

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, SUDBURY, ON TUESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7.00PM

Present: Ms E Murphy – Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR.

Mrs J Antill	Mrs J Osborne
Mr N Bennett	Miss A Owen
Ms J Carter	Mr J Owen
Mr P Faircloth-Mutton	Mr T Regester
Mr A Osborne	

Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mrs J Budd – Deputy Town Clerk

3 members of public.

Before the start of the meeting, a 2-minute silence was held to remember those who had lost their lives and those still suffering in Turkey and Syria following the recent earthquake.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Ayres and Mr T Cresswell. Mr S Hall was absent, but no apologies had been received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr A Osborne, Mrs J Osborne and Miss A Owen declared that they were Babergh District Councillors. Ms J Carter and Mr P Faircloth-Mutton declared they were Suffolk County Councillors.

3 DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

There were no declarations of gifts or hospitality.

4 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensation had been received.

5 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10th January 2023 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6 ACTION FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

NOTED

The Deputy Town Clerk advised members that:

- The budget for the financial year 2023/2024 had been set and the precept demand sent to Babergh District Council.
- A Grounds Maintenance Tractor had been purchased and was due for delivery after 1st March 2023.
- The £25,000 for the Churches Conservation Trust to refurbish the areas around St Peter's had been transferred.

7. REPORTS

a) County Councillors' reports

A copy of Councillor Ms Carter's report is shown at minute page 79.

The following questions were put to Councillor Ms Carter:

- Could the parking in Newman's Road and Upper East Street be looked at when Ms Carter meets the Suffolk Highways officer?
- Could Ms Carter investigate the Taxi Voucher scheme? This is an alternative for those who cannot use public transport. It was reported that many taxi firms in Sudbury will not take the vouchers as there is a long delay in these being redeemed. It was also suggested that the taxi licencing department at Babergh District Council be informed of this issue.
- On a question relating to the council tax, Councillor Faircloth-Mutton informed members that there would be a total increase of 3.99%. 2.00% of this is related to adult social care. The remaining 1.99% was for the general base.

Councillor Mr P Faircloth-Mutton advised members of the following:

- Suffolk County Council had undertaken a monitoring test on the number of HGVs actively using Churchfield Road. The results identified there was a problem in this area. Councillor Faircloth-Mutton was due to meet the highways authority later in the month to discuss ways forward. Councillor J Owen suggested that the car park at the old Delphi factory could be used as a temporary solution for a lorry park.
- With regards to proposals for Market Hill, Councillor Faircloth-Mutton stated he fully supported the town council's policy for a hybrid approach; one row of parking, with the remainder left pedestrianised. In the summer parking would be suspended with the whole area pedestrianised.
- All three levels of local authority appeared to support this scheme and it was important that it was taken forward as quickly as possible.

RESOLVED

That Councillors Ms Carter and Mr Faircloth-Mutton be thanked for their reports.

- b) District Councillor's report – Cllr Miss A Owen gave the Babergh District Council report. A copy is shown at minute page 80.

The following questions were asked:

- As photo ID would be required by all votes when casting their ballots in the May local elections, the question was asked what could be done by those electors who didn't have suitable photo ID? Members were informed that anyone could obtain a Voter Authority Certificate, free of charge, via the Babergh District Council website.
- If all the waste services, public realm, and building services were moved into a brand new depot, what would happen to the existing locations? Councillor Mrs Osborne advised that this question could not be answered until a new site had been proposed. The proposal will be in stages. To start with the full District Council would need to approve expenditure of £12m. Once approved, further discussions and details will be available.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Miss Owen be thanked for her report and that Mrs Osborne be thanked for answering members' questions.

c) Police

The Town Clerk advised that there was no police report this month. Although he had emailed the Police Commissioner requesting an update on ANPR cameras, no response had been received. Members requested the following questions be put to the police:

- Could we have an update on whether the two girls seen throwing bricks from the bridges in Springlands had been caught?
- The police still appeared not to be using the CCTV camera from Belle Vue Park to prosecute offenders. Why was this?
- What were the police doing to educate children against committing crime?

Members were requested to advise town council officers of any crimes that were brought to their attention so that these could be added to a list that would be discussed at the quarterly reviews of the efficacy of the CCTV system.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk be thanked for the update.

d) Public Forum

A question was asked relating to the consultation for any changes to Market Hill. The Mayor advised that there had been a full public consultation and exhibition held in the Town Hall in June 2022 and that it was the option 2 from this consultation that had been adopted as the Town Council's preferred solution. Once the full details of how this option could be implemented had been agreed, it was expected that there would be further engagement with the public.

A question was asked relating to migrants being housed in Sudbury. Councillor Mrs Osborne explained this was a District Council responsibility, not a matter for the Town Council. However, as a District Councillor, she explained that refugees from Ukraine could apply for housing through Babergh's gateway programme. Currently there was one family from Ukraine living in Sudbury. Migrants from other countries had to speak to Babergh's housing team directly.

8. TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

Planning and Development on 16th January
It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT.

Planning and Development on 30th January
It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT.

Human Resources on 26th January – Following the resignation of the chairman of this committee, and the need to the committee to agree the minutes, these would not be circulated until approved by the next meeting of the HR Committee.

Leisure and Environment on 31st January.
It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT.

Finance on 7th February 2023 – The Chairman advised members on the fixed term deposit investment plan and that plans were in place to replace the current RFO.
It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT.

9. NEW MEMBER FOR THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Following the resignation of Councillor R Spivey, members were requested to appoint another member to the Human Resources Committee.

RESOLVED

Councillor Mrs Antill proposed Mr Bennett and the Mayor seconded the proposal.
No other nominations were received.
Therefore, it was resolved that Councillor Mr Bennett be appointed to the HR committee.

10. DATE OF FIRST MEETING OF THE NEW COUNCIL

The local elections will be held on Thursday 4 May 2023 and the District Council have said that they might not be able to announce who has been elected until late on Friday 5 May. To allow the new members to be summons with three clear days' notice, the first day that the new council could legally meet would be Friday 12th May. Therefore, members were requested to approve holding the first meeting of the new council on the third Tuesday, 16 May 2023.

RESOLVED

That the first meeting of the new council will be held on Tuesday 16th May 2023.

11. PERENNIAL PLANTING SCHEME

The Leisure and Environment Committee recommended that the full council approve expenditure of up to £12,500 excluding VAT to implement a long-lasting perennial planting scheme across Sudbury's floral beds and roundabouts.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10, members approved expenditure to The Garden Nursery of up to £12,500 excluding VAT to implement a long-lasting perennial planting scheme. This will be funded by using £8,000 from neighbourhood CIL for the perennial planting scheme and soil improvements with the balance of up to £4,500 on maintenance costs coming from 4045_321 in the FY2023/24 budget.

12. TREE WORKS

The Leisure and Environment committee recommended to full council approval of expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT for the tree works required within one year of the survey.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10, members approve further expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT for tree works.

13. COMMUNITY WARDENS VAN LEASE

The Finance committee recommended that the full council approve a one-year extension of the lease on the current Community Warden vans, which were still in very good condition. The Town Clerk explained that the Council were looking into the purchase of electric vans for the Community Wardens, however no viable options could be identified that would deliver replacement electric vans before the end of the hire contract for the current diesel van on 31st March 2023.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of Local Government Act 1972, s.111, members approve a one-year extension to the lease for the Community Wardens' vans at a cost of up to £7,200. This will be funded from 4018_341 in the FY2023/24 budget.

14. WRITE OFF OF ASSETS

Members were requested to approve the write off of the assets list in the table attached to the agenda valued at up to £15,828 excluding VAT. These were either redundant, broken or had been stolen and replaced with new items that were listed separately. Members noted that accounting rules for local councils did not allow assets to be depreciated during their life, so the values stated were purchase costs, not current values.

RESOLVED

That members approve the write off of the assets list in the table on page 87 to the agenda valued at up to £15,828 excluding VAT.

15. WORKING TOGETHER MEETING

The Mayor gave a brief report on the Working Together meeting:

- Babergh District Council were listening to Sudbury Town Council and had agreed to consult with the Town Council on any issues relating to Sudbury.
- Currently only Belle Vue House was for sale. The old swimming pool site was not.
- Market Hill – All three levels of local authority were in agreement with option 2 for Market Hill– one line of parking, with more pedestrian space in the winter and parking completely suspended in the summer. All three local authorities wished to take this forward as quickly as possible and would aim to introduce an interim arrangement to allow the change to parking and traffic flow to be implemented this spring. It was believed that a permanent scheme could be delivered within two years.
- The next Working Together meeting was scheduled for June, after the local elections.

RESOLVED

That the Mayor be thanked for the report.

16. BELLE VUE WORKING GROUP

The Belle Vue Working Group had held a productive meeting with senior officers from Babergh District Council and agreed to work together to better understand the costs of clearing the old swimming pool site so that it could be incorporated as part of Belle Vue Park. As there was no longer a need to hold regular meetings of the Belle Vue Working Group, it was proposed that this item be removed as a fixed item on the full council agenda.

RESOLVED

That the Belle Vue Working Group be removed as a fixed item on the council agenda and only included when there was new information to discuss.

17. PARTY IN THE PARK/KINGS CORONATION EVENT

Councillor Mrs J Osborne introduced her motion:

“That this year’s Party in the Park be themed as a coronation event rather than spending additional money on a separate coronation street party.”

Members noted that there was no funding in the budget for coronation events.

Members discussed the option of moving Party on the Park from July to the weekend of the coronation in May and holding a coronation event instead, but there was strong support for retaining Party in the Park in its current format in July.

The Town Clerk estimated that a relatively simple coronation event along the lines of the ‘Big Lunch’ on 7 May proposed by the Palace could be organised for about £5,000. District Councillors Miss Owen and Mr Cresswell and County Councillor Mr Faircloth-Mutton offered to contribute £700 each from their locality budgets towards a separate coronation event to be held on the weekend of the coronation.

RESOLVED

That Party in the Park remain scheduled for July with the funding in the current budget.

That a separate coronation event be organised for Sunday 7th May, with the Events Co-ordinator presenting two options, one based on Market Hill and one based on Belle Vue Park, for discussion and approval at the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee on the 28th February.

That District Councillors Miss Owen and Mr Cresswell and County Councillor Mr Faircloth-Mutton be thanked for their contributions of £700 each from their locality budgets towards the coronation Event.

That up to an additional £3,000 could be used from General Reserves to fund a coronation event.

18. MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor requested that the Finance Committee discuss making a donation through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) in aid of the relief work for the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

RESOLVED

That the finance committee consider this request.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 8.25pm.

Chairman.....

Report for February 2023 to Sudbury Town Council - From Jessie Carter (SCC Councillor)



Date: 10/02/2023

Email: jessie.carter@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 07955 434411

Highways:

I have arranged a meeting with Sudbury's Highways liaison engineer on the 28th we will be visiting Churchill Drive and Beaconsfield Close to look at the issues on these streets with on street parking. If there are any other locations, you would like us to visit please let me know before this date.

Regarding my highways budget I have requested TRO changes for Goal Lane, Ballingdon Street, Station Road, Priory Street and Clermont Avenue. To save money these will be combined and completed as one project.

Dentaid:

On the 3rd of February Dentaid came to Sudbury where 50 people received treatment for dental pain that they were suffering. Thank you to everyone who made this a possibility and if needed I wouldn't hesitate to ask them back later on in the year.

Anglian Water:

On the 6th of February AW started work to install new equipment at Sudbury WRC, off Brundon Lane, which will remove phosphorous from wastewater, thus improving river water quality nearby. £1.6 million is being invested exclusively into the Phosphorus scheme, this project will further increase the quality of the water that AW's Water Recycling Centre (WRC) discharges and therefore this investment will be spent entirely at Sudbury WRC.

Budget 2023/24:

On the 9th of February at Endeavour House SCC voted by majority to increase council tax by 0.89% generating an additional £3.363m
This is an annual rise of £12.78 Band D council tax payers and an annual rise of £9.94 for Band B council tax payers

BABERGH REPORT 14TH February

Babergh Council Tenants

Babergh council house tenants, including those in Sudbury and surrounding villages, are likely to pay seven per cent higher rents after cabinet decision on Monday 6th feb. The changes would see an average weekly rent increasing by more than £6 for social rents and £9 for affordable rents. Babergh full council will need to agree the uplifts in February before they are implemented for the financial year starting in April. These changes come after Babergh announced that just under 470 inspections and safety reports in council homes had been missed.

The regulator of social housing issued a regulatory notice, which are given when actual or potential serious harm has been caused to tenants due to breach of a consumer standard.

REASON FOR DECISION

1. The Council's current HRA Business Plan presents a financial picture over the longer term (a thirty-year period as required under the self-financing regime). The business plan sets out the aspiration of the Council to increase the social housing stock by either buying existing dwellings or building new ones. In addition, the Business Plan is used to plan and understand any potential borrowing requirements which are needed to adhere to Social Housing Regulations such as the Consumer Standards and the Decent Homes Standard. The housing landscape will look very different in years to come, as such the Council has taken the decision to carry out a full review of the business plan, taking into account all compliance requirements, stock condition data and the emerging Social Housing Regulation Bill. As such a one-year interim budget has been produced. Members can expect a revised and up to date business plan to be presented before the next budget setting period. This will include a series of presentations which provide Members with the appropriate stress testing and scenario planning to enable a longer-term view to be taken. This will

also give comfort to our customers as our planned and estate enhancements will be included in the plan. Members should also note that officers will be working with customers during the year to understand their aspiration around how we create place to be proud of. This forms part of the new housing regulations, and as such officers will consult with customers on what they would like to prioritise in the new business plan. The information presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2023 and Cabinet focused on the budget for 2023/24. The revised business plan when it is presented, will set out the longer-term financial implications and ambitions for the HRA and will take into account any decisions or approvals in relation to the 2023/24 budget. Following a period of five years that saw annual 1% rent reductions, which ended in March 2020, councils were allowed to increase rents by the maximum of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) +1% for a period of five years from April 2020. Subject to compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard, this has begun to mitigate the impact of the 1% reduction on the 30-year plan. However, the cost of living crisis has resulted in the Government making a change to the rent settlement. This is a significant risk to the HRA as the recent reductions and now the rent cap, leaves the Council at risk of not being able to meet its legal obligations. This is again against the backdrop of aging stock which requires urgent investment.

The removal of the HRA Debt Cap from 29 October 2018 means that local authorities can borrow to fund new homes without worrying about breaching this cap. Any borrowing will be subject to the Council adhering to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code.

New £12m depot would ‘future-proof’ services for residents

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are exploring plans to consolidate three aging operational sites into a shared £12m depot – future-proofing services for residents and improving conditions for their staff.

If councillors approve funding later this month, the next stage of the project will involve developing a more detailed business case and identifying a suitable location for the councils’ 200 shared operational staff and fleet – including waste services, public realm, and building services and repairs teams.

The councils’ current main depots, in Stowmarket and Sudbury, are each over 50 years old and not fit for future needs, with significant and increasing costs now required to keep them running. A further depot at Great Wenham is also starting to struggle to meet 21st century operational demands.

According to a report going before councillors, the sites are no longer able to house the staff and vehicles required to service in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

As well as providing council staff with a modern, fit-for-purpose depot to help them meet the needs of the growing population more effectively and efficiently, the new depot would also allow help ‘future-proof’ the councils’ ambitions for further change ahead.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk’s waste fleet was amongst the first in the country to be converted to run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in a move to slash carbon emissions – but further changes are in the pipeline with the implementation of the Government’s Resource and Waste Strategy, and the global transition towards fully electric vehicles, which the existing sites would struggle to accommodate.

Significant capital investment is required to secure a new depot – with an estimated £12m required to develop a 3.25 hectare (8 acre) site within the districts. This would more than double the councils’ current combined operational capacity – with Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council funding £6m each.

These costs would be offset by the operational savings and income generation that could be delivered from sharing a single depot, estimated to be between £75k to £150k coming back into councils’ coffers each year.

Babergh District Council cabinet member for assets and investments, Cllr David Busby said: *“Our operational teams work hard, but they are constrained by outdated sites that cannot be brought up to the 21st century standards that we need in order to deliver the best possible services to our residents and communities.”*

Bring photo ID to vote in May

From May 2023, voters have to show photo ID at polling stations before they are given a ballot paper.

[Read more information about the Elections Act 2022](#)

The most commonly used photographic IDs include:

- passports issued by:
 - the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man
 - a British Overseas Territory
 - an European Economic Area (EEA) state
 - a Commonwealth country
- photographic driver's licences (including provisional) issued by:
 - the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man
 - an EEA state
- EEA photo ID cards
- biometric residence permits
- identity cards that bear the [Proof of Age Standards Scheme \(PASS Scheme\)](#) hologram
- Blue Badges
- 60+ Oyster photocard
- Concessionary travel passes funded by the government, or a local authority. Examples include:
 - older person's bus passes
 - disabled person's bus passes
 - travel cards from Wales or Northern Ireland

Only original documents are accepted. Scanned images or copies will not be accepted - however, expired documents are accepted if the photo is still a current likeness.

VCFSE Resilience Fund: Councils launch third sector funding ‘lifeline’

For immediate release: 10 February 2022

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are delivering vital support to incredible organisations already helping those in our communities most exposed to the cost-of-living crisis.

The VCFSE Resilience Fund for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprises (VCFSE) in the districts, with £50,000 available in each district, is specifically targeted at supporting grassroots and medium-sized groups to keep them financially viable in these challenging times.

Up to £5,000 is available for applicants meeting the criteria for the fund, which closes on 26 February.

New projects are welcome but not required – any fundamental costs such as salaries, training, equipment and expenses can be included in an application.

Julie Flatman, cabinet member for Communities, Health and Wellbeing, said:

“This new fund truly could be a lifeline for a grassroots organisation, allowing them to stay afloat while helping others do the same. No one is immune to the effects of inflation and the cost of living crisis, and the same is true of those helping those in need.”

Only VCFSE organisations with constitutions are eligible to apply, such as Community Interest Companies (CICs), registered charities or unincorporated associations. They must either operate in, or be based in, Babergh or Mid Suffolk, and have a turnover between £500-£200,000pa.

A full list of criteria can be found on the VCFSE Resilience Fund webpage, along with the application form.

Half-term activities ready for schoolchildren in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

For immediate release: 7 February 2022

A week of swimming, sports and fun activities for children of all ages are planned in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Young people looking forward to the half-term can take part in a wide range of activities across the two districts – from scavenger hunts and outdoor adventure days to football and dance camps, craft classes to soft play, everyone can try something new.

Family and casual swimming sessions return in both Babergh and Mid Suffolk, providing a great opportunity to stay active affordably on the February break.

Older children in Stowmarket are also able to try an escape room at The Mix, made possible in collaboration The Together Project's Employability Programme.

Plus, if you are looking for a family day out, want to learn more about the places you visit, or want to keep everyone entertained, the council has worked with Love Exploring to add several interactive walking routes to their app.

You can follow walks for any ability around Sudbury, Lavenham, Hadleigh, Alton Water and the Dedham Vale AONB which are full of beautiful sights, and you'll find your route takes you past historic buildings, pictures and views which all have extra information or fun quizzes made specifically for them.

Mary McLaren, cabinet member for Communities and Wellbeing, said:

"A variety of activities for children of all ages and abilities is a vital part of our holiday activity programme. It's that diversity that gives all our young people a chance to try something new, spark an interest, or expand their horizons during the half-term.

"It is so important to enable everyone to stay healthy and physically active, so a huge amount of work goes into providing and organising this programme across the entire district."

The council is also delighted leisure provider Abbeycroft Leisure will continue offering family park cooking sessions in Great Cornard and Stowmarket over the week, giving families and children aged 8-12 years an opportunity to learn some new skills and recipes, cooking in the open air.

Those taking part will also take home a week's worth of ingredients to carry on cooking at home.

Julie Flatman, cabinet member for Communities, Health and Wellbeing, said:

“Holiday hunger is always a priority for the council, so we are proud to support these sessions to develop young people’s skills and interest in cooking, providing extra support families may need out of term time.

For those looking for a warm space this half term, Mid Suffolk and Babergh have funded both our leisure providers to make sure our leisure centres operate as warm spaces as well, so please visit if you are looking for more information from partners like Citizen’s Advice or if you need a safe space for a hot shower and hot drink.”

REQUEST TO WRITE OFF COUNCIL ASSETS - FULL COUNCIL**Items agreed for secure destruction**

Asset Register 2022/2023

No	Description	Purchase date	Original cost	Write off amount	Reason
36	Telephone systems x15	02/03/2015	£2,646.00	£2,646.00	Redundant
51/52	Dell OptiPlex x 12	24/02/2015	£6,461.00	£5,621.00	Redundant – monitors being retained
63	Billy Goat	10/03/2018	£1,152.00	£1,152.00	Stolen/replaced
68	Edge Cutter	21/03/2020	£1,136.00	£1,136.00	Stolen/replaced
71	Push Trimmer	22/07/2021	£775.00	£775.00	Stolen/replaced
72	Mulcher Lawn Mower	22/09/2021	£475.00	£475.00	Stolen/replaced
80	CCTV (ex-Homebase roundabout)	31/03/2013	£4,023.00	£4,023.00	Broken
Total				£15,828.00	