

SOHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Soham Town Council meeting held at the Walter Gidney Pavilion Fountain Lane recreation ground Soham Monday 14 February 2022.

Present: Cllr E Johnston (Chairperson), P Lane, P Leonard, G Woodbridge, C Warner, K Horgan & Mesdames R Aitchison & A Pallett

In attendance: CClr/DCllr M Goldsack & DCllr A Jones

The meeting commenced at 7:15pm

NOTED: By invitation presentation by Mr Andrew Fillmore & Ryan Bruty Pigeon Homes PLC relating to **21/01048/HYMB Land To Rear Of 81 - 111 Brook Street** Soham Hybrid planning application consisting of full planning permission for the demolition of 81 Brook Street and the provision of a new site and replacement bungalow along with outline planning permission (all matters reserved except for access) for the construction of up to 80 new homes (including affordable housing), public open space and associated infrastructure.

After the presentation a summary document highlighting flood mitigation measures to be installed to this site was circulated to Cllr members.

Cllr Aitchison's questioned the depth of the proposed attenuation basin and steps that the Developers/District Council/management committee/contractors subsequently appointed would take to safeguard children in this area. Noting the technical specifics of the basin of 0.7m in depth with sloping sides and commitment that where necessary perimeter fencing will be provided. It was also reported that under the s106 agreement that ECDC will be responsible for the good housekeeping of the surface, whilst Anglian Water would maintain the piped network, into and out of this drainage basin.

Cllr Woodbridge raised a question in relation to solar panels and EVC (carbon neutral installation/improvements). The representatives responded that all dwellings would conform to required minimum EPC standards with solar panels, electric car charging points and an ability to support introduction of non-gas (fossil fuel) heating.

A resident queried the more general matter of sewage incapacity facing the town which would be exacerbated by further large scale development(s). The representative responded that Anglian Water was the responsible amenity Provider/Supplier and had a legal obligation to ensure sufficient network capacity. Where not additional cost burdens were charged to all residents as part of their service level agreement with domestic users.

Cllr Pallett thanked Pigeon Homes PLC for attending the meeting and providing opportunity for open debate on this site which is noted as a Development within the Local Plan 2015.

16/22 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & TOWN CLLR VERBAL UPDATES (maximum 5 minutes per group) TO INCLUDE:

Cllr Johnston noted she had represented Soham Town Council as Mayor at the commemoration service held at Ely Cathedral to mark the actual date of accession of HM Queen Elizabeth II (February 6th 1952).

The Chairman noted that Ms Charlotte Simoes had resigned from the town council and had expressed her thanks to all for their support during her time as a town Cllr.

Cllr Warner noted that he had met with the Police & Crime Commissioner, Police Inspector and other interested Local Authority Parties to demonstrate the effectiveness and capacity of the town's CCTV system for use in crime detection and its prevention and is currently waiting for their feedback.

Cllr Warner noted had received copy of confirmation from Wicken Parish Council that the resident whose fields/land, under Riparian Rights, abuts

footpath 126 had provided their written permission to continue ground works (Soham Town Council's responsibility will be up to the parish boundary). Cllr Pallett noted her disappointment that Persimmon Homes PLC had their Appeal upheld by the Planning Inspectorate which granted planning permission for 175 houses to be built at the back of Broad Piece which is outside the Development envelope for the town as stated in the Local Plan 2015.

Cllr Warner's noted not only his disappointment to the Appeal decision but his frustration at ECDC as the Planning Authority regarding the lack of support received from them given that their opposition was based on the Development being outside the development envelope and on a sufficiency of housing growth/numbers (Principle of Development) solely and not in regards to the specific (known) flood risks at this site which has been highlighted by the town council and residents alike. Cllr Warner expressed the comment that the granting of this Appeal was a disaster for Soham setting a precedent and encouraging all future Developers who are not currently identified in the Local Plan 2015 to challenge a(ny) refusal decision, irrespective of legitimate reason, made by ECDC. Further he suggested that the 'keeping of its own rate demand' the same over a significant number of years might be politically expedient but irrational where it was unable to demonstrate or discharge effectively its own Statutory Duty, including proper planning enforcement measures.

a) Meetings and training attended in month by Cllrs.

Cllr Horgan noted his CPD attendance on the role and Duties of the Town Clerk during Local Elections

b) Re-establishment Committee structure (from Team Lead Cllr)

NOTED the recent EOM held on 2 February 2022 that with immediate effect from this date Soham Town Council would reinstate committee/Standing Committee structure for decision making.

NOTED Cllr Woodbridge's comment that all Cllrs remain responsible for not only attending these committees but taking primary in taking an active role and duties and these responsibilities this should not be left solely to the committee chairpersons to undertake.

c) Chapel repairs (Cllr Woodbridge verbal update)

NOTED the tile roofing Contractor is expected to complete works in the next few weeks.

NOTED that the scaffolding Contractor had allegedly damaged the newly installed rain goods (gutters and downpipes) when dismantling and removing some of the external supports but that this does not fully explain some of the omissions and issues remaining.

NOTED the ridge crosses still need to be reinstalled and would require 2 external tower scaffolds to be provided to complete these works.

APPROVED a request to the scaffolding Contractor to remove all his remaining materials on site to enable these tower scaffolding (front and back) to be installed so that works could be finally completed. Any final matters to be delegated to the town office with assistance from Cllr Woodbridge as previous approvals. Proposed Cllr Woodbridge, seconded Cllr Aitchison approved by majority (Cllr Warner wished it to be recorded that he abstained from the vote).

17/22

PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

NOTED a resident made representation regarding Soham Town Councils last months meeting where a combination of lack of use of microphones and Cllrs talking simultaneously/over each other had made it difficult for the public in attendance to hear the debates motions and resolutions being taken.

NOTED the Pavilion hall is fitted with internal hearing loop for residents who may be hearing impaired/use hearing aids (need to use T settings on aids).
NOTED a resident echoed the above complaint but was pleased to note that Soham Town Council had returned to its previous committee structure. Noting that the last two years had been difficult due to COVID for everyone the resident thanked the town Cllrs and the Office for all their unseen but nevertheless hard work and behind the scenes in support of Soham residents.
NOTED a resident made representation regarding last year's Drum service on the recreation ground undertaken by RBL on Remembrance Sunday last year (Soham Branch). Noting the effects of COVID and the changes imposed during this time the Branch will take this opportunity to canvass a public-wide consultation regarding the location, time and format of Soham's Remembrance Sunday for this and subsequent years. Once completed the results would be provided in feedback to Soham Town Council at its next (March 2022) meeting with results and requests on how the Branch would like Soham Town Council to continue to support it on this special commemorative day (matter further considered under min 25/22v below)

NOTED Cllr Woodbridge's comment that should the local MP be in attendance the Police remain responsible for all security and crowd control (road closure) measures.

NOTED a resident made representation on the possibility providing a statue to commemorate Olaudah Equiano possibly with its installation on one of the roundabouts coming into/out of Soham. Noting the likely costs (in the high £ thousands) the resident was content to apply for Lottery funding but required Soham Town Council to lend support as the named recipient in any Bid and to hold these monies for this specific purpose (matter considered under min 25/22c below).

NOTED Cllr Johnston read out an email from a resident, one volunteer currently assisting annual festive light provision in the town, highlighting his ongoing logistic technical and resource concerns to for this activity and offered his continued support and advice to ensure that the festive lighting is not only robust but befits the status of Soham as a town.

18/22

COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

The Chairman thanked CCllr/DCllr Goldsack and DCllr Jones as Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) representatives, for providing their respective written reports affecting Soham or more generally. Noting these monthly summary reports had previously been circulated by email to all town council members and for residents' convenience had been reproduced on the town councils website at <https://www.soham-tc.gov.uk/county-district-cllr-reports/> (February 2022).

Confirming the above the Chairman asked members if they had any queries or questions for those CCllr or DCllrs present.

Cllr Warner questioned the District Cllrs present on East Cambridge District Council's preoccupation to not increase its rate demand which it has done so for a number of years as this action may well gain favour and political advantage with constituents but is counterproductive and intuitive the lack of financial resources to the detriment of its fiduciary Duties including Planning: its inability to retain suitable professional support and advice to those elected to its Planning Committees, to ineffective planning condition enforcements and citing the performance which was observed on Youtube (in public domain) in the latest Planning Appeal its inability to retain knowledgeable legal representation. DCllr Goldsack agreed that the decision regarding the current

Appeal had significant long term effects and badly served the town of Soham in regards to further additional and speculative developments.

IN SESSION AND AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA

- 19/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies were received from Cllrs D Woricker, H Ross & A Woricker and duly noted by the membership.
- 20/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST TO ITEMS ON AGENDA
No Declarations of Interest to matters on the agenda were noted by the Cllr members.
- 21/22 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17th JANUARY 2022 & EOM 2nd FEBRUARY 2022
APPROVED the minutes of the meeting of the 17 January 2022 & EOM 2 February 2022 as printed and attached herein being true records of proceedings were duly signed as being such by the Chairman.
- 22/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CURRENT & WHERE NECESSARY PREVIOUS FULL COUNCIL MINUTES (*where not specified by prior notice and listed on this agenda no decisions or approvals may be legally taken*):
A) Confirmation or otherwise to those matters noted as approved and as recorded in minutes (official record) of, but not listed on, the agenda of 17th January 2022 including:
i) Hire fees (Pavilion) and recreation ground 2022-23
APPROVED to rescind its previous decision/approval taken at its February 2022 meeting
APPROVED no hire or charges will be applied to community groups which operate on a not-for-profit/surplus basis during the times that Council staff are in attendance at the Pavilion (Monday-Wednesday 9am-4pm, Thursday 9-1pm, Friday 9-2pm) for the financial year 2022-23 commencing 1st April.
APPROVED that all commercial, private hires and community groups wishing to book out of hours, weekend including Bank holidays would attract normal rates with no concessions (£38 per hour plus caretaking disbursement £20 week days up to 10pm, £40 after 10pm, weekends and bank holidays - where alcohol was consumed or large numbers of people £80 would be applied to cover cost for 2x caretakers - lone worker safety considerations) excluding the Carnival, Pumpkin Fair & Beer festival who will be charged for caretaking only at £160 per day
ii) Consideration virement of CIL monies to allocated reserve 122/18 grant application
APPROVED to rescind its previous decision/approval taken at its February 2022 meeting.
APPROVED not to virement monies from CIL ring fenced reserves as these were monies not only available to the town council for amenity and infrastructure improvements requiring capital investment but also other groups (subject to application and approval by the council).
APPROVED costs of Pavilion roof insulation to be taken from current reserves/surplus's at year end.
iii) Cllr Allowance

APPROVED Clerk to issue a formal request to ECDC to consider allowances for parish and town Cllrs when the Independent Remuneration Panel (RPI) next convenes to consider such matters.

iv) Allotment rents & Burial fees

NOTED a 5% increase for both services are automatically applied annually and as indicated in the tenancy agreement and burial regulations (effective 1st April, 15th October), respectively

APPROVED any further increases from this automatic rise be considerations in the next (2023-2024) budget.

v) Neighbourhood plan costs of advertisement/promotion literature

APPROVED £2500.00 for printing & distribution of public consultation materials to include a £50 prize draw as incentive to encourage residents to complete and return the questionnaire(s).

B) Neighbourhood planning (Working Group)- *Any approvals to be made by Soham Town Council as Lead Body [Town and Country Planning Act 1990 s61F(1), (2)] including aspects of designation of neighbourhood area, appointment of consultant, grant application AOB.*

NOTED that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot displace or overturn the Local Plan 2015 (or the NPPF) but augment and further define conditions to better assure not only the quality of developments but their impact on existing residents, amenities and infrastructure.

APPROVED a budget of £3 000 for neighbourhood planning matters for 2022-23.

C) Jubilee '22 Committee

NOTED a number of infrastructure (staging and lighting) safety (first aid) requirements and additional expenditures (badges for all primary school children) proposed for the upcoming Bank Holiday celebrations.

(see 23/22 v below)

23/22

PREVIOUS MONTH'S STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

a) Finance & Policy- none (written update from RFO in regards to 22/22A and other budgetary issues)

ACKNOWLEDGED receipt of report by members.

i) Multitool request (Grounds staff) - PAS multitool system total £805.00 (net)

APPROVED unanimously purchase in current financial year. Proposed Cllr Warner, seconded Cllr Pallett.

ii) Internal connecting roads (S section cemetery Fordham Rd) - selective annual vegetation management programme (budget 2022-23)

APPROVED works for this growing season only and for this matter to be reconsidered by the Cemetery Committee at its next meeting (date TBD).

iii) Festive light provision Christmas 2022 (2022-23 budget consideration)

APPROVED a budget for 2022-23 of £20 000.

iv) Heritage tree planting (2022-23 budget consideration)

APPROVED budget for 2022-23 of £5 000.

v) Jubilee '22 (budget considerations).

APPROVED a further £5 000 to pay for children's rides, first aid, look into lighting up the church and a PA system. This would also cover a free commemorative badge for every primary school child in Soham.

vi) Carbon reduction & 'greening up' measures 2022 (budget consideration)

APPROVED a budget for 2022-23 of £20 000 (new budget heading).

vii) MHI (budget consideration)

(see 25/22 a below)

APPROVED a budget for 2022-23 of £3 000.

b) Planning - 31st January 2022 (list with comments)

NOTED Cllr comments sheet January 2022

NOTED Planning Committee minutes reinstated as of February 2022.

i) Street name(ing) proposal-pool of notable WW1 & II surnames including Evershed within Soham (motion to discuss Cllr Woodbridge)

NOTED Cllrs to provide the Office with a list of names of noteworthy residents including the possibility of including surnames for street/road names that may be forwarded to relevant Planning/Developers when requested.

24/22

INCOME & PAYMENTS OF ACCOUNTS MADE (FP 22/20), STATEMENT OF BALANCES AT 31st JANUARY 2022.

NOTED income & RESOLVED TO APPROVE those payments made to 31st January 2022 (inc. vat) of £ 37776.88 as attached to these minutes.

NOTED AS APPROVED and without comment the monthly financial reports consisting current monthly actual net (income and expenditure) budget statement with financial movements including any virement(s) which had previously circulated to members via email and are attached to these council minutes as appendices and additionally reproduced on the councils website <https://www.soham-tc.gov.uk/soham-town-council/accounts/monthly-accounts/>

25/22

COMMUNITY SUPPORT INCLUDING FINANCIAL (LHI) REQUESTS

A) Feasibility FR12 - Cyprian Rust Way/Townsend Junction – (financial year 22/23) attached

APPROVED the 10% contribution town council contribution required for double yellow line installation at Cyprian Rust Way should it be identified as a successful scheme by CCC members at upcoming LHI Highway Panel meeting.

B) Northfield Road, Soham - LHI 21/22 - Proposed Scheme contribution request £1200. (10% scheme costs, applicant (resident/horse rider) to improve safety around Northfield Road, Soham, supported and request made by CCllr Goldsack - to note that budget 2022-23 - no financial provision currently)

NOTED scheme application was to be privately funded by the applicant and on this basis inappropriate for the council to consider this request.

C) Statue request 'Oludah Equiano' (motion to discuss Cllr Woodbridge)

NOTED a discussion took place regarding this initiative.

APPROVED to use councils Facebook to determine residents interest relist matter at its March 2022 meeting for further consideration.

D) Public open space events 2022 Hire costs/Financial support & requests and approvals:

i) Fun fair [18th-24th April]

APPROVED charge of £1100.00 as agreed in 2020 (pre COVID)

ii) Carnival [1st Sunday May]

APPROVED a flat rate of £160 per day for public open space events undertaken by not for profit groups or organisations to enable provision of 2x caretakers (lone worker safety considerations) and as contribution to overheads.

iii) Queens Jubilee 2-4th June 2022] - request invitation to representatives Twinning (motion to discuss Cllr Pallett).

NOTED due to level of HR as well as public finance associated with this and other civic events not to add to matters by extending invitation this year (matter to be reconsidered next year).

iv) Pumpkin Fair [24th September],

APPROVED a flat rate of £160 per day for public open space events undertaken by not for profit groups or organisations to enable provision of 2x caretakers (lone worker safety considerations) and as contribution to overheads.

NOTED that whilst the Beer Festival as a public open space event had not been listed on the current agenda it could be considered in general terms to the foregoing (as an anticipated annual open space provision 2022). On this basis:

APPROVED a flat rate charge of £320 be applied over the 2 day (Friday pm, Saturday and Sunday clearing up) to cover 2x caretakers (lone worker safety considerations) and as contribution to overheads.

v) Remembrance Sunday [RBL Soham Branch] - civic event /road and marshal public liability and cost considerations

APPROVED council to seek residents' opinions on the matters of format (parade) costs and times using the councils Facebook.

NOTED due to representation made earlier in the meeting and te above approval that the matter would be relisted at next full council meeting.

E). Date for Annual town meeting - (1st March - 1st June 2022 inclusive) requirement for literature advertisement and promotional materials (please note that this is a meeting for the residents and should not be confused with the Annual meeting of Soham Town Council which is scheduled Monday 9th May 2022 [TBC])

APPROVED Annual meeting for Soham Town Monday will be on 16 May 2022 commencing 7.15pm at the Pavilion

APPROVED any advertisement and promotion for this event would be limited to the council's website and Facebook.

26/22

CORRESPONDENCE –NOTED ONLY UNLESS OTHERWISE

INDICATED (*italicised* and in **bold**) IN THE MINUTES. (matters in bold or as highlighted in **red BOLD on the agenda** considered to be more relevant to Soham) Unless otherwise indicated all correspondence emailed/circulated to Cllrs as being received:

- Cambridgeshire County Day-Arts, Culture and Sport Thursday 23 June 2022
- IHMC Incident report-December 2021
- The Rural Bulletin - 11 January 2022; 18 January 2022
- Road Victims Trust Annual Report
- East Cambs Parish and Community Forum: Youth Focus - 19th January 2pm
- Parish and Community Forum meeting tomorrow - 19th January @ 2pm - Youth Focus
- Proposed TTRO - Mill Corner, Soham 28/02/22 - 02/03/22
- Proposed TTRO - The Cotes, Soham 01/03/22 - 03/03/22
- Community Safety Partnership Eyes & Ears programme
- Age UK Visiting Support Service
- Sunnica Energy Farm Update - Registration to become an interested party has opened
- ECDC - Revenue Budget 2022-23
- Street Works - TTRO 22/097 - Broad Piece, Soham
- IHMC Incident Report - January 2022
- Cambridgeshire Local Heritage List Project

NOTED Cllrs to send any recommendations to the office.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of matter 27/21 Land acquisitions and related matters which is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that where members of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure of exempt information of Category 1, 3 and 5 (commercially sensitive including legal privileged considerations) under Part I Schedule 1972 (AS

27/22

Land (and property) acquisition- Strategy and Funding options 139/19C, 151/19B v, 07/20B, 53/20E, 67/20iv, 82/20,26/21B, 31/21 (EOM), 56/21, 63/21, 81/21,104/21,155F/22)

a) Cemetery extension (Hopkins Homes)-, Execution of purchase (TP conveyance) and approval of related costs (inc. T 1/2 Ground Water Assessment surveys budget consideration 2022-23)

NOTED those land restrictions placed by the Developer and as part of the s106 agreement

APPROVED authorisation and signature of TP1 form (HM Land Registry) to complete conveyance matters.

NOTED no budget consideration for 2022-23 made in regards to ground water assessment surveys.

b) Additional land parcels purchases requiring approvals including solicitor engagement considerations (Land Agent budget consideration 2022-23)

NOTED small parcel of land directly off High St being offered as part of an Estate sale.

APPROVED due to the area being suitable for limited amenity use or purpose only not to pursue purchase.

c) Wildlife areas 2022 Proof of Principle works (Closed churchyard and cemetery -Fordham Road budget consideration 2022-23)

NOTED the question of use of the recently acquired purchase of Drayton Meadows (for general community use and access including dog walking or by restriction and dedication to wildlife/conservation purposes), ongoing site security as well as matters pertaining to use/repurposing of existing land (suspension of normal mowing schedules at cemetery Fordham Rd) and any alternate provisions and measures to be taken to verge planting (Fordham Rd) due to retirement of current community volunteers to be relisted at the next council meeting.

NOTED with exception of the amount approved (min 23/22 vi above) no budget allocation considered for matters under 27/22 c).

28/22

MONTHLY PAPERS/BIBIOGRAPHY/ PERIODICALS/ BULLETINS (LIST TO APPEAR IN MINUTES ONLY)

-N/A

29/22

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Soham Town Council Monday 14 March 2022 7.15pm @ Pavilion
- Planning Monday 28 February 2022 1.00pm @ Pavilion

(the above meetings will be conducted face-to-face but are still subject to cancellation due to any further COVID restrictions imposed by Central Government - date and venue confirmed at the time of agenda publication).

The meeting ended at 11.00pm.