

MINUTES of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL** meeting held at **Felixstowe Town Hall** on **Wednesday 22 June 2022** at **7.30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr S Harkin (Mayor) Cllr S Gallant
 Cllr M Richardson (Deputy Mayor) Cllr T Green
 Cllr D Aitchison Cllr Mark Jepson
 Cllr S Bennett Cllr G Newman
 Cllr N Barber Cllr M Morris
 Cllr S Bird Cllr D Savage
 Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Wiles

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
 Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 Member of the Public (*via Zoom*).

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

The meeting was preceded by a moment of reflection which focused on the town's commemorative events in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend, followed by a celebratory music video from Kingsfleet Primary School.

70. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr A Smith** and **Cllr K Williams**.

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr G Newman Cllr S Wiles	All	Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk County Council)
Cllr S Bird Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Gallant Cllr M Jepson Cllr M Richardson Cllr S Wiles	All	Non-Pecuniary (as Members of East Suffolk District Council)
Cllr N Barber	#83	Non-Pecuniary (as a Director of the Felixstowe BID)

73. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR

None.

74. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 18 May 2022 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

75. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor addressed the Council, highlighting her engagements so far, which by the end of the week would total 40 since taking the office. The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor who relayed his attendance at an enlightening Eye Jubilee Parade. The Mayor paid tribute to locals schools for their Jubilee badge designs, the children's energy had been infectious and it had been wonderful to see their artwork transformed into high-quality souvenirs.

The Mayor gave thanks to Cllr Aitchison for organising the Falkland's Service held at the Felixstowe Memorial.

Council congratulated the Mayor on the Jubilee speeches.

It was RESOLVED that the Mayor's communications be noted.

76. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the following meetings be received and, subject to their accuracy being confirmed by those committees, adopted:

- a) Planning & Environment Committee 25 May 2022
- b) Planning & Environment Committee 8 June 2022
- c) Finance & Governance Committee 8 June 2022
- d) Civic & Community Committee 15 June 2022

77. REPORT FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

There were none.

78. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: FULL YEAR 2021/22

Council considered the final Internal Audit Report for the year 1 April – 31 March 2022 as presented.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. **it be noted that there were no significant actions arising from the final Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year 2021/22 and, therefore, no action plan is required to be submitted with the Annual Return 2021/22 to the External Auditor.**

79. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT AND ANNUAL RETURN 2021/22

Council considered the Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and Annual Return for the Financial Year 2021/22 as presented. Council paid thanks to the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and the Financial Administration Assistant for their hard work and were advised that the Notice of Audit would be displayed on the Town Hall noticeboard in accordance with the statutory requirements.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. **It be confirmed that the Council has considered the potential financial impact of the coronavirus on the authority's budget;**
- ii. **the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 (Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement) be approved and the Mayor and Town Clerk be authorised to sign the declaration on behalf of Felixstowe Town Council;**
- iii. **the Annual Return for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 (Section 2 – Accounting Statements) as signed by the Town Clerk, as the Council's Responsible Finance Officer be approved, and the Mayor be authorised to sign the declaration on behalf of Felixstowe Town Council; and,**
- iv. **it be noted that there were no actions arising from the final Internal Audit Report for the Financial Year 2021/22 and, therefore, no action plan was required to be submitted with the Annual Return 2021/22 to the External Auditor.**

80. REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT EFFECTIVENESS 2022/23

Council reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit arrangements.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. **having reviewed the effectiveness of its internal audit, it be recorded that Council considers the arrangements to be effective; and,**
- ii. **in being satisfied of the independence and competence of its internal auditor, Mr Colin Poole of the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, be appointed to continue as the Council's internal auditor, undertaking a half-yearly and year-end audit on the basis of paras 4.14-4.17 of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide 2019".**

81. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2022/23

Council considered the Statement of Internal Control for the year end 31 March 2023.

It was RESOLVED that the Internal Control Statement for the year 2022/23 be adopted.

82. COMMUNITY FUNDING SUPPORT

Council discussed the cost-of-living crisis which was projected to become a more significant challenge for many local residents, particularly during the winter months. Council considered the Civic & Community Committee's request for additional funding to enable greater support the network of community groups across the town that would be tackling this issue.

Members agreed that this was a commendable initiative and should be supported by the Town Council in such a way as to ensure the greatest reach to the community.

RESOLVED that

- i. £50,000 be allocated via the Community Fund and Community Support Fund Earmarked Reserves to the Civic & Community Committee, delegating the authority to the Committee to commit expenditure for the purposes of supporting the community during the cost-of-living crisis; and,**
- ii. the Civic & Community Committee be tasked with the consideration of a policy framework for the administration of funding for the purposes above at its next meeting.**

83. FELIXSTOWE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)

Members discussed the positive engagement being had with businesses and the BID. Council was pleased to note that the Visit Felixstowe website had been refreshed and the efforts being made by the BID to promote Felixstowe beyond the town. It was suggested that the BID should consider advertising with First Bus for greater coverage.

Members commented that a correction to the Tourist Information Beach Hut opening hours was required. During the Summer months it is open between 11am – 3pm.

Members heard from Cllr N Barber, a director of the BID, on an initiative for a shuttle bus between the train station, town centre and beach locations. It was noted that the project was beset with complexities but funding was in place. Members raised concerns about competition with commercial operators both buses and taxis. It was asked that the BID would keep Council updated.

The Town Clerk advised that the BID had invited a representative from the Town Council to join the BID Executive Management Board.

RESOLVED that Cllr M Jepson be appointed as the Town Council representative to the BID Executive Management Board.

84. UKRAINE2FELIXSTOWE BRIEFING

Council received notes of a briefing given to Members from the Ukraine2Felixstowe group on 16th June 2022.

Council noted that the group was seeking a representative from the Town Council to sit on its steering committee. The Clerk confirmed that the expected commitment would be to attend meetings, no more than fortnightly, to act as a conduit between the group and the Town Council, and to assist in signposting the group through further support.

Members were pleased to note the risks associated with the matching of hosts to families were mitigated by the fact that all hosts were going through the correct channels.

Members heard that ESC had appointed an Assistant Cabinet Member for Refugees who would be pleased to assist any Councillor appointed by the Town Council.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr S Bennett and Cllr M Richardson be appointed as Town Council representatives to the Ukraine2Felixstowe Committee.

85. TOWN HALL WINDOWS

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Council on the pre-planning advice, the building regulations application and the number of Tenders received to date for the Town Hall windows.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the closing date for tenders to be received be extended until midday on 29th June, all tenderers to be informed of the extension and given the opportunity to tender or re-tender before this date;**
- ii. the Chair and Vice-Chairman of Assets and Services, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk to meet following the closing date to open all tenders received and report back to the Assets & Services Committee; and,**
- iii. Council's Asset & Services Committee be authorised to commit expenditure up to £50,000 for the refurbishment of the Town Hall windows, to be funded by the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve.**

86. FTC/ESC JOINT LIAISON GROUP MEETING

Council received the notes of the FTC/ESC Joint Liaison Group meeting of 17 May 2022.

Council expressed support for East Suffolk Council's wish to progress the potential improvements to the alleyway from Highfield Road to Hamilton Road with Suffolk County Council.

It was noted that work to replace the beach access ramp by Martello Park was due to commence after the summer season.

The Clerk encouraged Members to advise of any matters for discussion at the next meeting which was to take place on 26 July 2022.

In view of noted issues around the highways, Members were reminded of the highways reporting tool.

RESOLVED that the notes from the FTC/ESC Joint Liaison Group Meeting be received and noted.

87. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

It was RESOLVED that the schedule and payment of accounts be received and approved as follows:

Date	Voucher Nos.	Total Payment
18/05/2022	48 – 70	£6,853.65
30/05/2022	71 – 94	£85,510.43
13/06/2022	95 - 113	£9,305.66
	TOTAL	£101,669.74

88. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.43pm. It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting was scheduled for 7 September 2022 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Town Mayor: _____