

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 30th SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 6.30PM

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**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mr J Collier.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Miss A Owen and Mr T Regester declared that they were also 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 held on the 29th July 2025 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. **TO REVIEW THE OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Town Clerk updated the members on the outstanding actions.

7. TO APPROVE THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW ELECTRONIC DONATION DEVICE IN THE MUSEUM

A representative of the Sudbury Museum Trust attended the meeting to explain the benefits of card donations and to show the proposed electronic donation device.

RESOLVED

To approve the installation of an electronic donation device in the museum.

8. TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR REMEMBRANCE 2025

The Town Clerk gave a short summary of the preparations for Remembrance 2025, which was due to follow a very similar format to previous years. He asked members if there were any particular aspects that they were concerned about. Clarification was requested on how tea and coffee would be served at the Town Hall reception after the service on Remembrance Sunday. The Town Clerk confirmed that two members of the council staff would be scheduled to pour the tea and coffee from large tea and coffee pots to ensure that all guests had their first drink quickly on arrival.

RESOLVED

To note the update on Remembrance 2025.

9. TO DISCUSS THE SAFETY OF TREES ON THE CROFT

The Town Clerk had circulated an email that had been received from a tree surgeon who had installed bracing on the large oak tree at the bottom of the Croft in 2015 to prevent the tree collapsing. This contractor was concerned that the bracing that he had installed now needed to be re-inspected and replaced. The Town Clerk reminded members that all the trees had been inspected in January 2022 and there had been follow-up work to correct all the problems identified. The tree in question appeared to be T511, a Quercus Robur (English oak), which had been graded as a tolerable risk and not requiring immediate work in 2022.

RESOLVED

To ask for opinions on what work was required on this oak tree, together with quotes, from at least 3 independent tree surgeons.

10. TO DISCUSS CONCERNS OVER GRAFFITI IN THE TOWN

The Chairman explained his concerns over the amount of graffiti in Sudbury and asked what measures could be taken to remove graffiti and to discourage those creating it. Members understood that the Town Council had no duty to remove graffiti from any property that was not owned by the Town Council, so graffiti would have to be addressed according to which organisation owned the property concerned. In all cases, when graffiti was seen or reported, the Town Council's operations staff would take photographs as evidence and report the graffiti to the police as criminal damage. If the graffiti was on Town Council property, efforts would be made to remove it as soon as possible. The appropriate method would depend on the surface that had been graffitied. It was not safe to use the graffiti removal machine on many surfaces, and so a range of options were required to be available.

If the graffiti was on property belonging to other local authorities (county and district councils), this would be reported to them with a request to have it removed.

If the graffiti was on private property, the Town Council would try to identify the owner, so that this could be reported to them with a request to have it removed.

The Town Clerk would also raise this matter with the local police at the next meeting to see if there were any strategies that could help prevent new graffiti.

RESOLVED

That all graffiti seen in Sudbury be photographed, then reported to the police and to the owner of the property.

That Town Council staff work with other local authorities and private owners to have graffiti removed from the town as quickly as possible.

That Town Council staff work with the police to encourage other local authorities and private owners to take proactive steps to discourage graffiti.

11. TO DISCUSS THE WOODEN GATES ON ST GREGORY'S ARCH IN NORTH STREET.

Babergh District Council staff had noted that the old wooden gates at the pedestrian entrance through St Gregory's Arch to Girling Street Car Park from North Street, which they owned, were in a poor state of repair and rather than attempt to restore them, their preference was to remove them. Babergh District Council had asked Sudbury Town Council if it agreed with the removal of these gates, in case they were regarded as a historical feature of interest. The Town Council had consulted the Sudbury Society, who had reminded Babergh District Council that these gates were a grade 2 listed building. As a result, Babergh District Council intended to take the gates down for repair and redecorate them with fresh black paint.

RESOLVED

To note the action that Babergh District Council intended to take to repair the wooden gates through St Gregory's Arch.

12. TO DISCUSS LACK OF LIGHTING FOR THE PATH BETWEEN WOODPECKERS AND QUAY LANE

A resident had reported that 3 out of 4 streetlights along the pathway between 'Woodpeckers' and 'Quay Lane' were not working. This pathway runs parallel to the Bowls Club and starts opposite the Quay Theatre. The resident had contacted Suffolk County Council, who were aware that the lights existed, but would not repair them as they were on private land owned by Knight Developments, the original developers of Catesby Meadow estate. He had also contacted the Knight Group who had informed him that Knight Developments had ceased trading over 5 years ago. The resident asked if the Town Council could help get these lights working.

RESOLVED

To note that Sudbury Town Council had no liability for these lights and that any remedial action by the council would not indicate taking on such a liability.

That the Town Council would have these broken lights examined by an electrician to determine what repairs were required and produce an estimate of the cost.

That, if the repair required was simple, such as replacement bulbs or broken connections, the Town Clerk was delegated authority to have this completed.

13. TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF THE OLD METROPOLITAN DRINKING FOUNTAIN ON BALLINGDON STREET

A member had noticed that the old Metropolitan Drinking Fountain, near the bridge over Ballingdon Street, was in a sorry state. He proposed that the Council should change the compost and add some autumn bedding plants, with perhaps some bulbs planted in between for springtime. It would also benefit from some weeding around its base and a general cleaning. Another member had done some research on the history of this fountain which had been erected by Mayor Edward Arnold to commemorate the Coronation of George V in 1911. It had originally been located at the bottom of Ballingdon Hill and it was designed to be multifunctional, with dogs drinking from the trough at the bottom, cattle and horses from the larger trough above and passers-by from a cup once attached to the brass staple at the end.

Members were unclear over who currently owned this fountain as the Council might not have any authority over it.

RESOLVED

To enquire with Suffolk Highways and any local groups to ascertain ownership of the fountain.

That, subject to permission from the owners, the Council's operations team should wash the fountain and remove the weeds, before adding some suitable autumn bedding plants.

To review the maintenance of the old Metropolitan Drinking Fountain in the annual review of floral displays around Sudbury.

14. TO DISCUSS OF THE SCLC RANGER TASKS FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL

An email had been received from the clerk of the Sudbury Common Lands Charity (SCLC) raising a number of issues with the tasks that their Rangers performed for the Town Council.

The Rangers emptied the 18 bins on the Croft and Mill Acre and disposed of the waste. Historically, Babergh District Council provided a large container bin on the Croft into which the waste bags were placed. This was removed in September 2024, so from that point, the Rangers had been disposing of the waste in the Babergh container bins that were positioned in the lorry park area. Babergh have since removed those container bins from the lorry park due to vermin and misuse, so since April 2025, the waste has been taken direct to Babergh's Chilton Depot. However, Babergh have informed the Rangers that this 'historic' arrangement needs to be placed on an official footing with Sudbury Town Council.

SCLC had reviewed the contract work that they undertook on behalf of Sudbury Town Council and they believed that the current annual payments for the Valley Trail element (£4,287.80) and the Croft/Mill Acres element (£4,722.72) needed to be increased to reflect the amount and complexity of work involved. Their Rangers had also received a significant increase in pay and benefits, which had been necessary to retain the staff. They asked for it to be noted that the SCLC did not charge the Town Council for the significant number of volunteer hours or for their clerical overheads.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk meet the Trustees and the Clerk from the Sudbury Common Lands Charity to discuss all the issues raised and bring the proposed increases in charges for the Rangers' work

to the Finance Committee and the Leisure and Environment Committee as part of the budget process for FY2026-27.

15. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF £2,100 EXCLUDING VAT ON THREE NEW STYLE DOUBLE BINS WITH ONE SIDE FOR THE GENERAL LITTER AND DOG WASTE AND THE OTHER SIDE FOR RECYCLING

The Town Clerk reminded members of the bin rationalisation plan that had been proposed by the Babergh District Council Head of Public Realm. Where current litter bins and dog waste bins were collocated, the Town Council paid Babergh District Council two fees every time these bins were emptied. Now that Babergh District Council did not keep dog waste and general litter separate, there was no need for special dog waste bins as dog waste could go into the litter bins. However, Babergh District Council were keen to increase recycling, and they proposed that the Town Council replace collocated dog and litter bins with a single double bin, where one side would be for litter (including dog waste) and the other side for recycling. The Town Council owned about 60 dog bins and 40 litter bins, so this would be an expensive project, but Babergh District Council said that some grants were available.

The Town Clerk proposed buying 3 of the new double bins as a trial to prove the new concept before making a decision about replacing all the other bins. Three sites had been proposed by the staff where the current bins were damaged and needed replacement. Two sites were on Acton Lane and the third site was at the junction of Landsdown Road and Park Road.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Litter Act 1983, ss.5-6, the expenditure of up to £2,100 excluding VAT is authorised for 3 new style double bins.

That the locations for the trial of the 3 new style double bins would be changed to;

- Acton Lane, by the entrance to the footpath to Fields View.
- Cornard Road, by the entrance to the footpath to the station, next to Ernest Doe.
- Mill Hotel, by the entrance to the water meadows.

That the working bins removed from these locations be used to replace the other damaged or missing bins.

16. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £4,500 EXCLUDING VAT ON THE CHRISTMAS FAIR

Members reviewed the quotes for the various elements (entertainment, health and safety, toilets, bins, signage, etc) for the Christmas Fair, which would take place on Friday 28th November 2025.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, the expenditure of up to £4,500 excluding VAT is authorised for the Christmas Fair.

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 17, 18 and 19 as the publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

17. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £5,000 EXCLUDING VAT ON LEGAL FEES

The Town Clerk explained the circumstances behind the various legal cases concerning property management for which there would be on going charges.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.111, the expenditure of up to £5,000 excluding VAT is authorised for legal fees for property management.

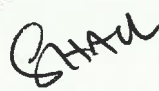
18. TO RECEIVE A CONFIDENTIAL UPDATE ON FLINT LODGE

See **CONFIDENTIAL** Annex page 783

19. TO RECEIVE A CONFIDENTIAL UPDATE ON STAFF ISSUES AFFECTING LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT

See **CONFIDENTIAL** Annex page 784

The meeting concluded at 8:26pm.



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Chairman