

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

26 November 2024

Meeting commenced: 6.30pm Meeting ended: 8.00pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Fojtik) in the chair

Councillors:

Albon	Lee
Alcock	MacDonald
Cleeve	McNaught Barrow
Coles	Petrovic
I Fradgley	Rashwan
J Fradgley	Rolfe
Hunter	Vos

69 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Duck and Smith and accepted for the reasons given.

Subsequent to the meeting Councillor Harding indicated that he had been unable to attend due to District Council training commitments and his apologies had not been conveyed.

70 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

71 To receive written requests for dispensation

There were no requests.

72 **Public Participation**

There was none.

73 **Presentations**

The UK Sepsis Trust

On behalf of the UK Sepsis Trust, John McCarthy attended the meeting and gave an insight into his personal experience and detailed the associated warning signs that we should all be aware of.

John explained that sepsis was a life-threatening condition that arose when the body's response to an infection injured its own tissues and organs, with the immune system going into overdrive. Prompt diagnosis and treatment could prevent organ failure.

Members expressed their gratitude to John for his informative presentation and the valuable insight shared.

Safeline

Diane Cockburn from Safeline, an independent charity established in 1994 that supports people who have been affected by sexual abuse and violence at any time in their lives and works to prevent its occurrence.

They currently provide a range of tailored and inclusive support and prevention services to adults and children regardless of personal characteristics, backgrounds, and beliefs. They also supported family and friends who had been affected.

Diane addressed questions from Councillors, and the Mayor extended thanks for her insightful presentation.

74 **Mayor's Announcements**

- Silent Disco Had raised £1150 for the Mayors Charities.
- The Remembrance concert had raised £700 for the Poppy Appeal.
- All of his recent events were detailed on his social media account.

75 **To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24 September 2024**

It was proposed and seconded and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24 September 2024 be adopted.

76 **To adopt the draft Open Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 8 November 2024**

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the draft Minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 8 November 2024 be adopted.

77 **To adopt the draft Open Minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee Meeting held on 15 October 2024**

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the draft Minutes of the Community Services and Environment Committee Meeting held on 15 October 2024 be adopted.

78 **To adopt the draft Open Minutes of the Civic Heritage and Events Committee Meeting held on 5 November 2024**

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the draft Minutes of the Civic Heritage and Events Committee Meeting held on 5 November 2024 be adopted.

79 **To receive the draft Open Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee Meeting held on 12 November 2024**

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That the draft Minutes of the Planning Consultative Committee Meeting held on 12 November 2024 be adopted.

80 **Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference for Standing Committees, with the exception of Finance and Audit Committee which would be considered at the next meeting, were submitted for review.

Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference for Committees be approved.

81 **Town Council Policies**

Gift and Hospitality Register

Consideration was given to the existing policy. There was ensuing discussion on the appropriate value for which a declaration should be made. It was agreed to maintain this amount at £30.00 to ensure clarity and transparency for the Council. Additionally, there was a discussion regarding the potential for this information to be made available electronically on the website. The Town Clerk noted that the Council's Publication Scheme stated the information was available for public inspection, but she would explore the possibility of providing it electronically.

Sexual and General Harassment Policy and Procedure

From October 2024 new legislation (s40A Equality Act 2010) places greater responsibilities and legal requirements on all Employers, to take proactive steps to prevent Sexual Harassment at work.

Training for all staff and Councillors was to follow in the New Year. It was

RESOLVED: That the Gift and Hospitality Register and The Sexual and General Harassment Policy and Procedure be adopted

82 **Town Clerk's Open Report**

Stratford Local History Society – Museum of Stratford

Matt Goodman (Chairman) and David Austin (Project Lead) attended the meeting to provide further details on the project. Members had received the Business Case and Initiatives Application under confidential cover.

Members reviewed the request from Stratford Local History Society for a grant of up to £10,000 to support a museum project aimed at preserving and showcasing local history for the benefit of the town. Whilst members were highly supportive of the project's objectives and its potential value to Stratford-upon-Avon, they acknowledged the significant budgetary pressures anticipated for 2025/26.

Given the unique nature of the project, members agreed that the request should be referred to the Finance and Audit Committee for further consideration.

The Finance and Audit Committee would be requested to further evaluate the grant application, taking into consideration the necessity for matching funds and ensuring that any accountability measures were established, if a grant was to be given. It was

RECOMMENDED That the Finance and Audit Committee be requested to consider the options for supporting the project in either the upcoming budget or 2026/27, with the understanding that the applicants be required to demonstrate match funding.

83 Worthy's Way Public Open Space and Play Area

Consideration was given to an initial offer for the transfer of ownership of public open space and play area at the above site.

There was concern expressed as to the liability the Town Council would have once the associated money had been utilised and who would be responsible for the required routine inspections.

Following consideration of the pros and cons of the Town Council taking on responsibility for such areas and the fact that the Town Council did not currently have any other ownership of play areas within the Town, it was

RESOLVED: That the offer of the public open space and play area at Worthy's Way be declined.

84 **Pay Award**

The annual pay award for staff had been announced on 23 October 2024, and was to be backdated from 1 April 2024. This has been met within existing budget.

RESOLVED: That the staff pay award for 2024 has recently been announced and the award of backpay be noted.

85 **Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer (Maternity Leave Cover)**

Due to the upcoming maternity leave of the current Responsible Financial Officer, it was essential to confirm a replacement RFO for the duration of the leave.

RESOLVED: That Odette Ghent be appointed as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer for the period of maternity leave cover.

86 **To appoint Members to Working Groups**

Nominations to the Working Groups were requested.

RESOLVED: (1) That Councillors, Alcock, Cleeve and McNaught Barrow be appointed to the Community Infrastructure Levy Policy Working Group

 (2) That Councillors Coles, J Fradgley and Smith be appointed to the Approved Suppliers Process Working Group.

87 **To receive update reports on Outside Bodies from Councillors**

Stratford Town Trust – Sarah Summers
Stratford in Bloom – Councillor J Fradgley

- 88 **Verbal Ward Reports to receive notification of important issues, for information purposes only, on issues affecting the town**

Councillor MacDonald gave a brief update on the Town Transport Group.

- 89 **Town Clerk's Verbal Report**

There was no Verbal Update

- 90 **Date and time of next Meeting**

Tuesday 7 January 2025 (with Planning Committee moving to 4pm).

Chairman: