

MINUTES of the ASSETS & SERVICES COMMITTEE meeting held at Town Hall, Felixstowe on Wednesday 19 November 2025 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr D Rowe (Chairman) Cllr S Harkin
Cllr M James (Vice Chairman) Cllr M Sharman
Cllr D Aitchison Cllr W Underwood

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

IN ATTENDANCE: 2 Members of the public (in person)
1 member of the public (via Zoom)
Mr N Farthing, Felixstowe Allotment Association

277. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

In respect of bonfires, a member of the public – a resident of Trelawny Place – called on the Council to extend the seasonal ban on bonfires to year-round, citing concerns over the lack of control over, environmental concerns, the risk to health, quality of life, air quality, loss of habitat, and other related nuisances, as well as the increased risk of fire spreading.

278. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr N Barber**, **Cllr B Price** and **Cllr M Morris**.

279. 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)
Cllr D Rowe	#282	Other registerable interests (as a Director of Level Two which has an allotment)
Cllr D Aitchison	#282	Other registerable interests (as a Director of Level Two which has an allotment)

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

280. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Assets & Services Committee Meeting held on 17 September 2025 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

281. ASSETS & SERVICES BUDGET REPORT

The Committee reviewed income and expenditure against the budget as of 14 November 2025.

On a question on Town Hall hire, clarification was given that all rooms suitable for licensing are currently licensed, though the duration of the Santander tenancy remained unconfirmed. It was noted that the availability of day-use rooms limited their suitability for longer-term leasing.

It was RESOLVED that the Budget Report to 14 November 2025 be received and noted.

282. ALLOTMENTS UPDATE REPORT

Committee received the Allotment update report.

A discussion took place regarding the bonfire policy, including enforcement challenges, the impact on residents, and issues arising when bonfires resumed after the seasonal restriction. Members considered the need to balance allotment waste disposal with the concerns of neighbouring residents.

A representative of the Felixstowe Allotment Association addressed the Committee, acknowledging the concerns raised while emphasising the tradition and practical need for burning waste that cannot be composted. It was noted that some misuse of bonfires occurs when inappropriate materials are brought to the sites.

Members emphasised the importance of ensuring tenants are fully aware of the bonfire policy. It was noted that the policy is published on the Council's website, the allotment regulations outline the seasonal restrictions, and the annual letter to all tenants includes a reminder of the restrictions and the Bonfire policy, with a link to the full document online and an option to request a hard copy from the Town Hall.

Committee agreed that tenant awareness should be strengthened further.

Committee discussed potential adjustments to the current policy and agreed that controlled bonfires should continue under tighter conditions.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Allotment update report be noted;**

- ii. with effect from January 2026, bonfires be permitted only between the 1st and 7th of the months from October to May, subject to existing rules, and only when using incinerators;
- iii. the new regulations be communicated to all tenants, with the Felixstowe Allotment Association to include the information in its January newsletter;
- iv. that a copy of the bonfire policy be included in all new tenant welcome packs, in addition to the existing reminders provided annually and through the Council's website, and;
- v. the new Bonfire policy to be reviewed after 12 months and reported back to Committee.

283. TOWN HALL UPDATE REPORT

Committee considered the update on essential works relating to the emergency exit door and the replacement radiator.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Town Hall update report be noted, and;
- ii. the cost of £350 for the replacement FD30 fire-rated emergency exit door be met from the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve, and;
- iii. the cost of £250 + VAT for the replacement radiator and valves in the Magistrates' Room also be met from the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve.

284. ALLENBY PARK GATES - REFURBISHMENT UPDATE

Committee received a further update on the significantly delayed project. Members discussed the lack of progress, missed deadlines, uncertainty surrounding the condition and location of the railings, and concerns regarding overall workmanship and communication. Options considered included giving a final deadline, engaging an alternative contractor, and exploring legal remedies. It was noted that partial payment had been made and that outstanding works remained substantial.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. that no further payments be made and the contractor be given a final deadline of 5 December 2025 to install or return the outstanding railings, and;
- ii. that the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of Assets & Services, be authorised to seek advice on potential legal action to recover costs and assets if the works are not completed or the railings not returned by the deadline.

285. CEMETERY UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received a report on the proposed removal of a large, dying cherry tree. In response to a query regarding the need for planning permission, it was clarified that none would be required, as the Cemetery is not located within a conservation area and the tree is not subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

It was RESOLVED that Company 2 be appointed to remove the tree at a cost of £750, to be met from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve.

286. CEMETERY EXTENSION UPDATE

Committee considered proposals for the hydrological risk assessment and agreed that a Tier 2 assessment should be undertaken.

Members also reviewed the proposed installation of removable bollards to prevent through-traffic on Cemetery Road, while maintaining access for visitors and staff. Clarification was given on the design and location, and that existing hedging and planned tree planting would reduce the risk of vehicles circumventing the barrier.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. Company 2 be engaged to undertake a Tier 2 hydrological risk assessment at a cost of £4,695 + VAT, to be funded from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve; and,**
- ii. removable bollards be installed on Cemetery Road at a cost of £347.26 + VAT, also to be funded from the Cemetery Earmarked Reserve.**

287. LGR AND LOCAL ASSETS

Committee received an update on recent Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) briefings and discussed forming a Working Group to consider potential local asset and service transfers.

It was confirmed that a list of relevant assets was available for Members who had not attended the earlier workshop.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the update be noted; and,**
- ii. a politically proportionate 'LGR and Local Assets' Working Group of five Members be formed, with no Members who also serve on East Suffolk Council or Suffolk County Council, comprising of Cllr D Rowe (Chair), Cllr D Aitchison, Cllr N Barber, Cllr M James and Cllr W Underwood.**

288. DRAFT BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS 2026-27

Committee considered first draft proposals for its element of the Council's 2026-2027 budget and reviewed the accompanying notes to the estimates in the report.

It was RESOLVED that the draft proposals for the Assets & Services element of the Council's 2026-27 budget be recommended as presented to Council's Finance & General Purposes for further consideration.

289. GRIT BINS

Committee received the report on grit bins and noted the request for a new grit bin at the junction of Ferry Road and Cliff Road. Clarification was given that any request must be submitted by the Town Council, regardless of who funds the purchase.

A brief discussion took place regarding funding options. It was noted that Cllr S Wiles had indicated he would be willing to fund the cost through his locality budget, and the Committee agreed that this should be the preferred approach.

A query regarding an icy private alleyway near the library was noted, with advice given that the library may be willing to hold supplies of grit and that the matter could be raised with County Councillors.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. that the Grit Bins report be noted, and;**
- ii. that the request for a grit bin at the junction of Ferry Road and Cliff Road (opposite the golf club) be approved, and;**
- iii. that the Town Council submit the required application to Suffolk Highways and that the grit bin be funded through Cllr S Wiles' locality budget.**

290. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.09pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____