

DRAFT MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE ALDEBURGH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 9th 2019 AT 7:00 PM IN THE LIBRARY

Present: Cllr Fox - The Mayor, took the Chair

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

Cllrs Russ Rainger (SCC) and T.J.Howarth-Culf (ESC) were present.

Six members of the public were in attendance.

- 1. Apologies:** Cllrs Bond and Cooper (ESC) and Cllr Digby (ATC).
- 2. Councillors' Declaration of Interest:**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3. To Approve the Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday August 12th 2019:**
The draft minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday August 12th 2019 were approved unanimously by a show of hands. Cllrs Jones and Palmer abstained because they were absent from the meeting.
- 4. SCC report and Correspondence:**
Cllr Rainger drew attention to the Sizewell C Stage 4 consultation which was due to end on September 27th 2019. He encouraged everyone to respond. He told Cllrs he would be meeting with representatives from National Grid Ventures to discuss plans to bring electricity ashore in this area.
Cllr Rainger's report can be found at <https://russrainger.wordpress.com/>
- 5. ESC Report and Correspondence:**
Cllr T.J.Howarth-Culf highlighted a number of issues from her report:
 - She reported on an ESC Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) Meeting at Melton where Members voted narrowly in favour of EDF Energy's plans to relocate facilities from Sizewell B to an adjacent greenfield site. She described the meeting, attended by many members of the public, as very emotive.
 - She drew attention to a Special Cabinet Meeting on September 23 to discuss Sizewell C and reminded everyone that the closing date for the SZC Stage 4 consultation was September 27.
 - Scottish Power Renewables would be hosting a community briefing on September 12 to elaborate on Development Consent Orders for East Anglia 2 and East Anglia One North.
 - The ESC Coastal Management Department were seeking views on proposed policy changes to the shoreline plan for Slaughden. Responses needed to be submitted by November 30.
 - Residents interested in renting a new affordable home in Aldeburgh should attend an information event on September 12 at the Fairfield Centre organised by Gateway to Home Choice.

Cllr Palmer, who attended the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on behalf of ATC, was highly critical of the proceedings, which he described as process driven. A number of issues were not adequately addressed by Members, including previous planning decisions which, he believed, imposed strict conditions on the Sizewell B site. These would have come to light if officers had carried out full legal searches. He felt the process had brought the planning system into disrepute, particularly as the views of the public who attended the meeting had not been properly heard. He complained that members of the SPM had been badly prepared and lacked knowledge of the subject. Officers' statements were simply not challenged, he declared.

Cllr Fellowes was disturbed to learn of the proceedings, particularly as one of the Aldeburgh and Leiston Ward District Councillors was on holiday and had been unable to nominate a substitute to vote on her behalf. Cllr Fellowes believed that members of the SPC predominantly represented urban areas who were unaware of important issues facing rural and coastal communities. She was also critical of changes to ESC Planning Committee procedures which now restricted members of the public to a three-minute slot to air their views.

Cllr Howarth-Culf recognised that the amalgamation of planning services in the old Suffolk Coastal and Waveney areas would require time to become fully operational, but she believed it was vitally important for all voices to be heard.

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 new signs erected outside the Moot Hall which, he felt were not in keeping with the building. He believed they were far too close to the Moot Hall and would be more effective if they positioned further away. He also offered to help in the regeneration of Kemp's Field, particularly with the possible provision of a BMX bike track.

Responding to his criticism of the signs, Cllr Fox, a Museum Trustee and member of the Museum Project Board, commented that observations about the signs fell into two categories - those who did not like them and those people who thought the design was excellent. She was critical of adverse remarks on social media which, she believed, went too far. She pointed out that the first thing visitors to the town saw as they descended Victoria Road was the sign indicating the Moot Hall. She confirmed that the Conservation Officer for East Suffolk Council had approved the design of the signs, though she did express concern about their appearance. The signs were made from a type of steel which should rust consistently, she explained, and should ultimately end up matching the mellow brickwork of the Moot Hall. The Project Board would be monitoring the rusting process to ensure this happened. She did, however, welcome all sensible observations about the signs and promised that the Project Board would consider all views.

The Town Clerk told the meeting that part of the remit by the Heritage Lottery Fund was that the refurbishment should embrace both ancient and modern design.

Cllr Fox welcomed the resident's views about Kemp's Field and called for a working party to consider all options for a regeneration programme. It was essential, she believed, the Primary School, the Youth Club and local residents were involved.

A second resident thanked all those who had supported the highly-successful Aldeburgh Carnival. He also congratulated Norse for its excellent litter collection service the day after Carnival.

He expressed frustration at the lack of speaking opportunities afforded to members of the public at a recent ESC Strategic Planning Meeting which was deliberating on EDF Energy's plans to relocate facilities from Sizewell B. Insufficient time was given to the views of the public, he complained. He also made observations about the Minutes of the ATC Council Meeting in July which, he felt, did not accurately reflect views he had expressed at a previous meeting.

The Mayor reinstated Standing Orders.

8 COMMITTEES REPORTS:

8a. PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE:

8ai) Report from Chairman of Property & Finance Committee

Cllr Jones told the meeting that Essex and Suffolk Water would advise ATC about the timing of work to lay a new supply to the Rugby Club. Fears that the play area would be affected had been allayed, she confirmed. Work to complete fencing at the Rugby Club should start in mid-September.

She briefed Cllrs on a number of issues:

- The drainage work at King's Field would start shortly and with good weather forecast, the project should be completed swiftly.
- The Kemp's Field Working Group had met recently and meetings would be arranged with parents and children to discuss ways of improving the area.
- Norse should start hedge cutting along Jubilee Walk in early-October, though they still had a long list of outstanding tasks.
- ATC would need to appoint a new land agent - the person previously employed was now representing a Town Council tenant and there was an obvious conflict of interest.
- A football team was keen to use King's Field for youth league football and this proposal would be pursued with enthusiasm.

She urged Cllrs to approve a resolution which would provide extra lighting at the third tennis court to enable players to warm-up before using the fully-illuminated courts. The new lighting would not be sufficiently powerful enough to play matches, she explained, but could be used by players waiting to use the main courts.

8aii) RESOLUTION to APPROVE expenditure, as quoted through the tendering process and using a known contractor, to install additional LED floodlights at Aldeburgh Tennis Club was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Harris and **SECONDED** by Cllr Cox.

In favour 13

Against 0

Abstentions 0

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8b. SERVICES COMMITTEE:

8bi) Report from Chairman of Services

Cllr Palmer confirmed that the next meeting of the Services Working Group would be held on October 10 when a number of matters would be discussed, including speed surveys, the next tranche of new litter bins and a street scene survey.

The Town Clerk pointed out that the Aldeburgh Society was keen to make a presentation to ATC about its own street furniture survey.

Cllr Fellowes asked if additional free car parking could be made available for special events and was advised by the Town Clerk that these arrangements were already in place, particularly for participants in the Triathlon.

Cllr Howard-Dobson complained about inconsiderate parking at King's Field which, frequently, denied her access to the Museum Office at the former Groundsman's Cottage.

8c. PLANNING:

8ci) Report from Chairman of Planning

Cllr Webster reported that a decision on the Church Holiday Park Appeal was awaited; that an Appeal in respect of Church Farm House had been dismissed and that representatives from the National Grid would be giving a presentation at the October 15 meeting of the ATC Planning Committee.

He invited comments on new signs erected recently outside the Moot Hall which had polarised opinion in the town.

Cllr Fellowes regretted there was no mention of the Museum on the signs and believed the one closest to the Moot Hall was too large, though she did applaud the cut-out arrow effect.

Cllr Blackburn felt the signs should have been positioned further away from the building but felt they would fit in better once they had mellowed.

Cllr Osben agreed with Cllr Fellowes that there was insufficient information on the signs and suggested the one on Crag Path should be moved closer to the Wentworth Hotel.

Cllr Howard-Dobson, Curator of the Museum, believed it was important the sign closest to the Moot Hall was prominent and clearly visible from Victoria Road. She explained the architect had not wanted to clutter the signs with too much information.

Cllrs Cox and Harris both expressed disappointment with the finish and Cllr Webster described them as too large. He did, however, say that two days after they had been erected he had barely noticed them. In response to a question from Cllr Piers-Hall, the Town Clerk revealed that only a handful of people had written to ATC, with four registering an objection and one letter very much in favour. Social media seemed to be the preferred choice for local observation, she commented.

Cllr Fox, a Museum Trustee and member of the Museum Refurbishment Project Board, believed the signs represented an improvement on previous versions. At least people now knew the location of the Moot Hall, she commented.

8d. GRANTS, REQUESTS & EVENTS:

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

Cllr Webster spoke enthusiastically about the Carnival, which he hailed as a great success. He was anticipating a huge turnout for the Triathlon, which, he believed, contributed so much to the town.

He called for volunteers to help out at the annual bonfire and firework display, remarks echoed by Cllr Jones and the Town Clerk. Both believed that a working group should be established quickly to coordinate the proceedings.

8dii) RESOLUTION to APPROVE a donation of £100 to Aldeburgh's Knit and Natter

Club to purchase materials for group activities was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Webster and **SECONDED** by Cllr Piers-Hall

In favour 13

Against 0

Abstentions 0

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. Representatives' Report:

- Cllr Fellowes attended the annual Reading Challenge in the Library which she hailed as a great success and would be in attendance at the Library AGM.
- Cllr Smith attended a recent meeting of the Aldeburgh Business Association.
- Cllr Howard-Dobson, curator of the Museum, told the meeting she was heavily involved in returning artefacts to the newly-refurbished Museum and extended an invitation to all Cllrs to view the project.
- Cllr Blackburn spoke of a recent meeting with the Citizens Advice Bureau in Leiston which was facing many challenges. It was essential, she believed, that

rural communities continued to get help and support from the CAB. New funding models had to be established to ensure the future of this excellent organisation. She reminded Cllrs that the CAB had a monthly surgery in Aldeburgh.

- Cllr Cox attended a meeting of the Museum Project Board and a breakfast event organised by the Aldeburgh Business Association (ABA) to discuss Christmas lights.
- Cllr Jones said she would be attending a meeting of the Community Centre Trustees.
- Cllr Harris attended a Museum Trustees meeting and visited the Holidays at Home event in the Fairfield Centre - a very happy gathering, he commented.

10. Town Clerk's Report:

The Town Clerk reported that, with considerable assistance from Cllr Jones, she was now dealing with lease revisions and would report back shortly.

She echoed earlier sentiments about the excellent performance of Norse and its post-Carnival clear-up operation. Unfortunately, she observed, that was their moment in the sun because there was little consistency in their day-to-day operations.

The external audit report was due at the end of the month, but no issues had been identified.

The draft response to the Sizewell C Stage 4 consultation had been sent to the Infrastructure Working Group members, she commented. This should be signed off at the September Committees Meeting and circulated to all Council Members and significant parties.

She announced that the Museum refurbishment project had just entered its 15th week but she could, at last, report some progress. The Council tables were about to be delivered, though there would be a slight delay with the chairs. Contractors were finalising electrics and lighting and a snagging list was being prepared.

She told Cllrs she was scheduled to meet the Artistic Director of the HighTide Theatre Festival, one of a number of significant events in the town.

She warned that Screen Suffolk planned to close Thorpe Road for 24 hours to enable sequences to be filmed for The Big Dig, a film about Sutton Hoo starring Ralph Fiennes.

11. Mayor's Notes:

Cllr Fox told the meeting she had attended the Planning Hearing at Melton into proposals to replace touring pitches at Church Farm Holiday Park with luxury lodges. Describing the proceedings as very relaxed, she commented that the Inspector had comprehensively reviewed the case with a decision expected imminently. She expressed amazement at the size of the proposed lodges, saying their scale was imposing.

She thoroughly enjoyed the Reading Challenge at the Library which, she said, was utterly charming. However, she found attending the day-long events at the Carnival less stimulating. She praised the Carnival Queen who, she believed, would present a very positive image of the town.

She revealed that the ABA's plans for Christmas were coming together, with a potential closure of part of the High Street for festivities.

Cllr Fox commended the work of the HighTide Theatre festival and encouraged all to attend performances. Cllr Harris interjected to say he had attended rehearsals in the Community Centre and thought the HighTide cast and productions were brilliant.

12. Correspondence:

All items of correspondence had been previously addressed.

13. Gifts and/or Hospitality Received by Councillors:

There was nothing to report.

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

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

In Favour 13

Against 0

Abstentions 0

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting ended at 8.25pm.

**The next meeting of Aldeburgh Town Council will take place on Monday October 14th 2019 at
7.00 pm. Venue tbc**