



# BUNGAY TOWN COUNCIL

## Riverside Centre & Staithe Sub Committee



### Minutes of the Riverside Centre & Staithe Sub Committee Meeting held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.00 pm.

As permitted by the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392 this meeting was conducted "online

Town Council Members:

Cllr. M. Lincoln (ML), Cllr. A. Dawes (AD), Cllr. S. Collins (SC), Cllr. P. Love (PL),

Cllr. J. Blowers O’Neill (JBO’N), Cllr. B. Prior (BP), Cllr. F. Betts (FB).

Also present:

E. Rosier, (JB) Assistant Clerk, Bungay Town Council, and 6 members of the public.

**RC&S 013 2020/2021 Apologies for Absence:** To receive any apologies for absence.

All members of the sub-committee were present at the meeting, except for Cllr. B. Prior and Cllr. J. Blowers-O’Neill, who both joined later during the meeting - **Noted.**

**RC&S 014 2020/2021 Declaration of Interest & Requests for Dispensations:** Councillors to declare any Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests. Notwithstanding this item, Members may subsequently declare an interest at any point in the meeting.

A Pecuniary Interest was declared by Cllr. Betts, as her husband had purchased materials to produce bat boxes for the Staithe area - **Noted.**

**RC&S 015 2020/2021 Minutes of the previous meeting: To approve the minutes of the Riverside Sub-Committee Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – for consideration.**

**It was proposed by FB, seconded by ML, and RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the Riverside Centre & Staithe Sub-Committee Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 as an accurate record of the meeting, and these minutes were signed by ML.**

For	5
Against	0
Abstain	0

**RC&S 016 2020/2021 Public Forum:** Members of the public are invited to give their views on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration, at the discretion of the Chairman, for no more than 15 minutes. Members of the public may not take part in the Committee meeting itself.

**It was proposed by SC, seconded by AD, and RESOLVED to suspend standing orders at this point in the meeting in order that members of the public could speak.**

For	5
Against	0
Abstain	0

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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Date \_\_\_\_\_



**RC&S 017 Vehicular Access to the Staithe – for information.**

**2020/2021** Cllr. Prior joined the meeting at 7.18pm.

Cllr. O'Neill joined the meeting at 7.22pm.

Cllr. Lincoln (Chair) opened the meeting and provided an overview of some of the difficulties that had been experienced by residents living at the Staithe. The heavy use of the area by visitors, a proportion of whom were not local had created a perfect storm of use resulting in anti-social behaviour including noise, litter, changing, urinating, large and commercial vehicles. This made it difficult for users of the Staithe, along with the Sea Scouts, canoe Club and for hirers of the Riverside Centre, as the car park was often completely full resulting in vehicles having to turn round with the associated noise and pollution.

The Riverside Centre & Staithe Sub-Committee had recommended, and in turn the Resources Committee made a proposal, but this had not been finally agreed by the Full Council to the agreement in principle to introduce a barrier to control vehicular access for users of the Riverside Centre and other groups. This would not restrict access to pedestrians and cyclists. Quotations had been provided for this work and implementation would take up to twelve weeks, but the closure of the bridge due to possible damage had meant that this work had not progressed further.

A member of the public asked to speak and explained their concerns as a resident of the town. They reflected on the health and leisure benefits of the Waveney and how the council should be encouraging access rather than restricting it, explain that this was the only area in the town where free safe access to the river existed, and that by closing access to the Staithe (car park), the council would be turning away residents and visitors. They asked if the Town Council would call a Public Consultation.

One member of the public asked to speak on behalf of the members of Bungay Events and Business Association (BEBA), stating that members had been unaware of the proposal to restrict access to the Staithe Car Park and recommended that this project should be rejected by the Town Council. After consulting with members, those who responded were against the idea for several reasons including money for a barrier being better spend elsewhere, restricted access for river users, discouraging visitors, commercial operators should be welcomed, parking in Bungay was already a nightmare, restricting disabled users and as a barrier to trade in the town.

One member explained how it was inaccurate to talk about restricting access to the car park, as it was already restricted, explaining that during the summer 600 vehicle movements a day across the bridge, one third up on the rarer peak periods of previous years, resulting in most of the traffic being unable to park, stating that it was already an impossibly oversubscribed situation.

Another member asked if there was some way of informing people when the car park was full before they reached a point of no return between The Mill and The Granary.

One member of the public, and owner of the Millstream Bridge explained he was the nominated owner of the bridge and the road, and that a number of neighbouring properties were covenanted together, and therefore had a say in its repair. The bridge was part Medieval and part Victorian and not designed for traffic, did not appear to be badly damaged



at present and should be easy to repair. The concern however remained about how the bridge would stand up to continued use as occurred last year as it remained a weak bridge. The previous survey, despite the repair insisted on a maximum weight limit of 3.5 tonnes and 5MPH, and was one of the reasons the speed bumps were still there. The Environment Agency were due to survey the bridge last year, and after several abortive attempts by various agencies due to the water level being too high, potentially the bridge could be reopened immediately if an opinion stated a safe weighting load on it.

The bridge owners had always subscribed to allowing people to pass through their property and accepted normal level of summertime disruption. The problem was that the bridge was not capable of handling the recent traffic levels and was becoming almost impossible to manage. He explained that in 2015 he issued a Cease-and-Desist Letter to Waveney District Council stating that they were attracting traffic across the bridge and should either close the car park to stop the traffic, and after a considerable negotiation they had agreed to pay for the damage. He stated that it was the same this time, and they would not be paying for the damage that they had not made. Anything that applied to Waveney, now applied to East Suffolk, and this would apply to whoever owned and operated the site. He, therefore, urged Bungay to look very closely and with very careful due diligence before taking over the (Staithe) site, as there were big, long legal situations there. He further stated that Waveney had a historic right (of way), but in Common Law you were not allowed to damage someone's property by exercising that right, and this is why they had previously spent in excess of £30,000 undertaking repairs to the bridge and extra surveys on the bridge to check the repairs were necessary.

The absence of toilets at the Staithe was highlighted, causing visitors to stay for shorter periods and causing a greater turnover of traffic. A further example of the car park being full was when fishermen parked all day from early in the morning to access the river from Falcon Meadow and not the Staithe, rendering the space unusable by others.

Several council members agreed that numerous meetings where members of the public had attended had provided significant input, and that no decision would be 'knee-jerk'. There also needed to be a recognition of the need to preserve the Medieval bridge, and the need to take so many things into account, and how protecting the Staithe and its structures must be part of that dialogue.

The need to close the car park overnight was also raised, as it was not unusual for vehicles to arrive late at night or in the early hours of the morning. The small size of the car park was emphasised, and the difficulty when manoeuvring with vehicles backing up, the national publicity resulting in an influx of commercial operators, the need to park when hiring the Riverside Centre, the Canoe Club who used both the car park and the green area, the environmental impact caused by the sheer volume of craft and the anti-social behaviour where the Police had regularly become involved.

Cllr. Lincoln (Chair) summarised by emphasising that the points raised had been well made and would be fully considered. The town Council expected to take ownership of the Staithe area and wanted to open and make the area more attractive, and to open the toilets having



first considered how these could be maintained in the hope of reducing anti-social behaviour.

**RC&S 018 Update of works in hand and completed** - for information.

**2020/2021** Work implemented because of a Survey undertaken by the Police to address anti-social behaviour included the upgrading of the CCTV system to include Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), improved lighting for the car park area with the first phase comprising LED light projected from the Riverside Centre over the forecourt and car park with Dusk to Dawn sensor and time switch.

Cycle Racks have been purchased and were to be installed to the left of the Riverside Centre. East Suffolk Council were to undertake further tree work at the Staithe and had been asked to survey the condition of both the car park and entrance road, delayed due to access issues and the recent bad weather. Lifesaving equipment was reinstated with a view to introducing further equipment, hopefully on the Falcon Meadow side. The existing interpretation / information board was to be refurbished, with a further board to be considered, one to promote the history and culture, the other for the environment, flora and fauna, and the possibility of walking routes as part of a wider project. Further ideas included the introduction of picnic tables, inviting small local business concessions, and the opportunity for open air events.

**RC&S 019 To review the Riverside Centre and Staithe Sub-Committee Terms of Reference** – for Consideration.

**2020/2021** **It was proposed by AD, seconded by JBO’N, and unanimously RESOLVED to accept the revised Riverside Centre and Staithe Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.**

For	7
Against	0
Abstain	0

**RC&S 020 Improvements to the Staithe Area** – for consideration.

**2020/2021** A member of the public suggested maintenance of the Portage Points, careful consideration of soft and hard landscaping and correct maintenance of the site, lowering hedgerows to improve visibility and discourage ASB.

**RC&S 021 Date and time of next meeting** - To be confirmed.

**2020/2021**

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

**Dated: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**Jeremy Burton**  
Clerk to Bungay Town Council,  
1a, Broad Street, Bungay NR35 1EE  
[clerk@bungaytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@bungaytowncouncil.gov.uk)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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Date \_\_\_\_\_



### **The Staithe and Riverside Centre Sub-Committee - Terms of Reference**

The purpose of The Staithe and Riverside Centre Sub-Committee is to oversee those matters within the Council's remit which relate to the Riverside Centre and the Staithe. The sub-committee will consist of at least 5 Councillors. Non-councillors with appropriate skills, knowledge or background may be members of this sub-committee.

The Sub-Committee will meet monthly with delegated authority from the Resources Committee to fulfil the following responsibilities.

Oversee the maintenance, management, development and control of The Riverside Centre building, including external items. This will include, but is not limited to:

- General Maintenance
  - Cleaning
  - The contents of the building such as furniture, kitchen apparatus & similar.
  - Health and Safety items/issues
  - Accessibility
  - Waste Management
1. The sub-committee will act as the council's first point of contact with residents of the Staithe area and with the Falcon Meadow Trust.
  2. It is the sub-committee's role to oversee the maintenance and development of the Staithe and Riverside Centre for the benefit of our community and for visitors. This includes liaison and close working with groups who use the Staithe.
  3. It is the sub-committee's role, therefore, to promote the use of the Staithe and Riverside as a venue/area for social, community and artistic events.
  4. It is the sub-committee's responsibility to encourage responsible use of the Staithe, and at the same time, to take what measures we can to discourage any irresponsible use.
  5. It is within the sub-committee's remit to ensure that the Staithe itself is accessible for local people and others to enjoy, and that people taking part responsibly in water sports and fishing have proper access.