

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 28TH MARCH 2023 AT 6.30PM**

PRESENT: Ms E Murphy – Chair

Mr N Bennett
Ms J Carter
Mr S Hall
Miss A Owen
Mr T Regester

Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mrs J Budd – Deputy Town Clerk
Ms R Price – Town Centre Manager
Mr B Smith – Community Warden Manager

Due to ongoing issues with the camera, the meeting was broadcast with only the audio.

1. **SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES**

Councillors P Faircloth-Mutton and A Osborne were absent, but no apologies 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 28th February 2023 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record. These had been circulated and adopted at the March Full Council meeting.

6. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

A list of actions is shown at minute page 177.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7. PARTY IN THE PARK

Members were requested to discuss and approve the format and expenditure of up to £5,055 for Party in the Park.

RESOLVED

That this matter be deferred until the April meeting to ensure that the detailed costings were within the budget provision.

8. GAOL LANE TOILETS

The Town Centre Manager, Ms Price, gave an update on the plans to refurbish the Gaol Lane public toilets. Babergh District Council (BDC) had sold the redundant public toilets in Burkitts Lane for £77,500 and had allocated this money to refurbish the public toilets in Gaol Lane. However, the only quote that they had received was well in excess of this figure and BDC were in the process of identifying additional funds to meet this gap. BDC had also offered two alternative options for consideration;

- For BDC to transfer the toilets to Sudbury Town Council (STC) with a capital sum and for STC to carry out the refurbishment, if they felt that they were able to have the work completed more quickly and/or more cost effectively.
- To close the Gaol Lane toilets completely and allow members of the public to use the Town Hall internal toilets.

Ms Price advised that she had investigated various alternative options for public toilet design and, as an example, a purpose-built vandalism proof modular unit would cost about £90,000.

RESOLVED

That Babergh District Council be urged to complete the refurbishment of Gaol Lane public toilets as soon as possible.

That Sudbury Town Council officers obtain rough estimates from local builders to establish their costs to refurbish the Gaol Lane public toilets.

9. WARDEN VAN INSURANCE

Members were requested to approve expenditure of £1,122.60, including IPT and all fees, for a new insurance policy for the Community Wardens' Vans which would need to run from 1st April 2023.

This figure was slightly less than the premium for the current year.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972 s.111, expenditure of £1,122.60 be approved for the annual insurance policy for the Wardens' Vans.

10. TRACKER FOR THE TRACTOR

Members were requested to approve expenditure of up to £667 excluding VAT, for a John Deere Link Motion system for the grounds maintenance tractor.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972 s.111, expenditure of up to £667 excluding VAT be approved for a John Deere Link motion system.

11. NO MOW/WILDFLOWER SCHEMES

The Town Centre Manager and the Community Warden Manager presented their proposals for 'No Mow/Wildflower schemes on the Croft. A copy of these proposals are shown at minute page 178.

The first complete mow was due to take place at the beginning of April. The 'No Mow' areas would then be left alone until September. The Town Council officers were working closely with the Biodiversity Officer at Babergh District Council who had visited and supported the proposed 'No mow' areas.

RESOLVED

That the Option One 'No Mow/Wildflower' scheme on the Croft be approved, however this should be slightly modified to provide a mown area wide enough for people to walk along the riverbank.

12. SUMMER PLANTING

Members were requested to approve expenditure of up to £8,500 for the supply and maintenance of summer floral displays (May to October 2023). Three quotes were received, all of a similar amount.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Open Spaces Act 1906, s.10, members approved the expenditure of up to £8,500 for the supply and maintenance of summer floral displays.

That the current contractor, The Garden Nursery, be awarded this supply and maintenance contract covering the period May to October 2023.

13. HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Members were requested to approve Heritage Open Days weekend activities (planned for the 16th and 17th September 2023) celebrating ‘Creativity Unleashed’ and event expenditure of up to £1,500 excluding VAT.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972 s.144, expenditure of up to £1,500 excluding VAT be approved for the Heritage Open Day weekend.

14. HEALING ON THE STREETS

Members were asked to consider a request from Stour Valley Vineyard to allow them to provide ‘healing on the streets ministry’ once a month on Saturday Market days.

RESOLVED

That the Stour Valley Vineyard church be asked to attend the next meeting of the committee to discuss this matter in more detail.

15. SUFFOLK REGISTRARS

The Town Clerk advised that although the lease for the Suffolk Registrars had still not been finalised and signed, he had taken advice from the Council’s solicitor and the HMRC helpline about the appropriate VAT rate for this lease. Although a normal lease with its service charge would be exempt from VAT as explained in VAT Notice 742 paragraphs 3.1 and 11.2, the fact that this lease included an area for conducting wedding ceremonies may change this. Paragraph 2.7 lists examples of supplies that are not licences to occupy land and this includes ‘wedding facilities (including, for example, use of rooms for a ceremony, wedding breakfast and evening party)’. Therefore, he had determined that 20% VAT needed to be charged on the whole invoice. As this had been resolved, the invoice for FY2022/23 had been issued to Suffolk County Council for payment.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk’s report is noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.30 pm

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Chairman

Leisure and Environment Action Plan – 28th February 2023

Actions.

- **Temporary Floral planting & maintenance – Expenditure approved by full council. The Garden Nursery accepted the scheme.**
- **Floral planting and maintenance tender – Ongoing.**
- **Wayfinding scheme – Ongoing.**
- **Millacre – Further details will be discussed at the March meeting.**
- **Installation of a bench outside Iceland – Approved by Iceland and license applied for from Suffolk County Council.**
- **Security Systems – Alarm systems all replaced.**
- **Suffolk Registrars – Ongoing.**



Proposal - 'No Mow' / biodiversity areas for The Croft | Leisure & Environment – Tuesday 28.03.2023

What?

To establish an area (approx. 25 – 35%) of grass on The Croft as a 'no mow' meadow biodiversity area every year between April and September. Four proposed schemes for the Croft below.

Why?

Areas of longer unmown grass are diverse in their range of flowers, with other nectar-rich plants like oxeye daisy, red clover, field scabious and knapweed increasing the range of nectar sources for different pollinators and extending nectar availability into late summer.

The resulting nectar is available to a huge range of pollinating insects – from hoverflies and beetles to butterflies and bumblebees. With a third of wild bees and hoverflies in decline, 'no mow' areas are vital for supporting these pollinators. Between 1980 and 2013, every square kilometre in the UK lost an average of 11 species of bee and hoverfly, so areas of 'no mow' open spaces can throw our pollinators a lifeline.

Mini meadows also provide a habitat for beetles and other small creatures to wander and where sparrows and goldfinches can come to feed on the seeds. The grasses will set seed, wildflowers can bloom and provide nectar, and the longer stems will create a sheltered microclimate.

Why are pollinators important? Pollinators allow plants to fruit, set seed and breed. This in turn provides food and habitat for a range of other creatures. So, the health of our natural ecosystems is fundamentally linked to the health of our bees and other pollinators. Maintaining our native flora also depends on healthy pollinator populations.

How?

The summer meadow

The first mow of the season will be in early April and then the no mow zone(s) will then be left until September before mowing once or twice until the end of the autumn growing season. This will mimic the old hay meadows and will suit flowers like Corn Marigold and birds-foot-trefoil.

What will it cost?

The scheme will be managed and maintained in house by our Community Warden team. The impact of the no mow zones will be measured by biodiversity samples taken and recorded by our Sustainability Warden. We will liaise with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust to record any significant species, especially those at risk.

The zones should be marked by signage and a well maintained and defined boundary. Signs will cost no more than **£250** to produced and we can get these fabricated locally. Funded by Public Infrastructure EMR CC 239.

Complimentary bee and bug houses could be built from reclaimed wood at no cost.



Find out more about our sustainability projects across Sudbury:
sudbury-tc.gov.uk/ecoprojects



Proposal - 'No Mow' / biodiversity areas for The Croft | Leisure & Environment – Tuesday
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Examples of 'no mow' areas with defined borders:





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Proposed 'no mow' area schemes for The Croft

1. Curved patch

No mow area right up to river. This scheme retains plenty of short lawn for accessing the river. Added benefit of extra cover for ducks and ducklings. 3 metre mowed access along the wall edge for resident access. Plenty of mowed recreational space retained.

Three separate no mow zones are proposed as indicated on verges adjacent to Croft Road / Gregory Street. With a neat 3m fully mowed area around the periphery and curves cut around bench and bin.



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2. The Talbot

The 'No Mow' area in the shape of a Talbot. To attain the shape the area would have to be at least 20m tall. Puts a Sudbury stamp on the no mow patch and presents a marketing opportunity. Plenty of recreational lawn retained.

Three separate no mow zones are proposed as indicated on verges adjacent to Croft Road / Gregory Street. With a neat 3m fully mowed area around the periphery and curves cut around bench and bin.



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3. Full mow on Croft with 3 Gregory Street verge no mow areas

Three separate no mow zones are proposed as indicated on verges adjacent to Croft Road / Gregory Street. With a neat 3m fully mowed area around the periphery and curves cut around bench and bin. The Croft is fully mown throughout the summer.



4. No change

Retain existing mowing schedule with no areas of no mow mini meadows.

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