

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 6.30PM**

Committee members present: Mr S Hall – Chair
Mrs M Barrett
Mr P Beer
Mr N Bennett
Ms E Murphy
Mrs J Osborne

Officers in attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk

1. **SUBSTITUTES AND APOLOGIES**

**Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs P Berry-Kilby and Mr A Welsh.
Councillor Mr N Bennet was the substitute for Mr A Welsh and Councillor M Barrett was the substitute for Mrs Berry-Kilby.**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Mr P Beer declared that he was a Babergh District Councillor and a Suffolk County Councillor.

3. **DECLARATION OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

No declarations of gifts or hospitality were received.

4. **REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

No requests for dispensations had been received.

5. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Leisure and Environment Committee meeting held on the 30th July 2024 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. **ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Town Clerk confirmed that fire door closures had been fitted and were working well. The Town Clerk cautioned members that the minutes of the previous meeting, which had taken place whilst he was on leave, contained unresourced aspirations to run schools' competitions and community litter picks. These would have to be allocated resources in the next budget if they were to take place

RESOLVED

To note the Town Clerk's report.

7. TO DISCUSS BAMBOO GROWING ON THE CROFT

Members of the public attended the meeting to express their concern over bamboo growing on the Croft. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the planting of invasive species is forbidden in the UK, but unlike Japanese knotweed, which is on the list, bamboo is not classed as an invasive species in the act. However, court cases where landowners sue their neighbours because their bamboo has spread to their land have become increasingly common. The law used is the common law of private nuisance and the offended party can seek compensation for things like loss of enjoyment, property damage and costs of removal.

The two different types of bamboo send out runners in different ways.

- Running – these have rhizomes that spread out or ‘run’ far away from the mother plant.
- Clumping – the runners on this type stay close to the original plant.

The running bamboo spreads over a much wider area and is considered more invasive. Professional advice would be required to identify the particular species on the Croft and to advise on appropriate methods to eradicate it. Possible sources of advice could include Writtle College, the Environment Agency or a garden centre. Eradication could require digging out the rhizome to a depth of about 1 metre and care would be needed to avoid obstructions such as the gas pipeline.

RESOLVED

To seek professional advice on the type of bamboo and the appropriate method of eradication.

8. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CEMETERY GROUNDS MAINTENANCE WORK

The Chair gave a short report on the visit to the cemetery on 16th September which 5 members had attended. The Town Clerk had discussed a range of issues and would circulate his note to members. The key to success would be to start the grass cutting programme on the first dry period in February, cut again in March, then cut every 10 days from the start of April until the dry summer weather reduced the rate of growth.

RESOLVED

To consider the cemetery issues raised with the Town Clerk during the visit at the next meeting.

9. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE DIGITAL NOTICEBOARD

There had been no progress on the digital noticeboard due to the need to prioritise staff time to deal with immediate problems caused by absences.

RESOLVED

To note the report and to progress as soon as possible when staff time could be allocated.

10. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Members who had been present for the Heritage Open Days reported on the high turnout and obvious satisfaction of the visitors. This event had been a great success.

RESOLVED

To give a vote of thanks to all those involved in making the Heritage Open Days such a success.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MOVING CINEMA MODELS PROPOSED FOR FY2025-26 AND TO APPROVE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £6,480 EXCLUDING VAT

The Town Clerk apologised for the confusion over this item on the agenda. There had not been time to discuss the plans for the moving cinema with the Business Manager and he had thought that additional funds were being requested in the current financial year. It was now clear that this was a proposal for FY2025-2026 and therefore would need to be considered along with all the other proposed public events under item 13.

RESOLVED

To consider the moving cinema under item 13.

12. TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED PUBLIC EVENTS PLAN FOR FY2025-26

Members discussed the proposed public events plan for FY2025-2026 as shown below.

Proposed Public and Civic Events Plan for FY2025/26 (1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026)				
When	Event	Proposed date for 2025/26	Estimated Event expenditure	Estimated event income (stall fees, locality etc)
Early May Bank Holiday Monday	Plant, Flower & Eco ('Green Fingers') Fair	Monday 5 May 2025		
Saturday 21 June (or the weekend closest to Suffolk Day)	Suffolk Day	Saturday 21 June 2024	£ 150.00	£ -
Third Sunday in July	Party in the Park / Party on the Hill	Sunday 19 July 2025	£ 5,055.00	£ 2,000.00
On the Sunday of the late summer Bank Hol weekend in August	Sudbury Street Food Festival	Sunday 24 August 2025		
September	Heritage Open Days	Sat 14 - Sun 15 September	£ 2,000.00	£ -
November	Sudbury Christmas Light Switch on & Fair	Friday 28 November 2025	£ 4,200.00	£ 2,000.00
February Half term for 10-day run	The Incredible Moving Cinema	Thurs 19 February - Sunday 1 March 2026	£6,800 (Hybrid model)	£ -
Third Sunday in March (every other year)	Sudbury on Show	21 March 2026	£ 750.00	£ -
March or April	Annual Town Meeting - required to host	Monday 24 March or Wednesday 26 March	Staff time / TOIL	£ -

RESOLVED

To approve all the events listed above for inclusion in the first draft of the FY 2025-2026 budget with the costs shown.

13. TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £3,000 EXCLUDING VAT FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREES

The Town Clerk asked members if they were content with the size of the previous Christmas trees and members confirmed that all recent trees had been of a reasonable height. The Town Clerk proposed that he would work with the supplier to identify the most appropriate trees for the town centre this Christmas.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, members approve the expenditure of up to £3,000 excluding VAT for two Christmas trees.

14. TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO £2,298 EXCLUDING VAT ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, members approve the expenditure of up to £2,298 excluding VAT for Remembrance Sunday.

15. TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF £800 EXCLUDING VAT FOR RENOVATION WORKS TO THE AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL

A member of the public expressed his disappointment at the state of the inscription on the American war memorial and the time taken from when he had first raised this. The Town Clerk explained that the sloping angle of the memorial caused rapid erosion of the paintwork. The memorial had been repaired in 2021 and had had a temporary touch-up before the 4th July celebration this year. Quotes had been obtained for another 'in place' restoration of the paintwork, but if this was not successful, the whole memorial would need to be removed to a stonemason's workshop to be re-cut and set vertically.

The member of the public expressed a strong desire to have the inscription restored before the remembrance events in November and suggested he would donate funds to undertake a full 'removal restoration' if the 'in place' renovation works did not last. Members requested that the Town Clerk kept the member of the public updated on progress and thanked him for his generous offer of further funding.

RESOLVED

That, under the power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, members approve the expenditure of up to £800 excluding VAT for repainting the inscription on the American war memorial.

16. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TOWN HALL REPAIRS AND RENOVATION

The Town Clerk confirmed that he had inspected the Town Hall repair work that afternoon and the renovation was being carried out to a high standard. The top levels of scaffolding would be removed the next day as the painters worked their way down the front of the building.

RESOLVED

To note the report.

17. TO DISCUSS ESTABLISHING A TOWN COUNCIL FOOD BANK

RESOLVED

To defer any discussion of a food bank until a member put forward a detailed proposal.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)

RESOLVED

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 6 as the publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

Members received a confidential briefing from the Town Clerk on the progress with actions from the previous meeting. There were no resolutions during this section of the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8:33 pm.



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S. W. M.

Chairman

