

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
ALDEBURGH TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON MAY 13th 2019 IN THE MOOT HALL AT 7.00 PM**

Present: In the Chair: Cllr Digby, Mayor of Aldeburgh

Cllr Blackburn	Cllr Cox
Cllr Fellowes	Cllr Fox
Cllr Harris	Cllr Howard-Dobson
Cllr Jones	Cllr Lewis
Cllr Osben	Cllr Palmer
Cllr Piers-Hall	Cllr Smith
Cllr Webster	

There were 12 members of the public in attendance.

Also present was Cllr Russ Rainger - SCC and Cllr Tony Cooper - ESC.

Cllr Digby gave a warm welcome to all those present before the business of the evening commenced.

1. Nomination and appointment of Mayor for 2019/20

The Town Clerk invited nominations for the office of Mayor. Cllr Digby **PROPOSED** that Cllr Sara Fox be appointed Mayor of Aldeburgh for the year 2019-20. **SECONDED** by Cllr Harris.

In Favour 14

Against 0

Abstentions 0

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Nomination and appointment of Deputy Mayor for 2019/20

Cllr Fox **PROPOSED** that Cllr Webster be appointed to the role of Deputy Mayor for the term of office 2019/20. **SECONDED** by Cllr Cox.

In Favour 14

Against 0

Abstentions 0

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Mayor, Cllr Sara Fox took the Chair.

3. Declarations of Acceptance of Mayor/Deputy Mayor Office

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor read and signed their respective Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

4. Apologies

Cllrs T.J. Haworth-Culf and Cllr Bond - ESC.

5. Rev. Mark Lowther led the Council in Prayer

Rev Lowther, priest in charge of The Church of St Peter and St Paul, Aldeburgh offered prayers for the Town Council and the town.

6. Approval of Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council May 14th 2018

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on May 14th 2018 were approved by a show of hands. **(Six new Cllrs were ineligible to vote)**

The Minutes were duly signed

7. Approval of Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council on April 8 2019

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on April 8th 2019 were approved by a show of hands.

(Six new Cllrs were ineligible to vote)

The Minutes were duly signed

8. Persons Authorised to sign Council cheques for 2019/20

The Town Clerk explained that Cllrs Digby, Fox and Jones were currently authorised to sign cheques on behalf of ATC. She asked the meeting to ratify this arrangement for 2019/20.

Approved unanimously by a show of hands.

9. Retiring Mayor's Report – Cllr John Digby (see Appendix One).

10. Vote of Thanks for the Retiring Mayor – Cllr Jones

Proposing a vote of thanks to Cllr Digby, Cllr Jones said that John was one of the longest-serving Cllrs and had just completed his third term of office as Mayor – a contribution to the community she described as remarkable. Cllr Digby, she added, enjoys serving the people of the town and had done so with great distinction, providing sound advice and wise counsel behind the scenes. His reputation as the face of Aldeburgh extended across the whole of the county, where his ready wit and charm were always welcomed by civic leaders.

Cllr Jones also thanked John's wife Jenny for supporting him on Mayoral duties. Her contribution has been largely unseen but hugely important, she commented. Cllr Jones presented flowers to Jenny Digby on behalf of ATC.

The Mayor, Cllr Sara Fox took the Chair.

11. Mayor's Address

Cllr Fox thanked fellow Councillors for appointing her as Mayor. She welcomed the election of six new members of the council, saying that fresh faces would bring fresh ideas. The success of ATC, she believed, was based on the differing views of its members and while the wheels of local democracy occasionally ran slowly, the system worked well. She applauded the election of Cllr Webster as Deputy Mayor who, she felt, would give her great strength and support during her Mayoral year.

Cllr Fox commended the Town Clerk and her staff, describing them as the backbone of the Council. In addition to getting through a huge amount of work on a daily basis, the Town Clerk's team is a highly-effective support group for Cllrs, she said.

She made special mention of her husband, Peter Hill who was in the Public Gallery. Just when he thought I might be slowing down, she joked, I've suddenly speeded up. She thanked him profusely for his continuing support. Cllr Digby presented Mr Hill with the regalia of the Mayor's Consort.

12. Suffolk County Council Annual Report

Cllr Rainger congratulated Cllrs Fox and Webster on their appointments as Mayor and Deputy Mayor and also welcomed the new councillors elected to ATC.

He went on to address a number of issues including the resurfacing of King Street, continuing traffic problems on Leiston Road and maintenance of footpaths on the marshes. He told the meeting that discussions were taking place with local groups opposed to infrastructure plans submitted by Scottish Power and EDF Energy, in addition to National Grid proposals. He reminded Cllrs that grants were available from two funds within his remit and he encouraged applications in respect of local projects. He also expressed support for the Aldeburgh Christmas Lights initiative and offered to get involved. Cllr Fellowes drew attention to the loss of double-yellow lines on King Street following the recent resurfacing and asked when they would be restored, a question supported by the Town Clerk who

reminded Cllr Rainger that the lines would need to be repainted before the half-term holiday break. Cllr Rainger promised to progress the matter.

His report in full can be found at <https://russrainger.wordpress.com/>

13. East Suffolk Council Annual Report

Cllr Tony Cooper introduced himself to the meeting as one of three recently-elected District Councillors for the new Aldeburgh and Leiston ward of the East Suffolk Council. His ward colleagues, Cllrs T.J.Haworth Culf and Bond, had sent their apologies because they were attending other meetings in the district. Cllr Cooper congratulated the six successful Cllrs in the ATC election. He drew attention to Cllr Haworth-Culf's report and the extensive annual report produced by ESC.

(See Appendix 2&3 for full reports).

14. Police Annual Report

There was no Police Report.

The Mayor suspended Standing Orders for the next item.

15. Public Questions & Comments

A resident offered congratulations to ATC's new councillors and belated congratulations for the responses submitted by the Town Council to the Scottish Power and EDF Energy proposals. He described the next four years as potentially challenging and called for a wider debate on the infrastructure projects planned for this area. He was pleased to announce the return of Aldeburgh's swifts, which would feature in a film being produced by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust in the summer.

Former councillor Julian Worster, together with Mr Andrew Scrivens, then presented new regalia to be worn by the Deputy Mayor. Mr Worster believed it was important that the role of Deputy Mayor was recognised with unique regalia to be worn on all civic occasions. The new regalia, a piece of green amber mounted in a silver setting, was then presented to Cllr Webster who offered thanks on behalf of the Council.

There were no further questions from the Public Gallery and the Mayor restored Standing Orders.

16. PROPERTY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

16i) Report by the Chairman of the Property and Finance Committee

Cllr Jones told the meeting that end of year accounts had been completed in April and the annual submission would be presented to the Council for approval in due course. She reported that discussions with East Suffolk Council regarding the transfer of Church Farm open space land from a developer appeared to be approaching a denouement with a sum of money due to ATC. She believed the land could solve the pressing problem of cemetery space.

Cllr Jones highlighted a number of issues in which she was involved:

- Approved work on the damp course at the Groundsman's Cottage had started, with redecoration to follow.
- A tender for new fencing at the rugby field was being sought, together with a commitment from Norse to maintain the pitch.
- Pothole repairs on the approach to King's Field should start at the end of May.
- The contractor responsible for work on the tennis courts was still being dilatory; Cllr Cox had agreed to paint the honesty box at the courts red to encourage payment.
- She was pressing Cllr Rainger to improve footpath access across the marshes.
- Sport England had confirmed that drainage work at King's Field could proceed this year and she would be liaising with the Carnival Committee on dates.
- All vacant allotments had now been allocated, she and Cllr Cox confirmed.
- Sports Week activity programme was now finalised, with funding requests sent out. She reminded Cllrs that this was an opportunity for them to assist.

Addressing the new members, Cllr Jones explained that the Property and Finance Committee does exactly what it says on the tin, covering all financial matters and responsible for the management of Council-owned property and all sporting matters. She invited the new Cllrs to ask either herself or Cllr Cox for advice and guidance.

17. SERVICES COMMITTEE

17i) Report by the Chairman of the Services Committee.

Cllr Palmer expressed satisfaction at the regular quarterly meetings of the Services Committee Working Party, normally attended by SCC Highways representative Denise Mortimer and County Cllr Russ Rainger. He believed that many issues, including pothole repairs, parking and highways-related concerns, were now being properly addressed.

He recognised that while the on-going scheme to replace rubbish bins with seagull-proof alternatives was working well, the disposal of trade waste in the High Street remained a concern which needed a solution. The provision of avian-proof hessian sacks to deter *larus argentatus*, *larus fuscus* and *larus marinus* was under consideration. The problem, he believed, lay in the habit of shop assistants disposing of unwanted food waste in non-organic refuse. Gulls are not naturally attracted to cardboard, plastic packaging and rejected clothing, he said, but they could sniff out the remains of a half-eaten sandwich. Educating High Street employees and hessian sacks should keep the High Street free of detritus and looking pristine, he argued.

He told the meeting that he was analysing data from recent speed surveys on Saxmundham and Leiston Roads and would report back at the ATC Committees meeting at the end of May. The results, so far, look very interesting, he commented.

Cllr Palmer reported on an inaugural sea front survey with representatives from East Suffolk Council. A number of problems had been identified and he was moderately optimistic they would be resolved.

He told the meeting that King Street had been recently resurfaced but the recurring drainage problems on that thoroughfare had not been resolved prior to the completion of the work. Wearily, he said he was resigned to the newly-dressed road surface being dug up later to sort out flooding issues.

18. GRANTS, REQUESTS AND EVENTS COMMITTEE

18i) There was no report by the Chairman of the Grants, Requests and Events Committee.

The Town Clerk explained to new Cllrs that this Committee consisted of the entire Town Council and considered requests for donations from local organisations. The Committee also gave permission for the staging of events on ATC-owned land. She encouraged Cllrs to come forward with innovative ideas on how to allocate funds it had a statutory obligation to dispense under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

19. PLANNING COMMITTEE

19i) There was no report by the Chairman of the Planning Committee

The Town Clerk told Cllrs that a new Planning Committee, Chair and Deputy Chair would be appointed at the Committees Meeting on May 28th 2019. In the meantime, the work of the ATC Planning Committee would continue on an ad-hoc basis with a temporary chair agreed for each meeting. A number of important planning applications would have to be considered before the new Committee was installed, she commented. She encouraged all Cllrs to contact her if they had any questions about impending planning applications.

20. Items to Pay – details had previously been circulated to all Cllrs.

All payments were **PROPOSED** for **APPROVAL** by Cllr Jones and **SECONDED** by Cllr Digby.

In Favour 14

Against 0

Abstentions 0

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

21. The Mayor formally closed the Annual Meeting of the Town Council at 7.58pm.

**The next meeting of the Town Council will take place on Monday 10 June 2019
at 7.00 pm in The Public Library**