



Soham Town Council
The Walter Gidney Pavilion
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SOHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Soham Town Council Meeting held at the Walter Gidney Pavilion,
Fountain Lane, Recreation Ground, Soham, on Monday 10th June 2024.

Present: Cllrs D Woricker (Chairman).
L Johnston (Vice-Chair), R Aitchison, G Dyer, G Griffiths,
K Horgan, A Jones, A Pallett and C Warner.
M Strand, Town Clerk, M Francis, Assistant Clerk.

In attendance: County & District Cllr Mark Goldsack.
District Cllrs Keith Horgan and Lucius Vellacott.
There were 4 members of the public present.

The meeting was opened at 7:15pm.

16/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Patricia Baker, Tony Chouler and Kathleen Clements (personal).
Cllr Hamish Ross (work commitments). Cllr Glenn Woodbridge was
absent from the meeting.

17/24 COUNCILLORS' DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

18/24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS & TOWN CLLR UPDATES

- a. Annual Town Meeting – Cllr Woricker thanked everyone who had
attended and those who took part. It had been interesting to hear
about some of the activities going on in the town on a regular basis.
- b. So-Fest 2024 – Cllr Woricker attended this with his family and said
that it had been an excellent event which was exceptionally well
organised. Cllr Woricker will write to Viva to congratulate them on its
success.

Cllr Horgan added that Viva had produced incredibly good
documentation in relation to the event's management which had
included measures required by the forthcoming 'Martyn's Law'.

Other matters raised at the meeting: -

- Cllr Aitchison said the Regulation 16 public consultation for the Neighbourhood
Plan had finished and 14 representations had been received. The Plan now
moves on to the Examination stage. Cllr Aitchison recommended Examiner
Andrew Ashcroft who is approved by ECDC, is very experienced and who can

start work next week. This was seconded by Cllr Horgan and AGREED unanimously.

- A safeguarding evening will be held on Tuesday 16th July at Soham Town Rangers football club for all members of the community and children over the age of 11. The evening will cover subjects such as knife crime and county lines and will be hosted by the Mayor. The evening begins at 7pm and free pizza will be served.
- Cllr Horgan had attended the Soham train disaster commemoration on Sunday 2nd June and said it was moving and informative.
- Cllr Pallett said that the development on Mereside for 91 dwellings had been refused.
- Cllr Pallett had met with Mark Peck from CCC regarding a footpath opposite Soham Village College. The footpath has become dangerous due to roots growing through the surface. Mr Peck has said he will arrange for the work to be done to rectify this but gave no timescale for the work.

19/24 PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

A resident and member of the Royal British Legion said that the D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemoration held on Sunday 9th June had been an excellent event attended by around 250 people. He thanked the Council for the use of the recreation ground and the Scout & Guide group for the use of their hall for an exhibition. He also thanked all those involved in organising the event. Donations collected on the day amounted to £81.40 and this will go to this year's Poppy Appeal.

Cllr Anne Pallett concurred with the resident that it had been an excellent and moving event, and wonderful that a veteran from D-Day had been able to be there.

20/24 COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

County & District Cllr Mark Goldsack reported on the following: -

- Cllr Goldsack is continuing to discuss various highways issues with officers at Cambridgeshire County Council, including missing Passing Places signs on East Fen Road, and urged Councillors and residents to use the online Report It tool to report issues.
- A special meeting will be held by ECDC to discuss the planning application for the Eastern Gateway in either July or August.
- Cllr Goldsack had attended ECDC's D-Day commemoration and wreath laying on Thursday 6th June.

District Cllr Lucius Vellacott reported on the following: -

- Cllr Vellacott congratulated the Council on its Neighbourhood Plan and the progress it is making.
- A development of 91 dwellings on Mereside had been refused by the Planning Committee following recommendation for refusal by the Planning Officer.
- ECDC is now a member of the Debate Not Hate campaign against abuse towards those in public office.
- An audit of all ECDC owned play areas will be carried out to assess their accessibility for children with disabilities.
- Cllr Vellacott congratulated the Royal British Legion on their excellent event for the D-Day 80th Anniversary commemoration.

District Cllr Horgan had sent a written report from all District Cllrs and this was NOTED.

21/24

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. APPROVED unanimously – the minutes of the Annual Full Council Meeting held 13th May 2024. Proposed Cllr Aitchison, seconded Cllr Jones.
- b. NOTED – the draft minutes of the Finance & Policy Committee Meeting held on 13th May 2024.
- c. NOTED – the draft minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 20th May 2024.

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MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.

- a. NOTED – Clerk’s Report.

23/24

FINANCE & GOVERNANCE MATTERS

- a. APPROVED unanimously – Receipts & Payments for May/June 2024 (as listed at the end of the agenda). Proposed Cllr Warner, seconded Cllr Horgan.
- b. APPROVED unanimously – bank reconciliation and financial reports to 30th April 2024. Proposed Cllr Warner, seconded Cllr Jones. It was NOTED that the Council had so far received £7,289.48 in interest since opening its savings and investment accounts.
- c. APPROVED and adopted – updated NALC Model Financial Regulations 2024. Proposed Cllr Griffiths, seconded Cllr Aitchison.
- d. APPROVED unanimously – Cllr Tony Chouler as the Council representative on Soham Community Association. Proposed Cllr Warner, seconded Cllr Horgan.
- e. To consider Councillor training options from CAPALC, cost £75 per delegate or up to £600 for all Councillors. It was AGREED unanimously that the Clerk should get a date for the training (not before September) and then see who is able to attend. Proposed Cllr Warner, seconded Cllr Jones.

24/24

RECREATION GROUND/PAVILION/TOWN MATTERS

- a. Pavilion Phase II – APPROVED by a majority – to employ the Council’s land agent to research grants, cost £500 per day for up to three days. Proposed Cllr Warner, seconded Cllr Jones.
- b. Skatepark – to consider options in light of comments from ECDC’s Planning Officer and the Trees Officer. Cllr Pallett said that alternative plans are in progress.
- c. To consider & approve proposal to lease or purchase an additional vehicle for the grounds maintenance team. Cllrs Dyer and Horgan had submitted a comprehensive comparison of the options available which was discussed in detail.
Cllr Warner proposed that the vehicle should be fully electric in line with the Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency and pledge to go green, and the proposal was seconded by Cllr Horgan. Councillors voted 5 in favour, 3 against with one abstention and the proposal was CARRIED. A recorded vote was requested and is as follows: In favour – Cllrs Griffiths, Horgan, Jones, Warner and Woricker. Against – Cllrs Dyer, Johnston and Pallett. Abstained – Cllr Aitchison.

It was then proposed by Cllr Horgan to lease (rather than purchase) a new electric Peugeot e-Partner on a 4-year contract (including full manufacturer's 36-month warranty and monthly maintenance option) at a cost of £13,719.68 over the term of the lease (first year costs will be £5,301.13 +VAT). The proposal was seconded by Cllr Jones. Councillors voted 6 in favour with 3 abstentions and the proposal was CARRIED.

- d. To consider quotation for automatic gates on the recreation ground, cost £11,222 +VAT (includes a new gate and posts as the current gate is unsuitable for automation). It was proposed by Cllr Dyer to earmark additional funds in the 2025-26 budget and to proceed with the gate automation within that financial year. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Jones and AGREED unanimously. Further information and quotations for the gate and associated costs will be obtained.
- e. To consider proposal for the promotion of the town. Cllr Woricker asked Councillors to consider ways to promote the town to its residents. Examples include old pictures of the town to be erected in different locations as points of interest, and to investigate the possibility of having a central banner installed on the High Street to promote various events throughout the year. Councillors were asked to think about ideas to put forward.
- f. To consider request for ideas regarding Corporate Social Responsibility and volunteering – Councillors were asked to respond to the email directly with any ideas.
- g. AGREED unanimously to support the campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries in bikes and e-scooters.

25/24

CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

- a. NOTED – Resident re: response to Council correspondence regarding fencing on the boundary of the recreation ground.

26/24

MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Planning Committee, Monday 24th June, 1pm.
- Community Amenities Committee, Monday 24th June, 7:15pm.
- Finance & Policy Committee, Monday 1st July (to be confirmed), 10:30am.
- Full Council, Monday 8th July, 7:15pm.

The meeting was closed at 9pm.