

**MINUTES of the ORDINARY COUNCIL meeting held at Felixstowe Town Hall on
Wednesday 11 January 2023 at 7.30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr S Harkin (Mayor) Cllr S Gallant
Cllr M Richardson (Deputy Mayor) Cllr T Green
Cllr D Aitchison Cllr M Morris
Cllr N Barber Cllr D Savage
Cllr S Bird Cllr A Smith
Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Wiles

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)
Mr S Congi (Finance Administration Assistant)

IN ATTENDANCE: 3 Members of the public
Mrs S Faversham (Civic Events Officer)
Mrs E Wiggins (Cemetery Supervisor)
Mrs S Morrison (Planning Administration Assistant)
Mrs J Smith (Administration Assistant)
Ms H Miles (Communications Apprentice)

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

The meeting was preceded by a moment of reflection from Mrs Gulshan Kayembe, Deputy Lieutenant for Suffolk.

351. CLLR GRAHAM NEWMAN

Council reflected on the sad loss to the town of Cllr Graham Newman, who passed away on 28th December 2022 following a short illness. Members paid tribute to Graham, who joined the Town Council in 2009, becoming Mayor in 2014/15 and again in 2018/19, citing his dedication to Felixstowe as a councillor and volunteer to several local community organisations. Members remarked that Graham's experience would be sorely missed, particularly his knowledge of local cycle routes and public transport. It was noted that, alongside his council roles, Graham served as Chairman of Felixstowe Travel Watch, was a member of OFCA Old Felixstowe Community Association and was Chief Ambassador for Visit Felixstowe and the Tourist Information hut.

Members thanked the Mayor and Cllr Savage for keeping Council informed during the previous few weeks. The Mayor led the Council in a minute of silence.

Council delegated authority to the Clerk to appoint new representatives to the outside bodies that Cllr Graham Newman represented.

It was RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to appoint a new representative to the Felixstowe Old People's Welfare Association; the SALC Area Meeting; the Fairtrade Forum; and, the East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership.

At this point in the meeting, 7.57pm, Council adjourned for 5 minutes.

The meeting recommenced at 8.12pm

352. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

353. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr M Jepson, Cllr S Bennett** and **Cllr K Williams**.

354. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr S Wiles	All	Other registerable interest (as a Members of Suffolk County Council)
Cllr S Bird Cllr M Deacon Cllr S Gallant Cllr M Richardson Cllr S Wiles	All	Other registerable interest (as Members of East Suffolk Council)

355. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR

None.

356. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 9 November 2022 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

357. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor addressed the Council, highlighting a few of the engagements attended since the previous meeting. The Mayor spoke of the Mayor's Charity Fashion Show, which raised over £6,000, and St Elizabeth Hospice's Christmas Day Dip, where the Mayor entered the sea up to her knees. St Elizabeth's Hospice had shared with the Mayor that over £41,000 was raised which was their best year for fundraising from the Christmas Day Dip.

The Mayor's first engagement of the year had been the Felixstowe parkrun, attended by over 250 people. The Mayor commented on the number of sea swimmers and cyclists – the latter prompting thoughts of Cllr Graham Newman who was a keen cyclist himself.

The Mayor spoke of her attendance at the 25th Anniversary award ceremony for BSC Multicultural Services. BSCMS had received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2022. The award, which recognises the outstanding work of local volunteer groups across the UK, was given for the group's voluntary service contribution over last 25 years and the last award ever to be signed by the Queen. There were many people in attendance who paid their respects to Cllr Graham Newman.

Cllr M Richardson spoke about the events that he had attended for the Mayor which included visiting several care homes on the run up to Christmas.

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

358. 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, 16 November 2022**
- b) Assets & Services Committee, 23 November 2022**
- c) Planning & Environment Committee, 30 November 2022**
- d) Finance & Governance Committee, 8 December 2022**
- e) Planning & Environment Committee, 14 December 2022**
- f) Civic & Community Committee, 14 December 2022**

359. BUDGET, RESERVES AND PRECEPT 2023/24

Council received the finalised version of the 2023/24 Budget and Precept.

It was noted that the budget had been prepared and presented in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting of 8 December 2022 (*Minute #319 of 2022/23 refers*).

Members discussed the Cost-of-Living crisis and commended the Council's officers for their prudent management of Council's finances, which had enabled the budget to be prepared on the basis of a 0% increase to the Town Council's portion of the local council tax. The Town Clerk advised that, should inflation remain at a level that was not mitigated by a commensurate increase in ratepaying properties, it was unlikely that Council would be able to continue to freeze the council tax rate in future year. Council noted the advice of the Clerk and agreed that, given the current situation, the use of reserves to maintain a 0% increase was appropriate at this time. However, in the new municipal year Council should review its future budget requirements.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Felixstowe Town Council Budget for 2023/24, as set out in the report, be adopted and approved as follows:**

Total Budgeted Expenditure:	£818,314
Total Budgeted Income:	£789,262

- ii. **the 2023/24 Precept demand to East Suffolk Council of £621,629.12 (representing a 0% increase cost to Band D equivalent Council Tax payer), be made on the following basis:**

Band D rate		£70.87
Multiplied by tax base	x	8,771.40

Thus a Precept demand of: £621,629.12

- iii. **and, the Clerk be delegated the authority to take any necessary action due and instructed to submit any information required by East Suffolk Council in this matter.**

360. MEETING SCHEDULE 2023/24

Council considered the draft meeting schedule for the 2023/24 Municipal Year as presented, which had been based on the current year's cycle.

The Clerk advised that he had reviewed the schedule for potential clashes with any currently published dates for East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council meetings. It was noted that there was only one (ESC) meeting that directly clashed with a Felixstowe Town Council Committee date at this time.

Members discussed Planning & Environment meetings being held during mornings and how this may inhibit attendance by any new or returning Councillors who worked during the day. Following the Council elections in May 2023, there should be an opportunity to review the timing of these fortnightly meetings.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. **the Meetings Calendar for 2023/24 be adopted as per the schedule presented; and,**
- ii. **after May 2023 the timing of Planning & Environment meetings be considered for review.**

361. EARMARKED RESERVES EXPENDITURE

Council noted a report on Earmarked Reserve Expenditure for the financial year 2022/23 and were pleased to note that reserves were being used to help with the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

It was RESOLVED that the Earmarked Reserves Expenditure be noted.

362. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

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

Date	Voucher Nos.	Total Payment
18/11/2022	312 - 330	£5,524.43
30/11/2022	331 - 341	£46,933.30
14/12/2022	342 – 364	£17,039.80
20/12/2022	365 - 385	£63,928.78
	TOTAL	£ 144,919.48

363. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8:51pm. It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Town Mayor: _____