

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 30th APRIL 2024 AT 6.30PM

Committee members present: Mr S Hall – Chair

Ms E Murphy
Mr T Regester
Mr A Stohr
Mr A Welsh

Officers in attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mrs D Deeks – Administration Manager
Mr B Smith – Operations Manager

1. SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Miss A Owen; Mr A Stohr attended as her substitute.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Mr T Regester declared that he was a Babergh District Councillor.

3. DECLARATION OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

No declarations of gifts or hospitality were received.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensations had been received.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee meeting held on the 26th March 2024 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Town Clerk confirmed progress on the actions from the previous minutes.

- St Peters Church - A follow up email had been sent to the Friends of St Peters, which had been acknowledged.
- Involvement of sporting clubs – the new Administration and Events member of staff would take on the task of creating a new web page for Sudbury Sports. The front cover of the April events magazine featured Sudbury Cricket Club. Other clubs had been contacted and had agreed to have their fixtures online and in future magazines.

- Fire Alarm Panel – The fire alarm panel had been installed in the main office and was tested weekly.
- Hedge Cutting – Babergh District Council had been asked about their hedge cutting schedule and a response was awaited.

RESOLVED

That the progress on these actions be noted.

7. TO DISCUSS THE INSTALLATION AND LOCATION OF A DIGITAL NOTICE BOARD IN SUDBURY TOWN CENTRE

A representative of the Quay Theatre, who also happened to be a town councillor, gave a short presentation on the benefits that a digital notice board could bring to the arts and cultural establishments in Sudbury. **Her notes are included at page 268.**

Members were broadly supportive of the proposal and discussed the best way to take this idea forward.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk should bring detailed proposals back to the next meeting of this committee which should include suitable models of digital notice boards with their costs for purchase, installation and maintenance, suitable locations and power supply options. Once the committee had approved these aspects, funding could be identified and a planning application submitted.

8. TO REVIEW OPTIONS FOR A NEW CEMETERY AND AGREE ON THE WAY FORWARD

The Town Clerk reported that he had visited the site next to St Mary's Church in Chilton with the Chair of the Committee on 15 April to discuss options with the Chair of Chilton Parish Council. An old document from 1994 had come to light, which contained the notes of a meeting between Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council and Chilton Parish Council to discuss the location of a new cemetery next to St Mary's. A detailed 'Inspector's Report' appeared to have been produced in 1994 (although the council did not have access to a copy at the present time a search would be made in the archives) which recommended using the land immediately to the southeast of the church. This land, which was also owned by Suffolk County Council and leased for farming, benefited from better access, as the existing lane past the church led into it.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk approach Suffolk County Council to see if the land to the southeast of St Mary's Church in Chilton could be made available for the new cemetery and, if so, what it would cost.

9. TO APPROVE OF EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2,185.00 TO LAY A NEW MAINS WATER PIPE FROM THE OLD CEMETERY, UNDER THE PUBLIC FOOTPATH, TO THE NEW SECTION OF THE CEMETERY

The Operations Manager discussed the options available for a new mains water pipe to be used for the new section of the cemetery. **His briefing notes are included at page 269.**

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2), members approve the expenditure of up to £2,185 excluding VAT to lay a new mains water pipe from the old cemetery, under the public footpath, to the new section of the cemetery.

10. TO APPROVE EXPNDITURE OF UP TO £1,400 TO CUT DOWN A PINE TREE IN THE CEMETERY

The Operations Manager discussed the need to cut down a pine tree the cemetery which a local resident claimed was causing problems to their house after the council's insurers had recommended its removal. Members noted that new trees of a suitable native species should be planted in the cemetery to replace trees that were removed. New trees should be sited away from the boundary so that their roots would not spread under neighbouring properties. **His briefing notes are included at page 270.**

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2), members approve the expenditure of up to £1,400 excluding VAT to cut down a pine tree the cemetery.

11. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2,000 TO CUT DOWN A DEAD TREE IN THE CEMETERY

The Operations Manager discussed the need to cut down a dead tree the cemetery which could present an unacceptable safety hazard to the public. **His briefing notes are included at page 271.**

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2), members approve the expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT to cut down a dead tree the cemetery.

12. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2,450, EXCLUDING VAT, TO REPLACE 30 SMOKE DETECTORS AND 4 HEAT DETECTORS IN THE TOWN HALL

The Operations Manager explained that when the new fire panel was being installed it had been noted that most of the smoke and heat detectors in the Town Hall were over 20 years old and were past their manufacturer's recommended life span. This presented an unnecessary safety risk

and he recommended that they should be replaced as soon as possible. His briefing notes are included at page 272.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.133, members approve the expenditure of up to £2,450 excluding VAT to replace 30 smoke detectors and 4 heat detectors in the Town Hall.

13. TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £18,000, EXCLUDING VAT, TO SURFACE THE CAR PARK BEHIND THE TOWN HALL

The Operations Manager discussed the need to surface the parking at the rear of the Town Hall as the loose surface was only being patched up each year and this process was failing to provide a safe working area. His briefing notes are included at page 273. The Town Clerk explained the complex rights which neighbouring properties had to maintain access through this land and that a small proportion of the costs could be reclaimed from them at a later date. There would also be an opportunity for these properties to surface their own areas adjacent to the council's area at the same time.

RESOLVED

To recommend to the full council that, subject to scrutiny for affordability by the Finance Committee, they approve the expenditure of up to £18,000 for the surfacing of the parking area behind the Town Hall.

14. TO SUPPORT THE BID BY THE FAIRTRADE FOUNDATION FOR SUDBURY TO HAVE FAIRTRADE STATUS

Members were asked to support the 'Churches Together' group who wished to renew their 'Fairtrade' status for Sudbury with the 'Fairtrade Foundation'. It was noted that there were now multiple different types of designation used by tea and coffee producers to indicate the high ethical standards that they demanded from their growers. The 'Fairtrade Foundation' was one of these and was established as an independent non-profit organisation that licensed use of the FAIRTRADE Mark on products in the UK. Members did not want to tie down the Town Council in its procurement but were happy to buy Fairtrade tea and coffee when a suitable product was available.

RESOLVED

To support the bid by Churches Together to renew their 'Fairtrade' status for Sudbury.

15. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE MILL ACRE WORKING GROUP

The Operations Manager updated the committee on the meeting of the Mill Acre Working Group. Three options were currently being considered and these would be reviewed again by the working group at a meeting in the week beginning 13 May.

RESOLVED

To note the progress of the Mill Acre Working Group.

16. TO APPROVE THE PARTY IN THE PARK WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION TO CANCEL THE EVENT FOR 2024 AS THE REFORMATTED 'PARTY ON THE HILL' EVENT FOR THIS YEAR IS NO LONGER VIABLE IN LIGHT OF THE ETRO CANCELLATION

The Party in the Park Working Group had concluded that there was insufficient time available to reorganise the event on the Market Hill for summer 2024 now that the area would not be pedestrianised as planned under the experimental traffic regulation order (ETRO). Members hoped that the event could return in its 'full glory' the following year.

RESOLVED

To approve the Party in the Park Working Group recommendation to cancel the reformatted 'Party on the Hill' event for 2024.

The meeting concluded at 7:50pm.

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Chairman

Quay Theatre Presentation to Leisure and Environment Committee on 30 April 2024

Digital noticeboard

The Quay Theatre would like the town council to support them with better advertising for shows and events. Producing flyers and programmes which rely on a member of staff or a volunteer to distribute produce very uneven results, are expensive and flyers can only show 1 show at a time. A digital noticeboard has huge advantage in that it can show a no of forthcoming events in rotation, whatever is loaded. It could also have a QR code for those with smart phones which could give a big saving in costs to the theatre.

Our idea is that this noticeboard becomes the 'go to' place for all cultural events by sharing the space with GH and ST Peters. It could also accommodate Sudbury Festival and groups like Sudbury Choral Soc.

Planning – this was thought to be the main obstacle but thanks to Laura Smith we are told it is possible in principle even in the conservation area due to its benefit to the public.

Nearby business have digital displays in their windows.

Why is it important to look after our theatre? the nearest alt theatre is Bury, Colchester, Ipswich, it caters for all age groups and offers everything from comedy, drama, live music, film, children's theatre, see programmes. It allows residents to access high quality entertainment on the doorstep and surveys have reveal that the customers come from as far as Clacton and Chelmsford with many visiting restaurants and cafes first.

Research shows that cortisol and dopamine is raised in people who take part in cultural events giving great health benefits to theatre goers,

A quick search on the internet reveals that Cortisol is a steroid hormone that regulated a wide range of processes throughout the body including metabolism, and immune response, v important in helping the body respond to stress.

Dopamine is the 'feel good' hormone, gives a sense of pleasure, also motivation to do something, part of your reward system.

How affordable is it?

In May the programme has 17 shows with an average ticket price of £16, incidentally Rachel was canvassing recently about increasing the tickets price for Moving Cinema, to £8.50 per adult, The Quay is £7.

This project could be a prime contender for CIL funding but our idea is that it is hosted by the town council.

Agenda Item 9 – Cemetery Water Pipe and Taps
Leisure & Environment Committee 30 April 2024

What is required:

To approve expenditure of up to £2,185 to dig a new water pipe under the path in the Cemetery, then under the alley way and into the new section of the cemetery to supply mains water.

Why it is required:

We currently have a 1,000L water tank in the new section of the cemetery which requires filling on a regular basis.

This is currently done by the warden team and takes around 2 hours each time it needs doing, on average this is having to be done 10 times a year. The break down of the current costs are as follows:

2 staff members at £20.60 each per hour - Total £82.40 for 2 hours

3 Litres of petrol for running the pump for 45 minutes £1.46 per litre Total £4.38 per fill.

Van Diesel 6 miles @ £0.65 = £3.90 per fill

Total cost for each fill £82.40 + £4.38 + £3.90 = £90.68

Total cost for year £906.80

It would pay for itself in 2 year 4 months and would be a permanent feature.

Options

Option 1 – Do nothing and remove the tank and don't supply water in the new section of the cemetery.

Option 2 – Continue with the current arrangement that is in place.

Option 3 – install a new pipe and tap into the new section of the cemetery.

RECOMMENDED

How will these be funded: The Cemetery budget line 241_4040 has only £1,000 in year but this should come from the Cemetery EMR.

What else should be done?

Monitor the water consumption in the cemetery and look to install additional rainwater harvesting tanks beside the 2 we currently have by the recycling yard as an option for people to use if passing them.

Agenda Item 10 – Insurance Fell Tree in Cemetery
Leisure & Environment Committee 30 April 2024

What is required:

To approve expenditure of up to £1,400 to cut down a tree in the cemetery which a local resident claims is causing problems to their house after our insurers have recommended removal.

Why it is required:

This is required as our insurance company have agreed that we should remove the tree that it is claimed may be causing damage to the nearby property. We believed that this work had been done in December last year, but a different healthy tree had been felled by a tree surgeon on the written instructs of an ex-officer of Sudbury Town Council, who gave him the wrong tree number.

The correct tree is still standing and this work must be completed as soon as possible.

Options

Option 1 – Do nothing at all and risk action being taken against Sudbury Town Council by the house holders insurance company.

Option 2 – Deal with the tree concerned and instruct works to be carried out to fell the correct tree this time.

RECOMMENDED

How will these be funded: The Cemetery budget line 241_4058 has £5,000 for tree works. If more is required in year, this will have to come from the Cemetery EMR.

What else should be done?

Checks will now be put in place when any instructions are issued for tree works on any tree owned by Sudbury Town Council, and no tree works will commence until an onsite location checks and paperwork checks has been done and then double checked by another officer and signed off by the Town Clerk.

Agenda Item 11 – Dead Tree in Cemetery
Leisure & Environment Committee 30 April 2024

What is required:

To approve expenditure of up to £2,000 to cut down a dead tree in the Cemetery.

Why it is required:

This tree is listed in our tree survey from 2022 as a Robinia pseudoacacia (Black locust) number T331 (6636) with major deadwood in crown which could present an unacceptable hazard.

This tree is now clearly dead and causing a safety issue. As the cemetery is publicly accessible and we have a duty to keep the area safe, and a problem has been identified with the tree, so we must take action.

Options

Option 1 – Do nothing at all and risk an accident happening and having a claim filed against Sudbury Town Council.

Option 2 – Deal with the tree concerned and instruct works to be carried out to fell the tree.
RECOMMENDED

How will these be funded: The Cemetery budget line 241_4058 has £5,000 for tree works. If more is required in year, this will have to come from the Cemetery EMR.

What else should be done?

Re-check the tree survey to ensure that all works required have been completed.

Agenda Item 12 – Replace Fire Detectors in Town Hall
Leisure & Environment Committee 30 April 2024

What is required:

To approve expenditure of up to £2,450 to replace 34 devices throughout the town hall, 30 smoke detectors & 4 Heat detectors.

Why it is required:

This is required as we have now had the new fire panel and the new repeater installed in the building, and during the reconnection process it was discovered that all 34 device, bar one that we have just had replaced as it was faulty, are over 20 years old and are past the manufacturer's life span and do not have the capability of fault head removal.

Options

Option 1 – Do nothing and hope that the devices function correctly if there was a fire.

Option 2 – Replace all 34 devices that need replacing and bring our fire detection system up to standard and offers the best fire protection for the building and the safety of all users, this will then be good for the next 10 years and devices will only need replacing if they develop a fault.

RECOMMENDED

How will these be funded: Town Hall Maintenance EMR.

What else should be done?

On going maintenance program will be in place so that this does not happen again and that we are aware of when these will need changing again in line with manufacturers life span.

Agenda Item 13 – Car Park Surface
Leisure & Environment Committee 30 April 2024

What is required:

To approve expenditure of up to £18,000 to surface the car park behind the Town Hall.

Why it is required:

The car park at the rear of the Town Hall needs to be resurfaced completely, it has got to the end of its serviceable life and is just being patched up each year and the patching is failing and the material that is currently laid does not react to wet weather very well meaning it goes to a horrible muddy mixture when it rains. The surface is all up and down and this car park is used on a regular basis by the warden team to access the sheds as well as staff and contractors to the town hall. The car park requires proper drainage to be installed and connected to the drain within the highway to stop flooding. Also, there is access rights across our parcel of land to the rear of shops so we would be liable for any accidents if someone fell over on the current surface.

Scope of the Work Required;

Level the area, fill holes and compact the total area (about 200 m²). Install Aco drainage outside toilet block for about 17 m for discharge into main drain. Install kerb line to the rear of car park to show car park area owned by Sudbury Town Council. Tarmac the area with a subsurface layer 70mm thick and finish with a 30mm thick surface layer. Roll and compact ready for use.

Once finished, this should be painted with lines to show the parking spaces.

Options

Option 1 – Do nothing and continue with the surface we have.

Option 2 – Patch up the car park throughout the year as a temporary measure.

Option 3 – Resurface the car park, add drainage, and line mark it out, making the whole area tidier, safer and more useable with control over parking within the area.

RECOMMENDED

How will these be funded: We have 3 quotes for the work which all in the same region. The Town Hall budget line 211_4040 has only as small amount for routine tasks as we allocate £24,200 each year to the Town Hall EMR for these larger tasks.

What else should be done?

We may need to introduce parking permits so that the car parking can be enforced, and inappropriate parking dealt with, keeping access clear at all times for deliveries and access to the sheds.