

# **KESGRAVE TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Full Town Council Meeting held on 28 November 2022**

### **Councillors present:**

A Athwall  
N Beecroft-Smith (*Chairman of the Town Council*)  
A Comber  
R Gibson  
S Kandula  
G Lynch  
D Mears  
J Ogden  
G Ward

### **Officers present:**

J Abbott – Town Clerk  
A Dougall – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

- 1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence** – The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting and a special welcome to our new Town Councillor, Cllr Swathi Kandula. Apologies were received from Cllrs, A Cook-reason personal and T Hook-reason personal, following the vote these were all accepted.
- 2. Declarations of Interest** – Cllr A Comber, Item 9 – Scout Leader and Director of RFC, non-pecuniary. Cllr J Ogden, Item 9 – Scout Leader, non-pecuniary.
- 3. Minutes of the Town Council meeting** held on the 24 October 2022, – following the vote these were agreed.
- 4. Chairman’s Communication** – Cllr Beecroft-Smith wished to thank every member of staff for all their hard work and dedication to all the recent events; Fireworks, Remembrance Services, The Beacon Lighting, which was attended by MP Dr Dan Poulter and included a presentation to Rev Robin Spittle on his retirement and the Christmas Tree Light switch-on and Ice Skating weekend. All these events were a great success and something for all the Community, he also thanked all the Councillors, which gave their time to support these events. Cllr Beecroft-Smith reminded everyone of the Evening of Reflection, which will be Friday 9 December.
- 5. Clerks/Officer Report/Update** – J Abbott provided the following report.
  - Cllr Tash Hook has some health conditions, which is impacting her being able to attend full council meetings. Cllr Hook would like to be a member of Community & Recreation Committee to enable her to officially attend these meetings with voting rights etc. Following a unanimous vote Cllr Hook is now a member of C&R, Cllrs wish her well and are fully supportive.
  - Remembrance Services: 11.11, Remembrance Sunday and Beacon Lighting all went well, thanks to L Denny and J Catling for organising. MP D Poulter

attended Beacon Lighting with Rev Robin Spittle – thanks to J Catling for arranging Robins gifts, which was very well received.

- The Christmas Switch On and Ice Skating events were a great success, thank you to J Catling for putting it all together and the support of Cllr Comber and The Scouts. Also, thanks to Cllrs Gibson, Ogden and Ward for helping.
- Reminder of the Evening of Reflection at All Saints Churchyard on Friday 9 December at 6.30pm, being attended by MP D Poulter.
- We have a new Estate Operative starting on 9 Jan 23 – a new position to support the current 3 EO's.
- Suffolk Constabulary have been officially informed in writing that KTC will not be continuing to fund a Partnership PCSO from April 2023 (as agreed at KTC Oct 22 meeting).
- Papers signed and returned to our solicitor for adoption of Holly Gardens and Dobbs Drift Play Areas.
- The Defib at All Saints Church Hall is now in full working order and back in the external cabinet and in the ownership of the Town Council. The Defib at the MJH is also now in an external cabinet. Both registered with emergency services and EO's will carry out a weekly check.
- SCC upgrades on all KTC owned street lighting complete apart from 6 columns. This is due to power supply/other connected services, awaiting approx. completion date. Have agreed to pay for works completed, awaiting invoice. Also requested confirmation for when the lights, which have been upgraded will follow the same pattern as the SCC Lighting, i.e.: off at 11.30pm on at 6am?
- Teams Meeting 29 Nov with the Town Council's Conservation volunteer, regarding completing Cedarwood Walk Project and for advice on wild flowering Jolly's Pightle. This ESC public open space has been cut right back by Norse to enable the wild areas to be raked.
- An ASB issue has been highlighted at KWMCC play area – looking to remove the roof from the slide unit and have some re staining of the wood to cover graffiti. J Catling looking into surfacing, seesaw repair and possibly an additional piece of kit, will look to SPARK for possible funding along with Cllr Lawson's enabling budget.
- Issues with school parking and signage still not being enforceable. Speaking with ESC community officer and ESC Parking Services (Signage issue is SCC Highways).

**6. Members of the Public** – none present.

**7. County and District Councillor Reports** – District and County Cllr Stuart Lawson provided a written report, which was circulated via email to all Cllrs and will be attached to these minutes – no questions raised.

District Cllr Geoff Lynch provided the following verbal report:

- Has recently attend two Scrutiny meetings and one full Council meeting.
- East Suffolk Council (ESC) have agreed East Suffolk Services SLA's.
- ESC has agreed to continue with the Partnership Scheme for the next four years.
- ESC has agreed the District Councillors enabling budgets.
- Cllr Lynch has some of his Enabling Budget left for 2022/23 would like to fund some additional dog waste bins – The Town Clerk confirmed will ask the Estates Manager to discuss with him.

- Cllr Kandula asked for some clarification on how the new East Suffolk Services will work, Cllr Lynch provided an overview.
- 8. Partnership Funded PCSO Reports** – PCSO Clarkes reports were circulated to all Cllrs via email and will be attached to these minutes. Cllr Ward noted in the report it was mentioned for residents to contact their Cllrs re ASB? J Abbott will address this with PCSO Clarke as reporting of ASB is to the District Council.
- 9. Finance & Governance** –
- a. Finance & Governance Committee meeting minutes; 21 November 2022 – these were noted.
  - b. Schedule of Accounts –
    - List of Payments for the period 01/10/2022 to 31/10/2022 – all accepted and agreed following the vote.
    - List of Receipts for the period 01/10/2022 to 31/10/2022 – all accepted and agreed following the vote.
  - c. Transfer from the KTC Card Payments Account for October 2022– the transfers were agreed following the vote.
  - d. Version 4 Draft Budget 2023-24 – A Dougall explained that the spreadsheet had been updated with amendments discussed at the F & G meeting held 21 November 2022 and adjustments to the Earmarked Reserves for 2022/23 have been completed. A copy of the revised EMR balances, approved 2022/23 budget, was provided to all Councillors. Further discussions focused on the potential precept increase and subsequent council tax charge to residents (Band D equivalent properties).
    - The Income & expenditure calculated for the Draft Budget 2023/24 exceeds the 2022/23 precept, the shortfall to be met by the Council's General Reserve. It was recognised that drawing on reserves to finance the budget is only a short-term solution. JPAG's recommendation for a Smaller Authority's General Reserve is to retain between 3 to 12 months Net Revenue Expenditure (see section 5.32). Considering the increase in costs and potential for further devolution of services, it was considered prudent to retain approximately 6 months NRE. General Reserves as at 1 April 2022 was £317,758 plus/minus in-year spending during 2022/23.

Based on Version 4, the following shows the effect on the General Reserves (current Band D property at 0% increase = £67.93):-

- Every £1 increase to the council tax equates to £4,826.19 extra contribution towards the budget, therefore an equivalent reduction in use of reserves. The reserves needed to bridge the gap between 0% increase to precept and the draft budget is £110,247 (one-off expenditure = £80,295, balance = £29,952).
- The concern is the use of reserves to fund the recurring costs of £29,952. To reduce to zero, this would increase the cost for residents to £74.14 pa (increase of £6.21 or 9.14% from 22/23). For a 6% increase, this would be £72 pa (increase of £4.08).

It was agreed that a small increase to the council tax was necessary to avoid affecting the provision of services to the community. Once finalised, residents should be made aware of how the funding is to be spent with reference to the Business Plan. All agreed with the draft income/expenditure budgets but decided to review the percentage increase/effect on reserves at the next F&G meeting.

**10. Planning & Development** – Committee meeting minutes; 31 October 2022 and 14 November 2022, these were noted no questions raised.

**11. Community & Recreation** –

a. Community & Recreation committee meeting minutes; 31 October 2022 these were noted no questions raised.

b. Kesgrave Fire Works Display 2023 – J Abbott confirmed next year’s date would be 5 November 2023, J Catling would therefore like to get this date agreed – both the High School and Firework Display company have provisional agreed to this date. Following the vote this was unanimously agreed.

**12. Boundary Commission for England 2023 - boundary review** – the Clerk provided a brief overview, and it was agreed that the amendments made to the initial review are much improved and a better fit for the Town. It was unanimously agreed for the Clerk to confirm via email the Town Councils support.

**13. Transport EAST Survey, to be completed by 16 December 2022** – following a discussion it was agreed for the Town Clerk to complete the survey on behalf of the Town Council.

**14. Other/Urgent Communications** – Cllr Mears thanked all staff and Cllrs who supported him with this years Poppy Appeal, Kesgrave raised £11,949. Cllr Mears confirmed he was very pleased given the current cost of living crisis, confirming this was a very similar amount to last year. The support provided by the Town Council was also noted and thanked by the Reginal Poppy Appeal Leader.

**15. Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 23 January 2023 at 7.15pm, Town Council office.

**16. Agenda Items for Next Meeting** – none.

**17. Resolution to exclude the Public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960** – Agreed, no members of the public present.

*Agenda items 18a and b and 19a were then discussed in the CONFIDENTIAL part of this meeting.*

*this part of the meeting finished at 8.26pm*

**Chairman .....****Date.....**