

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.00PM

Present: Mr A Welsh – Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR
Mrs M Barrett Ms E Murphy
Mr P Beer Mr A Osborne
Mr N Bennett Mrs J Osborne
Ms J Carter Miss A Owen
Mr J Collier Mr T Regester
Mr K Graham Mr A Stohr
Mr S Hall Mr N Younger
Mr J Jeagar

In attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mr P Faircloth-Mutton – Suffolk County Councillor
Ms L Smith – Babergh District Councillor

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

All members were present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Mr P Beer, Ms J Carter, Mr A Osborne, Miss A Owen and Mr T Regester declared that they were also Babergh District Councillors.

Councillor Mr P Beer and Ms J Carter declared that they are also Suffolk County Councillors.

3. DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

No declarations of gifts or hospitality were made.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensations had been received.

5. TO CONFIRM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 14th October 2025 are an accurate record and are to signed by the Chairman.

6. QUESTIONS AND REPORTS

- a. Public Forum – No members of the public were present.
- b. Policing Report – Although the police had planned to attend, they had been detained by operational commitments.
- c. Mayor's Announcement – The Mayor thanked all those who had contributed to the highly successful events on Remembrance Sunday and the 2 minutes silence that morning. There had been excellent attendance by the public and many had expressed their appreciation.
- d. County Councillors' Reports – Councillors Ms J Carter and Mr P Faircloth-Mutton had sent in their reports, which had been circulated before the meeting, and are included at **pages 881 to 883**. The following points were discussed.
 - Overspend of £20m.
 - Contractors failing to re-surfaced paths to the same standard and materials as before after their works.

RESOLVED

That County Councillors Ms J Carter and Mr P Faircloth-Mutton be thanked for their reports

- e. District Councillor's Report – Councillor A Osborne had sent in his report, which had been circulated with the agenda, and is included in **pages 884 to 885**. There were no questions.

RESOLVED

That District Councillor Mr A Osborne be thanked for his report.

7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE STORY OF PLACE

The members of the Story of Place Working Group explained the progress that they had made and the great help that they had received from officers at Babergh District Council. All councillors were strongly encouraged to attend the meeting scheduled for 26th November 2025 when the Working Group would present their draft Story of Place.

RESOLVED

To note the update on the Story of Place.

8. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £20,000 PER ANNUM EXCLUDING VAT ON NEW ELECTRICITY AND GAS SUPPLY CONTRACTS

The Town Clerk explained that the existing gas and electricity supply contracts would expire at the end of March 2026 and new contracts would need to be in place for 1 April 2026. The prices for gas and electricity were volatile and exposed to global events. The current prices were reasonable and as the budget for FY2026-27 was being developed by the Finance Committee, it would be prudent to fix the gas and electricity supply prices now in line with the draft budget.

The new gas boilers for the Town Hall heating system were due to be commissioned in the next couple of weeks and should prove more efficient than the previous boiler. Since the council would only pay for the amount of gas and electricity actually used, the total spending authorised was just an indication. The current year (FY2025-26) had a fuel budget of £22,500 and the same was in the draft

budget for FY2026-27. Therefore, the Town Clerk proposed that member authorise a figure of £20,000 per annum for the new fuel supply contracts, leaving about 10% over for contingencies.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.111, expenditure of up to £20,000 per annum excluding VAT be authorised on new electricity and gas supply contracts.

That the Town Clerk be authorised to obtain the best value contract terms available and to sign new contracts for the gas and electricity supply.

9. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES

The mayor reminded members that this item was an opportunity for the Chair of each committee to brief the full council on what had been decided during their meetings. There was no option to change the decisions that had been made by the committees where these were within their delegated competences. Where a matter was outside the competence of a committee, the committee would make a recommendation to the full council and the matter would have to appear on the full council agenda as a separate item. Therefore, the Mayor did not intend to ask members to vote to note each of the minutes, as this would have no effect. However, members could ask questions to clarify what had been done by each committee.

Planning, Development and Highways Committee on 20th October 2025 and 3rd November 2025 -
The Chair summarised the minutes.

Finance Committee on 4th November 2025 – The Chair summarised the minutes.

Leisure and Environment Committee on 28th October 2025 – The Chair summarised the minutes.

Human Resources Committee on 5th November 2025 – The Chair said that they would give a summary of the HR minutes during the private and confidential section.

RESOLVED

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)

That pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2), the public be excluded from the meeting for the business specified in items 10, 11 and 12 as the publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

10. TO APPOINT A SECTION 151 OFFICER

Members noted that the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) had resigned and that the council had a duty to appoint another officer to be responsible for their financial affairs whilst a new RFO was recruited to fill the post.

RESOLVED

To appoint the Town Clerk, Mr C Griffin, as the officer responsible for the administration of the Town Council's financial affairs in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, s.151.

See CONFIDENTIAL Annex A, minute **page 886**.

11. TO RECEIVE A BRIEFING ON THE CURRENT FOI AND SAR SITUATION

Members were briefed on the various freedom of information (FOI) requests and subject access requests (SAR) that had been received.

RESOLVED

See CONFIDENTIAL Annex A, minute pages 887 to 888.

12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL LEGAL, CONTRACTUAL AND HR MATTERS

See CONFIDENTIAL Annex A, minute pages 888 to 889.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 8:48 pm.

Chairman

**Report for November 2025 to Sudbury Town Council - From
Jessie Carter (SCC Councillor)**

Date: 10/11/2025

Email: jessie.carter@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 07955 434411

Devolution and the new Mayoral Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk

At Council on 2 October, Suffolk County Council voted to give the government their consent to create the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined Authority, which will be led by a mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk. Both Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council are involved in creating the new authority, which will have powers for the two counties including economic development, transport, skills and employment, public safety and housing and strategic planning. The authority will be led by the mayor, with four other members, two appointed by Suffolk County Council and two appointed by Norfolk County Council, and decisions will be made by majority, but the majority must include the vote of the mayor or the deputy mayor if the mayor is not present. The authority can also have associate members (for example, somebody from a local college or university) or a non-constituent member, for example from a district or borough council. As previously reported, the election of mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk will be held on Thursday 7 May 2026. So far, the candidates that have been announced are Caroline Topping (Green), who is currently the Leader of East Suffolk Council, and Tim Passmore (Conservative), who is currently the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk. The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner will be undertaken by the mayor after they are elected. It is likely that Labour, Liberal Democrat and Reform UK candidates will be announced in the next few months, plus any independent candidates who decide to stand.

Get Suffolk Working Plan

On 2 October, Cabinet voted to approve the draft Get Suffolk Working plan which was prepared by the council's Skills team. This is the local version of the government's Get Britain Working initiative and aims to support people of working age who are not currently working to get into employment and address barriers they may face to employment, for example poor health, lack of transport, low qualifications and digital exclusion. Once the plan is approved by NHS partners in Suffolk and the Department of Work Pensions (DWP), a Get Suffolk Working Partnership Board will be created to oversee the work. The plan includes the launch of the Connect to Work programme, which will be funded by up to £9.5m from the DWP over five years (the amount of funding received depends on level of participation in the scheme). This programme is to provide tailored training, support and job placements and match people with suitable employers based on their preferences, strengths and previous work experience. Get Britain Working plans will become the responsibility of the mayor of Norfolk and Suffolk and the mayoral authority once in place, so Suffolk County Council is working with Norfolk County Council to make sure their plans are aligned.

You can read more about the Connect to Work programme here:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/support-finding-employment/connect-to-work>

Dental Services in Suffolk

At Health Scrutiny Committee on 8 October, colleagues from the NHS joined the meeting to update the committee on improving dental services in Suffolk. This is not a council service, and health partners from the two ICBs that cover the county (Suffolk and North East Essex, Norfolk and Waveney) ran through their progress to increase access to NHS dentists, increase the number of urgent appointments available and ensure that there are enough dental practices across the county. They are also undertaking outreach work on oral health and preventing issues with children and older adults. Both ICBs are reporting that they have managed to increase the number of adults and children seen by dentists, and they are working on changes to their contracts with dental providers to support a focus on highest priority patients. People who need a dentist appointment can contact NHS 111 to get one, as well as contacting dental practises directly.

There are a lot of changes coming up in the health service soon, including the NHS 10 Year Plan which was published earlier this year, and from 1 April 2026, Norfolk and Suffolk will have one ICB. This means that plans for dentistry in the region, like other services, may be subject to review.

Recycling Centres Raise £500,000 for Charity

Re-use shops at Suffolk's recycling centres at Bury St Edmunds and Foxhall have raised over half a million for local charity The Benjamin Foundation, which operates the shops and provides families with childcare, mental health, youth and housing support. White goods play a key role, as The Benjamin Foundation repairs broken appliances and sells them on, which not only prolongs the life of the appliance, but also helps families access affordable household goods. The shop at Foxhall opened in 2016 and the one in Bury St Edmunds opened in 2020, and they have together repurposed over 4,200 tonnes of waste so far. Suffolk residents do not need to book a slot at the recycling centre to visit or donate to the shops.

Budget Survey

The council has launched its annual budget survey where it asks Suffolk residents their opinions and priorities for how it should spend money in the 2026-2027 financial year. The consultation tries to provide some context on its financial position as well as asking for feedback which will be included in the budget-setting process. The first look at the new budget will be early January 2026, with councillors voting on the proposed budget in its February full council meeting. The consultation has been open since 14 October and will close on Tuesday 25 November, and can be accessed using this link:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/budget-council-tax-and-finance/the-budget-for-suffolk>

**Report for November 2025 to Sudbury Town Council - From
Suffolk County Councillor Philip Faircloth-Mutton****Budget Overspend – Quarter 2 (July to October) Report**

It was disappointing to learn that the County Council is currently projected to overspend its revenue budget by £20 million in the current tax year. The majority of this being from Children & Young People's Services (£10 million), including failed transformation saving of £2.2 million this year.

In February, the Council voted in favour of a revenue budget of £805 million, but this is currently expected to escalate to £820 million.

No Called Calling Review - Springlands

In 2022, I was pleased to secure the above-mentioned in respect of eastern sideroads of and including the Waldingfield Road and First Avenue on Springlands.

I understand that there have, however, been recent overzealous sales activities taking place in the area surrounding this more recently, and so Trading Standards are conducting a review of potentially expanding the current safe zone.

Bridge Terrace / Upper East Street Junction Improvements

Funded from my local councillor's highways budget, a follow-up consultation has taken place, after local residents voiced their concerns over exiting Bridge Terrace onto Upper East Street onto the one way road. The findings of the consultation are being finalised, and I will revert to the Town Council once these have been concluded.

Waldingfield Road / East Street Road Surfacing

Following the report made by Cllr Murphy in respect of the above-mentioned, my local highways officer will shortly be visiting the site.

Cllr Philip Faircloth-Mutton

Suffolk County Councillor - Sudbury East & Waldingfield Division

District Councillor's Report for December - Sudbury Town Council Meeting

Cllr Adrian Osborne

Champions of Movement Award Evening

Champions of movement celebrated Community groups , schools and volunteers help to promote greater health and wellbeing, have been championed at a special awards night . Abbeycroft Leisure staged the Move More Awards , on behalf of Babergh District Council and West Suffolk Council with the ceremony compered by motorsport broadcaster Dave Richardson .

Winners included Wells Hall Primary School, which picked up the School of the Year award, and the Sudbury Sporting Memories group, which won the Innovator in Health and Physical Activity category.

The Move More Awards celebrate the people who make a difference , who make it possible for others to be active .

Changes to the Leadership Team

At a recent meeting, Cllr Helen Davies was named as a new member of Babergh's political leadership team, representing the Lib Dems within the coalition following the death of Cllr David Busby. Cllr Davies is now deputy leader, alongside Cllr Deborah Saw.

Call for Sites

Residents, developers, landowners, businesses and other organisations are being invited to submit locations which could be considered for planned future development.

Babergh District Council, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Mid Suffolk District Council will shortly start preparation of their new Local Plans.

The new Local Plans will set out a strategy identifying sites for development and set policies against which applications for planning permission are determined, alongside national planning policies and Neighbourhood Plans.

These will provide a blueprint for the future of each area – ensuring residents and communities have sufficient housing, employment and inward investment, that environment and heritage is protected, and the right infrastructure is in place.

As part of the early preparatory work, the councils are working together to launch a 'Call for Sites', which began on Monday 20 October. The Call for Sites runs until 5pm on 9 January 2026, with the exception of Ipswich, which ends on Monday 15 December 2025.

This invites submissions of land to be put forward for consideration to be included in Local Plans – for uses such as housing, employment, sports and leisure and community purposes.

These are not planning applications, and no site put forward will automatically see development take place.

The process involves a form to be completed by anyone wishing to submit sites. The form can be completed online, by email or by post.

Each suggested site will be considered by planning teams before it is decided whether it goes forward as a proposed Local Plan site allocation. Decisions about preferred allocations will be based on a range of evidence and assessment, as well as through public engagement.

More information about the Call for Sites consultation can be found on each council's website.

Defibrillators

Babergh have worked with local charity, Sudbury Defibrillators, to install a new defib at our Blackfriars estate in Sudbury.

Sudbury Defibrillators, a registered charity, will be responsible for the maintenance and replacement of the machine going forward.