

SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, SUDBURY, ON TUESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00PM

Present: Mrs Ayres Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR.

Mrs J Antill	Miss A Owen
Mr N Bennett	Mr J Owen
Mr T Cresswell	Mr T Regester
Mr S Hall	Mr J Sayers
Ms E Murphy	Mr R Spivey
Mr A Osborne	Mr J Thomas
Mrs J Osborne	

Mr C Griffin	Town Clerk
Mrs J Budd	Deputy Town Clerk
Mr P Faircloth-Mutton	County Councillor

A short prayer was said by the mayor before commencement of the meeting.

1 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ms J Carter

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mrs S Ayres, Mr T Cresswell, Mr A Osborne, Mrs J Osborne and Miss A Owen declared that they were Babergh District Councillors.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

No declarations were received.

4 **REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

No requests for dispensation had been received.

5 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Tuesday 11th January 2022 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

6 **REPORTS**

a) County Councillor's report

Councillor Mr Faircloth-Mutton gave his report. The following points were made:

- Suffolk County Council was one of 9 counties across the country working to secure a devolution deal from the government . Included in the initial discussion was the proposed development and roll out of Oyster style travel cards to increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of public transport and longer-term funding for major transport infrastructure upgrades, not just one-off funding. Some of these devolution discussions for other parts of England could include a directly elected mayor, but Suffolk County Council had made it clear that this would not be appropriate for Suffolk.
- The Biodiversity panel had met and detailed various schemes.
- There would be a Council Tax increase of 2% on the base rate.
- There was a consultation underway on bus services in Suffolk. Councillor J Owen commented that he was very disappointed that there was hardly any mention of Sudbury. (This matter would be discussed in more detail at the Planning Committee meeting on the 14th February 2022).
- Councillor Faircloth-Mutton explained that the ‘Bus Back Better’ scheme very much included Sudbury, with a proposal that Sudbury could be used to trial the new Ticket Integration scheme.
- Councillor Mrs Osborne again expressed her frustration at utility vehicles causing damage to grass verges when parking. BDC were committed to ensuring the companies made good any of their land and asked if SCC could commit to doing the same? Could SCC ensure that all road works sign no longer in use were removed? If SCC decided not to repair damaged road signs on the grounds that they were not essential for road safety, could they remove them?
- Concern was raised by Councillors over the proposed changes to the junction at the bottom of York Road/Melford Road. (This matter would also be discussed by the Planning Committee on the 14th February 2022).

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mr Faircloth-Mutton be thanked for his report.

- b) District Councillor’s report – A copy of Councillor Mr Cresswell’s report is shown at minute page 181.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Mr Cresswell be thanked for his report.

- c) Policing report: The Town Clerk advised that a report was not available. Following on from the letter Councillor Mrs Ayres sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Passmore had agreed to attend the full Council meeting on the 14th June 2022.

The video meeting to discuss the effectiveness of the new CCTV system that had been due to be held earlier that day had had to be rescheduled as the police had not attended.

RESOLVED

That the Town Clerk’s report be noted.

d) Public Forum

A question was asked to County Councillor Philip Faircloth-Mutton regarding highway issues outside of Sudbury.

No other questions were asked.

7

TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

Planning and Development on 17th January 2022. The Chairman advised that members had discussed a complaint on the lack of footpath along Middleton Road, plus requested an update on the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders for Sudbury.

It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT

Planning, Development & Highways on 31st January 2022. At this meeting members had recommended refusal on an application from 'Toast' for the retention of an internally illuminated sign. Comments were given to Babergh on other businesses that may have incorrect lighting.

It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT

Policy and Resources on the 18th January 2022. The Chairman advised that the adoption of several policies would be considered later in the agenda of the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT

Leisure and Environment on 25th January 2022. The Chairman advised that the committee had received a very comprehensive report/update from the Town Centre Manager. Discussions were also held regarding new desk phone contracts, street lighting owned and paid for by the Town Council.

Due to confusion over the version of minutes to be adopted, it was RESOLVED just to NOTE the REPORT and adopt at the next meeting.

Finance on 1st February 2022. The Chairman advised that members discussed several items that require adopting further on in this meeting. A small grant had been given to the Woven Theatre Company.

It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT.

Human Resources on the 7th February 2022. No questions were asked regarding this meeting.

It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT

8.

PRESS AND MEDIA POLICY

The Policy Committee had recommended to full council the adoption of the Press and Media policy shown at minute page 184.

RESOLVED**That the Council adopts the Press and Media Policy.**9. **MEMBER STAFF RELATIONS POLICY**

The Policy Committee had recommended to full council the adoption of the Member Staff Relations Policy shown at minute page 188.

RESOLVED**That the Council adopts the Member Staff Relations Policy.**10. **PUBLIC ART POLICY**

The Policy Committee had recommended to full council the adoption of the Public Art Policy shown at minute page 195.

RESOLVED**That the Council adopts the Public Art Policy.**11. **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

The Policy Committee had recommended to full council the adoption of the Training and Development Policy shown at minute page 196.

RESOLVED**That the Council adopts the Training and Development Policy.**12 **INTERNAL AUDITOR**

The Finance Committee recommended to full Council that SALC remain as the Council's Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2021/2022

RESOLVED**That the Council approve SALC to be the Internal Auditors for the financial year 2021/22.**13 **VARIABLE DIRECT DEBITS**

The Finance Committee recommended to full council the approval of using variable direct debits in accordance with financial regulation 6.7.

RESOLVED**That the Council approve the use of variable direct debits.**

14 USE OF BACS AND CHAPS

The Finance Committee recommended to full council the approval of using BACS and CHAPS in accordance with financial regulation 6.9.

RESOLVED

That the Council approve the use of BACS and CHAPS.

15 GRANT AID APPLICATION – SUDBURY FUN RUN

Members discussed a grant aid application for the Sudbury Fun Run. The run was an annual event that took place each Good Friday.

The Fun Run were requesting £1,700 for the use of the Community Wardens to provide essential traffic management.

RESOLVED

That, using the general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 ss1-8, members agreed to provide a grant with a value of up to £1,700 for the Community Wardens' time for traffic management during the Sudbury Fun Run in 2022.

16 INSTALLATION OF JUBILEE BUNTING

The Council were requested to approve an additional £1,000 from the General Reserve for the installation of bunting for the Platinum Jubilee.

RESOLVED

That, under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.144, the Council approve the expenditure of up £1,000 to install bunting for the Platinum Jubilee.

17 PERFORMERS AT THE JUBILEE EVENTS

The Council were requested to approve an additional £700 from the General Reserve for 'Fairytale Fantasia' to provide two superhero characters to attend the Jubilee Country Fair and two princess characters to attend the Jubilee Street Party.

RESOLVED

That, under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972, s.145, the Council approve the expenditure of up £700 for performers to attend the Jubilee events.

18 HEALTH WATCH SUFFOLK CARE SURVEY

An email had been received from Health Watch Suffolk regarding the promotion of their Care Survey. The survey aimed to capture the effect COVID has had on Suffolk residents.

RESOLVED

That the Health Watch Suffolk Care survey be promoted on Sudbury Town Council sites.

19 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor covered the following points:

- Could any member who hasn't replied to the Civic Service invite please do so.
- The Sudbury Music Festival would celebrate its centenary this year. Programmes were available to buy from the Information Office.
- A new Rector had been appointed for St Gregory's Church.
- A tree would be planted in the Cemetery as part of the Queen's Canopy.
- A charity book entitled 'The other side of the Rainbow' was one sale in the Information Office.

RESOLVED

That the Mayor be thanked for her report.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 8.14 pm.

Chairman.....

Good Evening All

This is just a quick report at what is happening in our Area of Babergh with some time frames

So we know where when and what.

I have been asked by Councillor Dawson, to share with you, confirmation of the timeline to install new pay and display machines in our Babergh car parks.

The installation is expected to commence on **Monday 14th February** and a full list of dates and car park locations is outlined below:

	Car park location	Planned installation date
SUDBURY	The Station	14/02/2022
	Station Road (Kingfisher)	15/02/2022
	Great Eastern Road (ROYS)	16/02/2022
	North Street	17/02/2022
	Girling Road	21/02/2022
	Magdalen Road	22/02/2022
HADLEIGH	Maiden Way	23/02/2022
	High Street	
	Toppersfield	23/02/2022

To enable the old machine cash boxes to be removed in readiness for the new machines, we will **suspend parking charges where applicable on the day which installation takes place** for each of the car parks listed above i.e. – no charge

for parking in The Station car park on 14th Feb, then Station Road car park on the 15th Feb etc. For those car parks where no charge is made, the customer will not be required to obtain a ticket (virtual or physical).

This allows for the old machines to be removed and the new machines installed without the worry of customers trying to pay and obtain a ticket. Officers will arrange for notices to be displayed in our car parks and we will work with the comms team to update social media etc too.

Our enforcement teams will be updated and emails sent to both Sudbury and Hadleigh Town Councils to ensure they are aware of what's happening.

Cycle and walking connectivity Medford Road SUDBURY

I am writing to give you advanced sight of an upcoming public consultation being undertaken by Suffolk County Council regarding a proposal to improve walking and cycling connectivity on Melford Road, Sudbury.

The scheme proposes to provide:

- segregated cycleways and widening of footways;
- Copenhagen style crossings on York Road and Beconsfield Road;
- installation of tiger crossings (making provision for cyclists and pedestrians to use the crossings), which will provide access to quieter routes on North Street;
- slight enlargement of the central island, creating space for planting and green space.

Please find the proposal details attached.

The scheme has been proposed to provide a better gateway to Sudbury Town Centre and will provide a place-shaping scheme, which will support ambitions by the district council and town council to improve the town centre area and active travel connectivity. The Town Centre Manager and Town Clerk are also supportive of the scheme.

The consultation will be launched on Wednesday this week (2nd February) and will run for six weeks.

If you have any questions or queries about the proposal or consultation, please contact Kerry Allen (Principal Transport Towns Planner within the Transport Strategy Team at SCC), who is copied into this e-mail.

SOLAR CARPORT INSTALLATION AT KINGFISHER LEISURE CENTRE, SUDBURY

We are just advising you that the project completion date has slipped from **31 March 2022** to a **25 April 2022** commissioning date.

Unfortunately due to a supply chain delay with bespoke containment housing - for the battery storage and inverter electrical components - this is beyond our control.

The supplier is in Wales and was significantly affected over the Xmas/New Year period by Covid impacts and is currently running 4-6 weeks behind on orders.

The carport contractor Polysolar is doing all they can to mitigate programme impacts and other aspects of the construction are all on-schedule.

Next key dates on the sites for your information include:

- Screw Piling System installation 7th February
- Baseplate installation 21st February
- Superstructure installation 3rd March
- PV Panel install 17th March
- Battery Storage & EV Charging Point installation both 8th April

The public webpage will be updated with this information. Sectional installation should keep any significant parking impacts to a minimum, and we will update local signage.

Kind Cllr Trevor. Cresswell



Sudbury Town Council Press and Media Policy

Preamble

This policy applies on those occasions when the Town Council, as a corporate body, is asked for a statement, a comment or information from the media, or as a corporate body issues a press release, or information to factually clarify/correct other comments published in the media. Media is defined as any activity “reporting” on the Town Council.

This policy does not, and is not intended to, apply when individual Councillors are contacted directly by the media for a personal comment or statement, nor when individual Councillors contact the media with a personal statement. In such cases it should be made clear that it is the individual’s own opinion or comment, not that of the Town Council.

In general, the Town Clerk provides factual information on behalf of the Council. The Mayor or a delegated Committee Chair may be asked to provide details of the corporate decisions that have been made at official meetings. If a Councillor is unsure about the circumstances of a particular issue he should contact the Town Clerk before communicating with the media, including social media.

Policy Statement

Sudbury Town Council wishes to be open and transparent in the way it considers information and takes decisions. As a Town Council we will therefore proactively seek opportunities to publish information about our activities with the intention of raising awareness about what the Town Council is doing.

Personnel

When the Mayor is unavailable the Deputy Mayor will take on any of the Mayor’s specified tasks and responsibilities.

When the Town Clerk is unavailable the Deputy Town Clerk will take on any of his specified tasks and responsibilities.

1. Requests from the Media

- 1.1 All members and staff should make the Town Clerk aware of any approaches from the media for interviews, statements or information.

- 1.2 Any request from the media will be considered by the Town Clerk and he will try to identify if the Council has already agreed a policy position on the subject. The Town Clerk will then contact the most appropriate person (usually this will be the Mayor, or the Committee Chair where the matter has been delegated), to agree a response on behalf of the Town Council.
 - 1.3 Prior to releasing a statement or giving an interview, the Town Clerk and the Mayor or Committee Chair should agree bullet points to cover the broad content of any response. This may be supported by other, more detailed documents when appropriate.
- 2. Response to Media Articles, Published Letters, Online Comments, Tweets, Facebook items**
- 2.1 Every situation must be carefully assessed, and, in many cases, a corporate response will not be appropriate.
 - 2.2 Any officer or member who sees an article or item and thinks that a corporate response may be appropriate should inform the Town Clerk.
 - 2.3 In assessing whether or not a corporate response is appropriate the following will be considered:
 - Is the article or item in question factually accurate?
 - Is the article or item expressing a personal view – and if so is that clearly stated?
 - Would further discussion on the subject be constructive?
 - 2.4 Any potential corporate response will be considered by the Town Clerk and then forwarded to the most appropriate person to prepare a draft response on behalf of the Town Council.
 - 2.5 Prior to releasing any corporate response, the Town Clerk and the Mayor or delegated Committee Chair should agree the written content. This may be supported by other, more detailed documents when appropriate.
- 3. Media Releases**
- 3.1 The Town Clerk, Mayor and Committee Chairs should identify issues and stories that have the potential to be of interest to the public.
 - 3.2 The Town Clerk will draft corporate media releases in consultation with the Mayor and Committee Chairs, or any individual Councillor, as appropriate.
 - 3.3 An information copy of the final corporate media release will be sent to the Mayor and any Councillor who is quoted in the text.

- 3.4 Corporate media releases will be sent to relevant media outlets as determined by the Town Clerk following consultation with the Mayor.
- 3.5 A copy of the corporate media release will be posted on the Town Council's website.
- 3.6 A copy of the corporate media release will be sent to Councillors and staff.

4. Media training

- 4.1 Opportunities will be made for all Councillors and the Town Clerk to attend media-related training.

5. Decision making

- 5.1 This Press and Media Policy is the relevant policy referred to in the Town Council's Standing Order No 22 on relations with the press and other media.
- 5.2 Any decision about the content of corporate media releases or information to be supplied to the media or any response to any media item will be taken by the Town Clerk following consultation with the Mayor. (This accords with the legal position that no individual Town Councillor can make a decision on behalf of the Council).

6. Social Media Policy

- 6.1 Official social media accounts operated by the Town Council will be used to help keep local residents, businesses, interested parties and visitors to the town informed of important Town Council related news, events and updates.
- 6.2 The official accounts will be managed by the Deputy Town Clerk, on behalf of the Town Council, who will seek to ensure that any legal obligations or best practice guidelines are adhered to.
- 6.3 Members of the public can expect the Town Council's official social media to have updates covering some or all of the following:
 - Alerts such as news, publications, events, publicity campaigns, Council/Committee meetings and new content on our other digital channels.
 - Invitations to provide feedback on specific issues on which we are consulting.
 - Information about or from our partners or other local groups about what they're doing
 - Occasional live coverage of events
- 6.4 The Town Council may follow or subscribe to social media accounts from other users. This does not imply endorsement of any kind.
- 6.5 The official accounts will be updated and monitored during working hours only and will not be political. Political posts will be removed and the Town Council will not engage on issues of party politics at any time.

- 6.6 Inappropriate language or anything that might contravene libel, defamation, copyright or data protection laws will be removed.
- 6.7 Online social media sites may occasionally be unavailable and the Town Council accepts no responsibility for lack of service.
- 6.8 Feedback and ideas are welcomed from all sections of the community and the Town Council will endeavour to join the conversation where possible. However, it may not be possible to reply individually to all messages.
- 6.9 Emerging themes or helpful suggestions will be passed to the relevant persons.
- 6.10 Councillors may have their own personal social media accounts and it is helpful to have guidance on what is and is not acceptable usage as an elected or co-opted member. This guidance complements the general rules under the Suffolk Code of Conduct for Members. If your social media account identifies you as a member of the Council, others will presume that you are speaking as a member and you will need to adhere to the Code. It is often safer to state explicitly in the text that you are '*speaking in an entirely personal capacity*' and that your views are '*not the views of the Town Council*'.
- 6.11 Staff should avoid mentioning Town Council business in their personal social media accounts and must never comment on policies or individual members.

7. Correspondence

- 7.1 Councillors must not normally communicate in the name of the Council with any outside body or person. All such communications should be carried out by the appropriate member of staff as delegated by the Town Clerk. Staff may draft letters for signature by the Mayor or a Committee Chair when delivering policies agreed by the Council or a delegated Committee.
- 7.2 It may be appropriate in some circumstances for a letter to be sent in the name of a Councillor, for example in response to a letter of complaint regarding the Town Council sent direct to that Councillor, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. When this is required, the letter will be drafted by the staff and approved by the Town Clerk before being offered to the member for signature.
- 7.3 Letters which create contractual, legal or other obligations or which give instructions on behalf of the Council must never be sent out in the name of a Councillor.
- 7.4 Staff should consider when providing information to one Councillor, whether others should be informed e.g. in relation to a ward or local matter. Normally all members will be copied on a response to a councillor, unless there are good reasons for not making the information more widely available.



Sudbury Town Council

Member Staff Relations Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 The relationship between Councillors and Staff is essential to the successful working of the organisation. This relationship within the council is characterised by mutual respect, informality and trust. Councillors and Staff must feel free to speak to one another openly and honestly.

1.2 The purpose of this Protocol is to help Councillors and Staff to perform effectively by giving guidance on their respective roles and expectations and on their relationship with each other. The Protocol also gives guidance on what to do when there is a disciplinary or efficiency issue and on the rare occasions when things go wrong. Responsibility for the operation of this protocol lies with the Town Clerk as the Head of the Paid Service.

1.3 The Protocol must be read and operated in the context of any relevant legislation and national and local Codes of Conduct and any procedure for confidential reporting.

2. Roles of Councillors and Staff

2.1 The respective roles of Councillors and Staff can be summarised as follows: Councillors and Staff are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another. However, their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Staff are responsible to the council as a corporate body. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and to the authority, and to carry out the authority's work under the direction and control of the Council and the relevant committees. Mutual respect between Councillors and Staff is essential to good local government.

2.2 Councillors have four main areas of responsibility:-

- (a) determining the policy of the council and giving it political leadership;
- (b) monitoring and reviewing the performance of the council in implementing that policy and delivering services;
- (c) representing the council externally; and
- (d) acting as advocates on behalf of their wards.

2.3 It is not the role of Councillors to involve themselves in the day-to-day management of the council's services.

2.4 The role of Staff is to give advice and information to Councillors and to implement the policies resolved by the council.

2.5 In giving such advice to Councillors, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the Officer to express his own professional views and recommendations. Whilst an Officer may report the views of individual Councillors on an issue, if the Councillor wishes to express a contrary view he should not seek to pressure the Officer to make a recommendation contrary to the Officer's professional view.

2.6 Certain Staff (i.e. the Proper Officer and the Section 151 Officer) have responsibilities in law over and above their obligations to the council and to individual Councillors. Councillors must respect these obligations, must not obstruct Staff in the discharge of these responsibilities, and must not victimise Staff for discharging these responsibilities.

3. Expectations

3.1 Councillors can expect from Staff:-

- (a) A commitment to the council as a whole, and not to any political group.
- (b) A working partnership.
- (c) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures.
- (d) Timely response to enquiries and complaints.
- (e) Professional advice, not influenced by political views or preference, which does not compromise the political neutrality of Staff.
- (f) Regular, up to date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities that they have and positions that they hold.
- (g) Awareness of and sensitivity to the political environment.
- (h) Respect, dignity and courtesy.
- (i) Training and development in order to carry out their role effectively.
- (j) Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality.
- (k) That employees will not use their relationship with Councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly.
- (l) That Staff will at all times comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.
- (m) Support for the role of Councillors as the elected representatives of the council.

3.2 Staff can expect from Councillors:-

- (a) A working partnership.

- (b) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures.
- (c) Political leadership and direction.
- (d) Respect dignity and courtesy.
- (e) Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality.
- (f) Not to be subject to bullying or to be put under undue pressure. Councillors should have regard to the seniority of Staff in determining what are reasonable requests, having regard to the power relationship between Members and Staff, and the potential vulnerability of Staff, particularly at junior level.
- (g) That Councillors will not use their position or relationship with Staff to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly.
- (h) That Councillors will at all times comply with the relevant Code of Conduct.

4. Relations between Councillors and Staff

- 4.1 Mutual respect between Councillors and staff is essential to good local government. Personal relationships or close personal familiarity between individual Councillors and Staff can damage this relationship and prove embarrassing to other Councillors and Staff.
- 4.2 It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety. Councillors and Staff should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct.
- 4.3 Where there is a close relationship, it should be declared by both the Councillor and Officer to the Town Clerk who will treat them as confidential. The Councillor should also advise their Group Leader if applicable.
- 4.4 A close relationship includes any family business or close personal relationships. It is not possible to define exactly the range of relationships that would be considered close or personal. Examples however would include a family or sexual relationship and regular social mixing such as holidays or evening meals together.
- 4.5 In their dealings with staff (especially junior staff) Councillors need to be aware that it is easy for staff to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage. Such feelings can be intensified where Councillors hold an official office such as the Mayor.
- 4.6 A Councillor should not pressure an Officer to do something he is not authorised to do and which is against his professional judgement. A Councillor should also not require an Officer to do something which is outside his normal duties or working hours.
- 4.7 An Officer must not seek to influence a Councillor to do something that may be advantageous to the member of staff personally or professionally or injurious to another Officer. Any approaches of this nature should be reported to the Town Clerk.
- 4.8 No Councillor or Officer shall criticise or otherwise undermine the other at Council or other public meetings.

4.9 Councillors will take no part in the appointment, management or dismissal of staff except through the formal HR Committee process. Nor should they seek to influence in any way the appointment or dismissal of a particular person. Any informal discussions or contacts with staff who are involved in a disciplinary or management procedure must be reported in writing to the Chairman of the HR Committee at the earliest opportunity. (see Annex A)

5. Staff relationships with Mayor, Committee Chairmen and Group Leaders

5.1 It is important that there are close working relationships between senior staff and senior members. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close or appear to be close, so that the ability of a staff member to deal impartially with other Councillors or groups is questioned.

5.2 The Town Clerk is expected to work closely with the Mayor and the Chairmen of the Committees and to meet regularly with them.

5.3 A Councillor should not seek to influence a member of staff to reduce the options or withhold information which should properly be reported to the appropriate Committee.

5.4 Any issues arising relating to such reports that cannot be resolved will be referred to the Town Clerk for resolution. The Town Clerk has the ultimate responsibility for the content of the agenda.

5.5 Staff are accountable to the Town Clerk and whilst Staff should always seek to assist any Councillor, they should not go beyond the limits of whatever authority they have been given by their line manager.

5.6 Prior to the Council and Committee meetings, it is acceptable for the appropriate managers to meet informally with the Mayor or Committee Chairman to discuss matters on the agenda, answer any questions that Councillors have which might improve the running of the meeting and also to enable specific issues to be highlighted for which staff and Councillors may need to prepare. These meetings should be arranged through the Town Clerk and be regarded as confidential meetings.

6. Political Groups

6.1 The operation of political groups is an integral feature of local government, and such political groups have an important part to play in the development of policy. However, most issues at town council level are non-political and members have a duty to consider the facts before deciding on the best way forward.

6.2 Staff serve the Council as a whole and not exclusively any political group, combination of groups or any individual member of the Councils.

6.3 Officer Attendance

(a) Any political group may request the Town Clerk to attend a meeting of the group, consisting of members of the Councils only, to advise on any particular matter relating to the town.

(b) The Town Clerk may decline to attend where he is of the opinion that the particular issue is of such a political nature that it would be inappropriate to attend.

(c) The Town Clerk's advice to political groups will be limited to a statement of material facts and identification of options and the merits and demerits of such options for the council. Advice will not deal with any political implications of the matter or any option, and staff will not make any recommendation to a political group.

(d) Staff will respect the confidentiality of any matter which they hear in the course of attending a political group meeting.

7. When things go wrong

7.1 Procedure for Staff. From time to time the relationship between Councillors and staff may break down or become strained. Whilst it will always be preferable to resolve matters informally, staff must report the issue to the Town Clerk, who will take on the problem if it has not been resolved. In the event of a grievance or complaint being upheld by the Town Clerk, he will usually seek advice from the Monitoring Officer at the District Council on the course of action to be taken. Where the member of staff is concerned about the Town Clerk, the matter should be raised with the Chairman of the HR Committee.

7.2 Procedure for Councillors. In the event that a Councillor is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of a member of staff, the matter should be raised with the Town Clerk. Where the member of staff concerned is Town Clerk, the matter should be raised with the Mayor. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke the Council's Disciplinary Procedure. It is vital that there is no impression of impropriety during disciplinary or management procedures and so Councillors should follow the guidance in Annex A at these times.

8. Councillors in their ward role

8.1 Staff should inform Councillors about major issues concerning the Council and more specifically about issues affecting the wards that Councillors represent.

8.2 Whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the Ward Members should be informed and involved, as appropriate. Similarly whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all the Councillors representing the Ward or Wards affected should as a matter of course, be invited to attend the meeting.

9. Support services

9.1 The only basis on which the Council can lawfully provide support services (e.g. stationery, typing, printing, photocopying, room bookings, etc) to Councillors is to assist them in discharging their role as a member of the Council. Such support services should only be used for Council business. They should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity or for private purposes.

9.2 All Councillors are required to agree to adopt and abide by the Council's Corporate Internet and E-mail Policy.

10. Councillors' access to information and Council documents

10.1 If a Councillor requires information or advice from a member of staff they should approach the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk. It is not usually appropriate for Councillors to deal directly with other members of staff.

10.2 Councillors have a right to inspect any Council document which contains material relating to business which is to be transacted at a Council or Committee meeting of which they are a member. This right extends not only to reports which are to be submitted to that meeting, but to any relevant background papers. This right does not apply to certain documents which disclose exempt information.

10.3 A Councillor does not have a right to request information out of curiosity. They must demonstrate a need to know the contents of a document to enable them to carry out their duties as a Councillor. It is for the Town Clerk to determine whether a Councillor's request for information is justified and can be met from within existing resources.

10.4 Any information provided to a Councillor must only be used for the purpose for which it is provided and a Councillor must never disclose or use any confidential information.

11. Redress and breach of this protocol

11.1 If a Councillor considers that they have not been treated with the proper respect and courtesy or that a member of staff is otherwise in breach of this protocol, they should raise the matter with the Town Clerk.

11.2 If a member of staff has similar concerns about a Councillor, they should raise the matter with the Town Clerk. In such circumstances the Town Clerk will take appropriate action by approaching the individual Councillor or group leader.

Annex A – Sudbury Town Council Guidance for Interaction with Staff during Disciplinary or Management Processes

12.1 When any member of staff is under formal investigation or a management process the Town Clerk will inform members so that they know to avoid getting drawn on the issue. However, this will not be possible at the early stages and members should be alert to the signals that something is of concern and ensure that a third party witness is present.

12.2 When any member of staff is involved in an efficiency or disciplinary process it is especially important that there is no undocumented and witnessed contact between them and individual councillors. Casual conversations in a public place, such as the main office in the Town Hall should not be problematic, but there should be no discussion of the efficiency or disciplinary issue.

12.3 If a member feels that they need to discuss an ongoing efficiency or disciplinary issue with any member of staff who may be concerned, as the subject, witness or colleague, they should email the Chairman of the HR Committee and the Town Clerk in advance explaining why this is necessary.

12.4 The Council acts as a corporate body and one single member or unofficial group of members cannot promise any given outcome to any member of staff. All authority to deal with staff comes from the Full Council and most aspects are delegated to the HR Committee. The only member of the HR Committee who has any authority to act individually is the Chairman and then only in those restricted circumstances specified in the Standing Orders or Committee Terms of Reference.

12.5 Members will wish to act as caring and engaged employers, but must be aware that one-to-one private meetings between council members and council staff are open to serious misinterpretation when there is an ongoing disciplinary or management process.

12.6 If members feel that there is a danger of a casual conversation developing into a discussion that will touch on efficiency or disciplinary issues they should stop the conversation and explain that they will need to have an independent third party to join them as a witness. Even with a third party witness the member should only listen and take notes, not offer any opinion or advice outside that of following the correct process.

12.7 Members should never say anything that could be taken as committing themselves or the council to any given outcome. The following types of support must never be offered;

- “I know that you didn’t do it.”
- “I am on your side whatever happens.”
- “You will not be punished.” (e.g., given a written warning or dismissed)
- Any physical contact. (e.g., a hug or a shoulder to cry on)

It is up to the properly constituted committee or panel to determine the outcome in all serious efficiency and disciplinary cases and no member should appear to be operating outside this process.

12.8 If the Chair of the HR Committee or the Town Clerk are themselves the subjects of any investigation, then the Mayor or the Deputy Town Clerk should be contacted in their place.



Sudbury Town Council

Public Art Policy

Introduction

1. Sudbury Town Council may not have direct control over any of the potential sites for public art installations and displays in Sudbury but would hope to be consulted on all significant projects.

Timescale

2. Where the Town Council is asked to provide support or approval for public art installations or displays in Sudbury, the body proposing the work should apply at least 2 months in advance to allow time for consideration as follows;

3. Two weeks (1st and 2nd weeks of the month) for the council officers to assess the project and identify any approvals that might be required (e.g., Suffolk Highways, Common Lands Charity, planning permission)

4. Published on the agenda for the Leisure and Environment Committee in the 3rd week for their consideration in the last week of the month.

5. Recommendations from the Leisure and Environment Committee will go forward to the next full council in the 2nd week of the following month, with any necessary facts checked by the council officers.

6. A minimum two weeks for public notification and any preparation of the site.

Information to be Provided

7. The location.

8. Details of the design and the size of the work, with drawings where appropriate and any application for planning permission if required.

9. The dates for installation and removal of the work

10. The dates for the display of the work

11. Details of any public opening or event in the vicinity of the work

12. Contact details for the artist and project leader

13. Details of insurance for the project



Sudbury Town Council

Training and Development Policy

Introduction

1. Sudbury Town Council is committed to providing effective training and development for all councillors, staff and volunteers to ensure that they are fully prepared for their respective roles and that they keep up to date with all changes in legislation or best practice.
2. Sudbury Town Council's four-year strategic business plan will set the context for the training plan in order to align the personal development needs of individuals with the work required by the council. This will be achieved through a training needs analysis process, run by the Deputy Town Clerk.
3. An annual review of the training needs analysis will feed the budget process to ensure that the necessary resources of finance and time have been allocated. As the structure of the earmarked reserves (EMR) is transformed, it may be beneficial to develop an EMR dedicated to training to even-out the fluctuations between years.
4. Sudbury Town Council is mindful of both its legal and moral duties to ensure that councillors, staff and volunteers are properly trained for their roles. This will ensure that vital council services are delivered in accordance with current legislation and in the most cost-effective manner. It is also important that all councillors and staff embrace the spirit of continuous professional development during their time with the council. Through this process, Sudbury residents will be reassured that they are getting the best possible service from their council.
5. Each councillor and each member of staff will have a personal development plan drawn up in consultation with the Deputy Town Clerk which will identify what induction programmes, internal training events and externally run courses are required for their specific situation. These will be prioritised to ensure that there is a realistic balance between the time available, the dates of external courses and the funding allocated. All councillors and staff are encouraged to 'take ownership' of their own continuous professional development and to work with the Deputy Town Clerk to tailor it to their needs.
6. Prospective councillors and applicants for posts in the Town Hall should be made aware of the content of this policy and the expectation that they will engage in the training process.