

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE,
AT 6.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024**

Present: Cllr Julia Wingate (Chairman)
Cllr Philip Cole
Cllr Martina Edmonds
Cllr Barrie Fishman
Cllr Mike Jennings
Cllr Steve Mammatt
Cllr Chris Povey
Cllr Paul Vann
Cllr Lorna Yabsley

In Attendance: County Cllr Julian Brazil
District Cllr Denise O'Callaghan
Richard Torné, Kingsbridge & Salcombe Gazette
One Member of Public
Martin Johnson (Secretary)

24/71 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Anne Balkwill, Cllr Graham Price, Cllr Danielle Rawstron, Cllr Mel Rollinson, District Cllr Denise O'Callaghan and Sgt Charlie Wilkes.

Public Open Forum

There were no statements from members of public.

24/72 REPORTS FROM POLICE, DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL AND SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

72.1 A written Police Report for September 2024 was received by Members. The total number of occurrences reported within the Kingsbridge beat area was 72. The figure was higher than previous reports as it included several safeguarding referrals and incidents for which no crime had been disclosed or apparent. There had been 25 recorded crimes or anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents including 3 disagreements between neighbours, a public order offence and 2 drunk and disorderly. A stop and search had resulted in possession of class A drugs and the importation of one kilo of cannabis was under investigation. Numerous intelligence referrals had been made regarding drugs and the Police were actively trying to deal with the issue. A non-residential burglary was under investigation via forensic analysis. Criminal damage incidents were a rock thrown at a door, damage to a motor vehicle and damage to plant pots. Five domestic assaults included at least 2 related to mental health, there had been 2 allegations of coercive and controlling behaviour, 3 assaults which had resulted in no further action and a further 3 assaults were under investigation.

Members supported a recent post on the Kingsbridge Police Facebook page regarding ASB incidents in the Recreation Ground which also encouraged/provided directions for local residents to report intelligence and actual incidents. However, frustrations were aired about ongoing ASB in Quay Car Park and the Town Square. Moreover, it was queried if the monthly occurrences' figures included verbal reports made at the Police Station and at community surgeries. It was agreed to arrange a Town Council (KTC)/Police liaison meeting for late October.

72.2 County Cllr Brazil congratulated Kingsbridge In Bloom's continued successes and its positive impact on the town. He reported that the Police & Crime Commissioner had promised extra Police officers however, the local Police resource had been cut and it was agreed for KTC's Councillor Advocate to query the same. Devon County Council (DCC) had agreed a Devolution Deal with Torbay Council. However, he considered that it was no better than the original concept and was surprised that a Labour government had effectively signed up to a Conservative agreement. While he supported devolution per se he did not consider that that this was the right deal for Devon. All district councils, and Exeter, had agreed a 200% council tax for second homes. South Hams District Council (SHDC) would receive £700k income per annum which would be ringfenced for housing. However, DCC would receive £15m to £20m per annum but was unwilling to also target it for housing. SHDC, and other districts, were disappointed and had written to DCC imploring the authority to re-consider its position as said funding was a major opportunity for the county to provide innovative housing schemes for its core workers and DCC should be working in partnership. Members agreed that KTC should support SHDC and lobby DCC to fund housing matters with the additional income gained from second homes council tax. About 1,900 homes had switched to business rates for holiday let accommodation which could be retained if the property was available for at least 140 nights and was actually let for at least 70 nights and few properties switched back to council tax. Such properties had to evidence to SHDC that they managed a commercial waste collection service or were required to pay the authority to pick up their waste. Finally, DCC's reserves had reduced from £300m to £70m and the authority needed to be more creative in how it conducted its business.

Cllr Povey entered the meeting

72.3 District Cllr O'Callaghan congratulated Kingsbridge In Bloom for winning a Gold Medal and South West Travel Association Cup in the small town category at the SWIB awards. SHDC was in the process of purchasing 6 homes, 2 and 3 bedroom properties, in the Ivybridge area via the local authority housing fund. This would provide temporary accommodation to negate the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for refugees and resettlement. The 9 in number one bedroom flats in Westville were anticipated to be available by the end of the year. The Executive meeting on 10 October would discuss differential parking charges. A senior SHDC team would visit KTC on 16 October to discuss the proposals to bring visitor parking in-line with other tourist areas and for a discounted scheme to be introduced for local residents. The latter to be managed by an App for smart phone users and a longer period of parking would be provided for others. Parking charges had not been increased since 2021, as inflation had increased, and prices were deemed to be low at present. The thrust was to gain further income to maintain SHDC's core services.

SHDC had lobbied central government to introduce a 'tourist tax' because visitors used all the district amenities which were paid for by the local tax payer. Finally, new equipment to clean up chewing gum would be trialled in Kingsbridge on 11 October.

24/73 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman warmly congratulated Kingsbridge In Bloom for their outstanding successes at the South West In Bloom award presentations held in Bath that day (small town category Gold, small town group winner South West Tourism Award cup, best entry on judging day Sargent Trophy, Budge Social Media Trophy and It's Your Neighbourhood 3 outstanding and 3 thriving entries).

24/74 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

24/75 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 10 September 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

County Cllr Brazil left the meeting

24/76 PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committees held on 17 September 2024 and 1 October 2024.

24/77 ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Recommendations in the minutes of the Environment, Transport and Resilience Committee held on 24 September 2024.

A member of the Press left the meeting

24/78 SOUTH HAMS FESTIVAL

Further to the previous council meeting, Members re-considered SHDC's proposal for a district-wide South Hams Festival in June 2025. A discussion had also been held with SHDC's lead officer on 30 September alongside District Cllr O'Callaghan and the Director of Harbour House arts centre. Members carefully debated the matter and the salient points were:

- Members supported the concept of a district-wide festival.
- However, there was probably not enough time to June 2025 to plan for a 'gold standard' event in Kingsbridge.
- Community groups were likely to already have plans in place for 2025 and would be in the throes of producing their own calendar of events.
- Kingsbridge would require a dedicated independent committee (KTC, Harbour House, Kingsbridge Climate Action and other interested parties) to work-up ideas and carefully consider festival events in order to make it successful.

- Harbour House would wish to involve students from the community college and primary school as a fillip to its current engagement.
- While the change and biodiversity theme may bring the 'green agenda' to some current sceptical sections of the community it may prove difficult to adopt the theme per se.
- Members were sensitive about committing funding to an arts festival when SHDC was simultaneously considering solutions to increase income to deliver its core services.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to feedback to SHDC to strongly suggest the proposed South Hams Festival be held over to summer 2026.

24/79 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

79.1 DCC local waiting restrictions programme. Local residents' requests supported at previous meetings by KTC for the introduction of 'no waiting at any time' (double yellow lines) at the mouth of Devon Square and Allotment Gardens would be received by DCC's South Hams Highways & Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) in spring 2025. However, a DYL request in Embankment Road (Crabshell Inn to The Moorings) would be received by the HATOC in late 2025. Members supported a request to DCC to move the latter request from tranche 2 to spring 2025.

79.2 Waverley Road Community Garden. Further to the previous council meeting the questionnaire with all Waverley Road households to ascertain if they wished for the current planters in situ to be retained or be removed had gleaned 17 household responses by the deadline of 11 September with 14 in support and 3 objections. The results had been made known to local residents by the garden group. KTC had subsequently asked DCC how the garden group should make a retrospective application for their installation and feedback was awaited.

79.3 Salcombe Harbour Strategic Business Plan 2022-27. SHDC had adopted the business plan at the Executive on 19 September and a public consultation on the plan had commenced until 1 November. The plan included 2 projects for Kingsbridge:

- Pontoon development in FY 2025/26 for replacement of private pontoons licences which had expired in January 2024. Costs £60k from pontoon reserve with 3 year payback.
- Slipway, storage and dinghy racks to be discussed following completion of the new skate park. Costs £10k from Car Parks with 8 year payback.

79.4 Short Term Projects.

- Street lighting in Ropewalk, Cattle Market car park and Duncombe Street. Site visits had taken place with Enerveo and cost estimates were awaited.
- New VAS speed signs. It was proving difficult to 'tick all boxes' for portable, solar powered and colourful. An update would be provided to the Property & Recreation Committee on 29 October.

- Young children's play equipment in Trebblepark play area. A visit by Kompan was scheduled on 10 October to gain ideas, costs etc. Again feedback to be provided to the next Property & Recreation Committee.
- Drinking water fountains. Needed to be explored more thoroughly however, South West Water contact had been established.

79.5 SHDC proposal for Differential Parking. Further to agenda item 72.3: SHDC would consider differential parking charges for its off-street car parks, with a discount scheme for local residents, at the Executive to be held on 10 October. A meeting with SHDC had been scheduled at 6.30 p.m. on Wednesday 16 October. SHDC Ward Members, Chamber of Commerce, Information Centre and Fore Street traders' group had been invited.

79.6 Climate & Nature Symposium for South Hams Town & Parish Councillors. KTC would attend the event on 11 October.

24/80 REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND AUTHORITIES/AGENCIES

80.1 SHDC/Mayors & Clerks meeting 19 September 2024. A worthwhile meeting had received updates on: South Hams Festival, waste service, Fusion, financial position going forwards, car parking and briefings were shared from towns.

80.2 Police/SHDC/Café/KTC Recreation Ground anti-social behaviour meeting 24 September 2024. The meeting had agreed a range of actions to mitigate current ASB issues and a follow-up had been scheduled for 17 December.

80.3 SHDC Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans exhibition 25 September 2024. KTC and local residents discussed the proposals with SHDC officers and a link for the public consultation would be forwarded to Members.

80.4 KTC Property/Assets 2nd walkabout 25 September 2024. Members reviewed the cemetery, Recreation Ground, Memorial Shelter, War Memorial and festoon lights. Updates would be received by the next Property & Recreation Committee.

80.5 Traffic Management for Community Events course 28 September 2024. KTC had hosted the course by Cormac with representatives from KTC, Kingsbridge Celebrates Christmas, Kingsbridge Fair Week, Marldon Apple Pie Fair, Salcombe Regatta and Salcombe Town Council. All participants had passed!

80.6 SHDC/Harbour House/Kingsbridge Climate Action/KTC South Hams Festival meeting 30 September 2024. See agenda item 24/78.

80.7 Royal British Legion/KTC Remembrance Sunday preparations meeting 3 October 2024. Preparations were on target and the Town Clerk would seek assistance with road closures.

80.8 South West In Bloom awards presentation 8 October 2024. See agenda item 24/73.

24/81 FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 8 October 2024. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £13,233.39 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

24/82 SOCIAL MEDIA

A range of Instagram posts were agreed including hire of the thermal imaging camera, promotion of the new book “Birds of the Kingsbridge & Salcombe Estuary” by Gordon Waterhouse, findings from the Climate & Nature Symposium, Cllr Wingate wearing the mayoral chain of office, Kingsbridge In Bloom awards and Remembrance Sunday.

24/83 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN

None.

24/84 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

Members asked if Fore Street traders were aware of the need to support and apply early for stalls at Kingsbridge Celebrates Christmas and the Chairman agreed that they should be encouraged to do so and would take action.

The meeting closed at 8.28 p.m.

..... Presiding ChairmanDate