

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 28th JANUARY AT 6.30PM

Committee members present: Mr S Hall – Chair
Mr P Beer
Mr J Jeagar
Mrs J Osborne
Mr T Register
Mr A Welsh
Miss A Owen (Mayor – ex officio)

Officers in attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mrs D Deeks – Administration Manager

1. SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES

Apolgies were received from Councillor Ms E Murphy.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Mr P Beer, Miss A Owen and Mr T Register declared that they were Babergh District Councillors.

Councillors Mr P Beer declared that he was a Suffolk County Councillor.

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 26th November 2024 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Town Clerk updated the committee on the actions for the previous meeting.

RESOLVED

To note the Town Clerk's report.

7. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £5,000 EXCLUDING VAT ON THE CEMETERY WINTER WORKS

Some members had visited the cemetery with the Town Clerk in early December to discuss the priorities for winter works. These priorities were;

- As soon as the weather was dry enough, to schedule the operations team to do full cut and strim of the grass in the cemetery for winter.
- Paths – to seek quotes for training the operations staff in the proper use of glyphosate weedkiller to suppress weed and grass growth from encroaching into the paths. Recommend a spring and summer full spray annually. For use only on path edging.
- Paths with problem corners – to seek quotes for delivery of gravel to ‘top up’ the two problem muddy areas of path by the chapel and in the new cemetery by the tap.
- Hedge and scrub cutting back and shaping – to seek quotes from external contractors to cut back and shape all yew bushes and other coniferous shrubs. These should be cut back hard enough for paths to be reclaimed and then maintained.
- Hedging along the alleyway / fencing – Much of the hedging along the new fencing was dead. Although some sections had already been removed, the recommendation was to seek quotes for the removal and clearance of all the remaining hedging. Due to pine needle drop from the mature pines in this part of the cemetery, the hedging below was being starved of light and could not grow. To seek recommendations regarding shade tolerant, pine companion planting / bulbs that would work along the fencing.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the operations team would do as much work as possible, but that over the past 10 or 20 years many trees had been let grow out of shape so that they blocked the paths. A one-off cut back to their correct size was required, after which the operations team should be able to maintain their correct shape. It was recommended that an external contractor be employed to get this work completed before the fresh spring growth.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Open Spaces Act 1906, s.10, members agreed to approve expenditure of up to £5,000 excluding VAT for winter works in the cemetery.

8. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £5,000 EXCLUDING VAT ON A NEW GAS SUPPLY CONTRACT

The Town Clerk explained that the current standing charge for the gas supply was £25 per quarter, which came to £100 per annum. No gas was being used as the boiler was broken and would need to be replaced in 2025 by a new gas boiler or an air-source heat pump. The current gas contract would end on 31 March 2025 and, unless a new contract was signed, the standing charge would increase to £2.50 per day, which came to £912.50 per annum. As a new gas boiler could not be an option without a gas supply, the lowest cost option was to start a new gas contract for one year with a low standing charge. The Town Clerk recommended giving financial approval for up to £5,000 in case a new boiler was installed and the gas was used.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.133, members agreed to approve expenditure of up to £5,000 excluding VAT for a new gas supply contract.

9. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £4,600 EXCLUDING VAT ON REMOVAL OF THE BAMBOO FROM THE CROFT

The Town Clerk explained that the estimates for eradicating bamboo from specialist companies were very high and could not be confirmed without paying for a site visit. The contractor who had refurbished the Town Hall had submitted a quotation for the work that showed a clear breakdown of the costs. As this was cheaper than going to an external specialist, the Town Clerk recommended acceptance.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Open Spaces Act 1906, s.10, members agreed to approve expenditure of up to £4,600 excluding VAT for the removal of bamboo from the Croft.

10. TO NOTE THAT £450 EXCLUDING VAT HAS BEEN SPENT ON AN ENGINEER'S TECHNICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE TOWN HALL LIFT AND IT IS NOW WORKING

An experience lift engineer had visited to inspect and repair the Town Hall lift. After half a day on site he had the lift working and was confident that the problem had been rectified.

RESOLVED

To note that the Town Hall lift had been inspected and repaired at a cost of £450 excluding VAT.

11. TO DISCUSS THE POLICE RETAIL CRIME ACTION PLAN

The local police inspector had sent an email with the details of an alert system that had been shown at a recent retail crime action plan conference. This 'ShopSafe' system had been deployed in other towns and found to be helpful.

RESOLVED

To discuss options for a retail crime action plan with the local police inspector at the next meeting between him and the small group of councillors.

12. TO DISCUSS THE PROMOTIONAL SIGNAGE ON SUDBURY ROUNDABOUTS

Members were concerned that the Sudbury in Bloom signage had not yet been re-installed on the roundabouts.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk email the two county councillors representing Sudbury asking them for an update on the return of the Sudbury in Bloom signage to the roundabouts.

13. TO FORM A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER SILK FESTIVAL AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS

Members discuss how successful the silk festival had been in 2019 and whether it would be helpful to have another silk festival. Opinions differed over whether a working group was required at this stage and Cllr Regester was keen to engage the two key organisers from the 2019 silk festival and to hear their views.

RESOLVED

That it would be a good idea to have another silk festival.

That Cllr Mr T Regester should speak to the organiser of the previous silk festival held in 2019, and to the manager of The Sudbury Arts Centre in St Peter's Church, to see if they were interested in supporting another silk festival.

That a decision on forming a working group would be postponed until Cllr Regester reported back.

RESOLVED

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

14. TO AGREE ACTIONS TO ADDRESS ISSUES WITH FLINT LODGE

See PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL Annex A pages 61 to 62

The meeting concluded at 8:18pm.


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Chairman