

**SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**  
**HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025 AT 6.30PM**

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Committee members present: Mr S Hall – Chair  
Mr J Jeagar  
Mrs J Osborne  
Miss A Owen  
Mr T Regester  
Mr A Welsh

Officers in attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk

1. **SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES**

**There were no substitutes or apologies.**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

**Councillors Miss A Owen and Mr T Regester declared that they were also a Babergh District Councillors.**

3. **DECLARATION OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

**There were no declarations of gifts or hospitality.**

4. **REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

**No requests for dispensations had been received.**

5. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.**

6. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Chair updated the committee on the progress of the Mill Acre working group and their intention to have another meeting with the Operations Manager to review options.

The Town Clerk updated the committee on the reply from the Sudbury Arts Centre to the committee's concern about bookings for the Sudbury Choral Society.

7. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Jan Osborne be elected vice-chair of the Leisure and Environment Committee for the year 2025/2026. There were no other nominations.

**It was RESOLVED that Councillor Jan Osborne be elected vice-chair of the Leisure and Environment Committee for the ensuing year.**

8. TO DISCUSS THE COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN THE CLOSED CHURCHYARDS FOR ST GREORY'S AND ALL SAINTS CHURCHES IN SUDBURY. IT IS LIKELY THAT EXPENDITURE WILL BE REQUIRED IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR:

- THE RENOVATION OF THE PATH FROM THE MAIN DOOR TO THE GERGORY STREET (A131) GATE IN ST GREGORY'S CLOSED CHURCHYARD. ESTIMATED COST £10,000.
- REPAIRS TO THE WALL AROUND ST GREGORY'S CLOSED CHURCHYARD.

The Town Clerk explained that St Gregory's churchyard had been closed through an Order in Council made by the Privy Council in 1854 and that this allowed the diocese to transfer the responsibility for maintenance of the churchyard to the Town Council. The Town Council's responsibility was to '*keep it in decent order and its walls and fences in good repair*', however, there was no statutory guidance on the appropriate standard to which a closed churchyard should be maintained, and this was for the council to decide.

The Town Clerk explained that he had held a meeting 'on site' with the St Edmundsbury Diocese Church Buildings Support Officer to examine the path and the wall. The path was about 70 meters in length and appeared to have an original width of 1.5 meters. As there were graves on either side of the path, any attempt to widen it would be likely to require additional permissions to disturb these graves, and so the Diocese recommended resurfacing the path to its original dimensions. The wall was damaged in a number of areas, the worst being the eastern corner on St Gregory's Court. Most of the missing stones appeared to be lying next to the wall, so the repairs should just require a contractor with the skill to use lime mortar to refit the original stone.

The Town Clerk recommended that two long-term management plans be drawn up to cover St Gregory's and All Saints closed churchyards. These plans should be jointly agreed by the Town Council and the Diocese, so that each party would know which areas it was responsible for and could make suitable financial provision.

**RESOLVED**

**To recommend to the full council that the path from the main church door to the Gregory Street (A131) gate in St Gregory's closed churchyard be repaired at an estimated cost of £10,000 excluding VAT.**

**To note that the wall around St Gregory's closed churchyard was damaged in a number of places and will need to be repaired by the Town Council before the winter. This would be examined and estimated costs would be brought back to the Town Council for approval.**

9. TO CONSIDER THE BEST TECHNICAL SOLUTION FOR A NEW HEATING SYSTEM FOR THE TOWN HALL AND TO MAKE A RECOMMEND TO THE FULL COUNCIL. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £5,000 EXCLUDING VAT ON THIS PROJECT, IF WORK IS REQUIRED BEFORE THE NEXT FULL COUNCIL.

The Operations Manager had drafted a short note on the three options for a new Town Hall heating system; gas boiler, air conditioning or air source heat pump. There were pros and cons for each of these options and there was a high level of uncertainty over the suitability of the current heating pipes in the Town Hall to handle a new system. The Operations Manager recommended that up to £15,000 would be required for surveys to establish what could be re-used and what would need to be replaced. The most challenging requirement was to heat the Assembly Room due to its very large size and poor insulation. Some members felt that air source heat pumps had experienced difficulty when installed in similar historic buildings.

Members requested that data be gathered from other local authorities who had installed heat pumps, especially if their buildings were of similar scale and design.

Members agreed that the new heating system needed to be installed and working before the onset of cooler winter weather and that the new heating system must be fitted by October.

**RESOLVED**

**To bring the options to the full council in June for a clear decision to commit the necessary funds for a new heating system and to approve the selection process.**

**To aim to have 3 quotes for each option.**

10. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF £3,100 EXCLUDING VAT ON THE STREET FOOD FESTIVAL, NOTING THAT THE ESTIMATED NET COST WILL BE £1,750.

Members supported the street food festival and noted that, although the total expenditure was estimated to be £3,100 excluding VAT, receipts from stall holders should bring the net cost down to about £1,750 excluding VAT.

**RESOLVED**

**That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, members authorised the expenditure of £3,100 excluding VAT for the Street Food Festival.**

11. TO CONSIDER THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO NATIONAL COMMEMORATION EVENTS INLCUDING:

- AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY ON 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025
- VJ DAY 80 WHICH WILL BE ON 15<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025.
- REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025
- EVENTS IN 2026

Members discussed the need to identify events worthy of commemoration far enough in advance to allow authorisation of expenditure, booking of supporting organisations and the allocation of staff. The Town Clerk proposed that the best approach would be for the committee to consider the events for following financial year each spring. Those events selected for commemoration

would then be costed and the figures introduced to the draft budget in the autumn. Therefore, this was a suitable time to consider the events for financial year 2026-2027. Since this process had not been in place the previous year, it would also be necessary to consider events for the remainder of the current financial year.

Representatives of the Sudbury Branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) attended the meeting and emphasised that they would not organise commemorative events but would support civic events organised by the Town Council.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the Town Council would organise a commemorative event for American Independence Day on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025 in honour of the US servicemen who had been based at Sudbury during World War II with the 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group. This would be a short service at the war memorial at 9:00am on a similar format to previous years.**

**That the Town Council would organise a commemorative event for the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory over Japan (VJ Day 80) on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025. This was especially important as many local men had been captured in Singapore in 1942 while serving with the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Battalions of the Suffolk Regiment and suffered great brutality until released at the end of the war.**

- **There would be a stall in the market on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August to promote VJ Day and the museum in the Town Hall would host a special VJ exhibition.**
- **A white rose bush be planted by the war memorial to commemorate VJ Day 80.**
- **An application would be made to close Market Hill to traffic on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August so that there would be space for entertainment. This could include bands, singers, dance groups with a 1940s theme.**
- **On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August there would be a service at the war memorial at 8pm followed by lighting the beacon at 9pm.**

**As this event had not been included in the budget, estimates for the cost would be brought to the full council meeting in June for authorisation.**

**Remembrance Sunday (9<sup>th</sup> November 2025) would be commemorated in a similar manner to previous years with a parade from Market Hill to St Gregory's Church for a service, then a march past the Town Hall, with the Mayor taking the salute. This would be followed by a reception in the Assembly Room with dedicated staff employed to serve the food and drinks. There would also be a gathering on the steps of the Town Hall on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November to observe the national 2 minutes silence at 11:00am. This was funded in the approved budget.**

**Armed Forces Day would not be marked by an event in Sudbury in 2025 but plans would be drawn up for commemoration of Armed Forces Day 2026.**

**No other events worthy of commemoration could be identified for 2026.**

#### **RESOLVED**

**To extend the meeting by another 5 minutes to allow it to continue until 8:35pm.**

12     TO RECOGNISE THE 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY OF A FORMER MAYOR

Members discussed the best way to recognise the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of former mayor Inga Gilbert. Inga Gilbert had been the Sudbury Town Mayor in 1986 and her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday would be on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

**RESOLVED**

**To celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of former Mayor Inga Gilbert by;**

- **Flying the Borough Flag on her birthday.**
- **Sending her flowers and a birthday card.**
- **Inviting her to a small reception in the Mayor's Parlour at 11am to cut a birthday cake and have a cup of tea.**

The meeting concluded at 8:32pm.

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Chairman