

SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 24th January 2023
at 8pm
at
Champions Manor Hall

Present:

Councillor Eley (Town Mayor)
Councillor Shearring (Deputy Town Mayor)

Councillor Thompson
Councillor Massey
Councillor Birch
Councillor Wilson
Councillor Sherlock
Councillor O'Brien

Councillor Humphrey
Councillor Perham Lake
Councillor Kelly
Councillor Crosbie
Councillor Ferry
Councillor A Humphrey

In attendance: Town Clerk

C418 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were **RECEIVED** and **ACCEPTED** from Councillor Sismey, Roberts, John & Bentley.

C419 Dispensation Considerations

None received.

C420 Declarations of Interest

None received.

C421 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 22nd November 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Humphrey

Seconded: Councillor O'Brien

Vote: **Carried**

Councillor AA Humphrey requested an amendment on the minutes of 13th December 2022 under agenda Item 6 To resolve to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, as the following item contains confidential information.

The chairman agreed this amendment as a true record. The Town Clerk was not present for this agenda item.

The minutes of the meetings held on 13th December 2022 were agreed with the amendment and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Wilson

Seconded: Councillor Massey

Vote: **Carried**

C422 Public Questions

No public present.

C423 Councillor Co Option Vacancy

Council **NOTED** there is a Councillor co-option vacancy in the Collingwood Ward due to the resignation of Councillor John Miller. This is being advertised.

C424 Code of Conduct Training

Council **NOTED** Section 8 Complying with the Code of Conduct
8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.
Council has agreed we adopt the new Code of Conduct minute reference C374 on the 18 of October 2022.

C425 Reports from Committees attached to the agenda

425.1 Events Community & Leisure Committee

Councillor Crosbie nothing to add to attached information on agenda.

425.2 Planning & Environment Committee

Councillor Shearring nothing to add to attached information on agenda.

425.3 Finance & Projects Committee

Councillor Thompson nothing to add to attached information on agenda.

C426 Budgets and Precept 2023-2024

426.1 The Council was asked to consider and agree the Council's budget for 2023/24 as recommended at the Finance & Projects meeting on 17th January 2023 FP77. A budget of £442,251 was agreed.

Proposed: Councillor Humphrey

Seconded: Councillor Crosbie

Vote: All In Favour

426.2 A gross precept of £442,251 was proposed for submission for 2023/24 to Chelmsford City Council. Based on a tax base of 6092 Band D £72.60.

Proposed: Councillor O'Brien

Seconded: Councillor Bentley

Vote: All In Favour

C427 Policies

Council reviewed the policies recommended by the Finance & Projects Committee on 17/1/2023.

427.1 IT Policy

Proposed: Councillor Humphrey

Seconded: Councillor Wilson

Vote: All In Favour

427.2 Internal Control and Internal Audit

Proposed: Councillor Massey

Seconded: Councillor Kelly

Vote: All In Favour

427.3 Review of Financial Risk Assessment

Proposed: Councillor O'Brien

Seconded: Councillor Humphrey

Vote: All In Favour

C428 Items Noted by Council

Staff Vacancy

- it was **NOTED** the advert and job description for a full time Planning & Environment & Events Leisure Officer has been advertised in the Focus, Town Council website, noticeboards and with the EALC.

Councillor Training

- it was **NOTED** Councillor Eley, Thompson, Shearring and the Town Clerk will complete the EALC Elections Briefing in January 2023. All councillors were invited to attend.

Annual Town Meeting

- it was **NOTED** due to following purdah recommendations the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Friday 17th March 2023.

C429 Review of Staffing Terms of Reference

Council reviewed the Staffing Terms of Reference.

Proposal: To change the following Staffing Terms of Reference

4. To oversee the recruitment and appointment of staff up to budget level.
10. To make decisions on staffing related expenditure to the Town Council up to and not exceeding £15,000.00 to conclude any individual matter or dispute.

Proposed: Councillor Thompson

Seconded: Councillor Humphrey

Vote: Carried

C430 Chelmsford City Council / Essex County Council

To consider report(s) to Council from City Councillor/County Councillor concerning matters of interest to South Woodham Ferrers.

- Councillor Bentley reported at the Governance Committee meeting on January 18th 2023 the committee revision of the procedure for complaints against councillors (City, Town and Parish). Changes bring

the document in line with the model code of conduct that both Chelmsford City Council and South Woodham Ferrers Town Council have adopted

- Councillor Massey updated the Council on the following:
Essex County Council

Essex County Council have published their budget proposals for 23/24 this has been pitched at a 3.5% increase, considerably less than the government's maximum allowable 4.99%.

2% of that increase goes directly to fund adult social care; the County Council is proposing to spend a total of £506 million on adult social care - an increase of £58m.

For an average Band D property household, the ECC element of Council Tax will increase by £49.05 next year, or 94p per week. The budget will be discussed and approved at the County Council meeting on February 9th.

Members will recall that for the last few years County Councillors have been allocated 'Locality Funds' to spend in their local divisions; in recent years this has been £10,000. Two years ago it was spent on provision of defibrillators, last year on equipment for the Town Council's new toddler group.

This year's locality fund was £5,000 and this week received confirmation that it can be used to fund the sea wall access at Compass Gardens / Saltcoats that was recently requested by the Town Council. Contractors have been appointed.

C431 Reports from Representatives of Outside Bodies by Lead Councillors

An update from Councillor Kelly on the Health and Social Care Group was **NOTED**.

C432 Town Mayors Announcements

Council **NOTED** a recent list of events attended by the Town Mayor.

C433 Media Release

No items for media release.

C434 To resolve to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, as the following item contains confidential information.

Proposed: Councillor O'Brien

Seconded: Councillor Perham Lake

Vote: Carried

C435 Staffing

Private & Confidential

Committee discussed update from the Staffing Committee and further action required.

C436 Next Meeting

Next meeting is to be held 14th March 2023.

There being no further business to discuss the Town Mayor closed the meeting at 9.18pm.

Signed
(Chairman of the Meeting)

Date: 14 March 2023