

SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Full Council Meeting

Date of meeting: Monday 9 September 2024 at 7.30pm

Present Councillors: Cllrs Abercrombie (Walker), Ahmed, Asker, Coote, de Vries, Eke (Mayor), Freeman, Hawke-Smith, McBirnie, McLellan, Meloy, Parker, Porch and Reeve.

Officers: Town Clerk

Public: None present

FC 147-24	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Curtis, Gadd, Jones and Shotropa.
FC 148-24	Declarations of Interest Cllrs Ahmed, Asker, Coote, Freeman, McBirnie and Reeve declared generic non-pecuniary interests as District Councillors for Uttlesford District Council (UDC).
FC 149-24	Public Speaking Time There were no questions arising.
FC 150-24	Updates from 3rd parties – for information only No updates were received from Cllr Gadd as the Essex County Councillor or UDC Councillors for Saffron Walden.
FC 151-24	Mayor's Communications The Mayor noted the summer has been busy, he had attended: (a) SWTC's Beach on the Common opening event which was well attended and well loved by residents throughout August. (b) The SWTC Market Square Emergency Services Day and Saffron Hall activities. (c) Saffron Hall's outdoor panto held at Bridge End Garden.
FC 152-24	To verify minutes of the Town Council meetings as follows: The 08.07.2024 and 08.08.2024 full council minutes were accepted as a true and accurate records of the meetings and signed by the Mayor.

Signed as a true and accurate record
Minutes of Full Council Meeting September 2024

FC 153-24	<p>To receive Minutes from Committee meetings as follows:</p> <p>Council received the following draft minutes for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and Transport 08.08.2024 (Approved minutes) • Planning and Transport 22.08.2024 (draft minutes) • Finance and Establishment 15.07.2024 (draft minutes) • Assets and Services 22.07.2024 (draft minutes) <p>Cllrs noted the Saffron Walden Lloyds branch is due to close and whether SWTC will reconsider its banking arrangements, looking favourably on holding an account with a bank which remains in SW thereby supporting local employment opportunities. It was agreed a report will be presented to a future F&E meeting to review this matter; the report should reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential for banking hub opportunities • The impact of the cash machine removal. • Operational queries around future DMO placements (given these can only be transacted in branch)
FC 154-24	<p>Committee and Working Group Membership</p> <p>Council noted the following:</p> <p>(a) Cllr Parker was elected in June 2024 and has since attended committee and working group meetings to gain some experience of the remit of each, although she has not yet been formally appointed to any committees or working groups.</p> <p>(b) Some WGs have been inquorate due to low attendance (minimum of 3 required for a WG to be quorate).</p> <p>(c) Reports 8a and 8b detailing the current membership and working group schedule.</p> <p>In considering the above, Council unanimously resolved the following:</p> <p>(d) To appoint Cllr Parker as a member of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Assets and Services Committee ii. Finance and Establishment Committee iii. Climate Change & Environment Working Group iv. Budget Working Group v. Little Walden Play Area Working Group <p>(e) For Cllr Abercrombie to move from the Finance and Establishment Committee to the Assets and Services Committee. The Finance and Establishment Committee will re-appoint the F&E Deputy Chair position at the September meeting.</p> <p>(f) For Cllr Freeman to join the F & E Committee</p>

	<p>(g) In considering increasing the membership to Working Groups generally and thereby decreasing the opportunities for inquorate or cancelled meetings (4 WG meetings have not been quorate in 2024) Cllr McLellan was added to the Climate Change and Environment Working Group and Budget Working Group.</p> <p>(h) In considering continuance of the Peer Challenge Review, conducted by the Local Government Association (LGA) the following was noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The working group Terms of Reference and guidelines will come forward to a future Full Council meeting. In advance, councillors should email the Clerk with any specific areas they would like included in the review. ii. The previous review (anticipated for October 2023) was purposefully paused given resourcing and relationship difficulties at that time iii. The working group membership was re-established with membership as Cllrs Asker, Curtis, Eke, Reeve and Porch. iv. Council agreed to progress with the review in 2025 and that Officers would initiate the first WG meeting in the near future.
FC 155-24	<p>Budget Working Group Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Budget WG TOR were unanimously agreed for adoption.</p>
FC 156-24	<p>Priorities Update Report</p> <p>Council received and noted the updated action plan of priorities and unanimously agreed the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Remove item 6, the proposed footbridge at Lime Avenue. (b) Remove item 10, the establishment of a PROW working group. The work will form a natural part of the work carried out by the P & T Committee and will purposefully focus on a reactive position, completing PROW applications where appropriate to do so and/or required. Resourcing is not available to actively seek PROW queries, but a positive reactive position would be adopted. (c) Remove item 18, Close Garden, noting the land is not owned by SWTC and the area should be reported to ECC for remedial works. (d) Remove item 20, Ashdon railway line creation of a cycle path. <p>It was noted the war memorial and skate park could be added into the priorities, as their long-term maintenance is included within the EMR.</p>
FC 157-24	<p>Update on Proposals to Refresh the SW Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Council noted the following was agreed at the June FC meeting, (minute extract below FC 113-24), <i>It was Resolved:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>To receive and note the Town Clerk's update and advice with thanks;</i> b) <i>To carry this matter forward for further consideration at the September 2024 meeting when further information may be known about the UDC local plan.</i>

	<p><i>c) Resourcing for any refreshed NP should form an integral part of the draft budget for 2025/26.</i></p> <p>Council noted the post of a NP Co-ordinator (or consultant) is included in first draft 2025/26 budget and the continuance of this project will be determined through the establishment of the 2025/26 budget.</p>
FC 158-24	<p>Uttlesford Local Plan Regulation 19</p> <p>Council noted UDC has launched its consultation on the draft Reg 19 Local Plan and the Town Council's response will be drafted by the Planning Committee Chair and Deputy alongside officers, according to that as agreed at the P & T meeting held on 8 August 2024. Council requested, if timing of deadlines allows, that the response is presented to Committee and Full Council.</p>
FC 159-24	<p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>Council unanimously agreed to adopt the proposed financial regulations.</p>
FC 160-24	<p>Final recommendations for Essex County Council boundaries published</p> <p>Council noted the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published its findings for the future electoral arrangements for Essex County Council, which includes the transfer of the Rosconn Radwinter Road site from the Swards End Parish Council to SWTC.</p>
FC 161-24	<p>Reports from other Meetings</p> <p>No meetings reported.</p>
FC 162-24	<p>Additional Forthcoming Meetings</p> <p>It was noted UDC is offering Standards Training for all Councillors, dates in September as per the agenda.</p>
FC 163-24	<p>Urgent Items</p> <p>No matters raised.</p>
FC 164-24	<p>Date and time of Next meeting(s)</p> <p>The Mayor reminded all that the next meeting is scheduled for 14 October 2024 at 7.30pm in the Town Hall Saffron Walden.</p>

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9pm