

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, SUDBURY, ON TUESDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM**

Present: Mrs J Osborne - Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR.
 Mrs M Barrett Mr M Olyver
 Mr N Bennett Miss A Owen
 Ms P Berry-Kilby Ms J Rawlinson
 Ms J Carter Mr T Regester
 Mr S Hall Mr N Younger
 Ms E Murphy

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

Two members of the public were also present.

Before the meeting Councillor Mrs Osborne sent the town's best wishes to Babergh Councillor Dave Busby who was unwell.

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Osborne, A Stohr and A Welsh.

Councillor P Beer was absent, but no apologies had been received.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Ms Carter, Miss Owen and Mr Regester declared they were Babergh District Councillors.

Councillor Ms Carter declared that she was a Suffolk County Councillor.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

No declarations were received.

4 **REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

No requests for dispensation had been received.

5 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 11th July 2023 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Town Clerk advised that the floral contract hadn't progressed as intended. There had been no bids within the planned budget and the staff were re-examining the scope to make the contract affordable.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7 REPORTS**a)** Suffolk County Council (SCC) reports

A copy of County Councillor P Faircloth-Mutton's report is shown at minute page 563. The following points were raised:

- Weeds – Would the second round of weed spraying be completed? It had been scheduled for the end of August. Councillor Faircloth-Mutton advised that the highways contractor was changing from the 1st October, and that the current contractor had been told to complete all the works that they have been contracted and paid for.
- Overgrowing hedgerow – Suffolk County Council have advised that an overgrowing hedge on the junction of Newman's Road and East Street does not require cutting back, even though pedestrians are having to walk in the road to get past. **Officers are to pass on the details to Councillor Faircloth-Mutton.**

A copy of County Councillor Ms J Carter's report is shown at minute page 564. Councillor Carter summarised her report. No questions were asked.

RESOLVED

That Councillors Ms Carter and Mr Faircloth-Mutton be thanked for their reports.

b) Babergh District Council (BDC) report – A copy of Councillor Ms L Smith's report is shown at minute page 566. Councillor Smith summarised her report and advised members that discussions regarding Belle Vue Park were not on the agenda of the next Babergh cabinet meeting.

The following points were also raised:

- Why were Babergh selling council houses when there was a huge need for council properties? District Councillor Ms Carter, the Cabinet member for Housing would ask for the reasoning behind this.
- How many council properties were currently empty? District Councillor Register would find out and report back.
- The street sign for 'Park Road' was being held up by a grit bin. Could this be replaced and the grit bin moved back to its original location on Waldingfield Road.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Ms Smith be thanked for her report.

- c) Policing report – A policing report was not available. The Mayor advised members of an email circulated by the Town Clerk regarding two Police Public Meetings. These were taking place on the 21st September in Bury St Edmunds and the 4th October in Martlesham. These meetings would discuss changes within the Police Service.

RESOLVED

That the information be noted.

- d) Mayor's Announcements – A list of the Mayor's announcements is at pages 568. She reminded all members that the Civic Service would be on Sunday 24th September and it was important that as many Town Councillors as possible be there to show members of the public that Sudbury has a public facing council.
- e) Public Forum – There were two members of the public who attended the meeting and asked questions to the councillors.
- **A question was asked about college children having to stand on the bus to Bury St Edmunds due to a lack of seats, and children not being picked up at all due to the bus being full. County Councillor Faircloth-Mutton was aware of the problem and was in discussions with Suffolk County Council transport liaison team to try to solve the issue.**
 - **A question was asked about clearing weeds from the lane leading to Gainsborough's House. As the Heritage Weekend would take place the next weekend, could this area be tided?**
 - **A question was asked about why churches couldn't have stalls on the market raising money, not preaching. The Chair of the Leisure and Environment committee advised that the policy for the market was set by this committee and, if members wanted to revisit this, they could place it on the agenda and discuss it at their October meeting.**

8 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

Planning, Development & Highways on 17th July - The Chairman advised that previously the committee had refused an application for a dwelling on Newton Road. Babergh had also refused, and the application had gone to appeal. The applicant attended the meeting and discussed with members the reasoning behind the application. Members then chose to change their decision to recommend approval.

It was RESOLVED to note the minutes.

Planning and Development on 31st July - The Chairman recommended noting the minutes.

It was RESOLVED to note the minutes.

Planning and Development on 14th August - The Chairman recommended noting the minutes.

It was RESOLVED to note the minutes.

Planning and Development on 29th August - The Chairman recommended noting the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Leisure and Environment on the 25th July – The Chairman recommended noting the minutes.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Human Resources on 26th July – The Chairman gave members an update on the staff restructuring and the plans for the RFO. Any discussion of the contents of the minutes would need to have the public excluded due to their confidential nature. No discussion was required.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Human Resources on 30th August – The Chairman gave members an update on the staff restructuring which was progressing slowly. The Facilities Manager had resigned and a temporary Administrative Officer post had been approved to help cover the gap until the restructuring was complete. Any discussion of the contents of the minutes would need to have the public excluded due to their confidential nature. No discussion was required.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Finance on 5th September – The Vice Chairman advised that most items would be discussed further down this agenda. He did point out that the committee had agreed to write off about £247,000 of fixed assets. This would need to be approved by full council in October.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

9. APPOINTMENT OF RFO

Members were requested to confirm the appointment of Mrs Deborah Deeks as the responsible finance officer (RFO) under the Local Government Act 1972, s.151.

RESOLVED

That Mrs Deborah Deeks be appointed the responsible finance officer.

10. EXTERNAL AUDITORS REPORT

The External Auditor's report for FY2022/2023 had been received. Apart from one observation that had been addressed already, no further actions were required.

Members were requested to approve payment of the invoice for £2,277.50 excluding VAT.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.111, members approve payment of PKF Littlejohn's invoice for £2,277.50 for the External Audit.

11. BELLE VUE PARK

Babergh District Council had requested the town council nominate 3 councillors to sit on a working party to discuss Belle Vue Park. The working group would not have decision making powers, but would report back to both councils. The terms of reference (TORs) proposed by

Babergh District Council for the working group excluded members who sat on both councils from being members of the working group but did include the only member who sat on all three councils (county, district and town) as a member representing the County Council.

RESOLVED

That the town council wish to appoint four members on the working group. These are the Chair of the Finance and Planning Committees, Cllr N Bennett, the Vice Chair of the Leisure and Environment Committee, Cllr S Hall, the Mayor, Cllr J Osborne and the Chair of the town council's own Belle Vue Working Group, Cllr E Murphy.

That the town council strongly object to any district council members who do not represent wards in Sudbury sitting on the working group.

12. PCSO POST IN SUDBURY

Members were requested to discuss options for the employment of a PCSO. A PCSO would cost around £45,000 per annum.

Discussions were held regarding 'value for money' especially as police reform is expected by the end of the year.

RESOLVED

That funding for a PCSO will not be included to the draft FY 2024/2025 budget.

13. PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT ON MARKET HILL

Following the decision by the County, District and Town Councils for a trial pedestrianisation of Market Hill starting in May 2024, members were asked to consider what type of entertainment they would like to have on this space, and what financial figure they would like to go into the draft FY 2024/2025 budget.

Discussions were held regarding the hiring of temporary staging and sound systems, to the arranging of classic car events etc...

RESOLVED

That a minimal amount of funds be placed in the budget to cover encouragement, co-ordination and advertising of summer events on Market Hill. Members felt that working with local groups such as the Sudbury Arts Centre (St Peter's), and the Quay Theatre would be the best option. Let other organisations arrange and run events, which the town council could help facilitate.

14. BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Members were requested to approve payment of an invoice from Babergh District Council for £12,609.94 for the May 2023 elections.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.111, members approve payment to Babergh District Council of £12,609.94 for the May 2023 elections.

15. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2023

Following a recommendation from the finance committee, members were requested to approve expenditure of up to £13,650 excluding VAT on the installation and removal of the Christmas Lights 2023.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, members approve expenditure of up to £13,650 excluding VAT on the installation and removal of the Christmas Lights 2023.

16. CEMETERY PILLAR

Members were requested to approve expenditure of an insurance claim of £13,986 excluding VAT on the repair of the cemetery pillar and finial. The first part of this is payment of the invoice for £5,682.50 from MD Mills for the deposit for the new stone finial.

The new pedestrian gate had been refurbished and reinstalled. Rebuilding work on the damaged pillar had started earlier in the week.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2), members approve expenditure of up to £13,986 excluding VAT on the repair of the cemetery pillar and the payment of MD Mills invoice for £5,682.50.

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 item 17 as the publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

17. PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOLVED

That the private and confidential report be noted.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 8:32 pm

Chairman.....

**Sudbury East and Waldingfield County Councillor's Report to Sudbury Town Council
Tuesday 12 September 2023**

Suffolk County Council Fire Service Call Centre

The Cabinet, today, voted to end Suffolk's partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council in respect of the above-mentioned which has been in place since 2011. This comes as a result of delays being experienced due to sustained delays in new technology and computer systems, following financial difficulties of the provider.

The new independent call centre will be based in Suffolk and a new system will go live by the end of 2024.

Churchfield Road Progress

Progress has been made in respect of reducing the parking issues resulting from HGVs parked at the above-mentioned location. Following discussions over the summer, the Highways Team are currently formulating a pilot set of restrictions, consisting mainly of restricted waiting times, to reduce HGV parking. These should be finalised shortly.

I will update the Council once the final terms of the pilot have been confirmed.

Waldingfield Road Markings

Following my request to the Highways Team, the lines along Waldingfield Road and intersections to side ways have been repainted over the summer months. This is not just aesthetically good but will ensure visibility is maintained in the winter months.

Springlands Clean up Action Day

Along with Councillor Owen (Babergh District Council – Sudbury North East ward) and Siobhan Smith who has helped form a new Residents Association in Springlands, I enjoyed helping Babergh District Council refuse and community teams with our clean up day on 1 September. Demand was high, but the day has helped significantly with litter and unwanted household items.

We have requested a further day in the foreseeable future.

Philip Faircloth-Mutton
September 2023

JFO

**Report for September 2023 to Sudbury Town Council - From
Jessie Carter (SCC Councillor)**



Date: 11/09/2023

Email: jessie.carter@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 07955 434411

Highways And Footpaths:

- Clermonet Avenue TRO changes have been advertised and letters drops have gone out to residents regarding double yellow lines. We are awaiting feedback from this.
- Ballingdon Street & Goal Lane TRO's are combined so will be completed at the same time, however due to Suffolk Highways contract with Kier will be ending at the end of this month, making way for the new highways contract with Milestone from October. Currently SCC are in limbo in that they can't currently order any new works and don't yet have any information on how these processes will work under the new contract. However, the construction drawings are already complete, and they just need to price works under the new rates once these become available. It may take a little while to settle into the new contract, I have been informed that they will aim to update me mid to late October.
- I am pleased to confirm that work to remove the willow tree has been completed. On this basis the footpath leading over Kipling's Meadow is no longer blocked, and is safe to use again.
- After our last working together meeting with BDC Myself and Cllr Faircloth Mutton Met with Cllr Smith from SCC to discuss Hamilton Road, I reported back to BDC and they are planning a meeting with officers and will then include Councillors to take this further.

River Trust Update:

On the 20th of August the River Stour Trust invited everyone to come and show support for their mission to obtain bathing water status for our river, I would like to thank everyone that turned up on the day, since speaking to the rivers trust they were happy with the turn out. I would like to remind town councillors and residents, if they haven't already to Register your opinion on the River Stour Trust Website.

School Places:

Parents and carers can now apply for a place in the normal year of entry at a primary (including infant and junior) school and secondary school for September 2024.

The deadline for applications to secure a place at a secondary school is Tuesday 31 October 2023. The deadline for applying for a primary school place, including infant and junior schools, is Monday 15 January 2024.

OSA:

I Would like to welcome the new head teacher of OSA Ms Morris and thank her for taking on such a role. I am hopeful that our relationship will better help the youth of Sudbury.

Locality Budget:

I have committed two Sums of money this financial term and would like to remind Cllrs, Residents, Groups and Organizations that they money is there to help support Sudbury so if you or you know of anyone looking for funding please get in touch.

RAAC:

RAAC has recently become headline news again after a school ceiling collapsed over the summer.

Schools across the country are affected by the use of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) during although thankfully none of these are our or close neighbouring schools in Sudbury, Conard or Melford.

The aim is to get to a normal education as quickly as possible despite the RAAC issues — SCC have been proactive in making the transition as smooth as possible.

Fire Fighter Training:

The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Training Centre at Wattisham has had a £1.3m upgrade and was formally opened on 24 August. This includes a new tactical firefighting facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with and help them prepare for the dangerous work they undertake in the community.

Babergh District Council report for Sudbury Town Council meeting 12/09/23
by Cllr Laura Smith, Sudbury South West

Cllr Dave Busby

Unfortunately BDC Leader Cllr Busby has been diagnosed with cancer and needs an operation and some treatment. While he is off Cllr John Ward will act as Leader and Cllr Deborah Saw as Deputy. Everybody wishes Cllr Busby a swift recovery.

Belle Vue

BDC Cabinet met & approved the new toilet block project on 5/9/23. The proposal now needs the approval of the Full Council on 19/09. This is an opportunity to ask questions relating to the project. If it is given the go-ahead, the next step will be the Planning process.

If the Planning Application is approved, work can begin but the schedule will be very tight – the project needs to be moving by March in order to get the full £45,000 Changing Places grant. The park may need to be fully or partially closed for safety while the demolition of the old toilet block takes place. The new design is modular so ought to be quick to put up.

Post Office

After the worrying news in August that the Post Office in Borehamgate was to shut down at short notice, the decision has been reconsidered and will remain open for the foreseeable future.

Pets as Prizes

Babergh and Mid-Suffolk's Cabinets both also approved a ban on giving any animals as prizes on all council-owned or operated land and properties. The main activity associated with this is the giving of live goldfish as prizes at fairs – this will now no longer be allowed.

Springlands Community Action Day

BDC's Public Realm team and the Housing team worked together on September 1st to have a clear up on the Springlands estate. Unfortunately, due to the weather and an awful amount of bulky items being put out for collection the team did not achieve everything they wished to, so the day will be repeated in October.

Business support for start-ups

BMSDC are working together with MENTA to offer start-up businesses free support and guidance. The Start-up Support Program is free to enrol on and includes a range of workshops, 1 to 1 sessions, seminars and more; it will be open until the end of March 2025.

Rural Business Grants

BMSDC are launching three new grant schemes using the government's Rural England Prosperity

Fund to provide capital grants to small businesses, visitor economy organisations and community organisations in the district's rural areas:

Rural Business Growth Fund

Rural Culture & Creativity Fund

Rural Communities Fund

Grants of between £5,000 – £10,000 are available per application, but businesses must be able to match any funding that they are applying for with their own funds. Payments are made at the end of the process, so projects need to be fully funded before any reimbursements are made. See the website for eligibility criteria.

Following on from the meeting that Steve and Adrian (S), our Town Clerk and myself had with the Police Inspector, Ben Holland, it was very encouraging to have him attend our Full Council meeting in July.

Although Sudbury is below the national average for empty shops, I am concerned that the number is growing. In July I facilitated a meeting with our Town Centre Manager and Babergh to raise these concerns and to try to find solutions to the number of empty shops in Sudbury. This will be followed by a further meeting in the Autumn to be arranged by our Town Centre Manager.

We are, I am sure, aware of the fantastic work that our Scouting organisation do to help ensure that our young people are provided with many opportunities to move forward into adulthood. On the 13th July I was privileged to attend the Sudbury and District Scouts' AGM. Lovely meeting the fantastic volunteers.

On the 16th July I attended the West Suffolk Civic Service. It was a moving service with the themes similar to my own as your Major being Homelessness and mental health.

I was also invited to the Ipswich Mayor at Home event at Ipswich Football Ground on the 21st July. It provided me with a great opportunity to promote Sudbury.

On the 27th July 1993 Princess Diana officially opened William Wood House and to celebrate the 30 year Anniversary a party was held for residents and families. It was great having the opportunity to talk to residents and staff, many of them being able to reminisce on their memories. There was also great entertainment from Miss Grace.

An excellent part of being the mayor is meeting and experiencing the great work that our volunteers do on a day to day basis. Two examples of this are Orchestral Music Workshop and the Abi's 'Grand Opening' Ceremony.

The Orchestra Music Workshop was held on the 19th of July and was organised by the Bridge Project and the Orchestras Live. It was wonderful to meet and share the gift of music with users of the Bridge Project and the musicians who work so hard with Orchestras Live.

The other example was being invited to cut the ribbon on the new premises for Abi's Footprints.

Abi's Footprints started 7 years ago with the creative and forward thinking aim to provide the practical essentials that a young baby or child needs. They provide essentials for families that find themselves in difficult circumstances. This service, which started as a small acorn, is now a great oak and the new building will mean that more volunteers can be recruited.

After the sad loss of our wonderful Lord Andrew Philips, I was privileged and honoured to attend his Memorial Service in Lavenham. I have some lovely memories, including the long debates he and I would have concerning issues in Sudbury.

He was an example to us all and he will be sadly missed. My thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

Last but not least I was asked to attend the Rowing Club Regatta. Unfortunately, due to the weather conditions, it was cancelled. A great deal of time and effort and money goes into organising an event and the Regatta is no exception. My thoughts and best wishes to all the Rowing Club's members and here's hoping that we will see your return next year. Earlier in the month I had an informal visit to the Club to chat with members and see the facility.

In August I also attended the Sporting Memories weekly event. Both Adrian and myself really enjoyed ourselves sharing sporting memories and chatting to the members.

To end on two positives notes.

At the beginning of August, I was chatting to a young person who lives in Colchester. I was thrilled to hear him say that he loves visiting Sudbury as it is such a clean and lovely town with fantastic open spaces.

On the 16th September I will be privileged to be opening Sudbury's Heritage Day. Its an opportunity to celebrate the incredible diversity of our high street and our incredible heritage, both the more visible treasures but also the hidden ones. Please come along and enjoy what Sudbury has to offer.

I am also looking forward to my Civic Service being held at St Greogory's Church, Sudbury on the 24th September and I am hoping that all our Tow Councillors attend.