

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE, AT 7.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY 13 JULY 2021

Present: Cllr Mike Jennings (Chairman)
Cllr Anne Balkwill
Cllr Dena Bex
Cllr Philip Cole
Cllr Martina Edmonds
Cllr Barrie Fishman
Cllr Steve Mammatt
Cllr Chris Povey
Cllr Mel Rollinson
Cllr Paul Vann
Cllr Julia Wingate

In Attendance: County Cllr Julian Brazil
District Cllr Susan Jackson
District Cllr Denise O'Callaghan
District Cllr Hilary Bastone
Isabel Blake, South Hams District Council
Alex Rehaag, South Hams District Council
Michael Watts, Barclays Bank
Martin Johnson (Secretary)

21/40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Graham Price and Peter Ralph.

21/41 BARCLAYS BANK CLOSURE

Members received a written report on the Kingsbridge branch of Barclays closure on Friday 17 September and the South West Market Director provided a potted history of banking and the rationale for the decision. Only 10% of banking transactions took place in a branch and there had been a 15% reduction in counter transactions in the 2 years to March 2020 in Kingsbridge. A total of 113 regular customers used the branch exclusively for their banking and did not interact in other ways. However, everyday transactions could be completed at the Post Office in Fore Street and there were free-to-use ATMs in the town centre. Mr Watts then took Members' questions:

- There was potential for a Barclays mobile bank to visit the town however, this would be dependent on demand and a strategy needed to be worked up.
- Vulnerable customers would be contacted prior to closure and the impacts upon them discussed.
- Customers without access to mobile phones/computers could use the Post Office or make contact via landline.
- Different banks operating at a single site was being trialled at 3 locations in the UK.

The Barclays representative left the meeting

21/42 ROPEWALK ASSETS

Members received a South Hams District Council (SHDC) discussion paper: Affordable housing options and next steps for the brownfield site adjacent to the Cattle Market Car Park. SHDC officers expanded on the report, took Members' questions and discussed next steps. It was then **RESOLVED**:

- for the Town Council (KTC) and SHDC to work in partnership on the brownfield site in Ropewalk to deliver an affordable housing project,
- for KTC to consider setting up a formal Kingsbridge Community Land Trust,
- to agree a project plan to progress the site to planning application stage, and
- to draft a Terms of Reference for the project to include expectations, anticipated outcomes and timescales.

SHDC's Member and Officers left the meeting

21/43 REPORTS FROM POLICE, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL AND SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

43.1 County Cllr Brazil reported that he supported the proposed way forward for the brownfield Ropewalk site (item 21/42). He was delighted the Tour of Britain was riding through Kingsbridge and may be able to assist with promotion/events via his Devon County Council (DCC) locality budget. He recognised that a number of diversion and related signs were being left out after road works had been completed. Potholes in Church Street had been investigated recently and he would ascertain what progress was being made. Finally, he noted that Kingsbridge children were being taken by taxi to a pupil referral unit in Dawlish; Children's Services was a key priority for DCC.

43.2 District Cllr O'Callaghan reported that she also supported the proposed next steps for SHDC owned brownfield site in Ropewalk (item 21/42). SHDC had commenced a public consultation for rewilding and enhancing biodiversity on council owned land. Café Decks in the Recreation Ground had been closed throughout 2021 to date and SHDC was liaising with the tenant however, it meant that currently no toilets were available. Church Steps Passageway had been closed for over 2 years due to a dangerous boundary wall and rubbish had started to accumulate; she was liaising with SHDC engineers and was hopeful for progress. Finally, problems with the new recycling collection scheme continued to be worked upon.

43.3 District Cllr Jackson reported that waste and recycling updates had been provided to local residents to help to overcome current issues with the new service. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed for District Members to have an allowance for climate change business and for a Task and Finish Group to review the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan. SHDC Members would tour Quayside Leisure Centre shortly; Members queried if Fusion could explore solar panels and what community value was delivered to meet its charity status e.g. assistance to families on universal credit. Finally, SHDC was trying to bring a derelict property in Wallingford Road back into occupation.

Cllrs Brazil, Jackson and O'Callaghan left the meeting

21/44 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman agreed to take 2 items of Urgent Business at agenda item 21/54: Tour of Britain – Devon Stage and Kings Arms – update.

21/45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

21/46 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 8 June 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

21/47 PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committees held on 15 June 2021 and 6 July 2021.

21/48 PROPERTY COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Property Committee held on 22 June 2021.

21/49 EMERGENCIES & CLIMATE RESILIENCE FORUM

Members noted KTC's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan and queried what short term actions the Kingsbridge business and residential community could make to reduce its carbon footprint. It was **RESOLVED** to develop the concept for a Kingsbridge Environment Forum and to produce an internal briefing paper.

21/50 TREE PLANTING

Members received a report on a SHDC funding bid to the Urban Tree Challenge Fund to include 127 trees to be planted in Kingsbridge at Duncombe Park, Rack Park amenity space, Wallingford Road play area and Homelands play area. Given Kingsbridge did not have S.106 funds available a £15.5k contribution from KTC would be required. Members noted an anonymous donation for 50% towards KTC's sum, that KTC should negotiate species choice, the spread of planting to other locations (Recreation Ground, Embankment Road Cemetery, Treblepark, Fore Street and Stentiford Hill) and that there was no guarantee of bid success. It was **RESOLVED** to support SHDC's funding application for 127 trees to be planted in Kingsbridge and to make a financial contribution at £15.5k total; conditional that species choice and further locations could be agreed.

21/51 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

51.1 Public Open Forum. There had been no members of public at the scheduled Forum prior to the meeting.

51.2 Recycling Banks. A potential move of the recycling banks from the southern perimeter of the Cattle Market Car Park to the former loading ramp in the south east corner of the car park was being explored by SHDC. This would increase the number of parking spaces.

51.3 Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022. There would be a 4 day bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2 to Sunday 5 June 2022 with a potential Town Criers' competition.

51.4 Skateboarding. A potential re-invention of the current skatepark would require a larger footprint at the current site i.e. use of further car parking spaces and tree surgery to neighbouring trees. Members were supporting the New Skatepark For Kingsbridge group and there was liaison with SHDC.

A local resident had recently complained about skateboarding in the Town Square; guidance had been received from the Police and advice had been sought from SHDC whereupon a reply would be made.

51.5 Mural – Quay toilets. A potential mural to wrap around the Quay toilet block was progressing.

A Facebook invitation for local sculptors to express interest in the production of a sculpture on a grass verge at the head of the estuary had received over 7,800 views, 855 engagements and 55 shares to date.

51.6 A board advertising signs. DCC had been alerted to an increased number of unauthorised signage in and around the town centre. DCC considered such signs from a Health & Safety perspective rather than aesthetics e.g. an A board at Cookworthy roundabout was different to a similar sign at Lower Union Road. The authority had written to a night-economy business and phoned others to request removal.

51.7 Quay House – Covid-19. Lifting of Lockdown restrictions was scheduled for Monday 19 July whereupon a national increase in Covid-19 cases was anticipated, Members agreed for the Council Offices to retain the requirement to wear facemasks on entry during business hours plus retention of the hallway front desk/screen.

51.8 Foodbank search for new operating base. The Foodbank had written to both DCC and SHDC regarding use of the former Ropewalk learning site which was the subject of SHDC officer's housing presentation that evening

51.9 Vacancy in North Ward. Cllr Bex would leave KTC that evening thereby creating a vacancy in North Ward. A Public Notice would feature in the Gazette, noticeboards and website on Thursday 22 July alerting Ward residents of their right to call an election with a deadline for feedback by Wednesday 11 August. Thereafter, SHDC Elections Office would contact KTC to report whether an election

has been called or Members may co-opt. Members agreed that for the latter co-option the position should be advertised.

51.10 Town Fund. The outcome of KTC's application to the Improving the Business Environment Fund should be known shortly.

51.11 SHDC current consultations. The following consultations were ongoing:

- Better Lives For All – A vision for the South Hams (deadline 20 August),
- How do you feel about rewilding?? (SHDC's own green spaces e.g. Embankment Road grass verge), and
- Electric car and bike club.

Members noted the above consultations.

51.12 KTC summer recess. No meetings had been scheduled in August. Therefore, forthcoming meetings were Planning Committee 20 July, Finance Committee 22 July, Parks & Open Spaces Committee 30 July and then Planning Committee 7 September.

21/52 REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND AUTHORITIES/AGENCIES

52.1 Ropewalk assets/housing meeting SHDC/KTC 9 June 2021.

52.2 Police catch-up Insp Baker/KTC 11 June 2021.

52.3 Skatepark meeting SHDC/New Skatepark for KingsbridgeMaverick/KTC 14 June 2021.

52.4 Business Environment Fund meeting Chamber of Commerce/KTC 15 June 2021.

52.5 Neighbourhood Plan Q&A sessions 19 June, 23 June (Zoom), 3 July & 7 July (Zoom) 2021.

52.6 Devon Community Resilience Forum 9 July 2021.

Members noted the above meetings.

21/53 FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 13 July 2021. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £14,878.53 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to exceed a period of 2.5 hours (SOs article 3.x).

**21/54.1 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN:
TOUR OF BRITAIN – DEVON STAGE**

Cllr Wingate and the Town Clerk had liaised with DCC regarding the Tour of Britain which would ride through Kingsbridge on Monday 6 September to include a sprint along the Embankment and the riders cycling up Fore Street. The estimated time of arrival was 1.55 p.m. A clearway, i.e. no parking along the route, would be required from 9.30 a.m. and there would be a no deliveries time window until 2.00 p.m. Temporary barriers would be erected in Fore Street to effectively close-up the parking bays. It was a non-school day and there was potential for a good crowd and visitors in the town centre. It was **RESOLVED** for the event to be well promoted by way of a cross-street banner and for music and children's entertainment to be organised.

**21/54.2 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN:
KINGS ARMS – UPDATE**

The Chairman had liaised with the on-site manager of the refurbishment project; the works had commenced above Treyone Kitchenmakers and would progress to the former NatWest bank site then onwards to the Kings Arms.

21/55 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

None.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

The Chairman presented Cllr Bex with a card and gift to recognise her outstanding public service to Kingsbridge and in response she thanked Members and offered her ambitions for the town.

..... Presiding ChairmanDate