

Minutes of the online meeting of
SALCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL
 On Wednesday 23rd September 2020

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT * - Attendance; A- Absent; N - No Apologies Received

Cllr Mrs N. Turton – Mayor (in the Chair)	*
Cllr. M. Fice	*
Cllr Mrs Bricknell	A
Cllr T. Lang	N
Cllr R. Moore	*
Cllr Mrs L. Sinnott	*
Cllr M. Long (also District Councillor)	*
Cllr I. Hatch	A
Cllr A. Hainey	*
Cllr M. Payne	A
Cllr Miss D. Ward	A

Also in attendance:

Dist. Cllr Mrs J. Pearce	*
Cty. Cllr. R Gilbert	A
Gill Claydon (Clerk)	*
Pete Robinson (Cemetery Manager and Project Officer)	*
Tom Ladds Kingsbridge Gazette	*
WPC Jo Pengilly	A

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to acknowledge any declarable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests that they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting. Ongoing advice was that Cllr Long would not take part in planning decisions due to him being on the District Development Management Committee.

2. OPEN FORUM

Rosie Cotgreave of Devon Wildlife Trust was present to advise everyone on their forthcoming local project. She outlined Saving Devons Treescape which was instigated on behalf of the Ash Die back forum. They commenced March 2020 and were funded by Heritage Fund and One Tree Planted along with other funders and were hoping for further funding in the next year. Over the five years of this project they would plant 250,000 across Devon acknowledging the threat of such loss of trees to the landscape. The project was also looking at treescapes as a whole across Devon with 5 areas allocated and South Devon being one focus area. There was 50% of project resource going into these areas and the other to other Devon areas. They had a free tree scheme for people to collect and plant in their garden or somewhere on their land. The intention was going to be to give out trees at the Devon County show but due to Covid this did not happen. They also wanted to place a landmark tree in every parish in Devon to act as an educational and informative focal point. Landowners would have a partnership for creating hedgerows and nurturing current hedgerows together with planting hedgerow trees. They would also advise on funding streams available together with working with schools to plant fruit trees and urban trees.

They already had a tree nursery and over five years they were hoping to build up to produce 5000 trees annually and they were currently looking for other nursery locations. There was ongoing work with someone in North Devon as Devon Wildlife had commissioned a photographer to capture changes in landscape. There would be walks with talks but they were looking at this due to Covid restrictions. All trees to be provided were from the United Kingdom and local.

The Mayor advised that she found this interesting and felt that the Community Land Trust would like to plant a wood. All present were impressed and Cllr Long advised they could ask further questions of Rosie after the meeting via email. PWAG were talking to landowners and farmers and Cllr Long advised they would assist and he hoped that at key strategic points during the project that Rosie would return to a town council meeting and give 3 mins update on particular projects in this area which covered from Malborough to East Prawle and Portlemouth.

Rosie Cotgreave left the meeting.

District and County Councillor Reports

Cllr Gilbert arrived on Zoom as 6.05p.m. and imparted his report to the Mayor, which she provided, so he could attend other meetings. He had advised that the work at Edmeston on the road out of Modbury had commenced with tree work so that the roadworks would run from November to spring. An issue with regard to a vehicle parking in Church Street but not receiving an enforcement ticket had been taken up.

Cllr Fice further advised that he had heard back that Devon County were issuing virtual permits for cars to park in Church Street. The car in question also displayed a Haringey parking permit. Cllr Fice sent photographs to Cllr Gilbert to illustrate that two vans parked had received tickets but this vehicle had nothing. He had not yet found out what a virtual permit was. To finish off Cllr Gilbert's report he believed that the Bennett Road overgrowth should have been cut but no councillor could confirm.

Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce did not have much to report other than to say that District had a meeting the following day to consider their interim budget. She was pleased District Council had been able to extend the provision of outside seating at Whitestrand but felt this would end mainly due to the change in weather. She noted that there were two Government planning consultations. One was with regard to changes to the present planning system and mainly related to housing numbers and changes in the rate of affordable housing not having to be provided for under 40 dwellings built. This would affect planning decision at least for the next 18 months or until the next Housing Act was in force. She then explained that first homes were better than affordable due to restrictions implemented. The planning changes included Permission in Principle on neighbourhood plan sites. There was no reference to sites not already built out.

The other planning consultation would bring about the biggest change to planning since 1947 by doing away with everything and starting again. Her opinion was that it was 97% alright but there was not enough detail to know if definitely. This would introduce Zoning – with growth zones allocated and deemed to be permitted. Also Town Centres and boundaries, Protected zones – so Salcombe would be in this as in an AONB and it might work as there would be individual applications for zones. There were changes to the consultation process but District did not know enough about any of it. She had not a lot of push back from communities, Members of Parliament and councils and Government might be in retreat especially with devolution changes proposed. .

She then went on to explain the changes to the calculations for housing numbers as they were dramatic. The position regarding Neighbourhood Plans was also uncertain.

Cllr Fice noted that the first consultation paper on changes to the current planning system had in fact to be responded to by 1st October but this had not been widely advertised. He then referred to parts of the consultation proposals on first home, affordable and exception sites as a 30% reduction on a market price first home in Salcombe would still not be affordable to most people and that Government seemed to be delivering too much market value properties from their proposal.

Cllr Fice raised a query with regard to the new waste collection changes. His impression from the letter was that those with a weekly food caddy collection appeared to now be two weeks. This was not so and they would still be collected weekly.

Dist Cllr Long felt there needed to be a response made for this planning consultation as the question of changes in the housing algorithm needed scrutiny. The papers supplied had scant detail and there were serious questions on these two documents around Neighbourhood Plans, housing needs along with style and design thoughts. Much of this was being set nationally and should be challenged and he urged all councillors to comment on both documents. The Mayor advised that the planning working party would consider this consultation and Dist Cllr Long offered to also be involved. A response would be sent to the changes consultation to be ratified at the following meeting along with a proposed response to the Planning White Paper to be considered by town council.

3. CO OPTION

As no applicants had attended the meeting this was DEFERRED.

4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the online meeting dated 9th September 2020 were amended to include that when Cllr Fice referred to correspondence from a lady regarding Victoria Quay she had suggested that town council set up a reserve to assist any private individual but the town council had not felt this was appropriate. The Minutes were then approved to be duly signed by the Mayor as a true and correct record.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The applications below were considered by councillors and the following response submitted to District Planning by the Town Clerk under delegated authority:

- 1203/20/FUL Loft conversion 2 Moulton Moor, Moulton Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8LG – Response 8th October – Objection on the basis that this proposal would have an overbearing impact on the character of the building and with regard to its potential light pollution in a secluded dark area of the AONB.
- 2369/20/HHO Householder application for works to replace existing timber deck including new timber post and glass balustrade and timber cladding to walls below 7 Croft View Terrace, Salcombe, TQ8 8DL – Response 8th October – No comment.

- 2544/20/FUL External works to terrace 23b Ferrydown, Fore Street, Salcombe, TQ8 8ET – Response 8th October – Objection as the height of the side wall was overbearing and was contrary to NDP policy B1 as it was not in keeping with the area and did not enhance the Conservation Area and was thus out of context.
- 2779/20/HHO Householder application for alterations and extension to dwelling Hillsbrook Herbert Road, Salcombe, Devon, TQ8 8HN – Response 8th October – Objection on the basis that the development was overbearing, unneighbourly and would have an impact on the light amenity of the neighbouring property Fiddlers Green. The proposal to build up to the boundary edge would have an impact on the street scene of Herbert Road. The reversal of the floor space to have the living accommodation at the upper level with numerous balconies would lead to overlooking of neighbouring gardens, increasing the noise impact, and potentially increase light pollution.

WORKS TO TREES IN A CONSERVATION AREA

- 2748/20/TCA T1: Magnolia - Fell due to excessive shading, obstructing streetlight and cable and causing damage to wall Wedgwood, Allenhayes Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8HT – Response 1st October – Objection. This was a request to fell due to excess shading, but it did not obstruct the streetlight and town council were not sure of the statement regarding damage. There was amenity value to this Magnolia where it sat and rather than felling reasonable pruning and reshaping would retain its amenity value and remove some issues as stated. This was a magnificent tree when in bloom that needed management rather than felling.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

- Email received from Chris of Yeowards Boat Yard raised concern that business was no longer viable along Island Street. The pedestrian priority referred to was introduced for social distancing and was not permanent. Town Council had looked at times at traffic flow and potentially considered a one way system but felt this would not work as boats go to and fro from Batson. Pedestrian priority was to highlight the need for distancing due to Covid. It was felt that a discussion with the correspondent to ask for his thoughts at a meeting and not by email would help and then town council could speak to other traders who move boats and vehicles around this commercial area. All felt that the points were valid and fair from a person who had worked in this area for a long time and along with other businesses perhaps something could be worked out. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce advised that when she was in Island Street she was amazed to see a caravan coming along which must have come down Church Street. On walking down Fore Street most people did not understand that it was closed so Town Centre Closed should be stated on a sign. Cllr Fice noted that Island Street had a lot of traffic and perhaps it should be included in the Traffic Order as Access Only too. Cllr Moore urged diplomacy but noted that historically it was said there was not enough footfall along Island Street and town council were asked to move the park and ride bus to alight there to get more. Cllrs Mrs Turton, Mrs Sinnott and Long would arrange to meet with Chris.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROPOSED MODIFICATION

Cllr Long had spoken to Pat Whymer but he was currently on vacation however Cllr Long would arrange a meeting to discuss on his return. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce noted that the Thurlestone Neighbourhood Plan included the Section 106 agreement for principal residence, but it was hard to get it included. A Section 106 would be registered at Land Registry and any solicitor or legal executive could not miss it but they could a planning condition. If a Section 106 was breached, then they would have to do the legal work but that was what they were supposed to do. A solicitor would advise no one must breach a Section 106 Agreement but a planning condition could be insured against. Cllr Fice raised a question regarding the Planning White Paper as Section 106 was proposed to be removed but Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce did not believe it would go altogether. If it went then something else must be done but at present Town Council should keep going and get it covered. Cllr Long also felt that the planning legislation had to go through yet and as the current Joint Local Plan went to 2024 this was needed now.

It was noted that any public consultation would take a few weeks but AGREED that Cllr Fice would commence the process to proceed with the application for this amendment. There would be a cost but Town Council would have to fund this locally as it was a modification.

7. COMPACTOR WASTE BINS

The information provided by District waste department was advised and further points raised by Cllr Moore before this was discussed. Each time waste in this area was considered there was another new idea at a cost but all that was required was systematic emptying during the height of tourist season. Metal in this area would corrode and look shabby and photo voltaic powered bins would be shielded under the trees.

It was AGREED that this year in August, with a static operative covering Salcombe picking and clearing the town, had seen a great improvement. Uniform 4 large capacity black bins on Whitestrand would no doubt deal with the litter problem although town council were aware of the Covid new normal as this year there was four times the rubbish on previous years. However a dozen larger bins around the town would involve a smaller cost. Cllr Moore and Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce would follow this matter up.

Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce left the meeting.

8. CONSULTATIONS

It was AGREED to respond to the following consultations:

- (a) Licensing Act 2003 – District Licensing Policy Consultation – Response 16th October. This was a well written policy with no further input required.
- (b) Devon’s Updated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation – Response 15th October – Noted but no comment required as this did not directly apply to Salcombe as most flooding was run off water or sea incursion.

9. TREE WORKS

It was AGREED;

- (a) that the quote from Devon Tree Services for £3960 plus VAT be accepted for urgent works to trees identified with Ash die back.
- (b) following the report overview to obtain quotes for these works. The works for Primrose Field would be offered to the maintenance team under contract first.
- (c) that any planting at the Berry and allotments would be favourable to be done by volunteers and possible participants would be approached and possibly articles placed in the Kingsbridge Gazette, website and Facebook but consideration would need to be given to Covid restrictions on numbers gathering.
- (d) to accept the quote from Devon Tree Services for a full expert evaluation and report on trees in the ownership of town council at a cost of £840.

10. DEVON ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS – AGM

It was AGREED that the Mayor attend to represent and vote at this meeting on behalf of Salcombe Town Council.

11. REPORTS

MAYORS’ REPORT

The Mayor advised an article had been placed in the Kingsbridge Gazette advising there would be no Civic Lunch or Citizen of the Year and all community groups would be told via email. The Chamber of Commerce had sent a letter thanking Town Council for their proactive stance during Covid and offering future assistance and a letter of thanks returned to them.

Pete Robinson asked whether such cancellation should go on town council’s Facebook and he would do this.

COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS

- Cllr Long – Was looking at tree issues and would raise this at District as he had spoken to officers about separating Construction Management Plans from demolition management with conditions. Currently it was rather vague to get conditions for demolition and construction as they were two separate entities.
- Cllr Fice – He had spent a lot of time considering the Planning White Paper consultation and this had already been talked about and a draft response would be put together. Questions were being raised as to what was happening with regard to Remembrance Sunday and the Mayor advised that she and the clerk were meeting with the vicar and Tony Axtell the following Tuesday to obtain firmer details.
- Cllr Mrs Sinnott – Enquired what was happening with regard to the yellow feet painted along the streets as they were wearing out. It was expected that this would be redone in October ahead of the half term in the hope that this would last till and over Christmas.
- Cllr Hainey – Referred to the recent Government announcement and the reluctance by District Council to keep Whitestrand car park closed. He asked if Town Council would be petitioning to extend this further as the town really needed this closed to make the effort to reduce traffic flow along this street.

CLERK’S REPORT

- Affordable Housing at District had responded that the Lease for the property at Ember Road recently on the market allowed for ownership to be a ‘stepped lease’ with the ability to purchase. At that time the policy was to allow owners a chance to get on the housing rung. This was not a Devon Covenant property. It was a Section 106 agreement agreed prior to building and it was the historic belief of town council that they would all be retained in shared ownership with a limit to buy up to 80% so they always remained shared ownership in the system. However this s106 allowed purchase with no control so they could sell on the open market. Cllr Hainey asked if that could mean that every house in Ember could be lost. Yes in theory the shared ownership ones could go and Cllr Moore noted that back then a draft Section 106 never came to the community and his understanding was it remained at 80% but it obviously changed. There followed much discussion that town and parish councils needed to be involved in the creation of S106 agreements. Cllr Hainey felt that the town had therefore agreed to build stair-cased properties that have now become holiday maker units.

- Gabby Bridges who owned Dewberry the property adjacent to the Council Hall advised that over the last winter and spring water was building up and pouring out of the Council hall gutters with force into their property. This she noted was due to weeds and plants within the gutters and asked that they be cleared so this problem did not recur. Quotes would be obtained to check what works were required and Cllr Mrs Sinnott advised a contractor had photographed the issue.
- Microsoft 365 packages on the office computers expired on 2nd November and 2nd December respectively. If town council wished these would auto renew. Noted and agreed by all these would continue and roll on.
- Dale Cropper has emailed and requested a group phone call with him and Sarah to discuss the weed spraying invoice. Unfortunately since sending this email Dale had an out of office message that he was returning on the day the call was requested so no amended arrangements could be made. At present there was no further update so this would be reported back at the following meeting or by email if input from town councillors was required earlier. Cllr Long advised that the Non glysohate solution used needed sweeping so as this was not done the work did not have any effect. Town Council also questioned large areas that were not sprayed.
- A report was received that two youngsters were up at Jubilee Gardens playing football every evening, using bad language and a further group of about seven or eight were jumping back and forth over the fences screaming. This matter would be mentioned to see if the police could send someone to have a word. Cllr Mrs Sinnott also noted this problem at the Rugby Club, in her mother in law's garden and around and that the headmaster at the school had been notified.
- The question with regard to the creation of a tab facility to navigate and changes required to make the town council website compliant had been advised to be possible and work would take place once the company were available to do such work following completion of a large contract. They should be able to commence by the end of October.

12. FINANCE

Bank Balances

Current Account £5544.06

Deposit Account £ 461,477.03

SHDC – Half yearly precept £46,387.50

Receipts:

King Fun Ltd – Bonfire Hill Payne £95.00

Dignity Funerals – Bonfire Hill £150.00

APPROVED September Internet payments to:

HMRC – September Tax and NI £765.94

NEST – September Pensions £177.01

Wages – September £1808.77

SHDC – July Maintenance £998.95

City Security – Final Payment 31st August – 6th September £2520.00

13. NEXT MEETING

Town Council meetings recess during August so the next Town Council Meeting would be held at 6.30p.m. on Wednesday 14th October.

..... 14th October 2020.

Town Mayor

Meeting ended: 22.00p.m.