

**SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL HELD VIA VIDEO  
TELECONFERENCE ON TUESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.00PM**

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Present: Mr J Owen Mayor of Sudbury, in the CHAIR.

Mrs J Antill	Ms E Murphy
Mrs S Ayres	Mr A Osborne
Mr N Bennett	Mrs J Osborne
Mr T Cresswell	Miss A Owen
Ms L Fowler	Mr R Spivey
Mr S Hall	

Mr C Griffin	Town Clerk
Mrs J Budd	Deputy Town Clerk
Mr T Morelli	Petition Organiser

**1     APOLOGIES**

**Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors O Forder, J Sayers and County Councillor C Spence.**

**Councillor D Williams was absent but no apologies had been received.**

**2     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**In accordance with guidance from Babergh District Council's Standards Committee, Mrs S Ayres, Mr T Cresswell, Mr A Osborne, Mrs J Osborne, and Miss A Owen declared that they were Babergh District Councillors. Mr Owen declared that he was a Suffolk County Councillor. Mr and Mrs Osborne asked that it be noted that their views expressed at this meeting would be based on information available at the time and might not be the same as those expressed at meetings involving other councils.**

**3     DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

**No declarations were received.**

**4     REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

**No requests for dispensation had been received.**

**5     PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.**

6 REPORTS

- a) County Councillors' reports – Councillor J Owen gave a summary of his report.

A copy of Councillor Owen's report is shown at minute page 89.

A copy of Councillor Spence's report is shown at minute page 91.

**RESOLVED**

**That Councillors C Spence and J Owen be thanked for their reports.**

- b) District Councillor's report - Councillor Cresswell gave the District Councillor's report.  
A copy of the report is shown at minute page 105.

**RESOLVED**

**That Councillor Cresswell be thanked for his report.**

- c) Policing Report: The Town Clerk briefly summarised the latest meeting that had been held with Inspector Horton; the local inspector for Sudbury Town. The detailed technical discussions on the new CCTV cameras were in progress. Future meetings will be held between the Town Council and the Police to agree the best locations for the new cameras.

- d) Public Forum – Via live link members of the public were able to type questions pertaining to Sudbury.

One question was asked regarding how charities apply to receive funding from Councillors Locality budget.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Deputy Town Clerk forward all the necessary details.**

7 TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

Planning & Development  
4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT**

Planning & Development  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT**

Leisure, Environment & Highways  
26<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT**

Human Resources  
1<sup>st</sup> December 2020

**It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT**

Human Resources  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

**It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT**

Finance  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

**It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the REPORT**

**8      RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Members were requested to review the Risk Management Strategy.

It was felt that risk analysis would benefit from being expanded to show the full likelihood versus impact in a 5 x 5 matrix and that this should be discussed by the Policy and Resources committee.

**RESOLVED**

**That Full Council approval of the Risk Management Strategy would be deferred until the March Full Council meeting to provide sufficient time for the Policy and Resources Committee to study and discuss the expanded analysis.**

**9      BELLE VUE**

Councillor Spivey advised members that the Belle Vue working group had produced a report detailing the findings of their investigations relating to the proposed sale of Belle Vue House and the old Swimming Pool site. A copy of the report is shown at minute page 106.

The Leisure and Environment Committee had recommended the following motions:

- The Committee appreciates BDC's proposal to build a new entrance for the park. However members feel that the whole of the existing swimming pool site should be utilised for the entrance to the park in order to ensure an attractive green sight line from King Street.
- The Committee also believes that any new development on the Belle Vue site should incorporate the existing structure of Belle Vue, but in any event the development should be sensitive and not add to the existing building mass.

**RESOLVED**

**That these motions recommended by the Leisure and Environment Committee be adopted as Sudbury Town Council policy, and that Babergh District Councillors be encouraged to work with their colleagues on the District Council to deliver these outcomes.**

**That the report be published on the website and social media platforms.**

**That Councillor Spivey and the working group be thanked for producing such an in depth report.**

***The resolution above was a recorded vote as follows:***

***Councillors: Mrs Antill, Mrs Ayres, Mr Bennett, Mr Cresswell, Ms Fowler, Mr Hall, Ms Murphy, Mr Osborne, Miss Owen, Mr Owen and Mr Spivey supported the motion.***

***Councillor Mrs Osborne abstained.***

**10      CHARGING IN CAR PARKS**

The Cabinet of Babergh District Council had made the decision the previous Thursday to introduce parking charges in Sudbury, despite many objections including a joint letter from the Mayors of both Sudbury and Hadleigh.

Members were very disappointed with this decision especially when the Country is still in the midst of a pandemic. High Street shops would need all the support they could get once released from lockdown. The introduction of parking charges was very insensitive and appeared to be very damaging to the town centre, especially the independent retail sector.

At the previous Leisure and Environment Committee members had requested that the Town Clerk investigate the feasibility of the Town Council taking over the running of the car parks themselves. The Town Clerk confirmed that discussions had begun and that the initial financial figures showed that most of the current costs of running the car parks in Sudbury came from the business rates paid to Babergh District Council.

**RESOLVED**

**That this matter be discussed again at the next meeting.**

11 ADVICE CENTRE UPDATE

The Town Clerk advised that all three members of staff have been offered a transfer to Babergh District Council under TUPE. The consultation with the staff will run throughout February.

Members voiced concerns on how the new service will be monitored to ensure the high level of customer service required continues.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Town Clerk be thanked for the update.**

12 PETITION REJECTION

Mr T Morelli attended the meeting to discuss with members the issues relating to a petition. Mr Morelli had taken the time to obtain over 1,600 names on a petition opposing the closure of the Customer Access Point, the sale of Belle Vue House and the introduction of parking charges. This petition was deemed unacceptable by the Monitoring Officer at Babergh as it:

*‘failed to reach 20 validated signatures and addresses your petition has no recognised petition status and the Council has not been able to deal with it through the petitions process’*

Babergh’s Overview and Scrutiny committee were due to meet to discuss the handling of Mr Morelli’s petition, however it was believed that this would only consider be the actual validation process, not the substance of the petition.

**RESOLVED**

**That Mr Morelli be thanked for attending the meeting and for taking the time to produce such a detailed petition.**

**The outcome of the Babergh District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee review would be discussed at the next Leisure and Environment Committee.**

13 CENSUS 2021

The Town Clerk advised members that he had been approached by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to assist with the Census 2021. The Town Council were asked to be a support centre for the members of public who were unable, or not confident enough, to fill out the questionnaire online.

The reason for this last minute request for support was that the ONS had not realised until very late on that within Babergh there was a large area around Sudbury without a local support centre. As the accuracy of the census data is extremely important in designing local services for the next 10 years, the Town Clerk had accepted the request.

The Town Council will provide the equivalent of one member of staff for up to 35 hours per week, during normal office hours over the census period, 1<sup>st</sup> March to 9<sup>th</sup> May, including Census Day itself on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March. The majority of this will be conducted by the current Customer Access Point staff as part of their normal daily activities in March. Other members of staff are also being trained to ensure full flexibility and that support continues for those who have not completed their return by Census Day.

The Town Council will receive just over £5,000 to undertake this project.

**RESOLVED**

**That members fully support this proposal.**

14 GRANT AID REQUEST

The Finance committee recommended to Full Council the approval of a grant aid request to support a project by The Hive to purchase the former United Reformed Church (URC) buildings in School Street, Sudbury and to convert them into a multi-use community hub.

**RESOLVED**

**Members approved, under the General Power of Competence, a grant of £10,000 to the Hive on condition that the URC buildings are purchased by the Hive and that the funds will not be released until the contract is complete.**

15 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor did not have anything to report other than a request to members to begin consideration of appropriate nominations for the roles of Mayor and Deputy Mayor 2021/22.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 9pm

Chairman.....

County Council report to the February 2021 Town Council MeetingTuesday, 9 February 2021

Dear Colleagues

### Coronavirus in Suffolk

At the time of writing 86% of over 80s have received their first Jab in Suffolk which was up from 71% the previous week, in Babergh the daily reported cases is 8 which is the lowest recorded rate in Suffolk. 16 People tested positive in Sudbury in the 7 days leading up to the 30 January which is well below the average in Suffolk and the UK.

### Road resurfacing in Sudbury

A list of roads scheduled for resurfacing see below, half of Gregory Street has already been resurfaced, weather permitting the other half should be completed soon, in red have already been completed, in blue should be completed over the next couple of months weather permitting.

Scheme Ref Work Type Road Name Proposed Construction Start Date 5303 Machine Surfacing ADDISON ROAD 01 July 2020 5190 Machine Surfacing GAOL LANE 04 August 2020 5184 Machine Surfacing GIRLING STREET 11 August 2020 5188 Machine Surfacing BEACONSFIELD ROAD 30 October 2020 5189 Machine Surfacing CATS LANE 03 November 2020 5187 Machine Surfacing GREGORY STREET 06 February 2021 5185 Machine Surfacing KING STREET 22 February 2021 5186 Machine Surfacing EAST STREET 23 February 2021 5234 Machine Surfacing NORTHERN ROAD 08 March 2021 5600 Machine Surfacing BALLINGDON HILL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE 23 April 2021.

The two Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) are now up and running with one on the Newton Road just prior to Cats Lane and the other on Waldingfield Road, they will remain in those locations until February 15. They are capable of collecting quite a lot of data, i.e. vehicle speed, vehicle details, the number of vehicles passing etc. Councillors will be able to access this information via the Town Hall staff. After the data has been collected, one will go back into Newton Road and the other in Melford Road, I have asked for one to be placed in Cross Street and/or Ballingdon Street as there has been a number of complaints from people living in those locations, their location depends on there being a suitable lamp post for them to be attached to as they are a fairly bulky item.

The problem of HGVs using Station Road to navigate the junction with Friars Street is still unresolved, I have been onto the Highways Safety Team and spoken to an Engineer in an attempt to resolve it, but at the time of writing it is yet unresolved.

The first stage of trying to sort out the parking on the grass verge in Cats Lane has been sorted, bore holes into the surface identified for off road parking to ensure that no utilities beneath the surface would not be damaged by putting a hard surface for cars to park on to avoid them parking on the grass areas. The next stage will be to lay a suitable surface for the vehicles to park off road, if that takes as long as the first stage then it will be for someone else to resolve.

The 2021-22 Budget will be put before the full Council on Thursday, a requirement of £479,642,643 will be needed resulting in a 3.99% Council Tax increase equating to £53.55 rise for a Band D property from £1343.61 to £1397.16 in 2021-22.

### Locality Fund

[Sudbury Dramatic Society](#)

[Hive](#)-towards purchase of former United reform church

[Woodhall School](#)-purchase of outdoor equipment & clothing

[Hive](#)- Food Parcels

There are a few more in the pipeline.

Jack Owen County Cllr

# January 2021 Monthly Town/Parish Newsletter



**HANDS** **FACE** **SPACE**

**#StickWithItSuffolk**

Visit [suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus) for health advice, service changes, business support and schools' guidance.

Keep up to date on the latest guidance on Covid-19 from central government here: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Have your say on the Post-16 Travel policy for 2021/2022

On 7 January, the council announced it is seeking views on its proposed Post-16 Travel Policy for the 2021/2022 school year.

The consultation will be open until the 15 February 2021 for people to have their say on the proposed changes. The amendments are designed to ensure that the policy is clearer for parents/carers and students to understand what travel options there are for travelling to sixth form, college or Post-16 education.

The council's proposals for the policy are currently:

1. Make the annual increase to the charge of Post-16 travel and the cost of a spare seat as previously agreed by Suffolk County Council's (SCC) Cabinet on 19 June 2018.



2. Consider how we might align the Post-16 policy to the School Travel (5-16) policy to support students to attend their nearest Suffolk school sixth form even when they live nearer to a school sixth form outside of the county.
3. Enable a student to continue to attend their Transport Priority Area School when transport had been protected under the School Travel Policy for 5-16 year olds in September 2019 assuming that they meet the necessary criteria.
4. Clarify Suffolk County Council's Independent Travel Training scheme.

**Councillor Mary Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills said:**

"I would like to encourage parents, carers and students themselves to take part in the consultation and have their say on the proposed Post-16 Travel Policy. The consultation will be open until the 15 February and we want to hear from as many people as possible during this time."

## **Coronavirus rapid testing centre opens at University of Suffolk**

On the 13 January A new Covid-19 rapid testing centre has opened at University of Suffolk for people without symptoms in Suffolk.

The centre, based at the former Profiles gym at the University of Suffolk in Ipswich, provides lateral flow testing, with results delivered in under an hour.

The tests (LFTs) are most useful at identifying people who are infectious on the day of the test but not showing symptoms.

The centre has been opened by Suffolk County Council (SCC) in partnership with the University of Suffolk. Testing is for anyone working in the town who cannot work from home.

Also targeted are employers and organisations in Ipswich whose staff cannot work from home. They are being urged to block-book their workforce in for tests.

However, people showing symptoms of Covid-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has, should not visit the centre – instead they should ring 119 or go to the NHS website to book a test at one of the 12 symptomatic testing sites in Suffolk.

The centre began operating on January 4 testing teachers, university students, school pupils and support staff.

The test involves taking a swab from the throat and nose to see whether coronavirus is present in the body. The person tested will then receive a text message giving the result within an hour.

Anyone giving a:

- **positive test** will be told to self-isolate and advised on what to do next, including the need for further testing.
- **negative result** is invited back to carry out a further test after a few days. This is in case levels of the virus in a person at the earlier test were too low to be detected at that time.

The testing is being run by contractors Commisceo on behalf of SCC through government funding.

**Councillor Matthew Hicks, chair of the Local Outbreak Board said:**

“The test is another important tool in tackling the virus whilst the vaccine is being rolled out as it can help prevent the spread from people who are infected but do not have symptoms.

“This is important as up to 1 in 3 people who have coronavirus never show any symptoms but may still be infectious.”

## **New vehicle banners encourage Suffolk to be food and freezer savvy**

On January 18, it was announced that Waste and recycling vehicles in Suffolk will help to deliver the food savvy message and cut food waste across the county.

Over 50,000 tonnes of food is thrown away in Suffolk every year, and an estimated average of £730 of edible food goes to waste per household each year.

The fleet of 24 vehicles display the new banners, which have three simple messages with easy advice for people to follow.

- Bananas – one of the most commonly wasted food items across the UK. You can bake with them or blend them rather than throw them in the bin.
- Bread – another of the most commonly wasted food items. You can freeze or toast bread to prevent it from being wasted.
- Freezing - food storage is key to preventing food waste. Check the dates on your food and remember to freeze it when it is nearly out of date. Bread, bananas, cheese and even milk can all be frozen!

**Councillor James Mallinder, Chair of the Suffolk Waste Partnership, said:**

“Bananas and bread are two of the most commonly wasted foods, and this is a great way to show simple methods of putting them to use instead of throwing them away. Freezing is also a great way to store food for longer and save it from the bin.

“During the current lockdown we are all spending much more time at home, so it is a good time to keep an eye on the food in your kitchen and take some simple steps to reduce food waste and save money.

“Wasted food is a waste of natural resources so by cooking better we will be helping the planet and tackling our climate concerns. The smallest of changes can make a big difference over time.”

## **New home-schooling resource ‘a godsend’**

On the January 19, A new digital resource was launched to help parents and carers build exercise into the daily routines of children being home schooled during lockdown.

Providing information about, and access to, a host of curriculum-based and other popular resources, the resource brings together, in one place, everything parents could need to bring exercise into the home in a fun and engaging way.

Produced as part of the popular Keep Moving Suffolk campaign, it responds to data showing that activity levels of children and young people have fallen significantly during lockdown prompting fears of a long-term impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

**Councillor James Reeder, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention at Suffolk County Council urged parents not to under-estimate the power of exercise on children's education, saying:**

“Besides the obvious health benefits from being active, exercise has a wonderful ability to help and support a child's educational attainment. Not only does it improve their concentration and make them more focused it is proven to improve their readiness to learn. So, by building in regular exercise breaks throughout the day children will be happier, healthier and better equipped to study.”

## **Suffolk 2020 fund project embraces love of the great outdoors – Discovering Suffolk**

On January 20, as part of the Suffolk 2020 fund, the Discovering Suffolk project was launched.

The aim of the project is to raise further awareness of the range of great walking routes, areas of interest and variety of landscapes that form Suffolk's beautiful countryside through public rights of way and points of access.

Given the experiences many people have faced over the last year living through the pandemic, it is recognised that exercise and wellbeing is a fundamental element in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and whilst we continue to live within Government guidelines at present, Suffolk's countryside offers a freely accessible means for many of us to experience nature and stay healthy.

The key element of the Discovering Suffolk project is the development of a smartphone app alongside a range of supporting QR codes fixed to rights of way

signposts located along different routes to promote walking, cycling and exploring Suffolk's countryside.

Discovering Suffolk builds on our changing behaviours when visiting the countryside, as people become ever more interested in local exploration and taking short walks and cycling exercises during the pandemic. The project will continue to promote the Discover Suffolk website as new content, information and advice continues to be added to the current offer, promoting walking routes and cycle rides through local communities. The project seeks to actively engage new audiences who are not aware of the options available on their doorstep or have perhaps only begun to explore the local countryside beyond their neighbourhood.

Work will shortly start on developing the Discovering Suffolk App and setting the sites for the QR code points around the county. After development, the new, free App will provide access to the full range of Discover Suffolk outdoor guides with over 100 walks across the county. The App and QR codes will include audio, video, imagery and fun activities to further enhance people's enjoyment, appreciation and understanding of Suffolk's natural and built environment.

**Cllr Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:**

"As part of our investment this year through the Suffolk 2020 fund, we wanted to find new ways to support and encourage access to our beautiful Suffolk countryside, particularly amongst residents and communities who may have not considered local walks, cycling or exploring public rights of way, close to where they live. I believe this new smartphone App will provide an accessible platform for people to find out what's available and where they can begin to enjoy healthy walks, peaceful spaces and explore nature.

"During these challenging times, we all need to continue to abide by the Government's latest guidance relating to exercising safely within our local communities, keeping to social distancing rules and protecting families and friends. As part of this we can all find ways to enjoy the natural environment and countryside that surrounds us by considering the impact we have on the environment and considering others. At the moment this means staying local to where we live, but in

time as the situation improves, there will be greater opportunity to explore further, as long as we continue to adhere to the guidelines in the short term.”

## **Strong interest shown by Suffolk’s communities to engage with 2020 fund project creating electric vehicle charging points**

On January 21, it was announced the council had received 50 expressions of interest from local communities across the county which want to host new electric vehicle charging points.

This follows the launch of the Suffolk 2020 funded project in September.

Suffolk has long held ambitions to Create the Greenest County and as part of the Suffolk 2020 fund, which is all about investing in community projects to support the council’s climate emergency declaration and improve Suffolk for all residents in years to come, this year £300,000 has been invested into creating 100 fast charging points in rural areas of the county. Reaching 50 expressions of interest so quickly demonstrates great progress for the project and suggests that many communities can see the real benefits in being part of the Plug In Suffolk scheme.

At present, the majority of EV charging points are concentrated in our larger towns such as Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich and Lowestoft, but given the new expressions of interest, it is hoped that new fast charging points can begin to be installed across a range of more rural locations including Beccles, Wilby, Horringer, Orford, Long Melford and Tuddenham St Martin.

The strong interest comes from local Parish Councils and communities who can see the potential benefit in hosting charging points at rural village halls, community buildings, sports clubs and even places of worship besides commercial buildings and shops elsewhere. The council has begun to undertake site surveys and plan for the initial installations that will take place in the coming

weeks. Once installed, each host community takes a share of the income generated by drivers who pay to charge their cars in the locality.

Ultra-low emission vehicle ownership has nearly trebled in the last three years within Suffolk and this is set to continue to grow even faster with Government vehicle initiatives. In total, there are around 422,000 cars licensed in Suffolk, but currently just under 2,500 of these are ultra-low emission cars. With an improved charging network across the county, the council believes this will encourage greater electric vehicle ownership in Suffolk in years to come.

**Councillor Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection at Suffolk County Council, said:**

“This project is a key part of the council’s commitment to addressing the climate emergency that was declared in 2019, getting accessible electric vehicle charging points located across Suffolk to support residents and communities as they make informed choices in the use of greener transport options.

“Encouraging electric vehicle use is one way we can contribute to better air quality, the reduction of carbon emissions and cutting down our reliance on fossil fuels, all of which support the council’s climate emergency declaration and ambition to create the Greenest County.

“By putting the infrastructure in place, I hope we enable more people to choose electric vehicles. With fewer petrol/diesel vehicles on our roads, Suffolk’s air quality improves and we contribute fewer carbon emissions.

“I am very pleased with these initial expressions of interest. It gives me great confidence that we have made the right investment to begin breaking down some of the anxieties and barriers residents may have about owning an electric vehicle.”

## **Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service praised for its work throughout the pandemic**

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service was recognised nationally for its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was praised for its positive contributions to the local community and commitment to the welfare of its staff.

In August 2020, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was commissioned by the Home Secretary to examine how fire and rescue services are responding to the pandemic.

**In her report, Zoë Billingham, HM Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services, said of Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service:**

“We were impressed with how the service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively. The efficient use of its staff was notable, utilising extra capacity and providing support and resource for remote and home working. It provided support to Suffolk County Council (SCC) and the LRF, including advice, resources and effective command and control frameworks to co-ordinate its response.

“The service communicated well with its staff throughout the pandemic, including issues relating to staff wellbeing. It also made sure all staff had the resources they needed to do their jobs effectively, including extra information and technology, and it put in place additional flexible working arrangements. Staff wellbeing was a clear priority for the service.”

SFRS has continued to respond to emergency calls since the beginning of the pandemic, with over 4,500 emergency calls since the first lockdown was announced in March 2020.

In addition to this, staff across SFRS have been redeployed to support other departments in Suffolk County Council, in response to the pandemic.

These include:

- Providing additional resource to colleagues in the Coroner's Office



- Setting up and administering the first booking system and phonenumber for testing key workers
- In April 2020, around 30 firefighters volunteered and trained to work alongside paramedics to drive frontline emergency NHS ambulances, in turn freeing up paramedics to care for patients
- Teams have also helped deliver food, essential items and medicine as part of the Home But Not Alone scheme

**Dan Fearn, Temporary Chief Fire Officer, said:**

“I am extremely proud of everyone who works for Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service and I would like to thank each and every colleague for their professionalism and commitment to keep the communities of Suffolk safe.

“Fires, road traffic collisions, rescues and flooding have not stopped because there is a global pandemic. All our teams have stepped up by continuing to respond to emergency incidents, whilst supporting our partners and colleagues across Suffolk.

“Like many organisations, we have had to adapt our ways of working so we can continue to operate safely. We continued to safely recruit new members of our fire service team, train and develop our operational crews and, of course, ensure that we are there to help the most vulnerable in the county.

“Over Christmas and the New Year period, our operational crews and officers remained busy. On Christmas Eve and Day, a number of personnel assisted with a major flooding incident in Bungay, some of the worst flooding in the area in 50 years.

“It has been, and continues to be, a very challenging time due to COVID-19. But our teams across Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service are ready to respond to emergency calls and support their communities to overcome the virus. In the coming weeks, personnel will continue to assist the ambulance service and be ready to support our health colleagues where needed.”

**Councillor Richard Rout, Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection at Suffolk County Council, said:**

I'm delighted for every member of Suffolk's Fire and Rescue Service. To be commended by Her Majesty's Inspectorate is what they deserve for going above and beyond their responsibilities, during such professionally and personally testing times.

"It echoes the 'good' rating which the Inspectorate awarded the Service just over a year ago. That report did highlight some areas for us to work on, which I'm pleased to say colleagues have been focusing on ever since, to make our Service even stronger.

"That is why the council's Cabinet unanimously backed my proposal last year, to increase the service's budget by £500,000 plus inflation. That increase totals close to £1m and is helping to deliver the improvements identified in the report, alongside our existing plans for further investment, to keep Suffolk safe."

## **New recycling campaign aims to get Suffolk's recycling right**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> January, a new campaign was launched in Suffolk to help people get their recycling right.

Each year more than 10,000 tonnes (about 20%) of recycling from Suffolk homes is rejected due to the wrong items being placed in Suffolk's recycling bins. This is the same as 1 in 5 lorries full of recycling going to waste. The cost of sorting and disposing this spoiled recycling is more than £1million.

The new awareness campaign, launched by the Suffolk Waste Partnership is called Together We Can Get Our Recycling Right. It includes a leaflet to all households with the do's and don'ts of what can easily be recycled at home, plus tips on how to recycle other items not accepted in home recycling bins. The campaign will be supported on the Suffolk Recycling website and social media channels.

There are three simple steps that householders can take to improve the quality of their recycling. These include:

- Put glass in a bottle bank, not in your wheelie bin
- No bagged items. Keep your recycling empty, clean and dry

- Keep all food out of your recycling bin. Put any food you cannot eat or compost in your rubbish bin.

You can recycle the following items in your recycling bin at home: plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, metal cans, aerosols and foil and paper, card and books. The worst offending items incorrectly found in recycling bins include glass, black sacks, food waste, cartons and nappies.

## **Help us shape ambitious new Dementia therapy initiative using virtual reality experiences**

On the 28 January it was announced that as part of its work in supporting local care home providers and the ongoing care of residents with Dementia, Suffolk County Council is launching an exciting new initiative to develop virtual reality content, helping people recall and access positive memories that they hold dearly. Such experiences help to complement the support offered on a day to day basis, providing a variety of positive stimulus to those using the equipment and valuable respite for their carers.

In recent years, a number of international academic studies have demonstrated proven successes in using such technology as a reminiscence and therapeutic aid to help people access memories and positive emotions, despite facing the effects of experiencing Dementia. Some care providers already use theme rooms in their settings and show archive films to residents with positive effect. Developing the use of virtual reality will support and complement the great experiences that local care providers use.

The intention is to produce a range of local, Suffolk-based films and interactive materials that people can enjoy and experience whilst sat in comfort in their usual care setting, with the support and input of their carers or family members. A set of equipment, each consisting of a headset and connecting equipment will be made available to support different areas of the county, supported by the Council's Adult Social Work Teams. A budget of £80,000 has been granted for this project through Suffolk County Council's Suffolk 2020 Fund, which is all about developing a range of community-focussed initiatives to support residents across the county. This money

covers the cost of developing the films and materials, carrying out supporting academic research, the purchase of the equipment and the management and resourcing required to deliver the project in coming months.

As part of getting the ball rolling, the council would like to hear from people who have ideas about what kinds of films and experiences they may like to see produced.

The project team would also love to hear from care providers, service users and their family carers across Suffolk that may be potentially interested in helping to trial and take part in using the technology in months to come and take part in a service user group to drive the success of this project.

Those who are interested in taking part and/or sharing the ideas for possible content should contact the team in the first instance by emailing: [suffolk2020vr@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:suffolk2020vr@suffolk.gov.uk)

**Beccy Hopfensperger, Cabinet Member for Adult Care at Suffolk County Council, said:**

“This initiative is part of the digital revolution that is happening across the care sector at the moment. Given the extremely challenging period everyone has experienced through Covid-19, it has been essential to find ways to innovate and adapt to the changing circumstances and make the most of technology and supportive aids where possible to continue supporting our most vulnerable residents alongside the amazing work of our committed care providers and their staff.

“The virtual reality experience may seem a strange choice to some, but there is a great deal of evidence to support the research demonstrating that residents with Dementia who use the technology are able to often access memories and experiences, triggered by particular places, colours and sounds. Where it has been used elsewhere, the technology has offered positive outcomes including improving wellbeing, behaviour, and even cognition in some cases. This type of therapy also supports inter-generational shared experiences between older and younger family members.

“We really want to work with our partners in the local care sector to think about what sorts of experiences may work best, such as films of trips to the seaside, archive film footage of historic moments or particular landscapes and Suffolk landmarks.”

The meeting took place on the 19th of January 2021

There was two petition's sent into Babergh reference parking charges in Hadleigh and Sudbury the petition in Hadleigh was accepted by Babergh but the Sudbury one was dismissed by Babergh as for not having full postal addresses only post codes , Thomas Morelli had managed to provide over sixteen hundred signatures in a very short time in covid times to show our Towns people's feelings this is ongoing matter.

Overview and scrutiny had come to the conclusion that car parks needed maintenance works and there should be a charge

The Hadleigh car parking went to a vote reference the petition against the change in parking fees the result was a 14 /14 tie with the chair having the deciding vote voting in favour of the petition

Hopefully getting the cabinet to go back and consider their decision.

Cllr John Ward put a motion in for The international Holocaust Remembrance Alliance which was agreed on by all members . There was a list of around eight things that people should adhere to

On the motion.

Finally this was after the Babergh meeting we have finally being told where our Advice centre is going to end up at the library from April two days a week resulting in a 60% reduction in face to face contact alarming for all. It will also result in staff at the advice centre not always working in Sudbury which means Babergh talking about the carbon footprint hardly seems important to them in their quest to save money.

Regards Trevor



REPORT OF THE BELLE VUE WORKING PARTY TO  
THE SUDBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
MEETING 9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2021

V1 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Belle Vue site, the park, swimming pool and house was the responsibility of the Sudbury Borough Council up to 1974. It then passed to the Babergh District Council (BDC). Since 1974 the house has been used as Council offices and other purposes but was vacated in 2015 and not maintained since. The pool closed and the site has been used as a BMX site but that has also closed.

Various uses have been proposed for the site. In mid-December 2020 BDC announced they would be marketing a parcel of land on the Belle Vue sites that would include the house and land including part of the old swimming pool site. This sale follows the demise of the hotel project proposed in 2019 and the presentation of development ideas during late summer/early autumn of 2020.

BDC's marketing plans have not been discussed in detail with Sudbury Town Council (STC) and there was clearly a tight timetable to in which to submit comments and responses to BDC.

BDC in the past have said they did not understand what the Town Council wanted. STC therefore wanted to develop a worked through approach to these proposals and so set up a working group to help formulate the Council's response. The timetable was to report to the Leisure and Environment Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021 with a full report to STC Full Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

## 2.FINDINGS

That Sudbury Town Council wants:

- The front of Belle Vue Park opened up and in order to do this areas of the old swimming pool, included as part of the sale plot, would be needed,
- As far as possible the house should be maintained but if this is not possible any development should be sensitive to and not extend the current building mass.

See section 4

That BDC essentially sees this plot of land as their domain and are only letting outside parties question what they are doing through a planning process after BDC have decided which submission they prefer using criteria they are not at the moment disclosing.

The Belle Vue are came into BDC's ownership after the 1974 local government reorganisation. Although the land was gifted to them and remains an important part of Sudbury, BDC now view STC as just one of several organisations with a view rather than the main body speaking for Sudbury.

See section 5

## 3 NEXT STEPS

Although BDC are clearly reluctant to consider objections and responses until they make their decision at cabinet on the 11<sup>th</sup> March, STC needs to formulate a programme of activities to make sure BDC understand their view. STC should also coordinate with anybody who holds STC's views to show there is a consistency of feeling in Sudbury on what should be done.

## 4.DISTILLING COUNCILLORS REPLIES

Although there were different emphasises in some of the replies, the two main themes in the replies can be summarised as opening up the front of the park and as far as possible to maintain the house or at least the architectural style of the house in any new buildings put there. High rise blocks such as those being built on the old tax office would not be welcome.

This was discussed at Leisure and Environment Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> January and two resolutions were passed to reflect this:

- The Committee appreciates BDC's proposal to build a new entrance for the park. However members feel that the whole of the existing swimming pool site should be utilised for the entrance to the park in order to ensure an attractive green sight line from King Street.
- The Committee also believes that any new development on the Belle Vue site should incorporate the existing structure of Belle Vue, but in any event the development should be sensitive and not add to the existing building mass.

An indication of what the park site could look like is shown below:



Belle Vue Community Bid 2021

## 5.STC DISCUSSIONS WITH BABERGH

A meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> January between Babergh councillors and officers and representatives of the Working Group and the Town Clerk on the Sudbury Town Council side. The aim of the meeting was to try to develop an understanding of each side's position with regard to the Belle Vue site. Details of each side's notes on the meeting are shown in Appendix 2 but a summary of the main points are shown below.

- The process is wholly controlled by Babergh
- The decision to sell was taken in 2013.

- Babergh said they were not looking for a specific financial return or specific design
- The design concepts shown over the last 18 months were to give an idea of what could be done – the bids do not have to follow them.
- Babergh say there was no ulterior motive behind putting the marketing period over Christmas – the marketing went to a number of sites and the response has been good. The marketing period is now closing on 12<sup>th</sup> February not 8<sup>th</sup> January
- Babergh Council will evaluate the bids from the 12<sup>th</sup> February until the options go before Cabinet on the 11<sup>th</sup> March. If an option is preferred then this will go to planning and only at that point will interested parties be able to comment or object.
- Babergh believe they have addressed to issue of open space/surplus land and do not think there are issues here.
- Babergh see Sudbury Town Council as one of several interested parties in the process and will be looking to take into account other parties
- Babergh have not done any studies on the effect on road traffic as they see it as outside the scope of their project.

## APPENDIX 1 RESPOSES BY STC COUNCILLORS TO BV QUESTIONNAIRE

### Questionnaire

Dear Councillor

As you will recall, a working group consisting of Robert Spivey, Sue Ayres, Ellen Murphy and Oliver Forder was instructed by the Extraordinary Full Council on xxx to consult with Councillors so that an agreed position on Belle Vue could be presented to Babergh District Council. Accordingly, we should be grateful if you could complete and return the following questionnaire.

### Babergh's proposals

Firstly please can you give us your thoughts on the Options presented by Babergh on their own merits – not taking into account how they will get there. What do you like and what do you dislike?

The link to Babergh is: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/economic-development/sudbury-vision/>

### Considering other options

In addition to the above we have identified the following 5 main potential outcomes. Please can you indicate whether you find such an outcome acceptable/unacceptable by indicating yes/no and add any comments you feel appropriate.

- Option 1. Leave things as they are. (Note that this option is unlikely to be acceptable to Babergh as the building is in poor repair and is costing money to maintain with no income.)
- Option 2. Sell the site on the basis that the existing building is retained and converted into either a single dwelling or apartments.
- Option 3. As Option 2 above, but with additional low rise residential dwellings to be built on the site.
- Option 4. As Option 3 above, but the existing building to be converted into retirement accommodation.
- Option 5. Sell the site and permit any residential development, including apartment blocks.
- 

### The area for sale

Notwithstanding the way the sale has been handled or the legal issues involved, what are your thoughts on how the area of land being sold will affect how the what can be done with the whole site. For example:

1. Should the former swimming pool area should be included as part of the sale, could it be retained it be retained either to enhance the new entrance to the park or as additional area for the park?
2. Is the southern edge of the sale area too close to the existing building acting as an incentive to demolish the existing building.
3. Any other options

We have not received any other proposals for the site from third parties, but will keep you up to date if we do.'

Responses

It is my view that all Bellevue grounds should be reserved as park land, not sold off for short sighted, short term gains.

They were donated to Sudbury Borough Council for the purpose of benefitting the local community and that should be the case. If they have nothing worthwhile to do with them we'd be better off doing nothing while we wait for a competent cabinet with a decent vision for our future generations.

These options are pathetic. It's the same cabinet selling it that has left it to fall into disrepair.

Look forward to seeing you capture my feelings in your response.

Kind regards,

Daniel Williams

Dear Robert, I have over many years shared the view that looking into the needs of future generations ,we would do best to retain the whole park for recreation purposes ,as originally intended ,and sell the house and frontage area ,along with a condition that it is not sold ,unless a similar sized building were build in its place ,and of design complimentary to its surroundings ,thanks for presenting this view to your Group with regards , John Sayers

Thank you for the work that the group have carried out, I will try to respond in the manner you have requested and in the order that you have requested.

1/ I feel it should be used to enhance the entry to the park, to allow it to become part of any future development could impact on the new entrance.

2/I am totally opposed to the demolishing of Belle Vue House so would argue that it could be too close.

Other suggestion, that the House be developed into a Multi use facility with the rear of the building for Park use I.e. Cafe?

Bullet point 1 reject

Bullet point 2 no

Bullet point 3 ?

Bullet point 4 Possibly but I think there is a view that a Retirement home in Churchfield road may be preferred

Bullet point 5 reject

I hope this is helpful.

Jack

Thank you for collating feedback/responses regarding the sale of Belle Vue House and the recreational land surrounding it. Please find below my views and comments. I could have written much more, as I'm sure you're probably aware, but I tried to be as succinct as possible 😊

The area of sale:

It is clear from the map and selected area shown in the sale documents, that a large area of public recreational space is being offered in the sale. Just because an area is not currently 'green' does not mean that it is not or should not still be considered as community recreational space. The old swimming pool site and other areas nearby (which are currently considered as derelict), have still been

used for public recreation in the past and should be redeveloped/renovated to remain as such.

These particular sites have only become derelict and effectively an 'eyesore' to be dealt with, due to the fact that BDC have not invested in redeveloping the area for public use. At the very least they could have converted these areas to further green space and still should. We are already in deficit for the amount of green space in relation to the number of people we have in Sudbury. BDC should be investing in the wellbeing of the community for both mental and physical health by increasing green and outdoor community space whilst adding outdoor recreational facilities to go alongside this such as an undercover picnic site, family/baby changing etc.

I am also extremely concerned by the proximity of the sale site to the actual park itself, as we do not know what type of business may eventually be built in this location.

Surely the park could only be opened up properly with the new entrance indicated; without impacting on nearby infrastructure and increasing congestion, if most of that site was actually retained. I do not believe a proper study; traffic survey and inspection has been carried out and feel it has been rushed to sale (which could lead to disastrous consequences for Sudbury).

The actual house could perhaps be sold due to the large amount of funds needed to renovate it; if it was ensured that it would be respectfully converted. The actual character and heritage must remain as an important historical and cultural site for Sudbury. However, I do not believe the grounds or any other outside space should be included in the sale.

Considering other options:

Option 1 – No

Option 2 – Yes, but only the sale of the house itself, not the grounds or any other outdoor space/recreational area and with strict guidelines that it cannot be demolished, and must be converted retaining most of it's character and heritage for Sudbury.

Option 3 – No

Option 4 – No

Option 5 - No

Best regards

Louise Fowler

Thank you Louise agree whole heartily with what you are saying  
Alison

Option for me would be 2

At the moment reeling on the amount they have spent on Consultants over the past three years including 2021.

£363,000 + 2500,000 + another 300,000. Will go with whatever you say.

Sue
Option 2 and retain swimming pool site Ellen
<p>I have to say I agree with councillor Fowlers comments I believe the house may be difficult because of cost to bring back to it's former glory.</p> <p>Also it probably would not fit in the carbon footprint.</p> <p>But I also think possibly a new building sympathetic to what is there now may be workable as the house has got a amazing garden and would make a fantastic wedding venue.</p> <p>As for the old swimming pool area it has being recreational since the nineteen fifties and has like the house being left to decay. Which Babergh has played their part in doing nothing hence where we are.</p> <p>The park could have two entrances one where it is proposed and one to the house area.</p> <p>We are all concerned what Baberghs plans are for Belle View and would like to keep what Green areas we have without losing anymore.</p> <p>Kind regards Trevor</p>
<p>Belle Vue Questionnaire</p> <p>I feel that the site as drawn extends too far to the west, potentially compromising the entrance to the park for Sudbury residents.</p> <p>I also think that it is difficult to know how the area as designated for sale will ultimately affect the site as a whole; much depends on what is to be built there. It seems to me that it is a pity that the council has to be so prescriptive about what it is selling, and should perhaps wait until it has a buyer with whom it could discuss what is appropriate, before reaching a decision on acreage disposed of. I suspect that the council have been advised against this approach by advisors however, who will tell them that developers need certainty.</p> <p>I think that the status quo is not an option.</p> <p>I feel that some sort of mixed residential use would be appropriate for the site, and would like to see a mixture of well designed homes for the over 55's and younger people. I do not like seeing the elderly corralled into their own ghettos (although I understand that some older people prefer this).</p> <p>On balance I would prefer to see Belle Vue House and its features maintained within the scheme, but am aware that this is a problem since Babergh has allowed it to seriously deteriorate over the years.</p> <p>I am not averse to the idea of apartment blocks although their height should be strictly limited since this is already an elevated site from the perspective of the town centre.</p> <p>Jenny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• offices - no as working from home growth and present climate = no need</li> <li>• retail - not in present climate</li> <li>• care home - can see attraction with garden views etc and close to town centre but can see some conflicts with park users and complaints of noise</li> <li>• community uses - would fit well with park use but this will need funding and other bids going on e.g. former URC church and enhanced St peters</li> </ul>

use. Is there a really strong for proposed community use - if so great but I've not seen one yet even though this site has been in the news for some time.

- hotel - would fit well next to a park - good attraction for family users and hotel provision shown to be needed if more visitors to be attracted and aid town centre with retail decline. But unlikely investment in present short term climate.
- restaurant - good use in a great location with gardens but town centre has numerous and hospitality sector in short term difficulty.
- residential - good use which could suit renovation of existing house - can see some conflicts with park users and complaints of noise etc

As for the site for sale - the proposal does provide a new entrance to the park which is welcome and cafe but I note Sudbury Society point that new cafe for park would be difficult to deliver to if no access across site for sale as proposed.

On the idea of pool site being retained - its a nice idea to expand park provision - people could only argue against this based on less land for sale and so less income for Babergh plus higher cost to regenerate the larger area - funding to do this is key as it seems BDC want capital receipt and/or income not additional costs.

House gardens need protecting - no encroachment.

If had to choose then option 2 followed by 3 or 4. 1 and 5 equally not desirable.

Hope this helps, trying to be as pragmatic as possible and though conversion would be desirable for heritage and setting - a new well designed building could quite easily work too.

Nigel.

Apologies I had missed your initial seeking questioning email circulated where instead was otherwise noting discussion in separate emailed content from other members.

I've since however had discussion with Ellen on some shared concerns who is also on the working group with you so I'm sure she will highlight some of which I include below.

My concerns are raised here each in bullet point...

- that under section 123(2A) of the local Guv Act 1972 our District Council will have to seek the best price on offer from their disconnected location in Ipswich. This does not necessarily mean however the best outcome for our Town locally.
- Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils commissioned the consultants Carter Jonas to produce a combined report in September 2015 of its Town Centres & Retail Study' as can be found here.... [Ashford RNLA Report.docx](#) ([babergh.gov.uk](http://babergh.gov.uk)) Within this document we find suggested...

***'Sudbury Town Centre (13.30 The following provides a brief summary of Sudbury Town Centre's overall vitality and viability:)'Improvements to the Belle Vue roundabout and junctions would improve navigation for both pedestrians and road***



***users and provide better links through to the park. In addition, opening the entrance to the park to make it visible from King Street would have a positive impact in drawing visitors through the centre'.***

I generally support this reports assessment given above and voice concern where within the sales document is highlighting that most of the Swimming Pool site forming part of the sales footprint outlined in red will otherwise limit the view from and to the Park and its frontal landscape would not be seen from Kings Street in full. Instead all that would have happened is that Newton Roads hidden Entrance would have simply been shifted into Cornard Road. Note at the last Sudbury Town Council/Babergh District Council consultation meeting I remember attending a couple of years ago regarding Belle Vue I raised this very report mentioned above where the response from John Ward was 'yes I've seen this report' but then dismissed its findings. Its Ironic then that Babergh in the last year has changed its view and appears to welcome the opening up of the park but unfortunately are currently short-changing it.

- with regards to the sale I note that the Belle Vue Houses Garden is not included with the Sales of the House and other surrounding land. From a separated development I cannot see how a once connected House only separated by a thin boundary from the Houses Garden under different ownership will work. Say the House was converted into flats/apartments would 'Park Goers' wish to see private laundry hung off lines from this property. If the House was fenced off from the Garden where the features of the house won't be seen in view to the park this would defeat any campaign of saving the house only from character as the house is not listed.
- another Important point to raise is that Babergh have said that they have no intention of demolishing the house however upon selling the property this doesn't prevent the eventual owner/developer from demolishing it!! This has to me been Babergh using a smoke screen of covering up where instead letting the public know what the eventual outcome could be.
- that Hardwick House Surgery were once considered for this site and this fell through. Michael Holt eventually informed our full Council of plans to assign the lorry park as a place for this to go. However I understand that there is nothing set in stone. Ellen has further limited advice she might be able to give to you of which she has heard. I Believe Belle Vue House would make an excellent facility for a Community Surgery being so close to the centre of town. Also with its close proximity to the Park surroundings is an ideal location for a recovery and rehabilitation centre offering Health and Wellbeing facilities. We don't know the present bidders involved but I would like to hope that Hardwick House practice would be one of them.
- that Babergh District Council have no intention of maintaining or develop the site themselves for community groups and activity. The only reason that the cost of maintenance is high in order to bring the house up to standard is because they have just left it lay idle and haven't kept up with annual maintenance costs. This could be seen as a form of neglect on their part but where giving instead their reason for disposing of it. Recent events have highlighted that Babergh are not willing nor wishing to accept responsibility of schemes within our town and paying their share of providing them. This being no different where they would rather invest through property ownership investment schemes outside of their district which includes associated maintenance programs other than to do the same locally. I highlight Braintree District Council just across our border whom struggled to find developers willing to support regeneration schemes within Braintree's town centre where its town centre had been neglected for decades but where now instead of walking away again have taken on the commercial risk themselves but where knowing that short term revenue will be coming in to manage that risk to them and the local community as well as knowing though the social and economical benefit that will be gained where attracting further interest for other

opportunities that will come in because of the direct result of regeneration. Sound similar to our current state of developments lack of progress in our Town!

Questions from your original email and my responses raised along side in [blue text](#)....

### The area for sale

The area for sale is shown on page 7 of the presentation found on the link above.

Notwithstanding the way the sale has been arrived at or the legal issues involved, what are your thoughts on how the area of land being sold will affect what can be done with the whole site. For example:

Should the former swimming pool area should be included as part of the sale, could it be retained it be retained either to enhance the new entrance to the park or as additional area for the park? [I've covered this in my concerns above and would say most definitely yes should be included as for a grand entrance to the park.](#)

1. Is the southern edge of the sale area too close to the existing building acting as an incentive to demolish the existing building. [I've covered this in my concerns above and would say most definitely yes.](#)
2. Any other options you might think of. [See further thoughts shared above.](#)

### Considering other options

In addition to the above we have identified the following 5 main potential outcomes. Please can you indicate whether you find such an outcome acceptable/unacceptable by indicating yes/no and add any comments you feel appropriate.

Option 1. Leave things as they are. (Note that this option is unlikely to be acceptable to Babergh as the building is in poor repair and is costing money to maintain with no income.) [Yes but we are missing 'Option 1a' here with the proviso that the District Council refurbishes the build themselves to instead invest in its local community. Our District Council says it has invested in the park recently with no financial return so why not the house for social and wellbeing activity?](#)

- Option 2. Sell the site on the basis that the existing building is retained and converted into either a single dwelling or apartments. [Only as a last ditch support if 'Option 1a' failed and that the accommodation was only for the use as retirement accommodation. With this outcome consideration could be given for shared access of the associated garden albeit with conditions of use included.](#)
- Option 3. As Option 2 above, but with additional low rise residential dwellings to be built on the site. [I would think this would be inevitable in order to make a decent return for the developer but with the proviso that none should be built that encroach onto the swimming pool site.](#)
- Option 4. As Option 3 above, but the existing building to be converted into retirement accommodation. Ditto response to Option 3 but would support this more than option 3 due to the intended use. [As responses leading up to and including Option 4.](#)
- Option 5. Sell the site and permit any residential development, including apartment blocks. An example of apartment blocks could be like those built on the old tax office site opposite Belle Vue. [No never and especially not at the potential entrance to the park.](#)

Sorry to write you an essay but so many local community opportunities as well as indirect economical benefits could be lost here.

Feel free to share my thoughts and opinion with others interested or involved.

Kind regards

Steve Hall

#### Babergh's Proposal

Like the opening up of the frontage but don't like that the view from King St will be of steps and low level buildings rather than a conventional gate frontage which I see as a traditional park entrance

Looks as though the House would be maintained but extended but the buildings would need to be quite high to get enough flats which then starts to look like the building on the old tax office

#### Land Package for sale

By including the swimming pool as part of the sale automatically reduces what can be done with the opening up of the park

Having the border of the plot sale so close to the house will restrict what can be done with it – e.g. private residences are likely to want direct access to a garden – not just look at one. Also lack of privacy is likely to be a factor

#### House Options

- 1) Not an option – something must be done with it
- 2) Might work as apartments but not as a single dwelling
- 3) Not sure how this would work
- 4) Might work as there is no need for access to garden
- 5) Remodelling could work but no high rise buildings

Generally would like to see it as a traditional park with that can be seen from King St to make it a draw from the centre. If BV house could be kept fine, but the buildings on the site should be in keeping with the previous architecture and not modernistic blocks

Robert

Jan and Adrian Osborne did not reply specifically to the questionnaire and both have said that as they are Babergh councillors and particularly as Jan is a cabinet member it would be better to not comment at present.

They have both said that Babergh are keen see investment in the Town and indeed Babergh have a record of investment in the town. Babergh's proposals for Belle Vue will open up the park and provide much need facilities for the town.

## APPENDIX 2 – NOTES FROM MEETING WITH BABERGH

**Note of a Meeting between Representatives of Babergh District Council ('BDC') and Representatives of the Belle Vue Working Group of Sudbury Town Council ('STC') held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 by Microsoft Teams.**

Present

BDC: Cllr Michael Holt

Officers: Fiona Duhamel

Lee Carvell

Kate Parnum

STC: Cllr Robert Spivey

Cllr Oliver Forder

Town Clerk: Ciaran Griffin

The meeting was requested by STC to understand better the intentions of BDC regarding the proposed sale of Belle Vue and the process surrounding it.

BDC stated that the sale of Belle Vue had originally been agreed by the BDC Cabinet in 2013 and recorded in a confidential minute. This had recently been published in a redacted form on the BDC website. The process had accelerated following the withdrawal of Premier Inn from the hotel project. In addition, the site was expensive to maintain with costs arising from vandalism.

BDC stated that the commencement of the marketing over the Xmas 2020 period had been without agenda. BDC pointed out that both the marketing period and the period for objections had been extended beyond the minimum periods required. A substantial number of objections/comments had been received, and this was adduced as evidence that the timing of the process had had no effect on public engagement.

STC raised 3 areas of concern as follows: -

1. The lack of restriction on development proposals from potential purchasers
2. The inclusion of a substantial area of the former swimming pool site in the sale
3. The boundary being drawn so close to the south of Belle Vue that it could act as a disincentive to retain the building.

BDC responded as follows: -

1. The site had been marketed to encourage the maximum number of potential purchasers. BDC agreed that the site was sensitive and Cllr Michael Holt said that he personally was not in favour of intensive development. STC stated that a consultation had been launched with councillors, and while the responses were still being assessed, it was clear that an intensive high rise residential development like the development on Crown Buildings had no support. However, no formal assurances could be given by BDC.

2. BDC stated that the portion of the former swimming pool site had been substantially reduced from the area originally agreed in 2013. BDC were keen to state that this was because BDC was committed to securing a new entrance to the park which had received a favourable 'steer' at a meeting of the Steering Committee. In addition, the loss of the site did not represent a loss of amenity, as both the swimming pool and the skate park had been sited elsewhere.
3. The south boundary of the site was the same as had been agreed in 2013 and had been drawn to maximise the extent of the green space. There had been substantial interest from potential purchasers and several of them had expressed an interest in maintaining the fabric of Belle Vue, so BDC did not consider that the boundary would act as an incentive to demolish the building.

STC raised the question of the legal position of the sale of 'public open space' and the designation of 'surplus land'. BDC stated that these issues had been resolved.

The design of the roundabout linking Bures Road, King's Street and Newton Road was discussed and BDC stated that the professional advice from Suffolk Highways was that the current layout was optimal.

BDC stated that it did not have a particular target for a sales price/capital receipt in mind. They also stated that they were unaware what the book value of the asset in the accounts of BDC was.

Regarding the process, the BDC Cabinet would consider the offers had been received after the deadline of 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and make their decision on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021. BDC was unwilling to state what criteria would be used to assess competing bids. The process will now be driven by what the various developers propose and which of those is selected by the BDC Cabinet. It was likely that the sale would be conditional on planning approval. There is no plan for further consultation, or any role for other bodies, until the formal planning application is made.

STC stated that it would increase confidence if a mechanism for consultation with BDC could be put in place. However, BDC felt that STC was one of several organisations which had views on the site. The only opportunity for STC to represent its views would be at the planning stage where the local council has a statutory right to comment.

Oliver Forder

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

**BABERGH'S NOTES OF MEETING OF 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY****Meeting between Sudbury Town Council and Babergh District Council****Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 at 3pm via Teams****Re: Belle Vue House, Old Swimming Pool Site and Park**

In attendance:

- Fiona Duhamel – Babergh District Council - Assistant Director – Economy Development and Regeneration
- Lee Carvell – Babergh District Council – Regeneration & Capital Projects Manager
- Ciaran Griffin Sudbury Town Council - Town Clerk
- Cllr Robert Spivey – Sudbury Town Council
- Cllr Oliver Forder – Sudbury Town Council
- Cllr Michael Holt – Babergh District Council – Cabinet Member for Economic Growth
- Kate Parnum – Babergh District Council – Regeneration Project Manager (note taker)

**Notes****Current position**

Sudbury Town Council gave a summary of their position. They held an extraordinary Council meeting regarding the disposal and s.123 Local Government Act notice regarding Belle Vue. Following on from this a fact-finding group led by Cllr Spivey has been created to understand the position and what has happened to this point in respect of Belle Vue. Sudbury Town Council seek to understand the process better and the design and financial goals for this site.

Decision to market/dispose of the house and old pool site was made in 2013 and not a recent decision. The house and pool site have not been used for some time. BDC has shared on the Council website the confidential minute from the Council meeting in 2013. Since this decision there have been various engagements including with the interested parties, and a hotel operator and restaurant chain. They have now pulled out of the site due to their business model changing consequence of Covid.

There has been a town study and master planning underway for the Hamilton Road area since 2019. This work was extended to add Belle Vue when the hotel chain pulled out, as reported through the Sudbury Vision Steering Group. The master planning has focused on the outputs of the town centre study and views given from the 'What Next for Sudbury?' public exhibition event in January 2020, including a new entrance and improved connectivity between the park and town centre. The architect masterplan update was taken to the Steering Group in September 2020 and preparation of this work had been updated to Steering Group through earlier 2020 meetings. The masterplan modelled a new park entrance, better connectivity with the town centre and a new café toilet provision.

The development options shown in the masterplan were indicative only to show extent of what development could fit on the site in relation to the new entrance provision. These are not Council preferred or final design etc. but purely ideas of what could be done. This was background information only for the marketing particulars. BDC is open on what could happen on the remaining site and planning will ultimately determine. The current marketing

is to draw out the best possible bids and with that not simply being about financials but deliverability and concept. BDC wants to achieve the best consideration for the site which is a principle stated within the Local Government Act 1972.

### **Sudbury Town Council concerns**

Sudbury Town Council is concerned that the development will be unsightly or high density residential. BDC did not want to limit or restrict within the marketing, as understanding wide possibilities and options for the site will support best consideration. The planning process is the time for consultation into the context and detail of any development.

Concerns about the inclusion of the old swimming pool site - which has been used for leisure over time for various activities. It is a sizable section of the site and is all that needed? BDC responded that part is proposed to be taken for development of the new entrance. It was discussed that two of the key activities carried out at the old swimming pool site have been re-provided in other locations. The skate park has been upgraded and moved into the park and the swimming pool provision at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre.

Southern boundary of the site plan is too close to the building which is felt would lead developers to demolition of the building. The reasoning for the southern boundary being close to the building is to maximise the park. Views indicated by some interested parties so far have included retention of the house and there has been no request for further land on the southern boundary from those parties.

The S123(2A) notice is statutory process given part of the disposal area incorporates open space as defined by the 2006 Local Plan, however, the current situation of the area and its use is also relevant. The next step in the process is for the objections to be considered. There are no statutory requirements regarding how to evaluate the objections. For the objections to be considered by a decision-making body, in this situation this will be Babergh District Council Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021. At this meeting there will also be consideration of a preferred bidder, and it is likely that any agreement will be subject to planning permission. The S123 notice for objections was published for 3 consecutive weeks and closed on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021. We have received 31 objections, which will be considered in full by Cabinet.

It was a Council decision to the sell the site, and BDC understand the sensitivities and history. BDC does not have a specific capital receipt in mind and seeks to support prosperity and regeneration for the town. All relevant factors will be considered when reviewing any bids, and the marketing literature also refers. We understand the community's passion for the site but there is and has been no consensus about what is wanted at the site, and this has remained the case for many years at risk of nothing happening at all. Due to commercial confidentiality, we cannot discuss the bids. To have a balanced approach to the development particularly if a good use for the house was on the table.

It was agreed that we need to trust that we are all working towards having a good development which is suitable and appropriate for Sudbury. STC raised that there is a consensus of not wanted a big 'neo-brutalist' block of flats. The stage for STC to be involved now is when there is a planning application submitted as there will be statutory consultation. The survey that STC are carrying out will be able to feed into the planning process.

Within the 2006 Local Plan only a small area of the disposal area is designated as open space. We have considered the history of the use of the area including for public recreation and assumed the widest area as open space for the purposes of the notice/plan. The term 'surplus asset' is accountancy terminology used for the statement of accounts. The decision

to identify the area as surplus asset to the Council's requirements was via the Council's decision made in 2013.

STC raised that local views are suggesting it has been disingenuous of BDC to time the marketing over Christmas. BDC responded that this is an unfair statement, and we extended the marketing period for bids and viewings by 3 weeks up to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The marketing particulars were sent to over 70 agents both local and surrounding area. The advert was in the papers over several weeks and it was advertised further on social media, prompting over 1000 views. We have received a wide level of interest in the site.

STC raised the query of about the longer-term impact of development on traffic and highways improvements, including the Belle Vue junction. SCC have stated that the current roundabout provision is optimum. This is a planning and highways consideration and beyond the immediate topic of discussion.

Notes: Kate Parnum/Lee Carvell

21/22 January 2021