

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 28TH JULY 2026 AT 6.30PM

Committee members present: Mr S Hall – Chair
Ms E Murphy
Mr A Osborne
Mrs J Osborne
Mr T Regester
Mr A Welsh

Officers in attendance: Mrs C Morgan – Deputy Town Clerk/RFO

1. **SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Councillor Ms A Owen. Councillor Mr A Osborne was the substitute for Ms A Owen.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Mr A Osborne and Mr T Regester declared that they were 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 30th June 2026 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

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

The Deputy Town Clerk briefed members that both Sudbury Arts Centre and GALA had been contacted by the Business Manager to discuss the possibility of including Christmas lights around the church as an amendment to the current lighting contract or for potential inclusion when the contract is up for renewal.

7. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM ACTIVE SUFFOLK

A representative from Active Suffolk presented the work they are undertaking in Sudbury with local partners and the community.

RESOLVED

To thank the representative for their presentation.

8. TO REVIEW THE PUBLIC EVENTS PLAN FOR FY 2027-28

The Deputy Town Clerk produced the initial draft events plan for FY 2027/28, which had been circulated before the meeting, for discussion in preparation for budgeting.

Members were supportive of the plan, noting they would also like to see the return of the Moving Cinema.

Two additional suggestions were raised for consideration, the Silk Festival and a St George's Day event.

RESOLVED

That the outline Events Plan for the 2027/28 financial year be noted and supported as a basis for budget preparation, with officers requested to explore the inclusion of the Moving Cinema, the Silk Festival and a St George's Day event as part of the programme for further consideration during the budget-setting process.

9. TO AUTHORISE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £7,900, EXCLUDING VAT, ON THE CHRISTMAS FAIR 2026

The Christmas Fair 2026 expenditure breakdown had been circulated with the agenda for members to study. The total anticipated expenditure was up to £8,500, with an expected income of about £4,100, giving a net cost of about £4,400, excluding VAT.

Members requested confirmation of locality budget contributions.

RESOLVED

To recommend that the full council authorise expenditure of up to £8,500 excluding VAT for the Christmas Fair 2026, noting that the expected income will be about £4,100 and to confirm locality budget contributions.

10. TO AUTHORISE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £35,000, EXCLUDING VAT, ON THE LEGAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS (TRO) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO AMEND ORDERS ON AND AROUND MARKET HILL FOR SAFE TRAFFIC REGULATION ON MARKET DAYS AND CUSTOMER PARKING AVAILABILITY

The Deputy Town Clerk explained that while the barrier costs have already been secured through a Rural Prosperity Fund grant of £12,000, these additional costs are unplanned and would need to come from reserves. There are three elements to the TRO:

- Market Hill prohibition of motor vehicles on market days, which is linked to the barrier installation.
- King Street to revert to 1 hour limited waiting Monday to Saturday (8am – 6pm) with no return within 2 hours.
- Friars Street to amend the unrestricted bay to 1 hour limited waiting Monday to Saturday (8am – 6pm) with no return within 2 hours.

These last two actions would provide approximately 20 free parking spaces for genuine town visitors and shoppers. Local businesses have been approached and are in favour of these changes.

The TRO needs to be in place to enable the barriers to be fitted and to provide a safe environment preventing breaches of the road closure and putting staff and members of the public at risk.

Members noted that it would be beneficial for the TRO to state 'Market Days and Event Days'.

RESOLVED

To recommend that the full council authorise expenditure of up to £35,000, excluding VAT, on the legal Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) and associated infrastructure to amend orders on and around Market Hill.

11. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2,500 FOR TRAINING EXPENSES FOR 3 OFFICERS TO UNDERTAKE AN ARBORICULTURE COURSE

The Business Manager has recommended arboriculture training for three officers. The course forms part of their individual training plans and aligns with business needs. Successful completion of the course would enable the team to safely fell trees and branches up to 380mm. This inhouse capability would mean we are able to react quickly to dangerous / dead trees or branches and to remove some smaller trees deemed priority works following recent tree surveys. This qualification is likely to save the council money reducing the need to use external contractors in some instances.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed this expenditure would be funded through the training budget and tree works budgets as we would save on contractor costs.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of Local Government Act 1972, s.111, expenditure of up to £2,500 excluding VAT is authorised for training expenses for 3 officers to undertake an arboriculture course.



12. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2,200, EXCLUDING VAT, TO PURCHASE 100 CASES OF ECONOMY DOG POO DISPENSER BAGS

The Deputy Town Clerk briefed that the supply of dog poo bags for free public use needed to be replenished. The last order was made in February 2026 and this would be a slightly increased order of 100 cases of Economy Dispenser Dog Poo Bags.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Litter Act 1983, s.5-6, expenditure of up to £2,200 excluding VAT is authorised for dog poo bags.

13. TO DISCUSS A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE STATE OF THE WATER MEADOWS

Sudbury Town Council received a complaint from a resident regarding the state of the water meadows, particularly noting rubbish, including drinks cans and discarded fishing tackle being left alongside an increased presence of algae. The resident had suggested the need for more rubbish bins across the meadows. The Town Clerk forwarded the complaint to the Sudbury Common Lands Charity to investigate further. A site inspection confirmed whilst water levels are low with some algae due to recent and current heatwaves, the pond was relatively clear of rubbish and detritus as described. Their ranger removes rubbish and they are supported by local volunteers too. While some visitors do not take their rubbish home with them the Trustees are strongly of the opinion that they do not wish to place rubbish bins on the Common Lands or add to the numbers on the footpaths. The meadows are grazed by cattle for significant periods of time each year, are frequently flooded and are a county wildlife site and local nature reserve, so bins, benches and other similar parkland structures are not appropriate to the character of the land.

They have also approached the Long Melford & Sudbury Angling Association to make them aware of the comments received and to keep an eye on behaviours.

Members acknowledged that the presence of discarded litter within the water meadows is disappointing. However, it was agreed that the provision of additional litter bins would be unlikely to resolve the issue, as several bins are already strategically located at entrances and exits to the meadows. Members emphasised that users of the water meadows have a responsibility to retain their litter and dispose of it appropriately using the bins provided.

The algae present is linked to weather conditions and fertilizer run off from farmland rather than users of the meadows and water way. The designated bathing status, the presence of otters and water voles support the good water meadow management.

It was also noted that dog fouling and uncontrolled dogs worrying the cattle were also of concern.

RESOLVED

That the complaint raised by the resident be acknowledged, and that the Committee supports the response and ongoing management approach of the Sudbury Common Lands Charity. Recognising that the current maintenance regime is appropriate to the character and environmental designation of the Common Lands, and that the installation of additional litter bins is not considered a suitable solution.

14. TO CONSIDER BIDDING TO HOST SUFFOLK DAY IN 2028 OR LATER

Suffolk Day is held in June each year and a different town takes centre stage to host the civic ceremonies including the High Sheriff address, the reading of the Suffolk Proclamation and the presentation of the Suffolk Medals. Bury St Edmunds was the host town in 2026. The costs are usually split between the town council (civic duties), Local Business Improvement Districts (BID) funding and district council community and tourism budgets. Therefore, STC would need to consider venue costs, catering to host regional dignitaries, public infrastructure such as traffic management, waste, licences and insurance, entertainment and marketing. Alongside the officer time against other agreed engagements and commitments.

Members recalled that Sudbury's hosting of Suffolk Day in 2018 had been a very successful event.

RESOLVED

That officers investigate the process, eligibility requirements and associated costs of submitting a bid to become a host town for a future Suffolk Day celebration, and report their findings back to the Committee for consideration.

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm.



Chairman

