

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 31ST JANUARY 2023 AT 6.30PM**

PRESENT: Ms E Murphy – Chair

Mr N Bennett

Ms J Carter

Mr S Hall

Miss A Owen

Mr T Register

Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk

Mrs J Budd – Deputy Town Clerk

Ms R Price – Town Centre Manager

Mr R Jackson – The Garden Nursery

Mr B Smith – Community Warden Manager

2 members of public – District Councillors Mr & Mrs Barrett

1. SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Osborne.

Councillor P Faircloth-Mutton was absent, but no apology had been received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Miss A Owen declared that she was a Babergh District Councillor.

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

3. DECLARATION OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

No declarations of gifts or hospitality were received.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensation had been received.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Leisure & Environment Committee meeting held on the 29th November 2022 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record. These had been circulated and adopted at the January Full Council meeting.

6. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

A list of actions is shown at minute page 55.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7. TEMPORARY FLORAL PLANTING & MAINTENANCE

The Town Centre manager, Ms Price, supported by Mr R Jackson from The Garden Nursery in Constitution Hill, attended the meeting to present her plans for the temporary floral planting and maintenance contract and to ask for authorisation to spend up to £12,500 excluding VAT for soil improvement and to implement a perennial planting scheme across Sudbury's floral beds and roundabouts.

If the investment in perennial planting were made now it would save the Council time, money and energy in the future. Sudbury's floral beds were all in exposed areas and annual planting required significant annual investment when planting was exclusively seasonal. This scheme proposed a minimum 90% Perennial: 10 % Annual mix across all floral beds reducing maintenance costs, watering requirements, green waste and increasing biodiversity through the introduction of pollinator friendly species. Furthermore, years of neglect in the soil health of these floral beds has necessitated a significant enrichment plan of mulching, worm introduction and composting. This would be funded as follows:

- £8,000 for the perennial planting scheme and soil improvements from CIL.
- £4,400 on maintenance costs from AC321_4045 in the FY2023/24 budget
- Leaving £16,206 for the 2023 summer planting and winter schemes in the town centre.
- An application for a biodiversity and sustainability grant would be made in 2023.

RECOMMENDED

That the full council approve expenditure up to £12,500 excluding VAT for The Garden Nursery to implement a long-lasting perennial planting scheme across Sudbury's floral beds and roundabouts.

8. FLORAL PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE TENDER DOCUMENT

The Town Centre manager, Ms R Price, attended the meeting to review the timeline for the Floral Planting and Maintenance tender. The timeline proposed was:

- The actual tender document would be ready for members to view at the February meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee
- Tenders Issued / Advertised: 3 April 2023 (to be published on Suffolk Sourcing e-tendering site)
- Return date for Tenders: 31 May 2023
- Assessment and final decision: 19 June 2023
- Award and Regret Letters: 21 June 2023

- Agreement of Contract by: 21 July 2023
- Commencement of contract: 1 October 2023

The award criteria would be:

- Price = 25%
- Ability to deliver to timescales = 25%
- Business Experience and horticultural knowledge = 25%
- Demonstrating a commitment to sustainability = 25%

RESOLVED

To note the report and to thank the Town Centre Manager for her work.

9. TOWN SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING SCHEME

The Town Centre Manager, Ms R Price, updated members on the town signage and wayfinding scheme.

Members were advised that the application to use the remaining Sainsbury's s.106 funding had been successful.

The whole scheme included signage covered by the s.106 money but also replacing current wayfinding and gateway signs.

Councillor Mrs Barrett asked whether the Council had investigated the possibility of installing digital signage. Ms Price advised that the cost of installing such a sign would be around £3,000 plus the purchase of the actual sign which was up to £7,000. A conversation would be required with planning officers at Babergh regarding the acceptability of an internally lit sign within the town centre conservation area.

RESOLVED

That Ms Price be thanked for the update.

That Ms Price investigates the acceptability of internally lit signs within the town centre conservation area with Babergh District Council planning officers.

10. MILLACRE

The Community Warden Manager, Mr Smith attended the meeting remotely to discuss the way forward for Millacre and the Boating Pond.

Members were aware that the original proposal for this area was not possible as the Environment Agency would not approve new structures that might displace flood water elsewhere. Therefore, a new proposal had been developed that avoided this issue. This would keep the outer wall of the current pond which would be filled with hardcore and covered with topsoil before being planted. There would be a pathway running through.

This new proposal would run in conjunction with the proposed installation of new bins and benches in this area.

The detailed plans for this proposal would still need to be approved by the Environment Agency.

RESOLVED

That Mr Smith come back to the committee with a detailed plan for everything, including plants and costings.

That once approved, the public should be engaged to explain why the previous proposal was not acceptable and to give them an opportunity to comment on a new one.

11. EASTERN ARBORICULTURE INVOICE

The tree survey in early 2022 had divided the work required into what was required within six months and what was required within a year. In July 2022 the Council had approved the expenditure of up to £24,000 excluding VAT from the General Reserve to fund the remedial tree works required in the first six months. These would be paid as three separate invoices and members were requested to approve payment of an invoice for £9,650, excluding VAT, to Eastern Arboriculture, which was the second of these three invoices. The third and final invoice was expected before the end of the current FY.

RESOLVED

That members approved payment of the Eastern Arboriculture invoice for £9,650 excluding VAT.

12. TREE WORKS

Having completed the tree works required within six months, members were requested to approve further expenditure of up to a £10,000 for the works that were required within one year. This would not be paid until the new FY but the work needed to start as soon as possible to make best use of the dormant winter period.

RECOMMENDED

That the full council approve further expenditure of up to £10,000 for tree works.

13. MICROSOFT SOFTWARE CONTRACT

The IT support company had informed the Council that Microsoft would be increasing its charges for the use of its software in 2023. They offered three payment options and highlighted that committing to a full year's contract before the price rise would be cheapest. Members were requested to approve expenditure of up to £3,600 excluding VAT for next year's Microsoft software contract. There were sufficient funds in AC 109_4044 (IT Support and Software Maintenance) to cover this.

RESOLVED

That, under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.111, members approved expenditure of up to £3,600 excluding VAT for an annual Microsoft Software contract.

14. MUSEUM CARPET

Members noted that the carpet in the Museum had been professionally cleaned and were very pleased with the outcome. Boot cleaning brushes had been purchased to help staff clean their boots before coming into the Town Hall.

RESOLVED

That the state of the carpet be monitored and cleaned when required, quarterly or 6 monthly.

15. ST GEORGE'S DAY MARKET

Following the meeting in November, members were shown proposed costings options for St George's Day celebrations. A copy of this is shown at minute page 56.

The Chairman proposed that a relatively modest event be held to celebrate St George's Day as England's nation saint. There was no seconder for this motion so the proposal was not discussed further.

16. 2023 CALENDARS

Members were requested to approve the write-off of the value of the 2023 calendars (£596.79) by reducing the sale price from £6.99 to £3.49.

RESOLVED

That members approve the write-off of the value of £596.79 for the 2023 calendars.

17. SUDBURY GUIDED TOURS

A report from the Town Centre Manager regarding Sudbury Guided Town Tours was discussed. A copy of the report is shown at minute page 58.

Members were requested to approve expenditure of up to £900 for the 2023/24 season. The Town Clerk advised that this figure would represent the cost to the Council if no-one attended any of the walks. It was likely on past experience that the actual cost would be less than £300.

RESOLVED

That, under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, members approved expenditure of up to £900 on the Sudbury Guided Tour programme for 2023/24.

18. USE OF THE TOWN CREST

The Sudbury and District Invitation Pool League were sending a team to a tournament and had requested permission to use the Sudbury Town Coat of Arms on their shirts. The team will be called the Sudbury Talbot's.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council grant permission for The Sudbury and District Invitation Pool League to use the Sudbury Town Coat of Arms on their shirts.

19. SUDBURY FUN RUN

Members discussed a request from Sudbury Joggers to hold the fun run in Sudbury on Good Friday 7th April 2023.

To be able to hold the fun run, the Suffolk County Athletics Association must see proof that the event is endorsed by the Town Council.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council have no objection to Sudbury Joggers holding the fun run in Sudbury on Good Friday 7th April 2023.

20. INSTALLATION OF MEMORIAL BENCH

A request had been received from the Sudbury First Responders for a memorial bench to be installed in town in memory of Martin Richards. Mr Richards had been a long serving member of the Royal British Legion as well as creating his own charity 'Gryphon First Aid Unit' that provided first aid training and coverage at local and countrywide events.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council approve the installation of the memorial bench proposed by Sudbury First Responders.

That the best location for this bench would be outside Iceland in North Street.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS) That pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972 s 100A(4), the public be excluded from the meeting for the business specified in items 21 and 22 on the grounds that, if the public were present during these items, it was likely that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12A, ss 1-2, that is to say;

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and,
- Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

21. UPDATE OF SECURITY SYSTEMS

The Town Clerk explained the need to upgrade the security systems in the Town Hall as detailed in the CONFIDENTIAL briefing note.

RESOLVED

That, under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.133, members approved expenditure of up to £4,000 excluding VAT to upgrade the security systems in the Town Hall and up to £500 per annum on monitoring and maintenance. The capital cost will come from EMR 361 and the annual cost will come from AC211_4041 in the approved budget for FY2023/24.

That supplier One offered the best long-term value and was selected for the new contract.

22. SUFFOLK REGISTRARS

The Town Clerk advised that both Solicitors seemed content with the draft of the new lease agreement. The lease should be available imminently for signing.

The plans for wedding set-ups had gone well. The tables and chairs were light and easy to move.

As weddings would use the main front door, cleaning of the area around the steps had been added onto the general cleaning schedule.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerks report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 8:00 pm

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Chairman

Leisure and Environment Action Plan – 31st January 2023

Actions.

- **River Stour Trust – Deputy Town Clerk has had an initial meeting with Mr Kemp. As part of the application for part of the Stour to become a designated bathing area, a public meeting has to be arranged. This will form part of the Annual Town meeting on 22 March 2023.**
- **Bench and bin on the Croft have been removed.**
- **Grounds maintenance tractor has been purchased.**
- **Memorial bench scheme is up and running.**
- **St George’s Day market – further down agenda.**
- **Farmers’ Market SLA – Sent to SME for their signature**
- **Floor of the museum – members to look at outcome of cleaning**

Options for St. George's Day celebration in Sudbury | 23 April 2023

NB – (postponed) Civic Service to be held at All Saints Church from 2pm on the same day

Option 1: Celebration on Market Hill with stalls, food and drink and entertainment.

(Road closure and parking suspension required).

Option 2: Lighter touch event on Market Hill paved area with free, themed, costumed guided tours, family activities and town businesses involved for food and drink.

(No road closure or parking suspension required).

Option 3: No event, fly flag as usual.

| Estimated Costings | Market / Street Party style event on Market Hill - Sunday 23 April (10am - 2pm ?) | | |
|---|--|-----------------|------------------|
| Option 1 - Market Hill Street Celebration | Cost (Inc VAT) | Quantity | Sub Total |
| Road Closure (18:00 Sat 22 Apr - 15:00 Sun 23 Apr) | £100.00 | 1 | £100.00 |
| Street Works trained staff x1 operative (Sunday rate) at 7 hrs | £268.17 | 1 | £268.17 |
| Street Works trained staff x1 supervisor (Sunday rate) | | 1 | |
| Decorations - flags, tablecloths, selfie frames etc | £350.00 | 1 | £350.00 |
| Costumed characters (George, horse & dragon) | £2,000.00 | 1 | £2,000.00 |
| Promotion & Marketing | £350.00 | 1 | £350.00 |
| Event staff x3 at Event Rate 8am - 3pm (7hrs) | £221.20 | 3 | £663.60 |
| Street Furniture Hire (based on Jubilee Street Party with 10% uplift) | £850.00 | 1 | £850.00 |
| Food and Drink vendors x8 (pitch fees?) | -£180.00 | 1 | -£180.00 |
| Entertainment (music) | £150.00 | 2 | £300.00 |
| First Aid Cover | £300.00 | 1 | £300.00 |
| Face painting | | 1 | £- |
| New PA System | | | £- |
| Estimated Total | | | £5,001.77 |

| Estimated Costings | | Free family friendly Medieval / Sudbury themed: 'Legends & Literature' / 'Dragons & Dalmations' Tours with activities, have a selfie with George and the Dragon. No road closure required. Tours and activities 9.30am - 1pm | |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------|
| Option 2 - Lighter touch, family focused activities with free costumed guided tours | | | |
| Item | Cost (Inc VAT) | Quantity | Sub Total |
| Costume hire / purchase | £350.00 | 1 | £350.00 |
| x2 Event Staff at Event Pay (8am - 1pm) | £158.00 | 2 | £316.00 |
| x3 Free Guided Tours @ | | | |
| 10am | £75.00 | 1 | £75.00 |
| 11am | £75.00 | 1 | £75.00 |
| 12pm | £75.00 | 1 | £75.00 |
| Local Businesses for St. George's themed refreshments / catering | £200.00 | 1 | £200.00 |
| Decorations and props - Selfie Board / Medieval Stocks/ flags and banners | £250.00 | 1 | £250.00 |
| Promotion & Marketing | £350.00 | 1 | £350.00 |
| Children's activities (crafting, upcycling, making a dragon) | £75.00 | 1 | £75.00 |
| Face Painting | | 1 | £- |
| Estimated Total | | | £1,766.00 |

Option 3: No cost

Sudbury Guided Town Tour Programme 2023/24

Leisure & Environment Committee 31 January 2023



What is required:

Approval to host regular ticketed guided walks in 2023/24 in partnership with professional Blue Badge Guides, Guide East. Tickets will be made available to buy via the Tourist Information Centre and sold online via sudburytowncouncil.co.uk

Ticket prices: Adult ticket @ £7.50 / Child £4 (under 5's free) / Family ticket: £20 (proposed ticket prices frozen for 2023/2024).

Sudbury Town Council retain a £1 admin / marketing fee per ticket sold and 30% commission per ticket after the first 6 tickets sold.

Ticketed guided tour dates:

'Step Into the Sudbury Story' on the third Saturday of the month for 2023/24:

Sat 15 April 2023

Sat 20 May 2023

Sat 17 June 2023

Sat 15 July 2023

Sat 19 August 2023

Sat 21 October 2023

Sat 18 November 2023

Sat 16 December 2023

Sat 20 January 2024

Sat 17 February 2024

Sat 16 March 2024

Specialist ticketed tours:

A costumed **'Strolling in Gainsborough's Footsteps'** guided tour celebrating Gainsborough's Birthday (baptised in Sudbury 14 May 1727)

Sat 13 May or Sun 14 May 2023, also part of Suffolk Walking Festival

A costumed **'Dickensian Christmas Guided Tour of Sudbury with Scrooge and Mrs Scratchit on Saturday 2 December 2023'**

Free Guided Tours | Heritage Open Days 2023 | 16-17 September 2023

In addition to the ticketed tours, propose to host a programme of free themed tours that would be made available free of charge to the public as part of Heritage Open Days national 'Free to Explore' festival.

These events attract visitors to Sudbury from all reaches of the UK and are promoted via the Visit Suffolk and Visit East of England websites as well as via printed media. Expert guides would be offered a £60 fee for a 1.5 hr tour. 16 free tours were fully booked (25 – 30 attendees/ tour) at Heritage Open Days 2021 with visitors from all reaches of the UK attending. A total of 426 visitors attended free guided walks in September 2021 across the Heritage Open Days weekends. Some attendees stayed overnight and dined / shopped locally during their stay. Heritage Open Days in 2022 was postponed in respect of the Period of National Mourning. The free guided tour programme was rearranged in October with fewer tours but they all had over 15 attendees with the most popular tour having 32 attendees of all ages.

Why it is required:

To promote Sudbury's unique heritage, attract visitors from further afield, increase visitor numbers and encourage longer stays and local spending. Our guided town tours offer a unique opportunity for residents and visitors to experience an entertaining and comprehensive introduction to our town, its architecture, stories, and heritage. The tours have proved a vital promotional platform in the past and offer a unique way for visitors to experience Sudbury. The tours are a key part of our visitor offer and have a **direct** economic benefit for many local businesses.

How will these be funded:

The ticketed guided tours bring in a small amount of income on commission and admin fees. The proposed free guided tour programme as part of Heritage Open Days 2023 has been considered in the 2023/24 budget as below:

Tour Guides:

£600 (x10 free themed guided walks @ £60 fee to Blue Badge Guides).
206_4020 (206 Town Economy / 4020 Miscellaneous Expenses)

Promotion:

£300
206_4033 (206 Town Economy / 4033 Advertising and Promotion)

What will be purchased:

- a) Promotion – Digital and print flyers and posters = £300 2023/24 Budget
- b) Expert Blue Badge Guides for free promotional town tours in 2023
 Heritage Open Days budgeted for x10 free guided tours walks at £60 / guided walk
 In September (Heritage Open Days) x10 free walks = £600
- c) Expert Blue Badge Guides for ticketed public tours and group bookings – both generate income on a 30% commission on tickets sold.
- d) Where tickets are sold online there is a 1.4% transaction fee. This is accounted for in the ticket price with a £1 admin / booking fee.

Rachel Price, Town Centre Manager