23	<p><b>Additional Forthcoming Meetings</b></p> <p>Council noted the Uttlesford District Council area Parish meeting will take place on 21 November at 7pm via Zoom and the link would be shared with all members.</p>
FC 183-23	<p><b>Urgent Items</b></p> <p>No matters raised.</p>
FC 184-23	<p><b>Date and time of Next meeting(s)</b></p> <p>The Mayor reminded all that the next meeting is scheduled for 4 December 2023 – with all December meetings being brought forward one week due to Christmas, and only one Planning and Transport Committee meeting.</p>
FC 185-23	<p><b>Confidential Item – Exclusion of Press and Public (Part II meeting)</b></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 186-23	<p><b>2024/25 Budget</b></p> <p>This item is confidential because it involves the likely disclosure of employee personal information; publishing this information may breach data protection.</p> <p>Council received a written report regarding proposed service changes, impacting on the 2024/25 budget.</p> <p>A working group was established including Cllrs Gadd, Abercrombie, Meloy, Curtis and Reeve with officers whose primary remit was to focus on the matters as raised within the report.</p>
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The Mayor closed the meeting at 9pm