

Minutes of the online meeting of SALCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL On Wednesday 9th
December 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 *

Cllr T. Lang N

Cllr R. Moore *

Cllr Mrs L. Sinnott *

Cllr M. Long (also District Councillor) A

Cllr I. Hatch A

Cllr A. Hainey *

Cllr M. Payne *

Cllr Miss D. Ward A

Cllr P. Lafferty-Holt *

Also in attendance:

Dist. Cllr Mrs J. Pearce *

Cty. Cllr. R Gilbert *

Gill Claydon (Clerk) *

Pete Robinson (Cemetery Manager and Project Officer) *

Tom Ladds Kingsbridge Gazette N

WPC Jo Pengilly N

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 but he was not present.

2. OPEN FORUM

Vanessa Woods Community Engagement for Plymouth and South Hams Office of National Statistics was present to explain the changes in delivering the census for 2021. The next review took place March 2021 and she would be explaining over the next few months how to take part and encouraging others to include groups in the communities to get the message out. She had been working with District Council who had highlighted groups within communities who might need additional support. This was all stair casing on the 2011 work so next year was important to ensure Government fund were effective and used in a proper way in society. This was to be a digitally collected census with everyone receiving a code along with other supporting guidance on how to complete the details in various languages et al. Ten per cent of South Hams were deemed hard to count so might not have completed details before and not be on the Electoral Roll. These people would still receive a paper questionnaire and might include poor broadband areas among other reasons. Maps of those hard to reach areas were to be shared with local authorities and she return if any of those areas were found in this parish.

With organisations that had a positive relationship with communities they would understand and be more likely to take part and this was why she needed town council to raise this importance so everyone joined in. People with barriers or who required additional support could be identified and she would help by targeting additional engagement or completion activities. She had had virtually heard from all parish councils so she knew that people in this area were engaged. By the end of January 2021 there would be a mass marketing television, radio, all media, newspapers and interviews campaign as there were a lot of questions around asking with Covid why they were going ahead. Showing how important the national statistics were to reacting to such outbreaks was one of the reasons. During February there would be help available to get the message out and every household would hear mid-February with literature saying the census was coming and then in March receive a pack for completion. After then field officers would follow up and the last time would be 4th May. The census was expected to capture 94% of people and they were hoping for 75% completion online. They also had field team vacancies for anybody interested in joining the team. This would involve helping people to complete online. There would be support for other languages or issues and as an example the University in Plymouth was holding a veterans group along with other ideas.

Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce wished to mention to the Office for National Statistics that there was a huge problem for Salcombe in that the resident population was 20% of what it was during Summer. Therefore District never obtained financial assistance because these summer people were not registered as residents so she asked what could be done for this area. Vanessa said she would raise this as a point of concern at the meeting at District Council the following day. Then she could raise this matter to her seniors as an area of concern. It had been noted in reports so flagged but must be continually raised. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce continued that as the District Authority could only raise money through council tax they then had to spend disproportional tax on litter issues during summer. This was caused by those coming in and therefore District did not have the money to spend as much on the resident population who paid council tax. Vanessa felt it would be interesting to know the percentage of time people were staying in their holiday home so she agreed there was something in that information and she would ask higher up. The Mayor thanked her for attending and explaining and asked if she would be sending further information which she confirmed.

District and County Councillor Reports

Cty Cllr Gilbert advised he had changed his arrangements around to attend as this was the last town council meeting of the year. He complimented the wonderful newsletters being put out and thanked Salcombe Town Council. He had been trying to help sort the lack of Pay and Display feedback from the County Officers who ran this system but whilst a response had been forthcoming it was still not resolved. Information forwarded was that this was scam awareness month at County. He asked all to please take this seriously and highlight the information to elderly relatives to raise awareness of scams that were around and help neighbours and friends who are getting fleeced. County Council tax would probably increase by 5% this year, with 2% allowed and an additional 3% permitted for social and elderly care. County had sent information on Covid so he hoped all were reading that information and he would not cover this again. Through the last lockdown there had been a 32% reduction of traffic in Devon. He acknowledged that for South Hams car parks this must be difficult and he felt bad for District and their available income. He wished everyone Happy Christmas and hoped 2021 would be a better year.

Cllr Lafferty-Holt raised concern with regard to a skip situated on Fore Street opposite Boots as workmen had dropped material mess around and on the road. The detritus from the skip was mostly polystyrene which was settling in the gutter/gully making a mess which would in time head for the drains causing blockage and it was blowing around the street. Cty Cllr Gilbert requested that photographs were sent to him and he would make the highway officer aware as soon as he left this meeting to ensure someone got down there and sorted this so that the area was clear.

Cty Cllr Gilbert left the meeting.

Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce noted grants being given out and made a plea for the message to be spread as people/businesses were not applying for these additional discretionary grants. Some felt they did not qualify as they did not pay business rates. If they could show that their income was severely reduced in November, as people could not get out/down to shop or whatever, this would suffice so she requested please encourage people to apply.

Waste collection rounds operatives had been affected by a Covid problem and so they were relying on relief drivers. She asked if there been any recent bin problems but there were none locally heard of. She also apologised if bottle banks and other areas were down on collection but this was because the reduced team were focusing on the important areas. The following day would be the end of the self-isolating period that staff had observed so the normal service would be back up again. Kingsbridge Leisure centre was back open so she hoped everyone would use these and support the facility which was providing all the safe measures possible to keep users safe.

County had a program for free school meals during the school holidays allowing £15 per each child per week if they qualified. District also had hardship grants for people who were experiencing problems. People might feel that they do not qualify but those who had needs were encouraged to make contact because without knowing their circumstances advice from District could not be given and maybe payments could be made.

The South Hams District response to the Planning White Paper had apparently caused ripples in Whitehall which had indicated it was one of the best responses received.

Car parking charges were going up shortly but in fact there was not much change in Salcombe. District Council was down by 40% income on car parks at present but they were being reimbursed for 75% by Government at present, so it was not all bad. However this was only for the first 3 months of next year thereafter was unknown. Hopefully April 2021 everything would return to normal but of course this depended on the vaccine. District was disappointed to be put in tier 2 lockdown as this was a blow for hospitality.

Dist Cllr Pearce noted that Salcombe still had an amount of Section 106 monies held at District. The Mayor acknowledged this and advised that town council had only just received an update from Alexis and had scheduled an OSSR working party meeting for January, which was already in the calendar, to sort projects out and consider what else might be included. Dist Cllr Pearce was only concerned that she did not want these monies to go back to developers if not called upon within the timescale.

Cllr Lafferty-Holt advised North Sands toilets refit was good but noted that there was no outside shower reinstated. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce would ask but felt this had not been something agreed to be done.

Cllr Hainey enquired about the business community use of Whitestrand car park the next summer. If Town Regatta wished to utilise it as historically they had done what would happen if it was closed to allow business use for tables and chairs and how would this work?? Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce thanked him as this was a good point to bear in mind.

He continued with regard to the Sandnes planning application and why had she totally ignored the wishes of town council in her report. She responded that she did not and had made reference to a lot of things. The fall-back position however was that they held an extant permission and the present proposal was not that different from that current extant proposal for this one not to be approved. The question was whether the contractors could move the building materials down the road. If District refused it was her opinion that any inspectorate would hammer them as they had a present approval so apart from the glazing there was not much difference. The contractors understood and had worked out what they were going to do by doing calculations and measured track as to how to get trailers down there and parked and they said they could do it. She advised that as Leader of the council she was no longer a member of the planning committee so once she had spoken she could say no more, which was up to Dist Cllr Long as he was on the committee. There had been no objections from any statutory consultees. She advised that when Salcombe Town Council stated an application did not comply with the Neighbourhood Plan policies they should give a precise reason why not.

Cllr Payne noted that Dist Cllr Long had voted against this application and town council in turn had to justify to people around the town why it was approved and he suggested there was much uproar as she had passed it. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce reiterated that this was not in fact true because she did not have a vote. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce spoke before Dist Cllr Long. Cllr Hainey said there were lots of rumblings among residents in this locality who would not allow the developers along the shared lane and would park their cars there. He suggested there might be civil disruption. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce sympathised but noted that the official adjudication of Beadon Road was that it was a public road not maintained by public funding.

Cllr Fice spoke in defence of Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce and stated that he did not know where the comments that Cllrs Hainey and Payne referred to came from because if it was Facebook this was not fact of what happened. Cllr Fice had concentrated on the previous approval and the fact that it was granted before the Salcombe Neighbourhood Plan was adopted. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce was the only person who agreed with him and acknowledged this. He continued that she did exactly as she said she had and made comments from a planning point of view and raised the local objection and access being a major problem so he cautioned those present to be careful of Facebook comments. Cllr Hainey felt Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce should support Town Council as she was a ward councillor but Cllr Fice and Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce agreed that she had in fact defended Town. She thanked Cllr Fice for his support. Dist Cllr Mrs Pearce left the meeting to attend other parishes.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the online meeting dated 25th November 2020 were approved to be duly signed by the Mayor as a true and correct record. It was noted that although Cllrs Mrs Turton and Mrs Bricknell had been placed in a break out room this had not been noted on the Minutes. It would be added.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

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

- 2644/20/VAR Application for variation of condition 2 of planning permission 3600/18/FUL Topwood, Sandhills Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8JP – Response 17th December – No comment.
- 3307/20/FUL Application to renew 2918/15/FUL for new car parking at bottom of property Moulton Moor, Moulton Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8LG – Response 17th December – No comment.
- 3601/20/HHO Householder application for alterations to steps, maintenance of landscape features and patio extension 1 Carbery, Newton Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8HH – Response 17th December – No comment.
- 3611/20/HHO Householder application for new side window to loft room Bottom House, Coronation Road, Salcombe, Devon TQ8 8EA – Response 17th December – Objection as the full length window was not appropriate for this location and would impact on the street scene and also overlook the neighbouring properties.
- 3616/20/HHO Householder application for proposed enclosed porch to existing dwelling 27 Burwood House, Mcilwraith Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8FF – Response 17th December – No comment.
- 3627/20/HHO Householder application for single storey front extension with balcony over to replace porch, extension to garage and erection of cabin to side of house 10a Little Hill, Salcombe, TQ8 8LZ – Response 24th December – No comment.
- 3809/20/HHO Householder application for rear two storey extension comprising a double garage, jacuzzi/gym and 2 no additional bedrooms Swallows Lodge, Sandhills Road, Salcombe, TQ8 8JP – Response 31st December - No comment.
- 3838/20/HHO Householder application for replacement balustrade and minor alterations to elevations
9 Beadon Drive, Salcombe, Devon, TQ8 8NU – Response 7th January 2021 – No comment.

5. DELEGATED AUTHORITY

It was AGREED to allow delegated authority to the Clerk to respond to any planning application requiring a comment before the 13th January 2021 meeting, following input from town council by email.

6. CONSULTATIONS

It was AGREED to respond to the alcohol Public Space Protection Orders which dealt with potential anti-social behaviour in an area, which could have a harmful effect on the quality of life for those in the local community for response by 18th December as follows;
Salcombe Town Council was generally satisfied with the areas covered by the PSPO-Alcohol Order and was happy that this provision was in place to help control the anti-social behaviour often caused by the consumption of too much alcohol.

As a small town with an abundance of opportunities to buy and consume alcohol, and with limited places to go during the evenings where alcohol was not available, Salcombe had suffered greatly from the effects of anti-social behaviour – vandalism, fighting, congregation of large groups of (mostly) young people in parks and other open spaces where their excessive noise disturbed the households living around those places, and where the mess and damage found the next day was costly in time and money to deal with. As a popular holiday destination, it was not a good advert for public spaces to be so misused.

Unfortunately, this anti-social behaviour occurred on a nightly basis throughout the main summer season but was not unknown at other times. This year, 2020, saw anti-social behaviour to such a degree that for the first time Salcombe Town Council employed their own Street Wardens to work alongside the police to keep people moving on, quietening down, and generally help manage people's behaviour.

The areas covered in the existing Order were the right ones, but town council would like to see some additions to that list in order to join some areas already covered and include two new areas since the Order was last reviewed. These were:

- Jubilee Gardens
- Park & Ride field
- Buckley Street and all connecting steps to Union Street and Victoria Quay
- Church Street and Church Lane connecting to Island Street
- Cliff House Woods and connecting steps from Devon Road to Cliff Road
- Connecting steps from Devon Road to Courtenay Park (between numbers 7 and 8)

Cllr Fice requested clarification as to who would have such jurisdiction in these areas, could private security guards enforce.

7. CAR PARK CHRISTMAS ACCESS

The daily figures for December 2019 were provided by District Car Parks and it was noted any income would not be the same at the previous year due to people being encouraged not to travel during this time. Another concern was that motorists might leave their cars as there was no charge and then there would be no turnover in the town. It was AGREED that there was no need to cover this cost and offer a free parking concession over the Christmas period.

8. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

The terms of reference for the current maintenance contract were provided and it was AGREED to let it remain as drawn apart from the addition of the area above the council parking spaces before putting this work out for quotes for commencement April 2021.

9. TREES

The quotes to carry out necessary works highlighted in the Tree Report as required to be undertaken immediately had not been possible to obtain in time and this was DEFERRED pending further information.

10. REPORTS

MAYORS'S REPORT

The Mayor attended the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AGM on the 27th November as an observer via their YouTube channel. Regarding planning issues, it was reported that this aspect was now taking up too much staff time – the equivalent of one full time employee. District Cllr Jonathan Hawkins made the point quite strongly that if the AONB kept saying 'No' to planning then the South Hams would only be a 'Millionaires' Paradise', locals could not afford to live here, and exception sites would be the only option.

COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

- Cllr Fice – Had a major concern regarding the Neighbourhood Plan as it was being used in a woolly way by officers and he was proposing to put together a commentary on the recent decisions to send to Pat Whymer, Head of Planning. He asked if other councillors wished to see this and agreed he would send it around, probably after Christmas. He would be going back over recent decisions where planning officers completely disregarded the Neighbourhood Plan as a legal document which was worrying. Pete Robinson asked if Cllr Fice needed an update of collected responses and said this could be provided.
- Cllr Moore – Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and vaccinated New Year. He asked for a hard copy of the Neighbourhood Plan and felt each councillor should have a hard copy for their own use. It was suggested that any councillor who wished this should put in a request to the office.
- Cllr Payne – Backed Cllr Fice noting it was obvious that the Neighbourhood Plan did not appear to be applied to larger developments and the town was being rough ridden over. He went past a property and wondered why town council went through hours of planning when some with a large development got through and what Salcombe wanted did not appear to listened to.
- Cllr Mrs Sinnott –Reported that there had been a rock fall on North Sands beach. The Mayor noted this had been reported to Dist Cllr Long and was being dealt with and a further email sent to Devon County Highways. Cllr Mrs Sinnott continued that a minor point was on Main Road leaving Sandhills and heading out of town the pine needles were very slippery for walking and if there was ice it could cause a problem. She asked could the mechanical sweeper be asked to go along Main Road.
- Cllr Hainey – Noted the wood chips at the Berry remained in a big pile but this matter was covered in the clerk’s report. There were cement lorries at the top of Sandhills Road waiting for access to somewhere and sitting with their drums turning making a noise. They were facing down the hill and queued up and this matter would be passed to Cllr Long. The weeds in town were still growing and the cemetery and paths were lethal as they were green and slippery. Pete Robinson advised that the moss had been sprayed. Some patches had gone brown but it did not appear completely effective yet. Potholes and the state of the road out to South Sands were raised. Builders might be contracted to sort this out as it occurred but it was getting worse and worse and with bad weather the repairs/filler kept getting sucked out. Travelling this route was rattling cars and it was now beyond what it used to be.

CLERK’S REPORT

- An application for additional Reopening High Streets funding had been submitted and an outcome waited.
- Devon County had advised that the proportion of grant money for the urban visibility cuts for 2021/22 would be £329.00. The agreement to continue this service would be signed and returned and this added, as previously, into the maintenance contract.
- Pete Robinson had advised that he had removed the fencing within the hedge along the boundary between the Bonfire Hill cemetery and park and ride. The hedging should now grow to make a natural barrier. Other works to another section and gate would be done once quotes had been received.
- Devon Tree Services had been chased as the pile of wood chippings remained at The Berry and a local resident had been trying to spread them. This should have been done by the company the previous week.
- Moles appeared to be on the increase at the cemeteries, park and ride and Berry so the mole catcher would be asked to attend and advise or deal with the issue.
- Western Power Distribution had advised of the substation breakdown along Buckley Street

and that residents had to get electricity from a generator that was running all night and noisy. In order to speed works up and not affect access into the town they asked if they could park in the town council parking space over Sunday 13th December into the 14th December. This was agreed to assistance the town.

11. FINANCE

Bank Balances

Current Account £501.00

Deposit Account £460,160.36

Receipts: Devon County Council – Highway cuts contribution £319

APPROVED Internet payments to:

Wages – December £1853.23

NEST – December Pension £181.90

HMRC – Nat Ins and In Rev £797.89

Devon Tree Services – Works to fell a large Ash in Redfern Woods due to dieback £3024.00

Salcombe Christmas Lights Committee – Grant £500

LexisNexis – Arnold-Baker Local Council Administration 12th Edition, ½ cost shared with Stokenham PC £60.00

Actionwest Business Systems – Purchase HP Officejet 7740 A3 £232.68

Information Commissioner (Direct Debit) – Data Protection subscription £35p.a.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting would be held at 6.30p.m. on Wednesday 13th January 2021.

..... 13th January 2021.
Town Mayor

Meeting ended: 19.58p.m.