

MINUTES of the ORDINARY COUNCIL meeting held ONLINE on Wednesday 11 November 2020 at 7.30pm

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

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjirishi (Town Clerk)
 Mrs L Monsen (Mayor’s Secretary)
 Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)
 Mr S Congi (Finance Admin Assistant)
 Mrs S Faversham (Business Services Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE: 7 Members of the public
 Ms Helen Greengrass, Felixstowe Forward Change Director

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

The meeting was preceded with a moment of reflection from Major David Lennox, Felixstowe Salvation Army.

315. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked the Council about the new East Suffolk Council policy concerning parking restrictions in the town and the impact on the community. A Member of Council advised that ESC had developed the policy following consultation with businesses and other local stakeholder in order to encourage people into the town and increase the dwell time more shops are visited. The member of the public suggested that a medium term impact survey be carried out to evaluate the impact of the policy on the local business revenue stream.

316. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from **Cllr D Aitchison**

317. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Gallant Cllr T Green Cllr M Jepson Cllr S Wiles	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk Coastal District Council)

Cllr S Bird Cllr G Newman Cllr S Wiles	All	Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of Suffolk County Council)
Cllr N Barber Cllr M Deacon Cllr M Jepson Cllr M Morris		Local Non-Pecuniary (as Members of the Wesel Association)
Cllr M Deacon		Local Non-Pecuniary (as Member of the Salzwedel Association)

318. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR

There were none.

319. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 9 September 2020 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

320. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor addressed the Council, highlighting the numerous Zoom conversations with the local businesses and community groups he had been having which were published online on the Town Council Facebook and twitter pages.

Council heard that this year's Christmas Light Up would be very different due to restrictions with no public involvement. The Mayor and Mayoress would be helping the Salvation Army with delivery to local residents of Christmas dinners on Christmas Day.

The Mayor told Council that it had been privilege to support Mrs Joan Rich during her fund-raising events for the NHS and in recognition of this a tree planting event had been held at Allenby Park. The Mayor thanked Cllr D Aitchison for also supporting the events.

The Remembrance events, although very different this year, had been fantastic and very moving. Members of the public who did attend adhered to social distancing rules.

The Mayor reported of the sad passing of Past Mayor, Mr Don Smith. Council recoded a moment of silence in respect of Mr Smith.

The Mayor then invited Cllr M Deacon to address the Council. Cllr Deacon paid tribute to Mr Smith who had been a respected Member of the Council, first elected in May 1995 and serving until May 2006, having been the Mayor of Felixstowe in 2004/05.

The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Sharon Harkin, for her support in attending engagements and for the online 'community conversations' with members of local community groups and voluntary organisations. These were being published on the Town Council's Facebook and twitter pages.

The Council thanked the Mayor for his report.

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

321. 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 9 September 2020
- b) Civic & Community Committee 16 September 2020
- c) Planning & Environment Committee 23 September 2020
- d) Assets & Services Committee 23 September 2020
- e) Planning & Environment Committee 7 October 2020
- f) Personnel Committee 7 October 2020
- g) Planning & Environment Committee 21 October 2020
- h) Civic & Community Committee 21 October 2020
- i) Finance & Governance Committee 28 October 2020
- j) Planning & Environment Committee 4 November 2020

322. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

There were none.

323. COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

The Clerk reported that the operations of the Council since the second lockdown commencing on 5 November 2020 were that the Town Hall staff were now working from home. All weddings had been rescheduled. The Cemetery and Allotments remained open and being operated in accordance with social distancing rules. A Coronavirus Bulletin had been delivered to all households providing information on advice and support. The Council's coronavirus grants scheme arrangements remained in place and had been promoted in the Coronavirus Bulletin and on the website. Remembrance Sunday went ahead following Government guidance.

It was RESOLVED that the update on Council services during the lockdown period be noted as received.

324. FELIXSTOWE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT RESULT

Ms Greengrass reported that businesses and organisations in Felixstowe had voted in favour of taking more control over their future by setting up a Business Improvement District (BID).

Ballot results released by the independent scrutineer, Civica Election Services, revealed that 57% of all those who voted are in favour of the BID progressing. For the BID to be successful, a second trigger 'majority by rateable value' was also required and this was achieved with 61% of those who voted. It was anticipated that the BID will commence from April 2021 for a five year term and financed through a BID levy, the proceeds of which will be invested into the town centre and seafront on the additional projects that businesses have identified and set out in the Business Plan. Over the next five years, the BID will generate over £600,000 to be spent in the BID area.

Members thanked Ms Greengrass and her team for all their hard work.

It was RESOLVED that the action taken by Finance & Governance Committee to voting in favour of the BID on behalf of the Town Council be noted as approved; and the outcome of the BID ballot in accordance with the Declaration made on 11 November 2020, be noted.

325. FORWARD REPORT

Council received the report of the Felixstowe Forward Change Director, Helen Greengrass.

Ms Greengrass reported that the case study featuring successful interventions around re-opening safely after the first Coronavirus lockdown had been submitted to the High Streets Task Force and was now live on their website. The businesses along the seafront had welcomed the opportunity to 'spill out' onto the grass verges along the prom. A seafront questionnaire had now been completed, garnering a huge response that had been overwhelmingly positive. Some businesses had indicated that they would like to discuss options to enable permanent continuation of the spill out.

In the past the plan was that memory dementia boxes were to go into the local cafés but because of Covid this had not happened so the boxes were now being distributed direct to families and the feedback had been very good.

A pilot project to meet the need for workspace in Felixstowe, where service providers can meet with the unemployed to provide face to face support was being explored. 'Covid-secure' work practices mean that many organisations are running out of space and unable to meet the demand for face to face activity. The intention was to use an empty town centre premises and to be visible in the location community to support the growing number of unemployed etc

A directory of local businesses who are still able to trade during lockdown was being collated and it was hoped that members of the public will be able to download this. In the next Town Council magazine there will be a feature on Christmas shopping in the town.

Ms Greengrass reported that East Suffolk Council were planning to locate a permanent, larger Tourist Information hut on the seafront instead of the two beach huts which would be situated on the site previously occupied by a concession.

Members asked if the new Visit Felixstowe Beach Hut Tourist Hut would still be manned by volunteers. Ms Greengrass confirmed this was correct.

Members thanked Ms Greengrass for her comprehensive report.

It was RESOLVED that the Felixstowe Forward update report be noted as received.

326. CEMETERY MAINTENANCE

Members considered the recommendation of the Assets & Services Committee (*Minute #250 of 2020/21 refers*).

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. expenditure of £590 from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve for the repair of the black roof outside the Cemetery Workshop be approved; and,**
- ii. expenditure of up to £3,112 from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve for the repair of the sinking internal road near block M be approved.**

327. LGBCE CONSULTATION ON SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL DIVISIONS

Members considered the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee (*Minute #300 of 2020/21 refers*).

It was RESOLVED to approve the response to the LGBCE to be submitted before the deadline of 23 November 2020.

328. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

Members considered the recommendation of the Assets & Services Committee (*Minute #299 of 2020/21 refers*).

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. **it be noted that the Finance & Governance Committee has Approved and Accepted the Annual Governance and Accountability Return including Audit Certificate as presented; and,**
- ii. **it be noted that, in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 as defined by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 & the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was displayed on the Town Hall noticeboard from 16 October until 2 November 2020.**

329. FTC/ESC JOINT LIAISON GROUP MEETING

The Town Clerk reported on the FTC/ESC Joint Liaison Group Meeting on 20 October 2020.

As referred to in the report, it was noted that the proposed leisure programme was still on course, with discussions with Sports England and the Football Foundation ongoing. There was £1.5-2.5 million available to bid for and the possibility of a further £500k for a 3G pitch. The current operator, Places Leisure, were helping to inform the District Council's business case for the new Leisure Centre. Discussions with Trinity College over the preferred leisure centre site were due to restart shortly following new personnel at Trinity and Bidwells the land agent.

The proposed plans for the former Deben School site were now available online. ESC anticipated a planning application by Spring 2021 with the first phase of development commencing later in the year. A community space was being proposed within the site which the Town Council would be invited to discuss with East Suffolk Council as to its use.

The South Seafront new café was progressing well with the new steel structure going up. The tenant was planning its internal fit out. The build was due to be completed by June 2021 and potentially open to the public from July.

With no additional space for memorial benches to be sold in Felixstowe, East Suffolk Council was considering a proposal for a memorial wall for plaques. A formal request for feedback from the Town Council would be forthcoming.

The Council was advised that the next Joint Liaison meeting would be held on 26 January 2021 and Members were asked to let the Town Clerk know of any matters they wished to be raised at this meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the FTC/ESC Joint Liaison Group meeting update be noted.

330. TOWN HALL CHRISTMAS TO NEW YEAR CLOSURE

Members noted the Town Hall would be closed to the public from Wednesday 23rd December 2020 and reopen on Monday 4th January 2021.

RESOLVED that it be noted that the Town Hall would be closed to the public from Wednesday 23rd December 2020 and would reopen on Monday 4th January 2021.

331. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

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

Date	Voucher Nos.	Total Payment
15/09/2020	189 – 204	£15,532.63
30/09/2020	205 – 224	£67,371.35
16/10/2020	225 – 244	£6,774.32
30/10/2020	245 – 263	£43,613.71
	TOTAL	£133,292.01

332. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.23pm. It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting was scheduled for 13 January 2021 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Town Mayor: _____