

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE,
AT 6.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY 9 APRIL 2024**

Present: Cllr Philip Cole (Chairman)
Cllr Anne Balkwill
Cllr Martina Edmonds
Cllr Barrie Fishman
Cllr Mike Jennings
Cllr Steve Mammatt
Cllr Graham Price
Cllr Danielle Rawstron
Cllr Mel Rollinson
Cllr Paul Vann
Cllr Julia Wingate
Cllr Lorna Yabsley

In Attendance: County Cllr Julian Brazil
District Cllr Susan Jackson
District Cllr Denise O'Callaghan
Two Members of Public
Martin Johnson (Secretary)

At the outset of the meeting, Cllr Cole reported that the Planning Inspectorate had dismissed the appeals for a development at Garden Mill, Derby Road following the hearing on 16 January 2024. He thanked South Hams District Council's support for the Town Council and numerous local residents.

23/157 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Chris Povey and the Neighbourhood Police team.

Public Open Forum

Members of public made the statement at Annex A.

A member of public left the meeting

**23/158 REPORTS FROM POLICE, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL AND
SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

158.1 PC Cooper had provided a Police Report for March 2024 in his absence. There had been 27 occurrences created from direct calls/website reports by the public and officer attendance at incidents. In addition, there had been several administration occurrences relating to disclosure requests, licensing activity and firearms' checks. Legally possessed firearms and knives had been handed in at the station. The summary of crime and incidents included 2 criminal damage reports i.e. damage to a roof and chickens being killed by a dog. There had also been thefts of 2 motorbikes and a vehicle (which had resulted in the arrest of a suspect), shoplifting, verbal abuse/road rage, threat with a knife (which was under

investigation), assaults without notable injuries and 2 serious assaults (one historic), domestic incidents, malicious communications via mobile phones, a missing person had been found safe and well and a small package of drugs had been recovered. Sergeant Charlie Wilkes would be joining the Neighbourhood Police team shortly.

158.2 County Cllr Brazil apologised for the traffic lights at the Cookworthy Road/Ilbert Road/West Alvington Hill junction over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend. Devon County Council (DCC) had to closely consider and communicate with tourist towns before making highways' decisions. The A379 at Stoke Fleming was now open following the completion of wall repairs. Government's Safety Valve agreement with DCC to cover Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) funding had created a huge debt for the authority which was spiralling out of control and greater than the authority's reserves. The public consultation for the Devolution Deal for Devon had closed and a special council meeting would be scheduled towards the end of April to ratify the proposal or not. However, a general election was anticipated and so the situation could change notwithstanding DCC's position. He noted that the Town Council (KTC) had recommended the proposals be rejected and the full results of the consultation be made public. Finally, he considered that a vast capital investment was required to upgrade the town's drainage system to mitigate ongoing flooding and sewage discharge incidents.

Three members of public entered the Chamber for a brief period and supplied a leaflet "The Madness of Net Zero" to the Town Clerk.

158.3 District Cllr O'Callaghan had noted Waterborn's request for support during the Public Open Forum and the Town Clerk would provide KTC's comments to her. She acknowledged that the Planning Inspectorate had dismissed the appeals at Garden Mill/Lock's Hill which she considered was the right decision. The new skatepark had opened in Quay Car Park and was being enthusiastically enjoyed by young people. South West Water's contracted tankers were still operating in Quay Car Park to alleviate pressure on the sewage system and SHDC had requested an update following meetings with SWW, DCC and the Environment Agency (EA) alongside KTC. SHDC had rebuilt its section of wall in Church Steps Passageway and was liaising with a third party regarding rectification of the adjacent wall. Another meeting was anticipated between SHDC, Hastoe and KTC in late April/early May to discuss potential affordable-led housing developments in Ropewalk. A Sustainable South Hams Assembly would take place on Saturday 19 April focussing on young people.

158.4 District Cllr Jackson reported that SHDC's Recreation officer had visited Quayside Leisure Centre the previous day and was satisfied with its cleanliness. SHDC's Overview & Scrutiny Committee received reports from the Fusion Task & Finish Group regarding the district's leisure centres. Each centre had a different contract which was a challenge to manage. Quayside's solar PV project would go ahead notwithstanding some delay.

County Cllr Brazil & District Cllr Jackson left the Chamber

23/159 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman agreed to take one item of urgent business under agenda item 23/168: "Social Media Strategy".

23/160 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

23/161 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 12 March 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

23/162 PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committees held on 19 March 2024 and 2 April 2024.

23/163 ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Environment, Transport & Resilience Committee held on 26 March 2024.

23/164 FLOODING & SEWAGE DISCHARGES

Further to the previous meeting, Members discussed recent flooding and sewage discharge events. It was noted that Members and Staff had patrolled the town centre that morning and would also do so the following day given the forecast for high tides at circa 5.6m. Two SWW officers had attended KTC's Flooding Awareness Event held at the Market Hall on Saturday 6 April and had spoken to several local residents and commented that potential independent projects were being worked-up by the company. Members queried what follow-up actions were taken by SHDC to ensure that flood mitigation measures at new developments were operating correctly e.g. attenuation tanks at the Applegate off Belle Hill. After discussion, it was considered that a follow-up to the Integrated Urban Drainage Management meeting held in October 2023 should be arranged. It was **RESOLVED** to schedule a meeting with DCC, EA, SHDC and SWW to discuss solutions to mitigate the town's flood risk/sewage discharges and to invite Anthony Mangnall MP to the same.

District Cllr O'Callaghan left the meeting

23/165 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

165.1 SHDC/KTC meeting. Further to last October's meeting with SHDC senior management another session was being arranged to discuss how SHDC and KTC could work together on potential short term projects.

165.2 Dog Control Orders. SHDC's public consultation had ended in November 2023 and evidence provided was being reviewed with the new Public Space Protection Orders likely to be published shortly. KTC's suggestions had been noted i.e. only dogs off-lead areas to be Duncombe Park and Rack Park amenity space.

165.3 Walking and Cycling (LCWIP) Project. SHDC intended to hold a public consultation at the Market Hall on the project. KTC had provided its feedback on the proposed barriers and interventions for walking and cycling in and around the town.

165.4 Street Lighting. An on-site meeting to review lighting issues/projects at: Ropewalk, Cattle Market/Tumbly Hill and Duncombe Street/Fore Street junction with DCC's lighting contractor was anticipated to take place late April/early May.

165.5 Bandstand Rebuild. Further to the previous meeting, the snagging list had been reduced with the following items to be completed:

- a small section of external cabling to be boxed-in,
- minor aesthetics to the rear cladding to be completed,
- guttering to be refitted, and
- re-decoration to be completed,

165.6 Cookworthy Museum. An application for KTC's public art funding to restore an 18th century dress received at the previous council meeting had been withdrawn however, the Museum may apply for a grant towards a photographic project.

165.7 Condition of 50/52 Fore Street. The UK agent for the overseas owner of the former YMCA shop had liaised with local builders and quotations for maintenance works were likely to be reviewed shortly.

165.8 3G/All Weather Pitch. Kingsbridge Sports Forum had submitted a business case for a pitch to be hosted on Education South West land at Kingsbridge Community College.

165.9 D-Day 80. Outcomes of a meeting with the RBL's Chairman on 25 March had earmarked the following events:

- Cookworthy Museum's exhibition "6 weeks to go" showcasing the evacuation of local villages.
- Museum's afternoon tea Wednesday 8 May to coincide with VE Day.
- War Memorial service a.m. Thursday 6 June.
- Dodbrooke Church peal of bells 6 June.
- Town Crier proclamation 6 June.
- Mill Club 1940s' themed event Saturday 8 June.
- Potential purchase of exhibition displays to 'show & tell' D-Day'.

165.10 A leaflet "The Madness of Net Zero" supplied by a member of public earlier during the meeting was distributed to Members.

**23/166 REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND
 AUTHORITIES/AGENCIES**

166.1 SWW/DCC/EA/SHDC/KTC sewage discharge meetings 13 & 25 March 2024. See agenda item 23/164.

166.2 Skatepark opening 14 March 2024. Several Members had joined the Skatepark committee and SHDC for a photoshoot.

166.3 Sgt Shotton/KTC meeting 20 March 2024. The Chairman and Town Clerk had met Sgt Shotton before leaving his post and provided KTC's thanks for his professionalism throughout his time in Kingsbridge.

166.4 Harbour House/KTC public art meeting 20 March 2024. Members received notes from the meeting which, in particular, provided updates on:

- An art projects' budget at £6,450 and researching fund-matching opportunities.
- Waymarking the Backways via an art solution supported by QR codes to lead to related information and a printed trail leaflet. All necessary permissions needed to be explored.
- Intergenerational skate project to rehabilitate some public perception of skateboarding as a nuisance e.g. mural at the new skatepark, zines distributed around the town, public events, workshops and skating merchandise such as stickers.

166.5 SHDC/TTC/KTC peer review 20 March 2024. Local councils had supported SHDC's communications and working partnerships with them.

166.6 SHDC/KIB/KTC Town Square paving meeting 21 March 2024. A seating and planting solution had been earmarked to effectively cover the paving raised by roots of a tree adjacent to The Creeks End Inn. A further on-site meeting and plans were required.

166.7 Devon Communities Together "Devon Prepared" Conference 22 March 2024. KTC had made a presentation to the conference and taken part in worthwhile workshops returning with lots of information which was anticipated to be translated into social media "Drip Feed" flood mitigation advice for local residents.

166.8 Annual Town Meeting/Flooding Awareness Event 6 April 2024. Several local residents spoke to Members throughout the 4 hour event and Members were distributed a summary of feedback received under the headings of: best things about Kingsbridge, worst things, if you had a magic wand? and immediate issues. See 23/164 for flooding awareness matters.

23/167 FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 9 April 2024. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £89,680.72 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**23/168 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN:
SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY**

Members received notes from a meeting held on 8 April which had discussed more structured Facebook and Instagram content to sit alongside KTC's formal social media policy:

- Public relations and social media to be included as full council agenda items with Members to forward ideas for posts.
- Instagram posts to be agreed and scheduled 6 months ahead with a suggested 3 stories per week to promote and raise awareness about KTC in general to commence with a group photo. Posts about the background and work of individual Councillors. Visual reminders on the day of council meetings. Shared posts and promotion of community events and groups. Promotion of new local businesses. Local stories and public arts.
- Facebook to continue to convey KTC information i.e. agendas, road closures, events etc. plus one story per week.
- The next meeting to be held at 11.00 a.m. on 22 April.

Members supported a reinvention of KTC's Instagram account.

23/169 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

None.

23/170 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was **RESOLVED** that in view of the nature of the business about to be transacted, at agenda items 23/171, 23/172 and 23/173 below, that the public and press be temporarily excluded.

A member of public left the meeting

23/171 QUAY HOUSE GROUNDS – LAWN PROJECT

It was **RESOLVED** to accept a preferred option and quotations to install a giant crossword in Quay House grounds on weekdays during the summer to further KTC's recreational offer.

23/172 KINGSBRIDGE COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Members received nominations and it was **RESOLVED** to select 9 local people as Kingsbridge Community Champions for 2024. It was further agreed for prizes and certificates to be presented by the current Town Mayor before the next council meeting/annual meeting of the council on 14 May.

**23/173 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR/VICE CHAIRMAN FOR
MAYORAL YEAR 2024/25**

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Price as Deputy Town Mayor/Vice Chairman for mayoral year 2024/25 and for him to take office at the Annual Council Meeting to be held on 14 May 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.52 p.m.

..... Presiding Chairman Date

Annex:

A. Public Open Forum.

Public Open Forum

1. Julie Taylor thanked SHDC for its efforts at the Appeals Hearing for the Land at Garden Mill which had resulted in the Planning Inspectorate's dismissals.
2. Crispin Jones sought advice and support for his Waterborn paddleboarding school located in Quay Car Park. KTC had supported the introduction of Waterborn (via planning application 3985/22/FUL which was approved by SHDC on 20 March 2023). This followed a licence being granted for the school on SHDC's asset. A trial 2 year period was due to complete at the end of 2024 however, he informed Members that this was likely to rollover for a further 12 months.

While there was much local and visitor support for the venture, 2023 had been difficult primarily due to poor weather indeed, one of the wettest on record. In order to sustain the business Crispin proposed that further revenue sources were required by offering kayak hire and providing drinks/bottled water and healthy option snacks from the school. In short, he suggested that he needed "to adapt to survive". The issue was that the licence was explicit regarding what he could and could not do and, in its present form, it appeared to preclude him from expanding.

Members commented that they were strong advocates for Waterborn and considered the school to be well presented, had livened up the waterside and been a great success. Adjacent to the reinvented skatepark the locale had become a recreational and social hub in the town. Therefore, Members unanimously expressed their strong support for Waterborn and it was moved to request SHDC, as a landlord, to assist Crispin as best possible and to consider sanctioning the amendments to his licence as proposed.