

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 26TH MAY 2026 AT 6.30PM

Committee members present: Mr S Hall – Chair
Mr J Jeagar
Ms E Murphy
Miss A Owen
Mr A Stohr
Mr A Welsh

Officers in attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk

1. **SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs J Osborne. Councillor Mr A Stohr was the substitute for Councillor Mrs J Osborne.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

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

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 28th April 2026 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

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

The Town Clerk briefed members on the video meeting that had taken place earlier that evening in which Babergh District Council officers had explained the three Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bids which they were submitting for work in Sudbury.

- Aubrey Drive Play Area total cost £59,998.78, of which CIL would be £54,958.78.



- Belle Vue Park Play equipment total cost £74,575.88 of which CIL would be £68,155.01.
- Belle Vue Park Community Café and Toilet Facilities total cost £1,262,378, of which CIL would be £421,341.

Members were supportive of all three of these projects as they seemed to epitomise the purpose of CIL.

7. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Jan Osborne be elected vice-chair of the committee. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Jan Osborne be the vice-chair of the Leisure and Environment Committee.

8. TO REVIEW A PROPOSAL TO HOST A 'GAINSBOROUGH 300' EVENT ON MARKET HILL IN MAY 2027 AND AUTHORISE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £5,000 EXCLUDING VAT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COSTS

The Town Clerk explained that the Business Manager was working in partnership with Gainsborough's House to host an event to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the baptism of Thomas Gainsborough, which had taken place in Friars Street Independent Church on 14th May 1727. The financial plan, which had been circulated with the agenda, showed an estimated total cost of about £23,000 and proposed a contribution from Sudbury Town Council of £5,000 towards this. The balance would be sought as 'match funding' from the county and district councils, grants from the National Lottery and the Suffolk Community Foundation, as well as from Gainsborough's House. The Town Clerk emphasised that nothing had been fixed at this stage, but that an early financial commitment from the Town Council was necessary to allow bids to other funding sources. Members would have the opportunity to discuss the details of the event at subsequent meetings.

The Chair of the Finance Committee was in attendance and noted that any proposed funding would have to be feed into the budget process for financial year 2027-28.

Members noted that the 300th anniversary fell on Friday 14th May 2027 and questioned the effectiveness of holding the event on a Friday during term time, as this might limit the engagement by local children. They asked for confirmation that the local schools would allow a significant number of children to participate, or consideration of holding the event on a Sunday. As schools would not break up for half term until Friday 28th May 2027, the option of holding the event during half term did not fit closely with the anniversary date.

RESOLVED

To approve the proposal to host 'Gainsborough 300' event on Market Hill in May 2027.

To investigate the options for ensuring maximum participation by local families, including school aged children.

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, expenditure of up to £5,000 excluding VAT is authorised to contribute to the costs of 'Gainsborough 300'.

9. TO APPROVE THE 2026-2029 FLORAL SUPPLY & MAINTENANCE 'INVITATION TO TENDER' FOR PUBLICATION

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Floral Supply and Maintenance Contract needed to be re-competed and relet for autumn 2027. The draft invitation to tender had been circulated with the agenda for members to study. Members were content with the tender but discussed options for including additional floral displays in the Ballingdon area, however they agreed that this option would be best explored as a volunteer activity through Sudbury in Bloom.

RESOLVED

To approve the 2026-2029 Floral Supply and Maintenance 'Invitation to Tender' for publication.

10. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF £10,000 EXCLUDING VAT ON PARTY IN THE PARK IN JULY

The Party in the Park 2026 expenditure breakdown had been circulated with the agenda for members to study. The total anticipated expenditure was about £9,730, with an expected income of about £4,800, giving a net cost of about £4,930 excluding VAT. The income included an allocation of £1,800 from the donation from the Sudbury Carnival funds.

Members asked if there could be additional live music by local performers. They did not anticipate paying large amounts but thought that a small payment of about £100 each to two musicians would add to the overall atmosphere and could be accommodated within a £10,000 ceiling.

RESOLVED

To ask the Town Clerk to investigate the option of including a couple of live music performers in the entertainment programme for Party in the Park at a total addition cost of £200 to the budget.

To recommend that the full council authorise expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT for the Party in the Park 2026, noting that the expected income will be £4,800.

11. TO REVIEW THE FORWARD PLAN AND ALLOCATE PRIORITIES FOR THE VARIOUS PROJECTS

The Town Clerk explained the Leisure and Environment summary spreadsheet in the earmarked reserves. This spreadsheet listed the main projects that would need to be addressed by the committee, with their estimated costs and the funds allocated for them in the earmarked reserves. The Town Clerk emphasised that he was hoping to be able to recruit a Projects Manager in the near future and this would give the staff capacity to take these important tasks forward. The Town Clerk asked the committee to agree the relative priority of the large projects as these would need to be sequenced. Many of the smaller, less complex projects should also be able to be addressed at the same time.

The Town Clerk recommended that the new cemetery be given the highest priority as space in the current cemetery was very limited and there were likely to be none available after 2030.

Members also expressed their concern over the delay in re-developing the former boating pond site on Mill Acre. As this would require detailed permission from the Environment Agency, this

would be a major project, but it was anticipated that this could be in the top priority alongside the new cemetery. Members agreed that an explanatory comment on the council's website would help residents to understand the likely timescale and complexity of the Mill Acre project.

RESOLVED

To note the projects listed in the Leisure and Environment summary spreadsheet.

To allocate the new cemetery and Mill Acre as the top two priority large scale projects.

To review the Leisure and Environment summary spreadsheet each September to inform the budget process.

The meeting concluded at 7:27 pm.


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Chairman