

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF KINGSBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE, AT 6.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2025

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

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

24/176 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Chris Povey and District Cllr Susan Jackson.

Public Open Forum

Statements from members of public are at Annex A.

The following agenda item was taken early out-of-turn:

24/182 PUMP TRACK

Members noted comments made during the Public Open Forum and received a written proposal for a pump track (looped asphalt bicycle track) from the Kingsbridge Skatepark Committee alongside the briefing provided to the annual town meeting held on 1 March 2025 and a report "main reasons against a pump track". A pump track or padel court, introduction of street lighting at specific locations and a refit of the Memorial Shelter had been allocated as community projects at £75k total within the budget for the current financial year 2025/26.

Members identified that 4 in number South Hams District Council (SHDC) sites in town had been investigated for a pump track: Duncombe Park, Rack Park amenity space, the front/Embankment Road end of the Recreation Ground and the rear/Derby Road end of the Recreation Ground. Duncombe Park and Rack Park had received minimal support during public consultations primarily because both areas allowed dogs to run off leads. The front of the Recreation Ground had raised concerns over flooding and disturbance near memory trees, benches and flower beds. The rear of the Recreation Ground had raised concerns over loss of football and picnic space. However, it was considered that the latter could be overcome and

the rear of the Recreation Ground was the preference. The reasoning was that Duncombe Park also had 5-a-side style football posts and a small football area could still be fitted into the rear of the Recreation Ground. Moreover, it was envisaged that the current picnic space could be re-invented to include more benches and tables than there were at present. A concept plan identified the pump track 30 metres from housing which was the recommended distance from residential property for such activity and it was noted that the tennis courts and bowling green butted up to Derby Road properties. After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to support a pump track to be installed in the Recreation Ground at the rear/Derby Road end of the park and to liaise with SHDC and the Kingsbridge Skatepark Committee to achieve the project.

Two members of public left the meeting

24/177 REPORTS FROM POLICE AND SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

177.1 Members received a written Police report for the period 11 March to 7 April 2025. There has been 62 calls for service raised for Kingsbridge via 999/101 calls and emails to the Police. As a result of these, and other means of reporting such as online reports and direct to the Enquiry Office, 65 occurrences were generated for further investigation or safeguarding work. These included reports of anti-social behaviour, domestic incidents, matters relating to firearms licensing, concerns for public safety and welfare, and fights at the town square/bus station area. There had also been several incidents reported at the café in the Recreation Ground and an increase in the number of missing persons. The aim was to drive down anti-social behaviour. PC Sam McGregor had joined the Neighbourhood Police Team from the Response unit and PCSO Tom Earby has completed training and would carry out mentorship between Kingsbridge and Totnes before joining full-time on completion. Finally, local residents could report incidents and local intelligence to the Police in several ways: via email, the force website or at the Police Station which was open Monday to Saturday 10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

177.2 District Cllr O'Callaghan reported that Devon County Council (DCC) elections would take place on Thursday 1 May 2025. The deadline to register to vote was 11 April, postal vote 14 April, proxy and photo ID 23 April and all relevant information was available on the Electoral Commission's website. Second homes council tax had commenced on 1 April and SHDC's share was 8% which would realise an extra £600k for affordable homes. SHDC had produced a leaflet "Don't suffer in silence", distributed to all Members, which provided help for tenants in rented properties who had damp and mould problems. Solar panels at Quayside Leisure Centre had been installed meaning cheaper bills and saving CO2; new dry side changing rooms had also been approved. Further to the previous meeting, the broken lift at the leisure centre was awaiting new parts to fix it, a large broken tree branch blocking the footpath to Rack Park amenity space had been removed and refuse lorries would try to avoid the primary school 'rush hour'. She would follow-up on issues raised during the Public Open Forum regarding the paddleboarding hub.

Devon County Council report to be received later in the meeting

24/178 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

24/179 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

24/180 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the council meeting held on 11 March 2025 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

24/181 PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt the Resolutions in the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 18 March 2025 and 1 April 2025.

24/183 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Further to the previous meeting, it was **RESOLVED** to receive and adopt a revised Complaints Procedure to include a minor amendment.

24/184 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

184.1 Extra litter bins for Easter & Summer. Six black wheelie bins had been deployed in the Town Square/head of estuary/Quay Car Park footway/skatepark areas for the 2 week duration of the current school holidays to supplement KTC's cast iron litter bins. They would return for the 6 week duration of the summer school holidays.

184.2 Dog bins. Three independent requests for new dog bins had been received recently for the following: Darky Lane (junction with Archery Close), Henacre Road (junction with Public Footpath No.5) and potentially a third location (awaiting further information from a local resident). SHDC would not approve such requests unless there was an agreement with the town/parish council that it would pay for supply/installation and collections. A bin cost £500 and collections from £240 to £600 per annum dependent on regularity and location. At present, KTC had fixed laminated 'dog management' signage at the above locations and Staff were monitoring alongside local residents whether said action would have a positive impact.

184.3 Lock's Hill/Garden Mill development site – heras fencing. Both DCC Public Rights of Way and KTC had been reluctant to assist with the management of the heras fencing which secured the private land/development areas either side of Public Footpath No.6 as it traversed Lock's Hill. However, further to the report at the February meeting, Kroll Limited (acting as the Receiver) had fixed the fencing via a contractor.

184.4 CCTV – complaint. At the previous meeting Members delegated the response to a recent complaint regarding KTC’s proposals to install CCTV in Fore Street to the Chairman and the Town Clerk. Said response had been made on 24 March which Dismissed all aspects of the complaint and written feedback had been received from the complainant on 7 April that she would not be proceeding any further. Members agreed that said complaint and KTC’s response (deleting any personal details from both) should be placed on the website to provide openness and transparency.

184.5 A couple of projects. A short briefing was made on the Carol Singing event for Friday 19 December and new “Welcome to Kingsbridge” signage as earmarked at the previous Property & Recreation Committee. Members were content for Staff to explore both projects and work up options for consideration.

184.6 Twinning Association – transfer of funds. As reported at the February full council meeting, the Twinning Association had wound up and its remaining funds at circa £780 had been paid into the Mayor’s Charity for the Youth Club based at Horizons. A photoshoot would be arranged and press/social media release worked up. A letter would also be sent to the Mayor of Weilerbach to thank the town for its companionship and hospitality over the years.

184.7 South Devon National Landscape – management plan review. The SDNL (formerly South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) had arranged a remote Zoom meeting with Chairman and Clerks of town and parish councils at 6.00 p.m. on Tuesday 22 April to introduce a major review over 2025 for its next 5 year plan to run 2026-2031. This coincided with a Finance Committee meeting and Cllr Yabsley agreed to represent KTC.

184.8 South Hams Society – Dividing up the South Hams. The Society was keen to promote a meeting at 6.30 p.m. on Thursday 24 April in the Council Chamber, Follaton House, Totnes to discuss proposals for unitary authorities and the area currently controlled by South Hams District Council.

184.9 VE Day 80. A service at the War Memorial would take place at 11.00 a.m. on Thursday 8 May and a cream tea/1940s themed entertainment in the Mill Club at 2.00 to 5.30 p.m. on Saturday 10 May. The Royal British Legion had commenced promotion of the events.

24/185 REPORTS ON MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND AUTHORITIES/AGENCIES

185.1 South Hams District Council (SHDC) briefing on planning changes/neighbourhood plans 12 March 2025. Reported upon at the Planning Committees held on 18 March and 1 April 2025.

County Cllr Brazil entered the Council Chamber

185.2 Kingsbridge Flooding Partnership meeting 13 March 2025.

Representatives from DCC, Environment Agency (EA), KTC, Pell Frischmann (PF), SHDC and South West Water (SWW) had discussed flooding issues in town. SWW reported that a pre-application for a long-term solution had been submitted to the EA and explained the development of short to medium term solutions to reduce the risk of sewer flooding. Installation of a new high-level overflow on the Quay wall from the Prince of Wales Road chamber to operate during periods of tide locking in the culverted watercourse and installation of a 6 to 10m³ above ground storage tank in Quay Car Park to replace the requirement for tankers. Said principles were supported. DCC reported upon the condition of culverted watercourses under the highway and the scope of forthcoming inspections. PF explained the outputs of its modelling; silt level up to 75% had limited impact during period of dry weather however, it took up valuable hydraulic capacity during wet weather. Moreover, the finer silts were likely to move when strong flows were experienced within the culverted watercourses. The EA had secured funding to complete a Kingsbridge evaluation to identify which properties were at risk of flooding, the severity and the likely timescales and frequency. The agency continued to seek funds for property flood resilience for commercial properties but had been unsuccessful to date. The Flood Defence Grant in Aid was an option for covering costs of property flood resilience for residential properties. County Cllr Brazil and Members agreed that a letter should be worked up to be sent to SWW, signed by all parishes which bordered the Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuary, to request the funding for a long-term flooding solution to be added to the agency's current 5 year capital programme in order for said works to be actioned.

24/177 REPORT FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

177.3 County Cllr Brazil reported that during the DCC election build-up he had received concerns from local residents regarding speeding traffic in Church Street and Embankment Road. He recognised that Members had agreed not to replace KTC's speed alert signs because they were not considered to have much impact. A greater Police presence was probably required and such presence at Torcross had proved effective. He had also been made aware of localised parking issues near the school and a residents parking scheme had been suggested but they only created additional pressures elsewhere. A 20 mph speed limit for the whole of the town had been supported by KTC and the new administration at DCC from early May should be lobbied. He was also aware of driving nuisance in the late evenings/early mornings at SHDC's Quay Car Park however, this was a Police rather than local authority issue.

Cllrs Brazil & O'Callaghan left the meeting

185.3 Kingsbridge In Bloom (KIB)/local groups/KTC meeting 24 March 2025. A worthwhile meeting had been held to connect local gardening interest groups together ahead of KIB judging in July 2025.

185.4 SHDC/Town Council (KTC) Kingsbridge Economic Plan 25 March 2025. An informative meeting had been held and the subject would feature as an agenda item at the next council meeting ahead of an inaugural steering group meeting to be held at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday 11 June 2025.

185.5 SHDC/Mayors & Clerks meeting 26 March 2025. The meeting had concentrated upon potential devolution and re-organisation of Devon's principal councils.

185.6 Devon County Council (DCC)/local residents/KTC Archery Close flooding meeting 27 March 2025. The meeting had received the concerns of local residents and a number of outcomes were achieved. KTC would action some immediate 'firefighting' by way of posting dog management notices in Darky Lane and producing flyers to caution motorists not to park over surface water drains. DCC Highways and Public Rights of Way would liaise regarding the poor ground surface of the lane which had several 'ravines' caused by flood water/run-off. Finally, DCC Flood Risk would liaise with the Environment Agency's Land Management team to work up a flood mitigation scheme for the locale.

185.7 DCC/local residents/KTC Waverley Road planters meeting 27 March 2025. Further to the recent South Hams Highways & Traffic Orders Committee, an on-site meeting re-considered the current installation of planters which had been supported by KTC. It was agreed in principle that 2 circular planters which contained fruit trees should be removed, 4 rectangular planters (2 each at either end of the road) to be moved inwards away from corners in order to improve highway sight-lines, and a new rectangular planter to be positioned midships in the road. A new plan and application to be produced and forwarded to DCC.

185.8 Kingsbridge Community College/KTC meeting 28 March 2025. KCC was likely to conduct a new survey amongst students to ascertain what they needed in town.

185.9 SHDC/KIB/KTC grounds maintenance meeting 2 April 2025. A worthwhile meeting had considered what various actions were required working up towards KIB judging in July 2025.

Cllr Jennings left the meeting

24/186 FINANCE – PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Members received a schedule of payments due to date 8 April 2025. It was **RESOLVED** that the payments amounting to £34,942.00 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

24/187 SOCIAL MEDIA

Members suggested several potential Instagram posts including: DCC election dates, Town Hall clock works, Kingsbridge Trees Around the World, "Go Electric" event in the Town Square 26 May and Friends of the Kingsbridge Estuary news. All posts required good photos, a succinct script and hashtags if possible.

24/188 BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIRMAN

None.

24/189 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman received a question regarding the condition of the Fore Street passageways art project and responded that an internal meeting would be convened shortly.

24/190 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Not required as members of public had left the meeting.

24/191 KINGSBRIDGE COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Members received nominations and it was **RESOLVED** to select 3 local residents, and a local community organisation, as Kingsbridge Community Champions for 2025. The prize giving and photoshoot was likely to take place before the next council meeting on 13 May 2025.

**23/192 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR/VICE CHAIRMAN FOR
MAYORAL YEAR 2025/26**

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Wingate as Town Mayor/Chairman and Cllr Price as Deputy Town Mayor/Vice Chairman for mayoral year 2025/26 and for them to take office at the Annual Council Meeting to be held on 13 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

..... Presiding Chairman Date

Annex:

A. Public Open Forum.

Public Open Forum

1. Crispin Jones, Waterborn, stated that he had recently requested an update from SHDC on the planning application submitted in October 2024 for the permanent retention of 2 containers in Quay Car Park for his paddleboarding hub. He had been informed that the current position of the hub was no longer viable and advised that the containers would need to be moved alongside the northern end of the skatepark on the opposite side of the car park. This would mean the hub would effectively be hidden from sight, away from the water's edge and require the carriage of 14 foot long paddleboards over a longer distance across the car park to access the estuary. Moreover, it would be easy for people to jump on top of the containers. However, he would be content to be transferred to the Slipway as had been mooted historically.

Members voiced their concerns with the suggestion for the paddleboarding hub to be located next to the skatepark given there had been no safety issues with the present location, the hub had a proven track record and had become a recreational fixture in the town. Moreover, Members struggled to understand the motivation behind the new position and how it could be construed as an improvement over the existing location.

The Chairman thanked Crispin for his statement and suggested that he liaise with District Cllr O'Callaghan, who was present, as one of his SHDC Ward Members.

2. Adam Sherring, Skate Park Committee, sought support from Members for a pump track to be installed in the Recreation Ground at the Derby Road end of the park which was an agenda item at the meeting. Members reviewed the pump track proposal included in the agenda papers and asked several questions:

- The artists impression included a 'figure of 8' track between the pump track and current picnic tables which was for small children on balance bikes.
- Within a designated recreational park it was likely that a pump track would be classed as permitted development rather than requiring a planning application. However, if the latter was required then SHDC was likely to be the applicant given the park was the authority's asset.
- An online public consultation in late 2024 received over 450 responses with 99% support and a face-to-face consultation had taken place at the annual town meeting on 1 March 2025 also with favourable feedback.
- A noise assessment was likely however, research had revealed that pneumatic tyres on a tarmac track created little noise. Tennis rated as a higher noise and Sport England reported that pump tracks were in the same bracket as artificial sports pitch noise. The key factor was the ambient noise.
- The tarmac surface would require minimal maintenance.
- There was no proposal for floodlighting.
- The proposed location was under CCTV surveillance.
- Costs for a first rate pump track could be up to £125k to include the track, landscaping and seating i.e. the whole package.

The Chairman thanked Adam for his statement and the proposal would be considered at agenda item 24/182.