

SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Full Council Meeting

Date of meeting: Monday 11 March 2024 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Cllrs Abercrombie (Walker), Curtis (from Min Ref FC 046-24), de Vries, Eke, Gadd, Hawke-Smith, Jones (from Min Ref FC 046-24), Meloy.

Officers: Lisa Courtney Town Clerk, Georgia Arnold Deputy Town Clerk and Colette Kerr Events and Activities Officer (until conclusion of the Jubilee Hub presentation, minute reference FC 051-24)

Public: Representatives of UCAN and Enterprise East CIC.

FC 042-24	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ahmed, Asker, Coote, Freeman, McBirnie, McLellan, Porch, Reeve and Shotropa
FC 043-24	Declarations of Interest Cllr Gadd declared a generic non-pecuniary interest as County Councillor for Essex County Council and as a Member of Saffron Screen. The following members declared a non-pecuniary interest in Min Ref FC052-24(a) as Members of Saffron Hall: Cllrs Eke, Gadd, Hawke-Smith, Meloy
FC 044-24	Public Speaking Time - There were no questions arising.
FC 045-24	Updates from 3rd parties – for information only (a) County Councillor Gadd noted a written report will be provided to the Planning and Transport committee, as per usual practice. It was noted George Street footpath has been widened as part of the SWTC request via the Local Highway Panel. (b) No update was available from UDC Councillors.
FC 046-24	Cllrs Curtis and Jones arrived.
FC 047-24	Mayor's Communications The Deputy Mayor gave an update on recent Mayoral activities, including: Golf Club Breakfast meeting; SWTC Youth Session with the Youth Outreach Project at Jubilee Hub; Café Cornell Kings Award for voluntary services; open day for FR8 Toolhire; High Sheriff Awards and in the coming weeks will attend the HMS Lapwing Service and Saffron Hall SWCHS Concert.

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FC 048-24	<p>To verify the Minutes of the Town Council meetings</p> <p>The 12.02.2024 Full Council minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting with the following amendments and additions:</p> <p>Addition: Under Min Ref FC 035-24c: "Cllr Hawke-Smith was appointed Chair of the Climate Change Working Group"</p> <p>Addition: Under Min Ref FC 035-24: Cllr Gadd offered the following opinion: "It was noted that the update didn't give a fair representation of the Council's progress towards the objectives set out in the Climate Action Plan, and that officers be requested to ensure that future Updates did so."</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed the delay was due to an historic lack of resourcing which was remedied (in the appointment to additional posts) in November 2023. It was agreed that future updates should include details of any missed milestones, providing details of the delay and/or challenges in meeting the target.</p> <p>Amendment, to remove existing text and replace with the following: FC 041-24b; "At the January 2024 meeting, Council focused the remit of the working group on potential and further cost savings on the TIC service"</p>
FC 049-24	<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 08.02.2024 (Approved minutes) • Planning and Transport 22.02.2024 (draft minutes) • Finance and Establishment 19.02.2024 (draft minutes) • Assets and Services 26.02.2024 (draft minutes)
FC 050-24	<p>Town Clerk's Achievements</p> <p>Council congratulated the Town Clerk for successfully completing the Community Governance degree, after a 6-year home study course. The Deputy Mayor passed on thanks from all members of SWTC staff and presented a written congratulatory letter signed by all staff.</p> <p>Council also congratulated the Town Clerk for being successfully nominated by Essex Association of Local Councils to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party this summer.</p>

FC 051-24	<p>Jubilee Hub Presentation</p> <p>SWTC officers, UCAN and Enterprise East CIC provided a presentation to Council, with an update on works to date regarding Jubilee Hub. The presentation included details of how the organisations work together and explains the skills, experience and attribute that each party brings in order to provide a collaborative community service to residents. Notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) SWTC is the leaseholder of the premises, supporting the day to day running of the building and also manage private hirings of an evening and weekend. b) Enterprise East CIC provides several of the weekly community services including Singing for the Soul and Art Sessions; both have been successfully grant funded by third parties. Additionally, EE CIC will be opening the kitchen in 2024 to host a youth café and cooking lessons, both funded by successfully awarded grant monies. c) UCAN a local volunteer service is based within Jubilee Hub five days a week, largely fulfilling an administrative / oversight role in daytime bookings. UCAN respond to enquiries supporting residents in need with lifestyle advice and provide several of the weekly sessions including Digital and Building Buddies. <p>Council thanked the Jubilee Hub partners for their informative presentation and the partners left the meeting.</p>
FC 052-24	<p>Council Priorities</p> <p>Council noted the written update on Council Priorities. Members consider the recommendations noted within the list on page 1, the following was Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Funding for Saffron Hall: Awarded grant funding of £10,000 being an integral part of the 2024/25 budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) That this funding is provided unconditionally to Saffron Hall, save for the usual obligations as imposed upon any grant recipient (ie, to acknowledge SWTC funding and for Saffron Hall to provide a post-funding evaluation form to SWTC, noting the benefit(s) derived from the Town Council's funding) (ii) That SWTC will pay the sum of £10,000 to Saffron Hall being a grant in furtherance of their arts and culture activities in Saffron Walden (iii) That SWTC additionally offers Saffron Hall free of charge venue hire for 2024/25 and that Officers are authorised to progress directly with Saffron Hall regarding specific arrangements, dates and requirements. (iv) That any free of charge venue hire is subject to availability of SWTC facilities and that it does not adversely impact on the ordinary bookings/hirings of Council owned facilities

	<p>(v) That SWTC would seek to recover from Saffron Hall any direct staffing costs arising from any free of charge venue hire (ie to seek direct staff cost-recovery from Saffron Hall).</p> <p>(b) Funding for Saffron Screen: Awarded grant funding of £2,500 being an integral part of the 2024/25 budget and that this money be used in drawing down any direct costs incurred by SWTC in the provision of free of charge hire (for clarity, Saffron Screen is not awarded a sum of money, but the sum is instead set aside and drawn down internally as per (iv) below).</p> <p>(i) That this funding is provided unconditionally to Saffron Screen, save for the usual obligations as imposed upon any grant recipient (ie, to acknowledge SWTC funding and for Saffron Screen to provide a post-funding evaluation form to SWTC, noting the benefit(s) derived from the Town Council's funding)</p> <p>(ii) That SWTC offers Saffron Screen free of charge venue hire for 2024/25 and that Officers are authorised to progress directly with Saffron Screen regarding specific arrangements, dates and requirements</p> <p>(iii) That any free of charge venue hire is subject to availability of SWTC facilities and that it does not adversely impact on the ordinary bookings/hirings of Council owned facilities</p> <p>(iv) That SWTC would seek to draw down a payment in kind of £2,500 from any direct staffing costs arising from any free of charge venue hire (ie to seek direct staff cost-recovery from Saffron Screen, drawing down on the 'in kind' payment of £2,500)</p> <p>(v) That once (and if) the 'in kind' payment of £2,500 is reached, any additional costs would be subject to further review and approval by the F & E Committee as part of the ordinary grants process</p> <p>(c) Funding for Uttlesford District Council (UDC)</p> <p>(i) That in the spirit of partnership and shared working, SWTC offers UDC free of charge venue hire for 2024/25 and that Officers are authorised to progress directly with UDC regarding specific arrangements, dates and requirements</p> <p>(ii) That SWTC would seek to recover from UDC any direct staffing costs arising from any free of charge venue hire (ie to seek direct staff cost-recovery from UDC).</p> <p>(iii) That this funding is provided unconditionally to UDC, save for the usual obligations as imposed upon any grant recipient (ie, to acknowledge</p>
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	<p>SWTC funding and for UDC to provide a post-funding evaluation form to SWTC, noting the benefit(s) derived from the Town Council's funding)</p> <p>(d) General consideration regarding free of charge hirings:</p> <p>(i) Council acknowledged that the Council's overall 2024/25 budget is predicated on an income from hiring of the Town Hall, Bridge End Gardens and other facilities. This income of £65,000 is an integral part of the 2024/25 budget and all endeavours must be made to reach this target; the Council's budget may run to a deficit if this income is not achieved. An appropriate balance must therefore be struck regarding the provision of free of charge hire against achieving the required budgeted income.</p> <p>(ii) A running total of free of charge hire should be kept and the management/discretion of these hirings is delegated to Officers</p>
FC 053-24	<p>Working Groups</p> <p>Council noted the contents of the attached written update regarding progress and schedule of working groups.</p> <p>It was Resolved:</p> <p>a. To support and agree the content and proposed timetable of working group scheduling.</p> <p>b. Appointment of the following deputy working group chairs: Cllr Meloy of Climate and Environment Cllr Freeman of Splash Park (subject to his acceptance, as he was absent from this meeting) Cllr Gadd of PROW and POS (and Cllr Meloy as the Chair).</p> <p>c. Consideration for the need of a speeding working group was noted due to the difficulties in combatting speeding although it was noted that officers frequently liaise with the police team. It was agreed to pause this working group and officers would conduct further research into the cost and feasibility of installing a vehicle activated sign and that the matter be progressed through the Planning & Transport Committee.</p>
FC 054-24	<p>Terms of Reference – Climate Change & Environmental Working Group</p> <p>Council noted the proposed Climate Change and Environmental Terms of Reference as prepared by the working group.</p> <p>It was agreed to adopt the TOR with the following amendments:</p> <p>1. Under key objectives to amend point 1 as follows: <i>“To oversee the implementation of the climate change action plan”</i></p>

	<p>2. Under key objectives to amend point 2 as follows <i>“Prepare and present biodiversity statements at a future full council meeting, these statements are considered best practice”</i></p> <p>It was further agreed that the Working Group be allocated a budget of £10,000 in furtherance of climate change initiatives.</p>
055-24	<p>Internal Controls and Risk Assessment</p> <p>Council noted the Internal Controls and Risk Assessment as adopted by the Finance Committee for 2023-24.</p> <p>There was a query regarding the potential for excessive and/or vexatious demands for parish polls and whether the Town Council could mitigate against these. It was noted that the right of the electorate to both request a Parish Meeting and to call a Parish Poll is enshrined in the 1972 Local Government Act and it was not possible to mitigate against that.</p>
056-24	<p>S106 Monies - Council noted the written report detailing the S106 monies due to SWTC and progress to date.</p>
057-24	<p>Nominations to the positions of Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor 2024/25</p> <p>The following nominations were agreed in principle for resolution at the May Annual Meeting scheduled for Monday 13th May 2024, this is in accordance with the Council’s published Mayoral Selection policy.</p> <p>Mayor and Deputy May from May 2024 to serve for one year: Nomination to Mayor: Cllr Deryk Eke Nominated by Cllr Asker, seconded by Cllr Porch Nomination to Deputy Mayor: Cllr Melon Ahmed Nominated by Cllr Asker, seconded by Cllr Porch It was Resolved: to note and agree and approve the in-principle nominations as above</p>
FC 058-24	<p>Reports from other Meetings - No meetings reported.</p>
FC 059-24	<p>Additional Forthcoming Meetings</p> <p>(a) The Annual Town Meeting of Electors will take place on Monday 8th April 2024 at 7.30pm.</p> <p>(b) An additional Parish Meeting will take place on Thursday 28th March 2024 at 7.30pm.</p> <p><i>POST MEETING NOTE: This meeting has subsequently been cancelled by the electorates who requested the meeting.</i></p>
FC 060-24	<p>Urgent Items - No matters raised.</p>
FC 061-24	<p>Date and time of Next meeting(s)The Mayor reminded all that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 15th April 2024 at 7.30pm.</p>

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.30pm

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