**MINUTES OF THE ALDEBURGH TOWN COUNCIL**

**MEETING HELD ON MONDAY JULY 10 2017**

**AT 7:00 PM IN THE MOOT HALL**

Present: Cllr Bond - The Mayor, took the Chair

Cllr Digby Cllr Cox

Cllr Fellowes Cllr Fox

Cllr Harris Cllr Jones

Cllr Kiff Cllr Osben

Cllr Oxby Cllr Palmer

Cllr Partel Cllr Worster

One member of the public was in attendance.

**1. Apologies:** Apologies had been received prior to the meeting from Cllrs TJ Haworth-Culf and M Jones

from SCDC, Cllr Russ Rainger from SCC and Cllr Walker.

**2. Councillors’ Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. To Approve the Draft Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 June 2017**

Minutes of the Council meeting held on 12 June 2017 were **APPROVED** by a show of handsand duly signed.

**4. SCC report and Correspondence**

There was no SCC Report.

**5. SCDC Report and Correspondence**

Cllr TJ Haworth-Culf submitted the monthly report on behalf of SCDC (see Appendix One.)

In the absence of the District Cllrs, there were no questions this month.

**6.** **Police Report**

No Police Report had been submitted but the Town Clerk reported on meeting with the Area Inspector and Sgt Mark Beresford to discuss police arrangements in the town during the summer months. Parking patrols had been stepped up and there was to be a bigger police presence on King’s Field and Kemp’s Field where anti-social behaviour had recently been witnessed. Further discussions with the police would take place at a meeting with the Safer Neighbourhood Team in Aldeburgh on July 19, added the Town Clerk.

**7.** **PUBLIC FORUM**

The Mayor suspended Standing Orders for the Public Forum.

The new chair of the Aldeburgh Society, Katherine Mackie, was welcomed to the meeting by Cllr Bond who paid tribute to the work of the Society. In response, Katherine Mackie promised the Society would continue to take a keen interest in the town and continue to work closely with ATC.

The Mayor then reinstated Standing Orders.

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**8. COMMITTEES REPORTS:**

**8a. PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**8ai) Report from Chairman of Property & Finance Committee**

Cllr Jones brought the Council up-to-date with the activities of Mint Fitness, the newly-opened fitness provider at King’s Field. They now have a full programme of classes, including evening training sessions with the Rugby Club. Drawings have been submitted to SCDC as part of a change of use application, she added, but the refurbishment project was not part of this application. Cllr Bond asked if the change of use was from storage to recreation and Cllr Jones confirmed there would be a storage element in the plans for

the shed. Cllr Cox suggested numbering the two sheds A and B to avoid confusion, an idea accepted by

Cllr Jones. Cllr Fellowes pointed out that if the change of use application was for recreation only, it would tie the Council’s hands if the building was to be used for another purpose in the future. She was assured by Cllr Jones that a further change of use application was a straightforward matter.

Cllr Jones reported that a £10,000 grant application to SCDC for new play equipment had been successful and she was now in contact with manufacturers to ascertain delivery dates, which could be late-September.

Cllr Jones asked the Town Clerk for clarification on the proposed drainage work at King’s Field and was

told the agronomist had only recently submitted a 54-page document which needed careful consideration.

Cllr Jones reported on damage to the shelter at Kemp’s Field which had now been repaired. Grass cutting appeared to be behind schedule and she was in contact with Norse. She asked the Town Clerk to cost a second five-a-side goal so that an application for S106 sports funds could be sought.

Posters advertising Sports Week were being displayed in the town, said Cllr Jones, and completed registration forms were arriving at the Moot Hall. T-shirts were now available for adult supervisors.

##### 8b. SERVICES COMMITTEE

**8bi)** **Report from the Chair of the Services Committee**

Cllr Palmer briefed the meeting on a lengthy War Memorials Trust grant application form in respect of renovation work on the town’s War Memorial. He was still completing the 12-page form. Sites for the two new defibrillators had been identified, the High Street Co-op and the Church Hall, with the latter being chosen because it is the town’s emergency centre. Cllr Jones asked whether consideration had been given to siting one of the devices towards the Slaughden end of the town. Cllr Palmer ruled this out because of the low population density and because there was not a suitable position guaranteeing 24-hour access. Cllr Worster pointed out that the Coastguards have access to defibrillators and could cover emergencies on the fringes of the town. Cllr Palmer said he and Cllr Cox were investigating the cost of installing speed signs for approach roads into the town.

**8bii)** **RESOLUTION** to **APPROVE** the quote that represents best value to the council for renovation work on the town’s War Memorial (pending the approval of funding applications) was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Harris and **SECONDED** by Cllr Cox.

**In favour 13**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**8biii)** **RESOLUTION** to **APPROVE** that ATC agrees to purchase in principle two defibrillators, subject to siting agreements was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Digby and **SECONDED** by Cllr Palmer.

**In favour 13**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**8c. PLANNING**

**8ci)** **Report from Chairman of Planning.**

Cllr Worster pointed out that SCDC will soon be paperless and planning applications will be transmitted digitally in the future. This, he said, demanded a different approach to the way the Planning Committee and members of the public could view planning documents. He suggested a regular planning bulletin produced by the Town Council which would track every application, whether it had been passed and containing the name of the Planning Officer which could then be viewed by all Cllrs and members of the public. It was very frustrating, he said, to see plans approved and then amended without the knowledge of the Planning Committee. Cllr Fellowes welcomed the idea and said that it would be helpful if the information included the officer level at which a plan had been approved. This would show how much the views of the Planning Committee had been taken into account.

Cllr Oxby drew attention to a recent planning application which had been turned down by the Planning Committee which had now been approved without the knowledge of ATC. She expressed concern about why this had happened.

Cllr Bond told the meeting she was in urgent talks with the consultant appointed by ATC to contest the Brickdock appeal. She expressed frustration with the Planning Inspectorate and SCDC who were providing unsatisfactory answers to many issues raised by the consultant. The submission deadline was rapidly approaching, she said, and our paperwork needed to be lodged 14 days before a site visit scheduled for July 31. The Town Clerk pointed out that the initial budget for the consultant was likely to be exceeded and warned Cllrs that additional costs might be incurred.

**8d. GRANTS, REQUESTS & EVENTS**

**8di) Report from Chairman of Grants, Requests and Events Committee**

Cllr Digby said there was nothing to report this month

Cllr Harris declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following resolution:

**8dii) RESOLUTION** to **APPROVE** that ATC donates £500 to Aldeburgh RNLI towards the cost of providing a Ceremonial Standard (on the understanding it will be used on Civic occasions) was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Worster and **SECONDED** by Cllr Digby.

**In favour 13**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**9. Representatives’ Reports.**

* Cllr Worster reported on meetings with the Jubilee Hall and the Church Elders and attended a training session for vulnerable adults and children.
* Cllr Partel attended the successful opening session of Mint Fitness at King’s Field.
* Cllr Kiff was present at the Library Trustees Meeting on June 25th and reported that autumn courses at the library were well-subscribed and that a development plan was underway.
* Cllr Fox, after a meeting with the Aldeburgh Business Association, expressed reservations about potential disruption when the Tour of Britain comes to the town. She also attended a meeting of the Museum Trustees and a Design Workshop which looked at interim proposals for the museum redevelopment.
* Cllr Jones attended the Community Centre AGM on July 5 and the Primary School Sports Day.
* Cllr Harris was present at the Fire Station Open Day.
* Cllr Digby presented medals at the Primary School’s Aldeburgh’s Got Talent competition, attended the school’s Sports Day and chaired the Carnival Committee.
* Cllr Palmer attended a meeting of the Sizewell A+B Stakeholders group on July 6 where there was a lively discussion about storage of spent fuel rods.

**10. Town Clerk’s Report**

The Town Clerk told Cllrs that minor queries raised by BDO had been addressed.

She then gave the meeting a lengthy report on the likely ramifications to the town caused by the Tour of Britain bike race on September 8. She described the event as the biggest the town will have ever seen and would inevitably cause some degree of chaos. Roads will be closed from midnight the night before, she revealed, with many issues raised by this still to be resolved. The Town Clerk expressed disappointment that parking problems had not yet been addressed and that many questions concerning access for emergency services, carers, business deliveries and hotel users remain unanswered by SCDC. She described the event as a brilliant opportunity for Aldeburgh and one the town should embrace but she also warned of complications for residents and visitors.

The Bike Race is the start of a very busy weekend for the town, she added, with the High Tide theatre group being constructed on the beach by Moot Green and the Triathlon taking place on Sunday the 10th. A number of Cllrs expressed concern at the potential disruption to the town caused by the Bike Race and were assured by the Town Clerk that issues would be raised at a meeting with SCDC and race organisers on July 19.

The Town Clerk drew Cllrs attention to an on-going communications problem with the SCDC Planning Department. The dedicated Planning Officer for Aldeburgh had been on sick leave for several weeks, she said, and in his absence four different case officers had been allocated to planning applications for Aldeburgh. This was not acceptable, she asserted, because things were being missed and there was little accountability. She told councillors she would be addressing this problem.

The Town Clerk reported substantial rainwater damage following flash floods on July 10, the night of the meeting. Many shops on the High Street were flooded, she said, and the newly-installed kitchen at the Moot Hall was currently under four-inches of sewage-infused water. The kitchen and a number of appliances were ruined and would probably be the subject of an insurance claim, she declared.

**11. Mayor’s Notes.**

Cllr Bond addressed the meeting on a number of issues on which she felt Town Council members should reflect.

She spoke of the potential pitfalls that come with the responsibility of being Town Councillors, particularly in respect of participation in groups or bodies within the area. Councillors, she said, officially represent the town on various groups but it was important to give careful consideration to which additional bodies they might be invited to join. For the avoidance of doubt, she added, ‘we are considered Councillors and representatives of the town first and foremost.  Explanations that we were not representing the Town in this or that particular group could fall on deaf ears,’ she asserted. ‘Perception tends to be everything.  In almost every case it was practically impossible to disassociate ourselves from our role as Councillors’ and, she warned, this could lead to misunderstandings. Cllr Bond pointed out that because Councillors represent the town on a large number of bodies, it was vital that Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in any matter should be made to uphold the Council’s reputation and not to bring it into disrepute, however accidentally. One of the Town Clerk’s roles, added Cllr Bond, was to protect Councillors and the Council’s reputation and the Town Clerk should be consulted if anybody needed guidance.

Cllr Bond also stressed that, for protection, Cllrs attending meetings with external bodies should be accompanied by a fellow councillor. She reminded the Meeting that under Standing Orders action or funding can only be agreed by a vote of the Town Council. But, she said, there was a danger of raising false expectation if a promise or even a suggestion of support might be forthcoming.  It is a great deal easier to deal with non-Council individuals if there were two Councillors present rather than just one, she declared.

She also drew attention to the fact it had been three years since the Town Council revisited

Standing Orders and she felt that ATC should now consider amending them to reflect changes in legislation.  The Town Clerk would be circulating the model version which would then need to be compared with the existing adopted version which is very similar, she said. She asked all Cllrs to bring ideas and re-wording suggestions to the July Committees Meeting.

Cllr Bond went on to remind Cllrs that when they occasionally meet In Camera, the subjects under discussion must not be aired outside the Council chamber.

Cllr Bond then spoke of the need to avoid diary clashes with events and meetings planned for the Moot Hall, particularly in respect of the Museum who are tenants of the Town Council. She said that while the Museum was doing an excellent job in attracting interest and funding, it was important they consulted with the Town Clerk’s office before organising meetings to avoid double bookings. The Town Council operates on behalf of the whole town, she declared, and it was vital that organisations wanting to use the Moot Hall for meetings should first consult with the Town Clerk’s office.

She then asked Cllrs to consider holding a dinner for members of the town’s Fire Brigade, Coastguard and Lifeboat Crews. She felt the work they did was insufficiently recognised and a dinner for the crews and their partners would be an appropriate way to show the town’s thanks. She felt that sponsors could be found to provide funds and commended the idea to the Meeting.

Events:

* June 13: With the Town Clerk, attended a positive meeting with representatives of the Jubilee Hall Committee, where Trustees outlined plans for the future of the Hall.
* June 15: with the Deputy Mayor celebrated the opening of East Suffolk House at Melton, the new SCDC offices.
* July 5: Attended the Save the Children Open Garden at Priors Oak.
* July 5: Community Centre AGM with Cllr Jones.

**12. Correspondence**

The Town Clerk reported on an email urging the Council to uphold the protection in place for seagulls and consider taking enforcement action against anyone mistreating the birds.

**13. Gifts and/or Hospitality Received by Councillors**

Cllrs had nothing to declare this month.

**14. Items to pay** – details had been previously circulated to Cllrs.

All payments were **PROPOSED FOR APPROVAL**

**PROPOSED** by Cllr Digby and **SECONDED** by Cllr Jones

**In Favour 13**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting ended at 8.10pm.

**The next meeting of Aldeburgh Town Council will take place on Monday 14 August 2017 at**

**7.00 pm in The Moot Hall.**