

MINUTES of the ASSETS & SERVICES COMMITTEE meeting held at Town Hall, Felixstowe on Wednesday 19 February 2024 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr D Rowe (Chairman) Cllr S Harkin
Cllr M James (Vice Chairman) Cllr M Morris
Cllr D Aitchison Cllr B Price
Cllr N Barber Cllr M Sharman

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

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the public.

408. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chairman of Felixstowe Old People's Welfare Association (Broadway House) addressed the Committee regarding Item 7 on the agenda. He raised concerns about replacing the gas boiler with a low-carbon alternative, highlighting the importance of Broadway House as a 'warm space' and the potential disruption such a change might cause.

The FOPWA Chairman also requested that the automatic door push button include an override function for use during the summer months.

409. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from **Cllr W Underwood**.

410. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

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

Members were reminded that if any matters directly related to their interests arose during the meeting, they should declare them at the appropriate time.

411. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Assets & Services Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2024 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

412. ASSETS & SERVICES BUDGET REPORT

The Committee reviewed income and expenditure against the budget as of 14 February 2024.

A discussion took place regarding the variance in budgeted salaries between Broadway House and Walton Community Hall. It was queried whether this was due to variations in working hours. The Town Clerk clarified that the salaries were apportioned based on an anticipated number of hours attended at each site, with the majority being undertaken at Broadway House.

Concerns were raised regarding a reduction in Town Hall income from leases, rent, and licenses. Suggestions included increasing the promotion of wedding services and exploring potential revenue from mini-conferences and seminar facilities. The Town Clerk noted that other councils, such as Woodbridge Town Council, had successfully obtained grant funding for a website update and that a similar approach could be considered for Felixstowe.

Outstanding invoices were discussed, with confirmation that officers were actively pursuing payment of those overdue.

A review of aged debts and the invoicing process would be presented at the next Finance & Governance Committee meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the Budget Report to 14 February 2024 be received and noted.

413. TOWN HALL PASSENGER LIFT

The Committee considered a report on the Town Hall passenger lift, which included a proposal to replace the lift motor due to excessive noise and potential failure risks. The Town Clerk explained that while the lift remained operational, the issue had been flagged as requiring attention. Members discussed the feasibility of reconditioning the motor but agreed that ensuring the lift remained reliable was a priority.

It was RESOLVED that the passenger lift motor be replaced at a cost of £3,482 + VAT, to be funded via the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve.

Note: As this expenditure exceeds the £20,000 threshold allocated from the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve, further approval will be sought at the next Full Council meeting.

414. BROADWAY HOUSE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

Committee considered the need to replace the gas boiler at Broadway House, which was over 24 years old and frequently malfunctioning. Discussion took place over the merits of replacing it with a like-for-like gas boiler versus exploring a low-carbon alternative, such as air-source heat pumps or solar panels. Concerns were raised regarding the high costs of installing renewable energy

solutions and their current feasibility for this location. It was noted that, although a like-for-like gas boiler replacement would still be an improvement in energy efficiency, a long-term review of sustainability options should continue.

The proposed installation of a push-button system for the automatic front doors was also considered. Members agreed that the system should include an override function to allow the doors to remain open during the summer months.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. company B be appointed to carry out the boiler replacement at a cost of £3,055.46 + VAT, to be funded via the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve;**
- ii. further investigations into solar panel installation and other low-carbon alternatives be undertaken; and**
- iii. The push-button door system be installed at a cost of £541.41 + VAT, to be funded via the Broadway House Earmarked Reserve, subject to confirmation that the override function is included.**

415. CEMETERY SHOWER AND DRYING ROOM

The Grounds & Maintenance Manager presented a proposal to convert an existing toilet at the cemetery into a shower and drying room for staff. This facility would enable staff to wash off mud and hazardous substances on-site and provide a dedicated space for drying wet coats and boots, supporting staff well-being.

Members were informed that the existing Ladies' toilet could be repurposed while still maintaining two toilets for public use, making these unisex, with upgraded hand dryers to address visitor concerns.

Committee agreed on the importance of the facility in improving staff welfare and ensuring practical working conditions.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. Committee approve the works, with a maximum expenditure of £4,000, subject to obtaining competitive quotes to be funded from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve; and,**
- ii. that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to progress the procurement of the works**

416. CEMETERY EXTENSION PROJECT

The Town Clerk presented an update on the Cemetery Extension Project.

Committee discussed the notice period required for allotment tenants and the Scouts occupying the site to vacate. The feasibility of constructing a chapel of

rest or a multi-use facility was also considered, given the limited availability of non-denominational service areas in Felixstowe.

Committee acknowledged the impact on the Scouts and the group's need for secure storage facilities was also highlighted as being a factor in any consideration of potential relocation options.

Additionally, it was noted that a budget plan would need to be developed to cover the associated costs.

Committee approved the outlined next steps and agreed to proceed with issuing formal notices, engaging in planning discussions, and conducting cost assessments. Further discussions will be required to support the relocation of the Scouts and its associated facilities.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. One year's notice to vacate be issued to current allotment tenants in accordance with the terms of their tenancy agreement**
- ii. two-year notice to vacate be issued to the Scouts, ensuring sufficient time for relocation arrangements; and,**
- iii. a budget plan be developed to outline financial implications, including construction and infrastructure costs.**

417. ALLOTMENT UPDATE REPORT

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

It was RESOLVED that the Allotment update report be noted.

418. ALLENBY PARK GATES

The Grounds & Maintenance Manager provided an update on the restoration of the Allenby Park Gates.

Members considered the long-term maintenance implications of restoration versus replacement with galvanised steel. Security concerns regarding the removal of the gates for off-site restoration were also discussed, and it was agreed that temporary fencing would be installed if required.

Additionally, it was agreed that signage would be placed to inform the public about the refurbishment.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the company providing the restoration quote be appointed to carry out the works;**

- ii. **security fencing be installed if issue arise during the removal process;**
- iii. **the Allenby coat of arms be incorporated into the design; and,**
- iv. **signage be placed in the park to inform residents about the refurbishment works.**

419. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 8.25pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 23 April 2025 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____