

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 14TH APRIL 2026 AT 7.00PM

Present: Mr A Welsh – Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR
Mrs M Barrett Mr A Osborne (from 7:15pm)
Mr P Beer (until 9pm) Mrs J Osborne
Mr N Bennett Miss A Owen
Ms J Carter Mr T Register
Mr S Hall Mr A Stohr
Mr J Jeager Mr N Younger

In attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mrs C Morgan – Deputy Clerk
Ms R Price – Business Manager
Ms L Smith – Babergh District Councillor
Mr P Faircloth-Mutton – Suffolk County Councillor

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Apologies were received from Councillors Mr K Graham and Ms E Murphy.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Mr P Beer, Ms J Carter, Mr A Osborne, Miss A Owen and Mr T Register declared that they were also Babergh District Councillors.

Councillors Mr P Beer and Ms J Carter declared that they were also Suffolk County Councillors.

Councillor Mrs M Barrett declared an interest in item 9 as she was a trustee of the Quay Theatre.

3. DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

No declarations of gifts or hospitality were made.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

Cllr Mrs M Barrett had submitted a written request for a dispensation to speak on item 9 and remain in the room, although she would abstain from voting as she was a trustee of the Quay Theatre. The dispensation had been granted by the Town Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 13e.

5. TO CONFIRM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the council meeting held on 14th March 2026 are an accurate record and are to signed by the Chairman.

6. QUESTIONS AND REPORTS

- a. Public Forum – One member of the public was present, but no questions were asked.
- b. Policing Report – The police had attended an earlier meeting with some councillors to discuss local issues. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and drugs had been the focus of efforts over the previous month and there had been significant progress on both.
- c. Mayor’s Announcement – The Mayor had attended the briefing by the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) in St Peter’s Church on their future plans for the Sudbury Arts Centre. Although a final decision had not been made, the message from the CCT was ‘use it or lose it’ as the Sudbury Arts Centre needed to attract more profitable events and activities to break even. It was likely that the CCT would provide funding to allow the Sudbury Arts Centre to continue for another 2 or 3 years with the current level of staff to prove their long-term viability. The Mayor also confirmed that he had completed his walk on the St Edmundsbury Way from Bury St Edmunds to Sudbury Town Hall on 8th April and had recorded a distance of 25.79 miles. He had raised a significant sum for his charities and thanked sponsors for their generous support.
- d. County Councillors’ Reports – Councillors Ms J Carter and Mr P Faircloth-Mutton had sent in their reports, which had been circulated before the meeting, and are shown at minute pages 324 to 327. The following points were raised for discussion.
- Highways – the poor management of restoration of the road surface after road works had often left the sites in the conservation area in poor condition. An example was Anglian Water who had left tarmac in place of block pavement. This had now been chased by a Town Councillor and resolved, but why were Suffolk Highways not driving this? Cllr Carter reported that she had chased this issue twice but with no success.

RESOLVED

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

- e. District Councillor’s Report – Councillor A Own had sent in her report, which had been circulated with the agenda, and is included in pages 328 to 329. The following points were raised for discussion.
- Grants – any community groups in need of a Babergh grant were encouraged to apply.
 - New bins – Instruction for the new Babergh recycling bins may be delayed due to purdah. Where are the new bins going to be stored in the town centre conservation area? If information came from Babergh, the Town Council could help disseminate it. Will the bins be left on the pavement/highway or returned to the garden? How will high usage families request more regular collections? How can single people request smaller bins?
 - Belle Vue – Members were interested in the date that the new toilets in Belle Vue Park would open. They were currently scheduled to be open by summer 2027.
 - Minden – There had been a tragic incident with scaffolding in Minden a few weeks before. Members were interested in when will this scaffolding would be taken down.

RESOLVED

That District Councillor Ms A Owen be thanked for her report.

7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES

Planning, Development and Highways Committee on 23rd March and 7th April 2026 – The Chair summarised the minutes.

Finance Committee on 7th April 2026 – The Chair summarised the minutes.

Policy and Resources Committee on 26th March and 9th April 2026 – The Chair summarised the minutes.

Leisure and Environment Committee on 31st March 2026 – The Chair summarised the minutes.

8. TO APPOINT MRS CLARE MORGAN AS THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER (RFO)

The Mayor reminded members that the Town Clerk had only agreed to be appointed as the responsible finance officer (RFO) to cover the gap until a new member of staff had been recruited and was ready to take on this role. Now that Mrs Morgan had completed 6 weeks work with Sudbury Town Council, and a new financial year had started, the Town Clerk wished to relinquish this role and have Mrs Morgan appointed as the responsible finance officer.

RESOLVED

To appoint Mrs Clare Morgan as the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) for Sudbury Town Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, s151.

9. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF £6,800 ON AN EXTRAORDINARY GRANT TO THE QUAY THEATRE FROM THE UNUSED FUNDS PREVIOUSLY ALLOCATED TO SUPPORT THE INCREDIBLE MOVING CINEMA, WHICH COULD NOT BE SPENT AS THE SITE WAS NOT AVAILABLE DURING THE SPRING HALF-TERM.

Councillor Mrs M Barrett asked members to consider the financial situation of the Quay Theatre which was worse than expected as no grants had been given by Babergh District Council for the current year. She explained that there were some potential sources of funding for capital projects, such as the replacement doors, LED lights and new hearing loop, but grants were also essential to supplement revenue as running costs had increased significantly. Many staff were on the national minimum wage and, as this had increased, it was necessary to maintain some differential in the pay rate for more senior staff. The Quay Theatre were grateful for the support they had received, such as the £9,640 from Suffolk County Council to support young people, but they were disappointed that Babergh had awarded £200,000 to 14 organisations but had not included the Quay Theatre this year. There was a maximum level of overdraft that the Quay could use and there was a need for additional revenue funds to meet operating costs.

Many members expressed their support for the Quay Theatre and its vital role in encouraging the performing arts in Sudbury, especially for children. Although the Quay Theatre would not replicate the film offer that had been missed with the Incredible Moving Cinema, it could offer the next best thing for Sudbury families looking for something to do.

Concerns were raised over the transparency of the Quay Theatre's funding; releasing quarterly or monthly accounts would help clarify the situation. When there had been a change in the accountants

there had not been a hand over which caused some concern. The current board running the Quay Theatre had only served in the last 5 years and could not answer for anything prior.

The importance of the Quay Theatre to families was a key point for many members as this was a vital element of their education. All arts and cultural institutions were suffering, so a member suggested that any extra funding be divided between all Sudbury cultural institutions. Some members were concerned about giving any grant outside the normal grant application cycle.

Some members were concerned that, without examining the accounts, the viability of the Quay Theatre could be in question, and the Quay Theatre could close in a few months' time. It would be easier to support this request if there was clarity on the current financial situation and how the extra money would be spent. An amendment to this motion was proposed and seconded to defer a decision to allow time for the Quay Theatre to clarify these points.

RESOLVED

Not to approve the amendment to the motion.

A recorded vote on the original motion was requested by Cllr Mrs J Osborne.

Mrs M Barrett	Abstained
Mr P Beer	For
Mr N Bennett	Abstained
Ms J Carter	Abstained
Mr S Hall	Abstained
Mr J Jeager	Against
Mr A Osborne	Against
Mrs J Osborne	Against
Miss A Owen	Against
Mr T Register	Against
Mr A Stohr	For
Mr A Welsh	For
Mr N Younger	For

The result was 4 votes in favour, 5 votes against and 4 abstentions, so the motion was not carried.

RESOLVED

Not to approve the motion.

10. TO AUTHORISE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £35,000 ON THE BIN RATIONALISATION PROJECT. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE FUNDING WILL BE FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL'S NEIGHBOURHOOD CIL, WITH AN APPLICATION TO BABERGH FOR MATCH FUNDING FROM THEIR CIL.

The Business Manager explained the many of the existing bins were at the end of their service life and needed to be replaced. Currently, there were many locations where a dog waste and a litter bin were in close proximity to each other. Babergh District Council charged for each of these bins individually, but had proposed moving to a new style of double bin, which would only attract a single charge to be emptied. The double bins had one side for combined litter and dog waste and the other side for recyclable items. This proposal would provide 55 new double bins and would reduce the annual cost of emptying bins.

The Town Clerk explained that the bins could be funded using CIL, with the potential to also apply for grants. The Town Council currently held about £25,000 of neighbourhood CIL and he proposed that an application was made to Babergh District Council to split the costs equally between the Town and District CIL funds, so that the Town Council would contribute £17,500 of CIL.

Concerns were raised that the three trial double bins had not been fitted yet, so the full commitment might be premature. Might it be better to delay a decision on the full number of bins until later? An evaluation of the trial would be helpful together with a clear statement on the potential savings due to reduced emptying charges.

The Business Manager confirmed that West Suffolk was using the double bins so this change would be future proof for the new Western Suffolk Unitary Authority. She was also concerned that some bins were in a very poor state and needed to be replaced soon.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Litter Act 1983, ss.5-6, members agreed to approve the expenditure of up to £35,000 for the bin rationalisation project.

That the balance of costs should be funded equally from the Town and District CIL funds, once any grant funding had applied.

11. TO ADOPT THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The revised Safeguarding Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and circulated to members with the agenda.

RESOLVED

To adopt the Safeguarding Policy as shown at pages 330 to 333.

12. TO ADOPT THE BODY WORN VIDEO CAMERAS POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The revised Body Worn Video Cameras Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and circulated to members with the agenda.

RESOLVED

To adopt the Body Worn Video Cameras Policy as shown at pages 334 to 340.

13. TO ADOPT THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and circulated to members with the agenda.

RESOLVED

To adopt the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy as shown at pages 341 to 344.

14. TO ADOPT THE LOAN OF COUNCIL PROPERTY POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The revised Loan of Council Property Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and circulated to members with the agenda.

RESOLVED

To adopt the Loan of Council Property Policy as shown at pages 345 to 348.

15. TO ADOPT THE USE OF TOWN COAT OF ARMS POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The revised Usage of the Town Coat of Arms Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and circulated to members with the agenda.

RESOLVED

To adopt the Usage of the Town Coat of Arms Policy as shown at page 349.

16. TO ADOPT THE BIODIVERSITY POLICY AS RECOMMENDED BY THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The revised Biodiversity Policy had been reviewed and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and circulated to members with the agenda. There was one outstanding point to be resolved on the percentage weighting in tender assessments given to sustainability and biodiversity considerations. Officers had not been able to identify any statutory requirement for a particular percentage, but the template from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) proposed 20%. After much discussion members agreed to leave the draft text unchanged to allow the policy to be applied pragmatically to those contract that may affect biodiversity, where up to 20% weight could be given to sustainability and biodiversity considerations.

Members emphasised the need to include the work done on behalf of the Town Council by other groups, such as the Sudbury Common Lands Charity who maintained the Valley Walk, and they were mentioned as a partner organisation in the policy. The Town Clerk explained that the policy would form the basis for developing more detailed procedures for implementation. Such things as apps for identifying flora and fauna changed rapidly and new ones could be used as they became available without a need to amend the policy.

RESOLVED

To adopt the Biodiversity Policy as shown at pages 350 to 355.

17. TO ADOPT THE AMENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE.

The terms of reference for the Policy and Resources committee had been reviewed and amended by the committee and circulated to members with the agenda.

RESOLVED

To adopt the amended Terms of Reference for the Policy & Resources committee at page 356.

To extend the meeting by 15 minutes and to have a short comfort break.

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 item 18 & 19 as the publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

18. TO RECEIVE A PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFING ON THE INVESTIGATIONS OF COMPLAINTS.

RESOLVED

See CONFIDENTIAL annex A, minute pages 357 to 359

19. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL LEGAL, CONTRACTUAL AND HR MATTERS

RESOLVED

See CONFIDENTIAL Annex A, minute pages 359 to 360.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 9:21pm.

Chairman


Report for April 2026 to Sudbury Town Council - From Jessie Carter SCC Councillor)

Date: 11/04/2026

Email: jessie.carter@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 07955 434411

Unitary Decision Announced by Government

On 25 March the government announced that it had chosen a three unitary model for Suffolk following the Local Government Reorganization process which will see upper tier authority Suffolk County Council and lower tier authorities like districts and boroughs abolished in two years. Last year the government asked Suffolk councils to submit proposals on how many unitary councils they thought the county should have in the future. Suffolk County Council submitted a case for a single unitary council (One Suffolk) and the district and borough councils submitted one for three councils, which was the option chosen by ministers. These plans will see the county split into three areas: Western Suffolk, Central and Eastern Suffolk and Ipswich and Southern Suffolk, which includes the county town and Felixstowe. Elections for the new councils will be held next May, with the new councillors shadowing existing councillors until the new authorities are 'vested' from 1 April 2028.

Motion of Support for Survivors of Sexual Harm Passed Unanimously

At council on 19 March, my group proposed a motion that the council release a statement of support for survivors of sexual harm and exploitation, on the basis that the near-constant media coverage of the 'Epstein files' was triggering for survivors of sexual harm of both genders, increasing the number of people seeking help. The motion also proposed that the council run a social media campaign signposting people to Survivors in Transition, a local charity which provides support and advice, and write to the government advocating for funding for support services. The motion was approved unanimously in the chamber. In the same meeting, motions were also passed in support of the Lowestoft flood barrier, and to look into how the costs of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) can be reduced. TROs are legal orders made by the council to amend speed limits, add road markings or make other changes to highways in the county.

Extra Funding for Public Rights of Way

On 24 March, Cabinet agreed to allocate an additional £3.9m of capital funding to repair structures on Suffolk's Public Rights of Way network. Structures such as bridges and boardwalks have a limited lifespan, and the council undertook a review to create a priority list of structures that need replacing or repairing in the next five years. The additional funding is needed because the amount of money usually allocated for these

works is no longer enough due to the increased costs of building materials and labour, which have gone up 50% in the last five years. The priority list includes the Bailey Bridge between Walberswick and Southwold, the Fen Bridge over the Stour at Debenham and Hempyard Bridge at Ixworth. If structures become unsafe for walkers the council has to close the Public Right of Way, with each closure costing £1,200 for a six month period (if a path was closed for a year, it would cost £2,400). The Cabinet also heard about the King Charles III Coastal Path, which contrary to national media reports is not yet fully open: sections between Manningtree and Shotley Gate, and north of Southwold, will not be open until later in the summer.

Libraries Decision Scrutinised

At Scrutiny Committee on 11 March, last year's decision by the council to move the library service back in house was reviewed. The council's contract with Suffolk Libraries ended on 31 May 2025 and following that date, the county's 45 libraries and three mobile libraries came back into council control. Libraries' Friends Groups remain in place, with the funds they have raised for individual libraries staying separate from Suffolk County Council's funding. The meeting heard how Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Libraries had worked together to make the transition seamless for library users, although the transfer into council employment had placed a burden on library employees to undertake staff training, including on council platforms for IT, HR and procurement. In addition, the council had undertaken a restructure which had saved £340k in the 'central team'. No redundancies of front line library employees were made. During the meeting the council also laid out their plans to engage with library volunteers, governance systems for the new service and how the service would be celebrating the 2026 Year of Reading. The meeting also noted that borrowing of paper books was reducing, but that digital services such as eBooks and audiobooks were continuing to grow.

Support for Care Leavers

On 5 March, the council's Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee met to discuss services and support provides for young people in Suffolk leaving care. The council has to offer support to young people leaving care up to the age of 25, and at the most recent Ofsted inspection in June 2024 this was highlighted as one of the main areas where the council needed to improve. Since the inspection, the council has worked to improve planning with young people who are coming up to leaving care, making sure more young people knew what support was on offer, and making sure that support was accessible for them as they prepared for independence. In addition, the council received a visit from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in April 2025 which focused on youth homelessness and found that the council needed to immediately review its pathways for care leavers who presented as homeless. In response to these findings, the council increased the number of advisors working with 17 year olds to prepare for leaving care, and making sure they are aware with the help they can get such as reduction in council tax, and the 'Family Business' model the council uses to provide apprenticeships and jobs for young people who have

been in care. The council has also nearly halved the number of care leavers in unsuitable accommodation, although they are still planning more work in this area, particularly for care leavers in custody.

If you want to know more about what help the council provides for young people leaving care, you can find it here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/children-in-care-and-care-leavers/services-for-young-people-leaving-care>

New Government Funding for Increasing Fuel Costs

Suffolk County Council has welcomed the additional £1.7m funding announced by the government to support households in the county facing increased oil heating costs. The council already provides cash payments to help residents with the cost of living through the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme, funded by the Household Support Fund. This scheme supports a range of essential costs, including utilities and energy, and has recently been updated to explicitly reference oil heating following the national announcement. From 1st April, Suffolk County Council will transition from the Household Support Fund to the Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF). This transition had already been planned prior to the new funding announcement, and will enable residents experiencing a financial shock or crisis - including sharp increases in oil heating costs - to continue accessing cash support via the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme, using the same application route as before.

Residents can access information about this process and how to apply here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/suffolk-local-welfare-assistance-scheme>

Parents Urged to Vaccinate Against Measles

The council is urging parents and carers in Suffolk to ensure their children are fully vaccinated against measles, mumps, rubella, and chickenpox, following a resurgence of measles cases nationally over the past two years. The country has seen a return of measles outbreaks linked to falling vaccination uptake, and as a result, the UK recently lost its World Health Organization measles elimination status. Vaccination rates remain below the 95% coverage needed to prevent outbreaks, with almost one in five children starting primary school not fully protected against serious diseases. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases in the world and can lead to complications including pneumonia, meningitis, and brain inflammation.

Health leaders including the Public Health team at Suffolk County Council have advised that parents and carers will usually be contacted by their GP practice when their child is due a routine vaccination, but if a child has missed a vaccine and is over 18 months old, these can be scheduled at any time by contacting their GP practice to book an appointment. If a parent or carer is unsure what vaccinations their child has already received, they can check their Red Book, the NHS app or by speaking to their GP practice.

Report for April 2026 to Sudbury Town Council - From Philip Faircloth-Mutton SCC Councillor)



Date: 14/04/2026

Email: philip.faircloth-mutton@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 07494 758000

Windermere Road/Ashmere Rise No Cold Call Zone

At the weekend, I caught up with residents on the abovementioned, who have reported compliance by traders in respect of the restrictions. This is welcome, given the high levels of older and vulnerable residents in the area, who voiced earlier concerns to me before the zone was implemented.

I was, however, made aware of the signage, which is not as visible as it could be. I have spoken to Trading Standards, who are liaising with the Highways Team to turn the NCCZ sign to face the entry point of Windermere Road for greater clarity.

The Quay Theatre's Leading Lives & Befriending Scheme Rewarded

I was pleased to learn about the Quay Theatre's ongoing work for our residents with disabilities and loneliness, and am pleased to confirm £502 has been awarded to the Theatre from my Locality Budget. These monies will be transferred to the Quay Theatre after 7 May.

Moratorium

The County Council and Babergh District Council are currently in a moratorium period with the ongoing election campaign, although ongoing casework for local councillors continues.

Thank you

This is my final meeting attending Sudbury Town Council of the 2021-26 term, as councillor for Sudbury East and Waldingfield.

I would like to thank everyone for their cooperation and good nature, some of whom have retired since 2021, while attending the meetings.

Following the election, Sudbury will be represented by three county councillors: for Sudbury West, Stour Valley and Cornard & Sudbury East.

BABERGH REPORT APRIL 2026

RECYCLING

As part of the Better Recycling changes across Suffolk, new bins are currently being delivered to all households in Mid Suffolk, before Babergh's rollout in late April and May.

Mid Suffolk households are receiving a new blue-lidded bin to go alongside their existing green-lidded bin, while Babergh residents will receive a new green-lidded bin to go alongside their existing blue bin.

In future, clean, dry and loose glass bottles and jars, drinks cartons (Tetra Pak), plastic bags, thin plastic film, cans and plastic bottles will go in the blue bin, while paper and cardboard will be collected in the green bin.

All households will also receive a smaller grey food waste bin and caddy, ready for the new collection schedule to go live on June 1.

Batteries of any type should never go in any Bin

Three councils for Suffolk - local government reorganisation decision

As you will be aware, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has confirmed that three unitary councils for Suffolk will be created, replacing Suffolk County Council and the five district and borough authorities: Babergh, East Suffolk, Ipswich, Mid Suffolk and West Suffolk.

The new authorities will cover western Suffolk, central & eastern Suffolk, and Ipswich & southern Suffolk.

Under the new arrangements, the new councils will come into operation in April 2028, with elections scheduled for next year to establish the shadow authorities responsible for shaping and overseeing the transition.

We will continue to keep residents, staff and councillors informed of all further developments. Should residents or communities have queries in the meantime, we have updated the relevant pages of our council websites.

Grants help fund community development

Some 46 organisations across Babergh and Mid Suffolk have received funding as part of the latest round of community developments grants award.

In total, £813,752.88 has been awarded, with £206,694 shared between 14 organisations in Babergh and £607,058.88 between 32 organisations in Mid Suffolk.

If you know of an organisation or community group in your ward that would benefit from some of our funding, be sure to direct them to the relevant page on Babergh or Mid Suffolk websites

BELLE VUE PARK

That Cabinet reviewed and noted the summary update and context relating to Belle Vue Park in Sudbury, as outlined within the report.

That Cabinet approved an increased upper funding allowance for delivery of the planning approved modular-build café, toilet block and changing place facility as re-estimated by an independent cost consultant in December 2025.

That Cabinet delegated authority to the Director of Property, Development and Regeneration to negotiate and enter suitable contracts and facility's agreements for the delivery of the modular-build café, toilet block and changing place facility.

REASON FOR THE DECISION

Belle Vue Park was a significant asset for the Council, the people of Sudbury, and the wider district. Its upkeep and enhancement delivered a range of benefits, including increased footfall and usage, greater opportunities for healthy activity and wellbeing across all age groups, improved safety and security, strengthened community pride in place and local heritage, and better connectivity and visibility with the wider town. Investing in the improvements outlined in this report demonstrated the Council's continued commitment to securing these positive outcomes.

SADBURY TOWN COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM POLICY 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Sudbury Town Council provides a range of services and facilities to the community. The nature of this provision means that employees and councillors will inevitably come into contact with children, young people, adults, and families in a variety of settings and circumstances.

1.2 Sudbury Town Council is committed to ensuring that safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance, best practice, and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership requirements.

1.3 Sudbury Town Council recognises that it has responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. It also recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm under the Care Act 2014.

1.4 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 also places a duty on Sudbury Town Council to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

1.5 We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who comes into contact with our services and facilities. This includes a duty to safeguard and support our employees and councillors.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to define how Sudbury Town Council operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of harm or neglect.

2.1.1 Provide employees and councillors with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding in a way that can prevent harm and abuse from occurring.

2.1.2 Ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and that the person experiencing the abuse is supported.

3. Definitions

3.1 This policy and its procedures relate to both the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

3.2 Children

3.2.1 A child is defined in the Children Act 1989 as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces, or are in hospital.

3.3 Adults

3.3.1 Adults at risk are defined in the Care Act 2014 as individuals aged over 18 who:

3.3.1.1 Have needs for care and support.

3.3.1.2 Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect.

3.3.1.3 As a result of these care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

4. Policy

4.1 Sudbury Town Council is committed to ensuring that any child, young person, or adult who comes into contact with an employee, councillor, or any aspect of our activities or services is listened to, feels safe and protected, and has their views taken into account.

4.2 Employees and councillors cannot give absolute guarantees of confidentiality. If a child or adult is at risk of significant harm or radicalisation, or if a crime has been committed, the need to gain consent and the Data Protection Act are not barriers to sharing information.

4.3 All employees and councillors must share concerns about the welfare of any child, young person, or adult with their Line Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Recruitment and Selection

5.1 Sudbury Town Council will endeavour to ensure the suitability of all employees appointed to work with children, young people, and adults through robust recruitment and selection procedures including DBS checks, appropriate training, and relevant working practices.

6. Designated Named Person for Safeguarding

6.1 Sudbury Town Council has an appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for leading safeguarding within the organisation.

6.2 In their absence, a deputy will be available for staff to consult.

7. Training

7.1 All employees will receive information and mandatory training to raise awareness of their role in recognising, understanding, and safeguarding children, young people, and adults.

7.2 This training should be refreshed, as a minimum, every three years.

7.3 Line Managers and Designated Officers will receive suitable training to enable them to deal with reported concerns and support individuals reporting concerns.

7.4 Training will also ensure that frontline employees understand Prevent, recognise vulnerability to radicalisation, and are able to refer concerns appropriately.

8. Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

8.1 Abuse in adults includes discrimination; domestic abuse or violence; financial or material abuse; modern slavery; neglect or acts of omission; physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional (psychological) abuse; and self-neglect.

8.2 Abuse in children includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

8.3 It is also important to be aware of more specific types of abuse and exploitation such as child exploitation, cyberbullying and online abuse, criminal exploitation, County Lines, trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM), honour-based abuse, and grooming.

9. Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff or Councillor

9.1 If a member of staff has information suggesting another member of staff or a councillor has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a vulnerable adult or child, this must immediately be reported to their Line Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the Whistleblowing Policy.

9.2 All allegations will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary or Grievance Procedures or the Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Whistleblowing Policy.

9.3 Allegations against councillors will be dealt with through Babergh District Council's Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee.

9.4 If appropriate the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consult with or make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

9.5 The LADO process applies to anyone who works or volunteers with children. Procedures can be found on the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership website.

9.6 LADOs can be contacted by email at LADO@suffolk.gov.uk or via the central telephone number 0300 123 2044.

9.7 If the allegation is made about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff must inform the Town Clerk.

10. Recording and Managing Confidential Information

10.1 Sudbury Town Council will ensure that any concerns about safeguarding or radicalisation are acted upon immediately.

10.2 Information will be clearly recorded and securely stored, and only made available to authorised staff, Children's/Adult Services and/or the Police.

10.3 Support from an appropriately trained individual will be offered to those who report concerns.

10.4 If a referral is required, the correct procedure will be followed within 24 hours of the initial concern being raised.

10.5 Safeguarding concerns can also be reported via <https://www.suffolksp.org.uk/concerned/>

10.6 The law allows for the disclosure of confidential information where this is necessary to safeguard a child, young person or adult.

10.7 Sudbury Town Council is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and safeguarding information will only be shared with those who need to know.

11. Policy Review

11.1 This policy and its procedures will be reviewed every five years by Sudbury Town Council.

12. Guidance for Employees

12.1 Responding to People Who Have Experienced or Are Experiencing Abuse.

12.2 Reassure the person concerned; listen carefully; record what you have been told or witnessed; remain calm; do not promise confidentiality; and explain that you will need to seek help to keep them safe.

12.3 If abuse has just taken place the priorities are to call an ambulance if required, call the Police if a crime has been committed, preserve evidence, keep yourself and others safe, inform your Line Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead, and record what happened securely.



SUDBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY FOR THE USE OF BODY WORN VIDEO CAMERAS (BWVC)

POLICY FOR THE USE OF BODY WORN VIDEO CAMERAS (BWVC)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Sudbury Town Council (STC) will use Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) lawfully, fairly, transparently and proportionately.

STC uses BWVC to:

- Support the safety and welfare of employees, particularly market operators and highways operators
- Reduce the risk of aggressive, abusive or threatening behaviour escalating
- Provide clear and reliable evidence of incidents
- Support civil enforcement activity
- Improve transparency and accountability in STC operations
- Assist in the investigation of complaints, incidents and disputes
- Support the prevention and detection of anti-social or unlawful behaviour

BWVC must only be used where its use is necessary, justified and proportionate to STC's legitimate operational purposes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All STC employees authorised to use BWVC
- All managers responsible for BWVC equipment and footage
- All STC owned BWVC devices and associated software
- All audio and visual recordings captured by BWVC

2.2 Only staff who have received appropriate training and authorisation may use BWVC.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

STC will operate BWVC in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance on video surveillance systems, including Body Worn Video
- Reveal Media's Guidance for the Non-Police Use of Body Worn Video Devices

- STC Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and Information Security Procedures and Health and Safety Policy

STC recognises that BWVC captures personal data and may include audio, which is particularly intrusive and must therefore be used where justified. The audio function should only be used where there is clear operational need.

4. Lawful Basis for Processing

The lawful basis for processing personal data through BWVC is:

- Article 6(1)(e) UK GDPR - processing necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in STC.
- Where special category or criminal offence data is incidentally captured, processing will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the STC relevant policy documentation.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is responsible for:

- Overall governance of BWVC use
- Ensuring secure storage arrangements are in place
- Oversight of retention, deletion and audit arrangements

The Project Manager or Business Manager is responsible for:

- Issuing and recording BWVC devices
- Maintaining issue and return logs
- Monitoring operational compliance
- Reporting misuse or equipment faults

Each staff member using BWVC is responsible for:

- Safe handling and use of their allocated device
- Carrying out pre-use checks
- Ensuring footage is uploaded promptly
- Complying fully with this policy

Misuse, negligent damage, unauthorised sharing or deliberate non-compliance may be dealt with under the STC disciplinary procedures.

6. Operational Use

BWVC must only be activated where this is a legitimate operational reason, including:

- All market duties, the nature of the work requires continuous recording of both video and audio for the duration of market duties to support staff safety, public reassurance, incident prevention, enforcement activity, or evidential integrity
- all highways duties, the nature of the work requires continuous recording of both video and audio for the duration of highways duties to support staff safety, public reassurance, incident prevention, enforcement activity, or evidential integrity
- Aggressive, abusive or threatening behaviour
- Actual or suspected anti-social behaviour
- Actual or suspected criminal activity
- Civil enforcement action
- Public safety incidents
- Where evidence preservation is necessary
- Where a staff member reasonably believes an interaction may escalate

Staff using BWVC should, where safe and practicable, inform individuals that recording is taking place.

The device should remain focused on the relevant incident and staff using BWVC must take reasonable steps to minimise unnecessary intrusion into the privacy of bystanders and unrelated third parties.

Once activated, recording should continue only for as long as is necessary and proportionate to capture the incident and its immediate aftermath.

Where a staff member decides not to activate BWVC during an incident where its use might reasonably have been expected, the rationale must be recorded in their incident notebook.

7. Storage, Security and Access

All BWVC devices must be stored securely when not in use.

Footage must be uploaded as soon as practicable and no later than the end of the working day to STC's approved secure storage system.

The following is strictly forbidden:

- Downloading footage to personal devices
- Transfer to unapproved cloud or removable storage devices
- Sharing footage via personal email, messaging applications or social media

- Copying footage without authorisation

All recordings must be encrypted and access restricted to authorised personnel only. Access permission must be role-based and subject to regular review.

8. Viewing and Disclosure

Footage may only be viewed by authorised personnel where necessary for:

- Investigation of incidents
- Investigation of complaints
- Disciplinary matters
- Civil enforcement review
- Police requests
- Insurance claims
- Legal proceedings
- Compliance with statutory disclosure obligations

All viewings must take place in a private or restricted environment.

A full audit trail must be maintained recording:

- Who accessed footage
- Date and time of access
- Purpose of access
- Whether footage was copied or disclosed
- Deletion date

Disclosure to the Police, courts, insurers, legal representatives or other lawful recipients must be authorised by the Town Clerk or nominated officer.

9. Retention and Deletion

Non-evidential footage will normally be retained for 31 days, after which it will be securely deleted automatically.

Where footage is required for:

- Incident investigation
- Complaints
- Disciplinary proceedings
- Legal proceedings
- Insurance claims
- Police investigation

- Subject Access request (SAR)
- Freedom of Information request (FOI)

It may be retained longer in accordance with the STC's Data Retention Policy schedule, but only for as long as necessary. Once no longer required, footage must be securely and permanently deleted, with the decision recorded in the audit log.

10. Subject Access Requests, Freedom of Information and Complaints

Individuals may request access to footage containing their personal data by submitting a Subject Access Request (SAR). Requests will be handled in accordance with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- STC SAR Procedures

Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will be considered on a case-by-case basis, subject to relevant exemptions.

Complaints about BWVC use should be made through the STC Complaint's Procedure.

11. Privacy Information and Public Awareness

STC will ensure that the public is made aware of BWVC use through:

- Published privacy notices
- Website information
- Staff verbal notification where appropriate
- Staff uniform / device visibility

This is to ensure compliance with the principles of fairness and transparency.

12. Governance, review and DPIA

STC will maintain a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for BWVC use and review it periodically, particularly where:

- Equipment changes
- Software changes
- Audio settings change
- Changes in operational deployment
- Complaints or incidents indicate risk

This policy will be reviewed every five years, or sooner where legislation, ICO guidance or operational requirements change.

Policy Name	Policy for the Use of Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC)
Current Status	Adopted
Approved	Full Council 14 th April
Next Review Date	April 2031
Policy Owner	



SUDBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

AS

Our Commitment

1. Sudbury Town Council (STC) is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.
2. This policy is intended to assist STC to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.
3. Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

The Law

4. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".
5. Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.
6. STC will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

7. Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.
8. In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
9. Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
10. Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

11. Sexual Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. This includes verbal, non-verbal or digital conduct regardless of intent.

12. Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

13. Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

14. Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

15. Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Worker Protection (Amendment of the Equality Act 2010) 2023, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

16. Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Equal Opportunities in Employment

17. STC will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

18. Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working Practices

19. STC will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. STC will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

20. Not used.

21. STC treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the Data Protection Policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the Data Protection Policy.

People not Employed by STC

22. STC will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided STC.

23. Any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others should be reported to STC who will take appropriate action.

Training

24. STC will provide training in equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

25. STC will provide training to all staff engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. Additional training will be provided to managers to enable them to deal with complaints of bullying and harassment.

Employee Responsibilities

26. Every employee is required to assist STC to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination or harassment. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, STC for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

27. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the STC disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances and Complaints

28. If a staff member considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, they should use the STC grievance procedure. If a member of the public considers that they may have been unlawfully discriminated against, they should use the STC complaints procedure.

29. STC will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Monitoring and Review

30. This policy will be monitored periodically by STC to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

31. This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

(Based on the NALC template 2019)



SUDBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

LOAN OF PROPERTY POLICY

AS

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Sudbury Town Council (STC) administer the loan of council property to members of staff, councillors or third parties for the facilitation of council business. All loans must be supported by a clear reason and formally authorised before the item leaves council premises.

2. Scope

Property means any tangible, moveable asset that belongs to STC. If in doubt, ask the Town Clerk.

All items recorded in the Fixed Asset register, will require prior approval by Full Council and must also be noted in the register as on loan, detailing the borrower and location details.

All property remains the sole property of STC at all times.

Private use is prohibited unless specifically authorised in writing and assessed for any legal, tax, insurance and policy implications.

3. Legal and regulatory Framework

STC will operate this policy in accordance with:

- Health and Safety Policy
- IT and Communications Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Retention Policy

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The attached loan agreement must be completed by the person borrowing the council property and the appropriate line manager.

Any loan considered contentious must be discussed with the Town Clerk before approval can be given.

A signed copy of the agreement will be retained by the line manager and scanned into the Master Drive.

If a line manager wants to borrow any council property, they must get approval from the Town Clerk.

If the Town Clerk wants to borrow council property, they must get approval from the Mayor.

If a councillor wants to borrow council property, they must get approval from the Town Clerk.

Borrowers must:

- Take reasonable care of the property
- Keep it secure at all times

- Not allow use by any other third party
- Report faults immediately to the appropriate line manager
- Report loss, theft or damage immediately to the appropriate line manager
 - The police must be informed and a crime number obtained for lost or stolen electronic devices
- Return the item on request or at the end of the loan period

For electronic devices, borrowers must comply with all IT, Data Protection, Data Retention and cyber security policies, including password protection, software updates, secure storage, and immediate reporting of any suspected personal data breach.

STC may inspect, update, service or recall any loaned item at any time.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary, conduct, insurance or recovery action where appropriate.

Policy Name	Policy for the Loan of Council Owned Property
Current Status	Adopted
Approved	Full Council 14 th April
Next Review Date	April 2031
Policy Owner	

LOAN OF PROPERTY OWNED BY SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

This loan agreement exists between Sudbury Town Council and the person who has signed the loan agreement.

Description of property, including Make, Model & Serial number (if applicable)	
Name of person requesting loan (BLOCK CAPITALS)	
Date loan started	Date by which the loan must be returned or resigned out
<p>I understand that the property I am borrowing remains in the ownership of Sudbury Town Council and confirm that I have read and understood the policy for the loan of Sudbury Town Council property. I agree to take all responsible care of the property and return it by the date specified above or at the time my employment/time as a councillor ceases. I understand that if the property is lost or damaged, I may be charged for replacement costs. I confirm that I have home insurance to cover the property within my home and will be responsible for any required claims, including excess policy payments.</p> <p>I confirm that I have read and understood Sudbury Town Council's IT and Communications Systems policy. <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
Signed	Date
Loan authorised by the appropriate manager Name	Date
Signed	



USAGE OF THE TOWN COAT OF ARMS POLICY

The Town Clerk shall exercise their discretion when considering requests for the use of the Town Coat of Arms. Where there is any uncertainty, the request shall be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

This guidance is intended to uphold and enhance the civic status of the town. Approval should therefore generally be limited to well-established charitable, community, or sporting organisations, and shall not be granted for commercial or political purposes.

The right to use the Town Coat of Arms may be withdrawn if circumstances change in the future, for example if the organisation relocates outside the town or no longer meets the criteria for approval.

Mr C Griffin
Town Clerk

April 2026

Policy Name	Usage of the Town Coat of Arms
Current Status	Adopted
Approved	Full Council 14 th April
Next Review Date	April 2031
Policy Owner	



Sudbury Town Council Biodiversity Policy

DEFINITIONS AND KEY COMPONENTS

- **Legislation & Targets:** The Environment Act 2021 mandates legally binding targets, including halting species decline by 2030, reversing it by 2042, and creating 500,000 hectares of new habitat by 2042.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** Mandatory in England, most developments must deliver a 10% improvement in biodiversity value, requiring a "net gain" compared to the pre-development state.
- **30 by 30 Target:** The Global Biodiversity Framework sets a target to effectively conserve and manage 30% of land and sea by 2030.
- **Mitigation Hierarchy:** Policies require developers to follow a strict order: first avoid damage, then minimise, restore on-site, and lastly compensate/offset off-site.
- **Local Action:** Local councils are required to strengthen their biodiversity duty through habitat maintenance, wildflower planting, and wildlife-friendly management

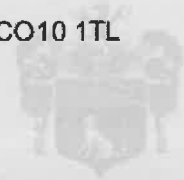
BACKGROUND

The Importance of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is key to all the processes that support life on Earth. We rely on it for our essential needs, like food, shelter, energy and medicine, as well as for the ecosystem services it provides, such as climate regulation, flood management, water purification, disease and pest control, and pollination¹

Additionally, more than half of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) is highly or moderately dependent on nature (WEF 2020; PwC 2023). Biodiversity also holds deep cultural significance. It not only provides a sense of place but also offers endless opportunities for recreation, tourism and inspiration amid our diverse landscapes.

Locally, Visit East of England's entire visitor economy manifesto ' *Naturally*ⁱⁱ recognises the role of East Anglia's diverse natural assets both nature's local recovery and the region's economic development. From award-winning coastlines, ancient water meadows and riversides, clean water bathing sites, marshes, heathlands and fens – all supporting a range of wildlife and attracting visitors.



In Sudbury, the promotion and protection of our natural environment is as important as any other heritage or community asset. From our ancient water meadows that support a huge variety of wildlife, to our recently attained DEFRA Clean Bathing status for the River Stour at Friars Meadow, to the council's green assets at The Croft, Millacre, Cemetery, Allotments and any other open space that may come under the Council's care in the future.

National decline and consequences of inaction

The UK is one of the most nature depleted countries in the world. The 2023 *State of Nature*ⁱⁱⁱ reports that: 16% of species are threatened with extinction from Great Britain. 151 of 10,008 assessed have already become extinct. The distributions of half of flowering plant species have decreased across Great Britain by 54%.

Failure to reverse biodiversity decline threatens critical ecosystem services, including food security, water purification, and flood management, while accelerating climate change impacts, increased disease outbreaks, and diminished public health.^{iv}

In accordance with the duty^v imposed on Town and Parish Councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, the council, must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective. This duty also means that Town and Parish Councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

LOCAL ACTION

"Parish and town councils are crucial in promoting biodiversity within their communities".

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

SLCC advises^{vi}: ***"English public authorities including town and parish councils should be able to show their duty to have regard for conserving biodiversity if they have identified ways to integrate biodiversity when they:***

- *Develop policies and strategies and put them into practice.*
- *Manage and advise on the planning system in line with NPPF policies on biodiversity.*
- *Manage: their land and buildings, woodlands and nature reserves, gardens, parks and public open space, community amenities e.g. sports grounds and cemeteries, waste and pollution, energy and water.*
- *Develop infrastructure, such as roads, buildings or flood defences.*
- *Make decisions about procurement.*
- *Implement economic, environmental and social programmes"*

NEED FOR A BIODIVERSITY POLICY

For several years Sudbury Town Council (hereafter 'the council') has been positively implementing schemes^{vii} for biodiversity net gain in areas within our control. This includes:

- Introduction of pollinator-friendly and drought tolerant perennial planting schemes to replace wasteful annual planting, this has been integrated into our Floral Displays contract (current 2023 – 2026) partly informed by Bug Life's (2021) 'B-Lines' Report.^{viii}
- Implementing a rainwater harvesting project (currently under review)
- Introduction of 'no mow' summer meadows on the Croft and North Croft. (2023 and ongoing).



- Better management of our Green Cemetery with a refocus on native tree species integrated into our memorial planting policy within the cemetery regulations to encourage wildlife and balance the needs of Cemetery users. (2024 and ongoing)
- Dedicated wildlife zones in our allotments that create essential habitats for a range of endangered species including the common lizard.

Although these local schemes appear to have an impact on encouraging biodiversity locally, the adoption of a formal biodiversity policy would play a key role in monitoring the council's biodiversity net gain actions and recording their impact(s) to relevant bodies^{ix} ensuring the council is proactive in supporting nature recovery in our region. There is a need to regularly review and adapt our biodiversity action plan to respond to legislation^x and local impact.

The National Association for Local Councils (NALC)^{xi} advises that local councils should develop and implement policies that support biodiversity conservation, such as biodiversity action plans or green procurement policies. These policies can guide decision-making and ensure that biodiversity considerations are integrated into parish council activities and projects.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS:

The aim of this policy is to proactively seek and implement ways of conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's assets and in areas of influence within the town.

The Council will:

- The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.
- In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:
 - consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
 - manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity especially by defining 'no mow summer meadows' / wildflower areas within our land asset areas. **(see appendix a)** and being proactive in creating habitats for native species, especially those that are endangered such as swift and other bird boxes, bug houses, protected areas for lizards, slow worms, toads etc.
 - Seeking the best sites within our control to plant and sow pollinator-friendly wildflower, plant and tree species to encourage and support a range of species.
 - support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact/nature positive practices.
 - Make sustainability and biodiversity consideration a significant proportion (up to 20%) of application weightings in tender and procurement contract considerations that may affect biodiversity.
 - Work collaboratively with other organisations in and around Sudbury to encourage sustainable management of land with biodiversity at the forefront (detailed below)
 - support residents and local organisation activities that enhance and promote biodiversity.

LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Council will:

- Raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website, newsletters and engagement events and workshops.



- Engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- Where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

PARTNERS

The Council will:

- Work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area. Identified local organisations include, but are not limited to:
 - **Sudbury Common Lands Charity**
 - **River Stour Trust** (especially with regard to Clean Bathing status).
 - **The Council's Floral Contractor** (at the time of writing, The Garden Nursery)
 - **Eden-Rose Coppice**
 - **Closed churchyard grounds Maintenance: All Saints and St. Gregory's**
 - **Suffolk Wildlife Trust**
 - **Biodiversity Officer at Babergh District Council**
 - **Suffolk County Council Ecology team**
 - **Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service (iRecord app)**
 - **Suffolk Tree Warden Network**
- review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

REPORTING

The Council will:

- During the Summer season May – October, measure, record and report to local and national biodiversity data recorders such as: *State of Nature, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and / or Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service* monthly.
- Keep our own records of species recording in areas with and without special measures implemented.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- This Policy should be reviewed annually and in accordance with national biodiversity legislation.



REFERENCES

ⁱ (2025) Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), Scottish Government, Welsh Government and UK Government (2025) published '*Blueprint for Halting and Reversing Biodiversity Loss: the UK's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for 2030*'ⁱ

https://uk.chm-cbd.net/sites/gb/files/2025-04/31.03.2025_UK_National_Biodiversity_Strategy_and_Action_Plan.pdf

ⁱⁱ '*Visit East Anglia, Naturally*'

https://issuu.com/visiteastanglia-uk/docs/vee_ddp_175x297mm_issuu/s/17314267

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://stateofnature.org.uk/infographics/> (2023)

^{iv}

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/696e0eae719d837d69afc7de/National_security_assessment_-_global_biodiversity_loss_ecosystem_collapse_and_national_security.pdf

^v <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/section/40>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defras-biodiversity-duty-statement-2025/defras-statement-on-the-strengthened-biodiversity-duty>

^{vii} Sudbury Town Council implemented and ongoing schemes: No mow and wildflower conservation areas, public engagement and partnership working, protected areas within the allotments where endangered species have been found. As well as urban town centre 'B-Line' pollinator friendly corridors.



viii

B-Lines: Insect Super Highways, Buglife (2021)
<https://cdn.buglife.org.uk/2021/03/B-Lines-Report-DIGITAL-01.pdf>

ix Local and national biodiversity data recorders:
<https://stateofnature.org.uk/get-involved/>
<https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/identification>
<https://nbn.org.uk/record-share-explore-data/record-wildlife-a-fun-way-to-help-nature/>

x *UK Biodiversity Action Plan, UK Government*
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7ced59ed915d2017106d17/2428.pdf>

xi *Tackling Climate Change: Biodiversity, NALC*
<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/campaigns/tackling-climate-change/biodiversity.html>



Sudbury Town Council

Policy and Resources Committee - Terms of Reference 2026

Purpose of the Committee

1. Policy and Resources Committee is established to ensure that Sudbury Town Council maintains strategic direction, looking ahead to balance ends, ways and means, in order to deliver efficient and effective services to the public.
2. The Committee will consist of eight members and will normally meet quarterly, on the third Thursday of the following months (January, April, July and October), or more frequently if required. Meetings will commence at 6.30pm.
3. The Committee may appoint working groups whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the Committee. Members of working groups may include non-councillors.
4. The committee has delegated authority from the Council to fulfil the following responsibilities (including spending within its approved budget):
 - a. To conduct a rolling annual review of the Council's standing orders, and any other policies and procedures that do not naturally fall to another committee to ensure relevance, effectiveness and compliance with legislation and guidance.
 - b. To evaluate proposals for new Council services or significant alterations before they are implemented to ensure compatibility with Council policies. Consideration must be given to need to balance the new service (the ends), with the resources available (the means) and the possible options to deliver them (the ways). This should be distilled into a simple business case.
 - c. To update the Business Plan on a quadrennial cycle and monitor annual progress.
5. Any proposed unbudgeted expenditure will require approval of the Finance Committee.