

**MINUTES of the ASSETS & SERVICES COMMITTEE meeting held at Town Hall, Felixstowe on Wednesday 20 November 2024 at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllr D Rowe (Chairman)  
Cllr M James (Vice Chairman) Cllr B Price  
Cllr M Morris Cllr M Sharman  
Cllr S Harkin Cllr W Underwood

**OFFICERS:** Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)  
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Mrs J Smith (Assets & Services Officer)  
Mr T Minns (Grounds & Maintenance Manager)

**283. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None.

**284. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from **Cllr D Aitchison** and **Cllr N Barber**.

**285. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Other Registerable Interests, to which no matters on the agenda were directly related, were noted:

<b>Member(s)</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
Cllr S Harkin	All	Other registerable interests (as an employee of East Suffolk Council)

**Cllr S Harkin declared an Other Registerable Interest in the annual grant applications (*Minute # 291*) Felixstowe Museum as part of Landguard Trust.**

Members were advised that, should any matters arise in the meeting that directly relate to any of their interests, they should make appropriate declarations at that time.

**286. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Assets & Services Committee Meeting held on 18 September 2024 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

## **287. ASSETS & SERVICES BUDGET REPORT**

The Committee reviewed the income and expenditure against the budget up to 15 November 2024.

Following a comment on the wedding hire income a suggestion was made to actively promote the Town Hall's wedding facilities, including further photography and improvements to the website.

A query was raised about the status of the telecoms mast licence review. The Town Clerk confirmed that the Council was awaiting feedback from the surveyors, who were in the process of investigating.

**It was RESOLVED that the Budget Report to 15 November 2024 be received and noted.**

## **288. TOWN HALL UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report on the Town Hall, including maintenance requirements and quotes received for damp repairs. Members discussed the importance of addressing identified issues proactively to prevent further deterioration.

The need for repointing the Town Hall building was highlighted, particularly given the accelerated deterioration caused by exposure to sea air. Members emphasised the importance of ensuring long-term resilience of the building.

In response to a query, The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that Quote 3 included the replacement of electrical sockets and skirting. Members supported this quote, noting its more holistic approach to resolving the underlying issues.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that scaffolding installations for the works would be planned to avoid any disruption to scheduled weddings. The Town Clerk advised that approximately £19,500 was available in the Town Hall's Earmarked Reserve to fund the proposed works.

**Following further discussion and consideration of the three quotes and options received, it was RESOLVED that:**

- i. The company who had refurbished the windows last year be appointed to carry out repointing, scaffolding and internal works to remedy damp at a cost of £17,345 +VAT to be financed via the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve; and,**
- ii. the scaffolding installation be planned around scheduled weddings.**

## **289. WALTON COMMUNITY HALL**

Committee discussed the current status and future maintenance needs of Walton Community Hall, including its financial position, roof condition, and plans for solar panel installation.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that Orwell Housing had confirmed that Walton Community Hall's roof had a 30-year guarantee, with a 25 year guarantee on the foam insulation attached to the back of the tiles. There is no felt on the roof. Members emphasised the importance of adhering to the roof guarantee terms, with further information required before proceeding with any roof-related work. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Orwell Housing might not support unnecessary roof work.

The Earmarked Reserve balance for Walton Community Hall is currently approximately £73,000

Members discussed contractor quotes for potential works, with some expressing trust in the current contractor, while others suggested further clarity on the roof's condition and guarantee terms before deciding. Concerns were raised about whether installing solar panels might invalidate the guarantee, and members agreed to seek confirmation via Orwell Housing.

The Committee also noted the approaching deadline for a related grant application. Members agreed that submitting the application, even in the absence of confirmed plans, was prudent to ensure potential funding for future works.

Reprofiling Earmarked Reserves: It was noted that the earmarked reserves may need to be reprofiled within the 2025/26 draft budget. This could involve reallocating funds from other reserves, such as Walton Community Hall (WCH) or Broadway House (BH), to support the Town Hall project. This recommendation will be presented to the Finance & Governance Committee and Full Council for consideration.

**It was RESOLVED that:**

- i. Further investigations be undertaken to confirm the condition of the roof, the terms of the roof guarantee, and whether solar panel installation would impact the guarantee; and,**
- ii. a grant application be submitted to secure potential funding for future works at Walton Community Hall; and,**
- iii. the re-profiling of Earmarked Reserves to support Town Hall projects be referred to the Finance & Governance Committee and Full Council for consideration within the 2025/26 budget process.**

## **290. ALLOTMENT UPDATE REPORT**

The Assets & Services Officer gave an update on current allotment occupancy.

**It was RESOLVED that the Allotment update report be noted.**

## **291. ALLENBY PARK GATES**

The Grounds and Maintenance Manager presented an update on the Allenby Park Gates. Comments from the Felixstowe Society regarding the historical significance of the gates were shared, alongside a report by David Gledhill detailing the historical value.

Committee discussed whether to pursue refurbishment or replacement of the gates, noting that the work was not time-sensitive and additional information could be sought. Options considered included full refurbishment, display of the existing gates if deemed beyond repair, or replacement with design modifications, such as smaller crests on either gate.

Following a discussion, it was suggested that consultation with the Conservation Officer at East Suffolk Council might provide clarity on the feasibility of refurbishment. Some Members expressed concerns over potential delays to the project, while others highlighted the importance of maintaining historical integrity.

**It was RESOLVED that**

- i. a second opinion on repair options be sought from blacksmiths suggested by The Felixstowe Society and Felixstowe Museum; and,**
- ii. the Conservation Officer at East Suffolk Council be consulted regarding the feasibility of refurbishment.**

## **292. DRAFT BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS 2025 - 2026**

Committee considered first draft proposals for its element of the Council's 2025-2026 budget and reviewed the accompanying notes to the estimates in the report. Discussions included the renewal of the wedding licence and its associated costs, and plans for the electric vehicle lease.

**It was RESOLVED that the draft proposals for the Assets & Services element of the Council's 2025-26 budget be recommended as presented to Council's Finance & General Purposes for further consideration.**

## **293. CLOSURE**

The meeting was closed at 8.28pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 19 February 2025 at 7.30pm.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_