

**MINUTES OF THE ALDEBURGH TOWN COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12 AUGUST 2019  
AT 7:00 PM IN THE LIBRARY**

Present: Cllr Fox - The Mayor, took the Chair

Cllr Blackburn	Cllr Cox
Cllr Digby	Cllr Harris
Cllr Howard-Dobson	Cllr Lewis
Cllr Osben	Cllr Piers-Hall
Cllr Smith	Cllr Webster

Cllr T.J.Howarth-Culf (ESC) was present.

Six members of the public were also in attendance.

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Rainger (SCC), Cllrs Bond and Cooper (ESC) and Cllrs Fellowes, Jones and Palmer (ATC).
2. **Councillors' Declaration of Interest**  
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **To Approve the Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 July 2019.**  
The draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 July 2019 were approved unanimously by a show of hands.
4. **SCC report and Correspondence**  
Cllr Rainger's report can be found at <https://russrainger.wordpress.com/>
5. **ESC Report and Correspondence**  
Cllr T.J.Howarth-Culf outlined a number of issues:
  - Anyone wishing to speak at ESC Planning Meetings now has to register in advance of the meeting.
  - Following a recent Joint Local Authority Group (JLAG) meeting, community leaders, including ESC, continued to express scepticism about EDF Energy's proposals in respect of the Sizewell C Stage 4 consultation - with many questions still unanswered.
  - The final phase of the refurbishment programme at Leiston Leisure Centre was now complete.
  - A 10-week consultation had just been launched by Suffolk County Council into Rights of Way across the County. Residents could have their say at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/rowip](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/rowip).

Cllr Fox expressed concern at the new requirement to pre-register to speak at ESC Planning Meetings, suggesting that this measure was restrictive. The Town Clerk confirmed that anyone wishing to address the Planning Meeting had to register by 5pm the day prior to the meeting.

Cllr Cox praised the refurbished facilities at Leiston Leisure Centre which he described as "fantastic." He was particularly impressed with the gym equipment.

**See Appendix 1 for Cllr Howarth-Culf's report in full**

6. **Police Report**  
There was no police report.

## 7. Public Forum

### **The Mayor suspended Standing Orders for the Public Forum.**

A resident complained about the number of bicycles chained to street furniture in the town. He assumed they might have been abandoned although laminated notices appeared on them occasionally. The offending cycles could be found at Oakley Square, the Town Steps and outside Baggott's newsagents. The Town Clerk confirmed this was a seasonal problem and invited Cllr Piers-Hall to use his best offices to have them removed.

### **The Mayor reinstated Standing Orders.**

## 8 COMMITTEES REPORTS:

### 8a. PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

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

In the absence of Cllr Jones, Cllr Cox advised the meeting that he and a Town Council officer had met the contractor responsible for drainage work at King's Field. The erection of a fence across the lower part of the field would take place in late August and the area then sprayed to kill off the grass. The bulk of the work would then take place two weeks later. Cllr Cox expressed satisfaction with the arrangements but warned that bad weather might further delay the project.

He praised the efforts of everybody involved in the Annual Sports Week. Everything went well, he commented, a view echoed by Cllr Smith who congratulated Cllr Jones, responsible for Sports Week events, on her organisational skills.

8aii) **RESOLUTION to APPROVE** expenditure on additional fencing to improve security around the children's play area at King's Field was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Digby and **SECONDED** by Cllr Cox.

**In favour 11**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### 8b. SERVICES COMMITTEE

#### 8bi) Report from Chairman of Services

In the absence of Cllr Palmer, Cllr Lewis reported that the next meeting of the Services Committee Working Group was imminent with matters such as dog bin emptying schedules, on-going parking problems and the need to begin discussions about updating the town's Emergency Plan to be discussed.

Cllr Harris invited the Working Group to address the problem of obstructions, such as A-boards and tables and chairs, on the town's pavements. Mobility scooter users who complained about these hindrances were often the target of rude remarks, he declared.

### 8c. PLANNING

#### 8ci) Report from Chairman of Planning

Cllr Webster reported on three recent Planning Committee meetings, where a number of non-contentious applications had been considered. He confirmed that the Appeal Hearing in respect of Church Farm Holiday Park would take place on August 28th at ESC offices in Melton, when Cllr Fox would be speaking on behalf of ATC.

### 8d. GRANTS, REQUESTS & EVENTS

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

Cllr Webster spoke enthusiastically about events in the town throughout the summer months - the Summer Theatre and the Siren Festival proving particularly successful. He commended the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, which performed a pop-up concert on Moot Green as a rehearsal for their later appearance at Snape Maltings.

8dii) **RESOLUTION** to **APPROVE** a donation of £1000 to Aldeburgh Cinema to help fund projects during the cinema's centenary year was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Digby and **SECONDED** by Cllr Harris

**In favour 11**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Cllr Fox expressed disappointment that representatives from Aldeburgh Cinema had not attended the recent Council Meeting to make a case for this substantial donation.

8diii) **RESOLUTION** to **APPROVE** a donation of £300 to the Aldeburgh Parish Nursing Service to help fund the annual Holiday at Home event for local residents was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Cox and **SECONDED** by Cllr Harris.

**In favour 11**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The Town Clerk reported that record numbers of local residents had registered to attend this year's Holiday at Home event in the Fairfield Centre.

## 9. Representatives' Reports.

- Cllr Lewis, with Cllrs Cox and Piers-Hall, had completed a survey of the town's allotments.
- Cllr Piers-Hall had helped-out at Sports Week, an event that had been slickly organised, he commented.
- Cllr Osben reported on a meeting of the Aldeburgh United Charities, which was still considering how to dispense money to local deserving causes without falling foul of data protection regulations.
- Cllr Harris had attended meeting of the Museum Trustees and the AUC, the beneficiary of a recent £1000 legacy.

## 10. Town Clerk's Report

The Town Clerk announced that, as usual at this time of the year, the office had been inundated with a high volume of low-level complaints which, generally, fell into four main categories - dog bins, bottle banks, litter and loos.

She was critical of the performance of Norse, ATC's cleaning and maintenance contractors, telling the Meeting that she was constantly being fobbed-off when complaints were registered with Norse managers. She believed the day-to-day service levels were poor and inconsistent, with many services not adequately resourced.

She pointed out that a lot of her time was currently occupied with the refurbishment of the Moot Hall, which, from the outside, looked as pristine as ever. The interior was, in fact, a building site with many hazards. It was essential, she commented, that access to the inside of the building was severely restricted to prevent accidents. Queries from members of the public would continue to be addressed throughout this difficult period, she asserted, with officers in attendance at the library, or via email and telephone.

With assistance from Cllr Jones, she would be dealing with a number of issues relating to outstanding leases and that Cllrs Jones and Cox would be overseeing the impending drainage work at King's Field. She was surprised that only four Cllrs had responded to the offer of complimentary tickets for Snape Proms and encouraged all members of the Council to reply to Snape Music as a matter of courtesy.

The Town Clerk reminded the Meeting that a response was required to the EDF Energy Sizewell C Stage 4 Consultation by September 27th 2019. Planning Aid England had, once again, offered assistance in the preparation of ATC's response which, she felt, should be more straightforward than at Stage 3. She regretted that no Cllrs had attended a recent meeting of the Joint Local Authorities Group to discuss EDF Energy's Stage 4 consultation and encouraged more Cllrs to join ATC's Infrastructure Project Working Group. Under the Chairmanship of Cllr Palmer, the group now only consisted of Cllrs Fellowes and Osben and, at least, another Cllr was required.

She too celebrated the success of Sports Week, which had attracted a large number of compliments. She thanked everyone who had been involved in the week's events, particularly local shops who had donated food and treats, coaches and volunteers who had given their time.

#### **11. Mayor's Notes.**

Cllr Fox told the meeting that she and the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Webster, had attended a number of civic events throughout the County - including the High Sheriff's Summer Party and Beating the Retreat at Wattisham, home of 653 Squadron.

With other Cllrs and Officers, she had attended the opening night of the Summer Theatre, a superb production of Blithe Spirit. She praised the cast and also commended the work of Cllr Fellowes, now heavily involved in the Aldeburgh Summer Theatre. The success of the Siren Festival, under the auspices of the Incredible Oceans project and supported by the Summer Theatre, had been astounding, she commented. The Town Clerk told the meeting that more than 2,000 people had visited the Siren Festival.

She attended a retirement party for Colin Edrich, who has retired from the retained fire service in Aldeburgh following 32 years of service, most recently as Watch Commander. Cllr Webster handed out medals to junior participants at Sports Week. Cllr Fox thanked Cllr Webster for his on-going support.

#### **12. Correspondence**

Cllrs had been circulated with an email from a resident complaining about the lack of affordable homes in the town for young local people trying to get onto the housing ladder for the first time. The only way young people could afford a house was to move out of Aldeburgh, in many cases, the town of their birth. The author of the email was critical of planning policies which had allowed this to happen and felt ATC should be doing more to alleviate this problem.

The email sparked a lengthy debate among Cllrs, who were supportive of the views expressed and praised the presentation of the argument.

Cllr Osben agreed with the sentiments of the correspondent, believing that Aldeburgh could eventually end up being a town of second homes and holiday accommodation. She suggested that some research should be undertaken to find out how other local authorities were dealing with this issue.

Cllr Fox believed that central government needed to introduce policies to help young people but pointed out that in areas such as Aldeburgh, house prices were market-led and the Town Council had no influence on property valuation, a view echoed by Cllr Cox.

Cllr Lewis commended the work undertaken by a neighbouring authority on this matter and suggested the findings might be of relevance to Aldeburgh.

Cllr Smith, while sympathising with the author of the email, pointed out that people who worked in London could not afford to live there. The problem exists across the whole country, she believed. Cllr Harris expressed support for Flagship Housing, who were providing some affordable homes for local people at the old Police Station site. Successive Town Councils have fought for such housing for years, he commented.

Cllr Smith, however, was critical of Flagship, saying that commercial considerations frequently came before the provision of affordable, starter homes. This housing association was trying to make as much money as possible, she declared.

The Town Clerk suggested that the email should be considered by Cllrs Fellowes and Jones, ATC's representatives for affordable housing. She called on all members of the Council to address the issues raised in the email so that a cohesive and measured response could be sent to the correspondent. She pointed out that, in the near future, ATC would be conducting a Housing Needs Survey and the issue of affordable homes would need to be addressed.

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

Cllr Digby received complimentary tickets for Snape Maltings and Cllr Webster attended the High Sheriff's Summer Party and the Summer Theatre's production of Blithe Spirit, with other Cllrs.

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

All payments were **PROPOSED FOR APPROVAL** by Cllr Webster and **SECONDED** by Cllr Harris.

**In Favour 11**

**Against 0**

**Abstentions 0**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting ended at 7.50pm.

**The next meeting of Aldeburgh Town Council will take place on Monday September 9th 2019  
at 7.00 pm in the Library**