

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.00PM**

Present: Miss A Owen – Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR
Mrs M Barrett Mr K Graham
Mr P Beer Mr A Osborne
Mr N Bennett Mrs J Osborne
Ms J Carter Mr T Regester
Mr S Hall Mr A Stohr
Ms E Murphy Mr N Younger

In attendance: Mr C Griffin – Town Clerk
Mr D Deeks – Administration Manager and RFO
Mr P Faircloth-Mutton – Suffolk County Councillor
Ms L Smith – Babergh District Councillor

1. APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs P Berry-Kilby and Mr A Welsh.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

3. DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

No declarations of gifts or hospitality were received.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

No requests for dispensations had been received.

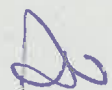
5. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 6th August 2024 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6. TO REVIEW THE ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Town Clerk confirmed that the resolutions from the previous meeting had been completed.



7. REPORTS

a) County Councillor's Reports – County Councillor Ms Jessie Carter had circulated her report prior to the meeting, which is included at pages 592 to 594. County Councillor Mr Philip Faircloth-Mutton then gave a short verbal report. Members asked questions on the following points.

- The proposed HGV parking restrictions on Churchfield Road would also cover scrap metal vehicles.
- The OFSED inspection had raised issues with young people leaving care and not receiving the appropriate level of housing support. This required both the county and district councils to work together as responsibilities were, split with housing the responsibility of the district council.
- Both county councillors confirmed that they supported changes to the strategic lorry route through Sudbury.

RESOLVED

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

b) Babergh District Council (BDC) Report – District Councillor Ms L Smith had circulated her report prior to the meeting, which is included at pages 595 to 596, and asked if members had any questions. Members asked questions on the following points;

- Black bin waste collection would be changed to once every 3 weeks in future but those with large families or medical issues would need an exemption process with more frequent waste collection. When would the details of the exemption process be made public?
- What were the future plans for brown bin collection?
- Would bottle banks in the community be retained after glass was included in the household recycling? This would affect parish income.
- Kingfisher Leisure Centre swimming pool would be closed for about 12 weeks for urgent repairs. This called into question the effectiveness of routine safety inspections.
- Could this unexpected closure of the Kingfisher swimming pool be used as an opportunity for a general refurbishment?
- Could the Great Cornard open air pool be used by Kingfisher members while the Kingfisher pool was closed?
- One Life Suffolk arranged for those recovering after serious operations to have 3 months gym or pool use at the Kingfisher. However, this is being delayed until many months after patients finish their medical treatment.
- Were the public toilets in Gaol Lane that had recently been refurbished by Babergh District Council now fully operational or were repairs still outstanding? What lessons had Babergh District Council learnt from the management of the refurbishment contract?
- What was the current timescale for the new café and public toilets in Belle Vue Park now that further ground works were required for the foundations? Babergh District Council anticipated completion by spring/summer 2025.
- Why had only 3 of the 13 scheduled planning meetings at Babergh District Council taken place? This was due to the reduction in large scale planning applications.
- Would additional waste collection vehicles be required for the new collection plan?

RESOLVED

That District Councillor Ms L Smith be thanked for her report.

c) Policing report – Sgt Ollie Williams, the Community Police Sergeant for Sudbury, attended the meeting to give a verbal report on current policing issues. Sgt Williams expressed his concerns about street drinkers congregating on the benches on North Street and Market Hill and noted that Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill had issued Community Protection Notices to address similar problems. He asked the Town Council whether it would like to examine applying for a similar Community Protection Notice for Sudbury. Members were broadly supportive but noted that the details of where drinking would be permitted would need to be carefully considered.

RESOLVED

That Sgt Williams be thanked for his report.

- d) Mayor's Announcements
- Members were asked to support the Heritage Open day on Saturday 14th September.
 - Members were asked to support the Mayor's Charity dinner on 18th September.

RESOLVED

That the Mayor be thanked for her report.

- e) Public Forum – Forum – There was an excellent turnout with about 11 members of the public attending the meeting. Questions from the public included;
- Were the increases in allotments rents consistent with Section 10 of the Allotments Act 1950. The Town Clerk confirmed that they were.
 - What did the Town Council actually spend on the allotments? This information was in the annual accounts and would be provided to the member of the public by email.
 - What action was the Town Council taking to remove the bamboo growing on the Croft? The Town Clerk confirmed that this issue was due to be considered at the next meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee.
 - What was the district council doing to protect residents from car parking displaced from the council's car parks to outside their homes? This was an issue for Babergh District Council.

8. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

Planning, Development & Highways on 15th & 29th July, and 12th & 27th August – The Chairman recommended noting the minutes
It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Policy & Resources on 18th August – The Chairman recommended noting the minutes
It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Leisure and Environment on 30th July – The Chairman recommended noting the minutes
It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

Finance on 20th August and 3rd September – The Chairman recommended noting the minutes.
It was **RESOLVED** to note the minutes.

9. TO APPOINT THE NEW CO-OPT MEMBER TO THE VACANT PLACE ON POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

To appoint the new co-opted member, Councillor Mr Kevin Graham, to the vacant place on the Policy and Resources Committee.

10. TO APPOINT HONARY FREEMEN OF SUDBURY

RESOLVED

To appoint the following people as honorary freemen of Sudbury

- Mr Peter Minter
- Ms Phylis Felton
- Mr Geoffrey Challacombe

11. TO CONSIDER A DRINKING EXCLUSION ZONE IN THE TOWN CENTRE

The possible merits of a drinking exclusion zones had been discussed during the police report under item 7.

RESOLVED

To work with the police to draft a detailed proposal for a drinking exclusion zone within clearly defined areas of Sudbury town centre and to bring this back to the full council for consideration.

12. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE MEETING WITH THE SUDBURY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Mayor reported that the initial meeting with the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce had taken place on 7th August and both sides had agreed on the following points;

- Communications were the key to a constructive relationship.
- One of the town council's managers, usually the Business Manager, should attend the Chamber of Commerce monthly meetings to improve communications.
- A member of the Chamber of Commerce should attend the town council's monthly meetings to improve communications.
- That the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce should work together on the new 'Vision for Sudbury', and ensure that realistic funding options were included.
- That the Town Council and Chamber of Commerce should discuss how to work together on current issues such as the Delphi site and parking charges.

RESOLVED

To note the Mayor's report and approve further discussions with the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce as outlined above.

13. TO CONSIDER A REPSONSE TO BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CABINET DECISION ON CAR PARK CHARGES IN SUDBURY

Members discussed their continuing concerns over the negative impact that increased parking charges would have in Sudbury.

Members resolved to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

RESOLVED

To note their disappointment that the increased parking charges were being introduced despite overwhelming opposition in Sudbury and Great Cornard and to co-operate with the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce and Great Cornard Parish Council to conduct a survey of shops and businesses in Sudbury to better understand the impact of the changes.

To invite the leader of Babergh District Council to attend the next meeting of the full council to discuss the details of the future parking charges in Sudbury and to explain how the following areas could be resolved.

- Parents on schools drop off.
- Patients attending medical appointments in Sudbury.
- How Roy's car park would operate.
- How the Kingfisher users would be charged or reimbursed.
- How town centre residents would be affected.

14. TO CONSIDER A REPONSE TO THE DECISION NOT TO APPROVE A NEW PHARMACY IN SUDBURY

Members discussed their concerns that residents using the GP services on Churchfield Road would not be able to have their prescriptions filled by a pharmacy on site. This caused particular difficulty for those with impaired mobility.

RESOLVED

To check whether the original planning conditions for the Sudbury Community Health Centre on Churchfield Road included a requirement for a pharmacy on the site.

To write to Primary Care Support England (PCSE) to explain why Sudbury residents need to have a pharmacy collocated with GP practice at the Sudbury Community Health Centre on Churchfield Road.

15. TO CONSIDER APPOINTING MRS FIONA WHEELER AS A REPRESENTATIVE TRUSTEE OF THE SUDBURY MUNICIPAL CHARITIES FROM NOVEMBER 2024

RESOLVED

To appoint Mrs Fiona Wheeler as a representative trustee of the Sudbury Municipal Charities from November 2024.

16. TO CONSIDER APPOINTING AN OBSERVER TO THE SUDBURY AND SOUTH SUFFOLK CITIZENS ADVICE

Councillor Mrs Jan Osborne asked for a belated interest to be noted in that she was a trustee of Sudbury Citizens Advice.

RESOLVED

To appoint Councillor Adrian Osborne as an observer to the Sudbury and South Suffolk Citizens Advice.

17. TO CONSIDER THE NEED FOR A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR SUDBURY

RESOLVED

To postpone consideration of a neighbourhood plan and to ask the next meeting of the Planning, Development and Highways Committee to discuss this and make recommendations.

Members resolved to have a 5 minute break and to extend the meeting by a further 15 minutes.

RESOLVED

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 items 18 and 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 AN UPDATE ON THE RENOVATION AND REPAIR OF THE TOWN HALL

See CONFIDENTIAL Annex A page 597.

19. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ANY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS.

See CONFIDENTIAL Annex A pages 597 and 598.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 9:58 pm.

Chairman

**Report for September 2024 to Sudbury Town Council - From
Jessie Carter (SCC Councillor)**



Date: 06/09/2024

Email: jessie.carter@suffolk.gov.uk

Phone: 07955 434411

Defibrillator

I am pleased to be able to say I have given £500 towards the cost of another Defibrillator, this time along Tudor Road.

HGV Signage improvements

After our proposals were rejected in SCC's Lorry Route review, I initiated the installation of directional signs for lorries and HGVs across Sudbury to guide larger vehicles away from unsuitable streets. The work began on August 19th, with two locations remaining, where work is set to commence on September 27th.

Please find a breakdown of each site below:

Girling Street: Approaching Traffic Lights - £609.56
 Girling Street: Advanced Directional Sign - £2,372.93
 Girling Street: Road Marking removal - £421.77
 Girling Street: Directional signs at Newton Rd island - £115.66
 East Street: Advanced Directional Sign - £2,457.06 (Maintenance)
 Exit to Lorry Park (Station Rd): £522.50
 Market Hill: £2,006.32 (Maintenance)

 Sign Improvement - £4,042.41
 Maintenance - £4,463.39
 Total - £8,505.80

Traffic Survey, Bulmer Road

The traffic survey results have come back that I commissioned on Bulmer Road, Sudbury using my LHB funds.

The Safety and Asset Management Officers have reviewed the data the speeds are considered within the acceptable limit for location and is what is expected coming from a rural 60 mph zone (National Speed limit) open fields over the brow of Kitchen Hill into the 30 mph zone at the county boundary just before the bungalows on Bulmer Road. Mean average speeds are 28 mph and 29 mph, the 85th percentile speeds are a little higher at 34 mph but not at a level where further investigation or action is required.

Unfortunately there is no suitable place to site a SID, the verge is too short to provide the minimum 80 meters required for the equipment to be able to function effectively.

The only option left would be to arrange for some advisory markings to be put down on the road surface, a white 30-mph roundel at the 30 mph terminal signs to highlight the speed change and perhaps a 'SLOW' by the road narrows sign in advance of the 30 mph (subject to approval by Essex Highways as this is over the county boundary).

Report on Blue Badge Application Backlog at Suffolk County Council

Suffolk County Council is currently facing a significant backlog in Blue Badge applications and renewals due to an unprecedented surge in requests since April 2023, a trend also observed nationally among local authorities. According to the DfT guidelines, authorities are expected to process applications within 12 weeks; however, SCC's processing times, which were maintained at 7-8 weeks until April, have now extended to over 13 weeks. As of last week, SCC is processing applications from May 21, 2023, and has received a total of 5,321 applications, with 4,921 still pending. Despite this, the Blue Badge team has successfully issued 8,981 badges this year. The team is fully committed to expediting processing and is exploring additional resources to help reduce the current delays, understanding the vital role a Blue Badge plays for eligible individuals.

Blue Badge holders are responsible for renewing their Blue Badge and to do this well ahead of the Badge's expiry date. Recognising the importance of Blue Badges to holders, the Council accepts renewal applications from 18 weeks prior to the expiry date, to help ensure continuity of badge validity. The processing of Blue Badge applications is in no way linked to where you live within the County, As I am sure you can appreciate the most effective and fairest way for us to process applications is in the date order that they were received so that we can be fair and consistent to each applicant. The only exception to this is applications made by individuals who have reduced life expectancy (terminally ill), these are prioritised and in many cases we issue within 2 weeks or less.

Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care

The inspection report for Suffolk County Council's social care services for children has now been published, following a visit from Ofsted at the end of May. The report found that social care services for children, which include fostering and adoption, safeguarding, child protection, youth justice and corporate parenting (children in care), 'require improvement to be good.' My group are concerned by this as children's services were rated as 'Outstanding' the last time they were inspected in 2019, and the remarks on leadership – that leaders do not have 'sufficient grip' on all the services provided – are especially worrying. A new director for children's services started in July 2024, and more information will be available on the plans for improvement in September when the inspection report is tabled at Cabinet. Here is a summary of the findings of the report:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families – Requires improvement to be good
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – Requires improvement to be good
- The experiences and progress of children in care – Good
- The experiences and progress of care leavers – Requires improvement to be good
- **Overall effectiveness – Requires improvement to be good**

This inspection is separate from the recent inspection into services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

You can read the full Ofsted inspection report here:

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80565>

Launch of Solar Together Suffolk

Residents of Suffolk can come together to invest in renewable energy sources through a group-buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage. Solar Together Suffolk helps homeowners feel confident that they are paying the right price for a high-quality installation from qualified installers.

Suffolk residents can join the group-buying scheme, which offers solar panels with optional battery storage and EV charge points, as well as retrofit battery storage for residents who have already invested in solar panels and are looking to get more from the renewable energy they generate. The scheme allows homeowners to increase their independence from the National Grid.

It is free to register at www.solartogogether.co.uk/suffolk, and there is no obligation to go ahead with an installation.

Electric Vehicles

Over 60 new community venues across Suffolk will have new electric vehicle (EV) charge points, as Suffolk County Council's 'Plug In Suffolk' project continues to grow. Fast charging facilities will be installed at 63 new sites, including community centres, village halls, scout huts and other community hubs, and 25 existing charge points from an early iteration of Plug In Suffolk will be adopted under a new contract.

The county council has successfully bid for £7.3 million from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund, which supports local authorities to plan and deliver EV charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking.

£1.4 million of the LEVI funding will go towards the community charging infrastructure, with a further £5.9 million allocated for on-street charging, which will be developed later this year.

In addition, a trial of electric community vehicles is set to launch next summer in Suffolk, with the council's tender process for this beginning this month.

Plug In Suffolk Car Clubs will be placing 16 electric vehicles across eight locations in Suffolk which local residents can book by the minute, hour or day. Planned locations include Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket, Sudbury, Needham Market, Stowmarket, Lowestoft and Woodbridge.

Babergh report, September 2024Cllr Laura Smith

Earlier in the summer..

Parking Charges

Cabinet met in August to discuss parking charges again, after being directed to do so by the Overview and Scrutiny committee. Despite a strong argument from Cllr Jessie Carter, the Cabinet voted 5:1 to bring in charges. This will be implemented from January 2025.

Listed Buildings

Babergh and Mid Suffolk will be the first councils in the country to introduce measures to make sensitive to Listed Building improvements quicker and easier.

The first is a Local Listed Building Consent Order, allowing Grade II listed property owners to upgrade or replace windows without having to make individual applications, subject to conditions.

The second is a Local Development Order, allowing solar PV and other renewable technologies to be installed on unlisted buildings within the curtilage of a Grade II listed property, also subject to conditions.

More recently...

Kingfisher Leisure Centre

The pool closed on Friday 23rd August to allow for repairs to be carried out after damage to a glass panel above the pool; it had been hoped the pool would reopen on 14th September, but the time required for the supply of the specialist glass panel means the pool has had to remain closed. While the pool is closed, the Council will also take the opportunity to carry out additional maintenance work.

The timeframe for reopening will be confirmed when known.

Housing Development on Uplands site

Progress is being made on plans to re-develop part of the former Uplands Middle School site to provide affordable housing.

A second consultation event for residents local to the scheme was held at the end of August at the Masonic Hall, providing further details on the design of the development and seeking residents' views.

Cabinet changes

As of 4th September Cllr Laura Smith (Sudbury SW) has replaced Cllr Daniel Potter as cabinet member for Thriving Communities.

As part of this portfolio, Cllr Smith will have responsibility for strong and safe communities, health, wellbeing, sport and leisure.

Waste Collection

The Cabinet will meet on Monday 9th September to decide on measures to bring in the Government's mandatory changes to waste collection. Kerbside collections of glass bottles and jars, cartons, and food waste will be brought in in 2025, with food waste bins and kitchen caddies being supplied to all households.

The Cabinet must decide whether to implement co-mingled or twin-stream recycling, and whether refuse collections will be carried out in a two-weekly or three-weekly cycle (the recommended option). The decision must be in line with the other councils in the Suffolk Waste Partnership.

