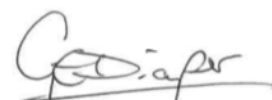


To Members of the Town Council

Cllr. David Adelson	Cllr. Ruth Leach	Cllr. Nigel Phipps	Cllr. Katharine Turner
Cllr. Sue Bale	Cllr. Eamonn O’Nolan	Cllr. Simon Sadler	Cllr. Catherine Walsh
Cllr. Ellie Beck	Cllr. Sharon Miller	Cllr. Robin Sanders	Cllr. Martin Wilks
Cllr. Geoff Holdcroft	Cllr. Doreen Pegg	Cllr. Michael Sutton	

You are hereby summoned to attend the **meeting of the Town Council** to be held at the **Shire Hall** on **Wednesday 21st October at 6pm.**



Greg Diaper
Town Clerk
16th October 2026

Public Attendance

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend. The public will be invited to give their views/question the Town Council on issues on the agenda, or raise issues for consideration of inclusion at future meetings. This item will be limited to thirty minutes duration.

The Town Council, members of the public and press may record/ film or broadcast this meeting when the press and public are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends this meeting is advised that the Town Council cannot control 3rd party recording.

Woodbridge Town Council vision statement

The Council will strive to ensure Woodbridge is a safe, harmonious, and thriving town where all residents and the wider community feel welcome.

We will work to make Woodbridge a place where all generations can participate in a vibrant, inclusive society that is environmentally resilient.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence.

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Member Interests.

To receive any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.



WOODBIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk: Mr G E Diaper

Shire Hall, Market Hill, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4LP

Telephone: 01394 383599 | Email: townclerk@woodbridge-suffolk.gov.uk | Website: woodbridge-suffolk.gov.uk

3. Requests for dispensations.

To consider requests for dispensations from Members on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registerable interest. Members are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring their [Register of Interest](#) is up to date.

4. Public question time.

For the public to ask questions of the Council or raise issues for consideration at a future meeting of the Council. Thirty minutes maximum – three minutes per person.

5. To agree and approve the [minutes](#) of the meeting held 23rd September 2026.

6. To present to Mr Moray Macphail the award of Honorary Freeman of Woodbridge.

7. To receive a presentation from Shayne Plant, East Suffolk Service Limited, followed by a Q & A.

8. To receive a presentation from Claire Stadden, Woodbridge Art Haven.

9. To note the receipt of the minutes from this Council's Committees:

- a. [Planning](#) – 30.09.26
- b. [Finance](#) – 30.09.26
- c. [Staffing](#) – 07.10.26
- d. [Climate and Ecological Emergency](#) – 07.10.26
- e. [Amenities](#) – 07.10.26

10. To consider and approve Town Council payments list for October 2026.

11. To note the following Town Council Accounts:

- a. Payments made since the September Town Council Meeting
- b. Direct Debit payments for September 2026
- c. HSBC Corporate Card payments for September 2026
- d. Bank Reconciliation and Supporting Statements to 30th September 2026
- e. Debtors report to 30th September 2026 (Confidential)

12. To note the Council's financial position as at 30th September 2026.

- a. Income and Expenditure Report to 30.09.2026
- b. Balance sheet as of 30.09.2026

13. To note the receipt of the second half of the 2026/27 precept payment.

14. Openness and accountability of Woodbridge Town Council:

- a. To receive a report from the Town Mayor
- b. To receive an update from the Town Clerk
- c. To note the feedback from the Beccles Town Council Peer Review.
- c. To receive a report from Cllr. Sanders regarding matters arising from the Sizewell/ NSIP meetings.

In addition, the Council will be updated on in the event of new information:

- i. The A12 upgrade
- ii. East Suffolk Rail Line services

15. To consider the significant projects of the Council.

- a. The Shire Hall
 - i. Receive an update and recommendations from the Shire Hall Working Party.
- b. Local Government Reform
 - i. To receive an update from the green spaces due diligence working group;
 - ii. To receive an update on the built spaces project
- c. Greater Whisstock's area matters (Floodgate, Foreshore, POS etc)
- d. Kingston Field improvements

16. To note the receipt of a written report from County Councillor Leach.

17. To note the receipt of a written report from District Councillors Leach and Molyneux.

18. To question the County and District Councillors on matters contained in their written reports.

19. To consider what support the Town Council can provide for rough sleepers.

20. To consider and vote on the nominations received for the Potter Community Cup.

21. To consider a recommendation from the Finance Committee in relation to the request for grant funding submitted by the Deben Climate Centre.

22. To consider the project plan for the Fen Meadow play area improvements and agree the next steps.

- 23. To consider a recommendation from the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee in relation to the signing of an agreement with the Bee Café CIC.**
- 24. To receive the minutes from the October meeting of the Property Working Party and consider the recommendations therein:**
 - a. Shire Hall toilet renovation**
 - b. Submission to HM Land Registry for the freehold ownership of Elmhurst Park and Kingston Field.**
 - c. Insurance cover for volunteers working in the Elmhurst Park kitchen garden.**
- 25. To note the receipt of interim internal audit and consider the comments provided by the auditor.**
- 26. To consider the quotations received for the renewal of the Council's Insurance cover.**
- 27. To consider the feedback received from the Whisstock's Place public engagement and agree future outreach.**
- 28. To consider if the Council wishes to comment on the proposal to record a public footpath along the route known as Doric Place.**
- 29. To consider the 'Quarterly Business Review' provided for the Council by React IT.**
- 30. To exclude the Public and Press from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the confidential information being discussed.**
- 31. To consider a recommendation from the Grants Working Party in relation to Round 2 of the 2026/27 grant scheme.**
- 32. To consider recommendations from the Staffing Committee in relation to the Council's:**

A – Administrative Officer

B – Strategic Change Management Specialist

C – Deputy Town Clerk (Temporary cover)

- 33. Closure.**

Item 6

To present to Mr Moray Macphail the award of Honorary Freeman of Woodbridge.

The Council agreed to award to Mr Moray Macphail the title of Honorary Freeman of Woodbridge at its July meeting. The Town Mayor will present to Mr Macphail his personalised Honorary Freeman badge.

Item 7

To receive a presentation from Shayne Plant, East Suffolk Service Limited, followed by a Q & A.

Mr Shayne Plant, the Facilities Management (FM) Operations Manager at East Suffolk Services Limited, has accepted an invitation to provide a short presentation to the Council on his work in Woodbridge, and take questions thereafter.

Shayne,

I wanted to reach out to see if you are still able to attend the Council's meeting on Wednesday 21st October. 7pm at the Shire Hall if you can.

If you are, would you be able to prepare a five-minute presentation on:

- Your main headaches and concerns on the management of ESC assets in Woodbridge.
- Your thoughts on the Model Boat Pond and Houchells Meadow in terms of ongoing maintenance requirements.

Have a great weekend – guessing you and your team are going to be busy with the high tides forecast across the County!

Best

Greg

Item 8

To receive a presentation from Claire Stadden, Woodbridge Art Haven.

Upon agreeing to sell the Council's former property at 15 Tide Mill Way to the Woodbridge Art Haven CIC, it was requested that six months hence the Council be updated on progress. A written piece has been provided in advance of a presentation from Claire Staddon:

Our launch in March 2026 attracted over 250 local residents, artists and community members who actively registered demand for subsidised creative sessions, movement classes, and inclusive spaces. Since fully opening in June, regular activities such as our Friday Art Cafe, movement classes and a £20,000 National Lottery-funded Art Spark initiative has provided over 35 different exhibitions, workshops and free experiences being offered on site so far. This is increasing month on month with a wide range of providers supporting our core themes of Art, Wellbeing, Culture, Nature.

During our free to access Bayeux Tapestry Print exhibition we had over 1200 visitors, including wheel chair users, young families and dog owners!

We are about to open a free to access Kids Art Club on a Saturday morning funded by the Woodbridge Town Councils Youth fund and we are also applying to the Thriving Places Investment fund to further improve the building and increase its accessibility for community use.

Warm regards,
Mary-Anne and Claire

Item 10

To consider and approve Town Council payments list for October 2026.

In order to accord with section 6.10 of the Council's Financial Regulations (below in italics), the Council must agree to authorise the monthly list of payments to the Council's contractors and suppliers (which may also include expenses payments to Members, grants, refunds etc).

The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation at council level, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the agenda of that meeting.

Provided via the Council's [website](#) is the list for October – **Members are asked to consider and approve the Town Council payments list for October 2026.**

Item 11

To note the following Town Council Accounts

- a. Payments made since the September Town Council Meeting
- b. Direct Debit payments for September 2026
- c. HSBC Corporate Card payments for September 2026
- d. Bank Reconciliation and Supporting Statements to 30th September 2026 (Summary below)
- e. Debtors report to 30th September 2026 (Confidential)

Account	30th April	31st May	30th June	31st July	31st August	30th September
Current	£5,366.38	£10,293.25	£8,296.60	£9,796.65	£6,480.22	£13,613.50
Money	£459,383.71	£383,971.13	£307,529.75	£255,671.18	£220,590.87	£491,979.72
SBS	£300,070.23	£300,070.23	£300,070.23	£300,070.23	£300,070.23	£300,070.23
Petty	£54.57	£169.34	£105.93	£57.94	£17.00	£112.67
Unity	£281,120.67	£ 281,120.67	£282,487.38	£282,487.38	£282,487.38	£283,875.82
Total	£1,045,995.56	£975,624.62	£898,489.89	£848,083.38	£809,645.70	£1,089,651.94

Provided via the Council's [website](#) are the above listed documents, **which Members are asked to note.** Members are advised that these documents are provided in the public domain to ensure full public accountability of the Council's accounts (excluded the debtors report), and to assist the Council's internal and external auditors during their review of the Council's finances.

Item 12

To note the Council's financial position as at 30th September 2026

Provided overleaf are the income and expenditure figures and statutory balance sheet to the 30th September which summarise the Council's financial position across it's day to day budget headings, bank accounts and reserves.

	30th April	31st May	30th June	31st July	31st August	30th September
Income (% received)	£334,403 (45.6%)	£335,157 (45.7%)	£344,157 (46.9%)	£350,715 (47.8%)	£366,216 (49.9%)	£712,181 (97%)
Expenditure (% spent)	£37,819 (9.4%)	£79,154 (15.1%)	£129,379 (21.7%)	£184,188 (28.4%)	£227,021 (34.4%)	£276,186 (41.7%)
General Reserve	£403,034	£362,453	£321,229	£272,977	£245,646	£542,446
Earmarked Reserve	£581,180	£580,758	£536,126	£536,126	£534,913	£532,163
Total	£984,214	£943,211	£857,354	£809,103	£780,559	£1,074,609

Members are asked to note the Council's financial position as at 30th September 2026

Item 13

To note the receipt of the second half of the 2026/27 precept payment.

Provided overleaf is the remittance advice received from East Suffolk Council further to the recent payment of the second half of the precept for the financial year 2026/27 – this payment is evident in the Money Manager account as detailed in the table provided for item 11, and the increase shown in the General Reserve at item 12.

As it is a requirement of internal audit to note the receipt of such a payment, Members are asked to **note the receipt of the second half of the precept payment for the financial year 2026/27.**

Income & Expenditure by Budget 30/09/2026
Month No: 6
Account Code Report

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Budget Variance	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>Income</u>						
1100 Hire of Elmhurst Park	325	1,000	675			32.5%
1200 Hire of Kingston Field	125	400	275			31.2%
1210 KP-Property Income	4,500	4,500	0			100.0%
1216 Whisstocks Develop. Lrt Income	3,213	6,426	3,213			50.0%
1217 Museum Income	426	853	427			50.0%
1218 WRT Income	1,034	2,067	1,033			50.0%
1220 Tennis Court Income	2,163	2,228	65			97.1%
1230 Allotment Rents	525	600	75			87.5%
1235 Property Re-charges	280	0	(280)			0.0%
1400 Theatre Street Wayleave	292	0	(292)			0.0%
1500 Hire of Shire Hall	859	2,000	1,141			42.9%
1505 Hire of Shire Hall Mkt Square	450	1,000	550			45.0%
1520 Hire of Whisstocks Waterfront	5,700	5,000	(700)			114.0%
1525 Whisstocks Quay Property Inc.	0	1,725	1,725			0.0%
1600 Precept	654,757	654,757	0			100.0%
1620 Wedding Income	24,682	21,000	(3,682)			117.5%
1690 Interest Received	4,522	17,000	12,478			26.6%
1700 Market Rents Received	2,124	4,000	1,876			53.1%
1870 CIL Income	5,708	6,000	292			95.1%
1871 Tide Mill Quay Inc	497	1,000	503			49.7%
1900 Building Insurance Re-charges	0	2,434	2,434			0.0%
Total Income	712,181	733,990	21,809			97.0%
<u>Overhead Expenditure</u>						
4005 Maintenance	5,827	15,794	9,967	1,778	8,190	48.1%
4010 Bin Emptying Contract	4,700	9,500	4,800	4,664	135	98.6%
4020 WTC Vehicles - in year costs	773	5,290	4,517		4,517	14.6%
4030 Estate planting	4,698	10,000	5,302	2,391	2,911	70.9%
4040 Gardening contingency	2,267	4,000	1,733	1,388	345	91.4%
4050 Gardening equipment	587	500	(87)		(87)	117.4%
4100 Utilities	3,398	13,000	9,602		9,602	26.1%
4125 Toilets - cleaning, maint, etc	5,642	11,814	6,172	5,157	1,015	91.4%
4127 Cleaning - KP public toilet	0	5,500	5,500		5,500	0.0%
4128 EP Changing places + clean	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%
4131 Events/Activities	(300)	6,000	6,300		6,300	(5.0%)
4135 Projects	4,080	30,125	26,045		26,045	13.5%
4410 Allotment Expenses	253	200	(53)		(53)	126.6%
4510 Telephone	535	1,100	565		565	48.7%
4515 Cleaning	1,398	3,000	1,602	1,400	202	93.3%
4600 Salaries	99,767	232,312	132,545		132,545	42.9%

Continued over page

Income & Expenditure by Budget 30/09/2026

Month No: 6

Account Code Report

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Budget Variance	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
4601 Salaries PAYE Tax/NI	30,674	83,587	52,913		52,913	36.7%
4602 Salaries Pension Contribs	30,105	78,127	48,022		48,022	38.5%
4603 Salaries Travel/Mileage	658	1,000	342		342	65.8%
4604 Salaries Subsistence	300	250	(50)		(50)	120.0%
4620 Mayor's Expenses	844	2,000	1,156		1,156	42.2%
4625 Mayor's Receptions/Civic Tea	1,428	3,000	1,572		1,572	47.6%
4630 Deputy Mayor's Expenses	0	400	400		400	0.0%
4635 Hospitality	48	150	102		102	32.0%
4636 Staff Vacancy advertising	1,014	515	(499)		(499)	196.9%
4640 Stationery & Printing	1,515	1,000	(515)		(515)	151.5%
4642 New website	263	250	(13)		(13)	105.0%
4645 Computer Maintenance Contract	15,041	17,000	1,959		1,959	88.5%
4650 Training (Staff)	2,513	4,646	2,133	945	1,188	74.4%
4655 Training (Cllrs) & Expenses	228	750	523		523	30.3%
4660 Photocopier	1,127	1,500	373		373	75.1%
4670 Postage	0	155	155		155	0.0%
4675 Wedding Expenses	5,028	2,750	(2,278)	396	(2,674)	197.2%
4685 Maintenance Officer Supplies	535	2,000	1,465		1,465	26.7%
4750 Surgeries and External Meeting	438	500	63		63	87.5%
4800 Grants Scheme	10,310	25,000	14,690		14,690	41.2%
4805 Regatta Insurance	537	600	63		63	89.5%
4810 Tide Mill Grant	7,500	17,500	10,000		10,000	42.9%
4825 Remembrance Day Expenditure	0	1,200	1,200	798	402	66.5%
4830 Foreshore Rent -Tide Mill Quay	3,065	2,380	(685)		(685)	128.8%
4841 Youth Engagement	3,166	5,000	1,834		1,834	63.3%
4842 Young Adult Support (18-25)	418	5,000	4,582		4,582	8.4%
4843 Permissive Toilet Scheme	1,500	1,500	0		0	100.0%
4844 Senior Support	2,260	5,000	2,740		2,740	45.2%
4846 NSIPS	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%
4847 International/Twinning	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
4848 Comms	3,554	10,000	6,447		6,447	35.5%
4853 Christmas Light fund	0	9,000	9,000		9,000	0.0%
4881 Whisstocks (other) Expd.	909	2,900	1,991	252	1,739	40.0%
4900 Bank Charges	190	600	410		410	31.6%
4905 Insurance Costs	2,500	17,870	15,370		15,370	14.0%
4910 Audit & Accountancy Charges	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%
4915 Other Subscriptions (inc SALC)	2,032	2,000	(32)		(32)	101.6%
4920 Internal Auditor Charges	0	1,288	1,288		1,288	0.0%
4925 Legal Fees	4,205	13,000	8,795	2,000	6,795	47.7%
4930 LGR	3,225	15,000	11,775		11,775	21.5%
5100 Amenities Cttee Exp	260	10,000	9,740	2,790	6,950	30.5%

Continued over page

Income & Expenditure by Budget 30/09/2026

Month No: 6

Account Code Report

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Budget Variance	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
5150 Planning Cttee Exp	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
5200 Highways Cttee Exp	2,253	5,000	2,747		2,747	45.1%
5250 Climate Emergency Cttee Exp	2,922	10,000	7,078		7,078	29.2%
5310 Pest Control	0	500	500		500	0.0%
Total Overhead	276,186	720,553	444,367	23,958	420,409	41.7%
Total Income	712,181	733,990	21,809			97.0%
Total Expenditure	276,186	720,553	444,367	23,958	420,409	41.7%
Net Income over Expenditure	435,995	13,437	(422,558)			
plus Transfer from EMR	79,267	0	(79,267)			
less Transfer to EMR	19,146	0	(19,146)			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	496,117	13,437	(482,680)			

Agenda Item 12 (b)**Woodbridge Town Council Current Year****Balance Sheet as at 30/09/2026****31st March 2026****30th September 2026**

Current Assets		
925	Debtors	9,816
29,657	VAT Control Account	4,848
789	Prepayments	0
10,210	Current Account	13,614
153,190	Money Manager Account	491,980
300,070	Suffolk Building Society	300,070
89	Petty Cash	113
281,121	Unity Trust Account	283,876
776,050		1,104,316
776,050	Total Assets	1,104,316
Current Liabilities		
14,886	Creditors	8,418
10,630	Accruals	0
6,225	PAYE/NI Creditor	0
26,429	Income in Advance	21,289
58,169		29,707
717,881	Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	1,074,609
Represented By		
125,596	General Reserves	542,446
592,285	Earmarked Reserves	532,163
717,881		1,074,609

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the Authority as at 30/09/2026 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman

Date : _____

Signed :
Responsible
Financial
Officer

Date : _____

Item 14

Openness and accountability of Woodbridge Town Council:

a. To receive a report from the Town Mayor

Mayor's engagements since 18 September 2026:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 21 September | Town Mayors and Chairs meeting in Lowestoft hosted by Caroline Topping, Leader and Chris Bally, Chief Executive of East Suffolk Council. If you exclude Lowestoft and Feixstowe, the East Town Councils are all facing similar issues with differences of emphasis – funding pressures, the search for volunteers, the economics of retail and the transformation of East Suffolk with the NSIPs. |
| 22 September | Beccles TC Peer Review with the Town Council and Sally Longmate, CEO of SALC, Chris Bally, CEO of East Suffolk, Paul Cunningham, Head of Comms, East Suffolk and Helen Greengrass, Town Clerk of Leiston TC. |
| 23 September | Meeting with Becky Finbow, Operations Directorate, and Patrick Ramsey, Adviser, the Environment Agency with Town Clerk and Estate Manager to review the operation of the Whisstock's Floodgate. |
| 23 September | Meeting with John Lemming and Philip Seurre of the Woodbridge Community Hall Management Committee with the Town Clerk to discuss renewal of the lease. |
| 24 September | Meeting with David and Sarah Clerk of the Bull Inn and Councillor Sadler to up date them on progress with the Shire Hall. |
| 25 September | Meeting at the Community Hall with Adam Stride, Associate Director, Harrison Clarke and the Town Clerk at the start of Adam's review of the Health and Safety of the Hall. A report has been produced and been discussed by the property working group. |
| 27 September | Transition Woodbridge, River Clean 2026. Part of the land-based team. Apart from one or two areas, the amount of rubbish collected was very small. Cigarette butts were the main concern. The river-based teams collected some quite big items. |
| 6 October | Twinning meeting to review progress. |
| 6 October | Remote participation at Beccles Town Council meeting to support Helen Greengrass, Town Clerk of Leiston TC who was providing feedback on the peer review. |
| 7 October | Update meeting with Barney Newman and Councillor Simon Sadler on WTC's comms strategy. |
| 7 October | Staffing, Climate and Amenities Committee meetings |
| 8 October | Grants Working Party meeting |
| 9 October | Property Working Party meeting |
| 11 October | High Sheriff of Suffolk's Justice Service at Ipswich Minster with the Elliot Astbury, Mayor's Cadet, also participating. |
| 12 October | Choose Woodbridge with John Risby and Councillor Geoff Holdcroft. |
| 13 October | Meetings in relation to the Shire Hall Project with Councillor Simon Sadler and the Estate Manager with (1) Emma Roodhouse, Collectors and Learning Curator (Art), Colchester and Ipswich Museums and (2) Peter Buist, Regional Director, Purcell (Architects, Masterplanners, Heritage Consultants). |
| 13 October | Meeting with Chris Harrold, owner of the Woodbridge Greengrocers and the Stag and Hare Butchers |

b. To receive an update from the Town Clerk

<u>Project</u>	<u>Position</u>
Sale of properties	See the minutes from the Property Working Party.
Community Hall	<p>Chapel Properties have been appointed to undertake the repairs to the Hutchinson Room – Estates Manager to attend a pre-project meeting on Wednesday morning.</p> <p>Health and Safety survey report received and first consideration undertaken by the Property Working Party – Town Clerk and Estates Manager will consider in detail in the weeks to come.</p>
Changing Places toilet	<p>The Property Working Party considered the HOTS as requested by the Council – see the minutes provided on SharePoint for their position and subsequent email from the Town Clerk to ESC Property Management Officer. No response received at this time (16.10.26).</p> <p>ESC Planning have now acknowledged the receipt of the pre-app and stated <i>'I am looking at this now and you should receive my thoughts in the coming days'</i>.</p>

Decision/action points from previous meetings of the Council:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>
10b	The Council asked that the Property Working Party consider the Heads of Terms for the Changing Places toilet at their next meeting.	Considered by Property Working Party on October 9 th (see item 24)
10e	Cllr. Adelson spoke to concerns about the lack of ability to contact the Officers of the Council in an emergency – The Council asked that the Staffing Committee consider this matter at their next meeting –	Considered by the Staffing Committee at their meeting on October 7 th – Cllr. Adelson asked to call a meeting of those Councillors and persons named on the Emergency Plan to test the readiness of those involved.

	that being the consideration of a formal arrangement for overtime/ emergency cover.	
10e	Cllr. Adelson and the Town Clerk were asked to update the Council's Terms and Conditions of Hire and present this for approval at a future meeting of the Council.	Scheduled for the November meeting of the Council
10e	The Town Clerk was asked to print a copy of the Emergency Plan for each Councillor to keep at hand at their home address.	Can be printed on request!
11a	Repairs to the foul water drains on the Market Hill	Repair work undertaken in early October – invoice to be approved at this meeting.
11b ii	The Town Clerk was asked to consider the timescales for Officers undertaking the due diligence research from publicly available sources.	A meeting of the Green Spaces Due Diligence Working Party is being scheduled – availability of 'critical friend' being sought before a date agreed. Town Clerk has produced significant documentation for the four priority sites – he and the A&F Support Officer will quite quickly be able to produce similar documentation for all other sites in Woodbridge. See the minutes from the Property Working Party for latest consideration of asset transfer and response to ESC Property Management Lead in relation to maintenance costs.
11c	The Town Clerk and Estates Manager were asked to consider maintenance requirements of the Whisstocks Quay, including the non-return flap valve and a survey of the structure under the path.	The Town Clerk and Estates Manager have undertaken a site visit (with Maintenance Officer), and quotations are now being sought for a number of options to attempt to safeguard the Whisstocks Quay – these include patching of the steel facings and wooden boarding of the length of the quay. Repairs to the flap valves are also required.

15	<p>The Council agreed that if an election is not called, Officers should publish the vacant seat with a view to co-opting a new Member at the November meeting of the Council. The Town Clerk was reminded to update the application form to include a section asking interested persons to state any membership to a political party and other declarations needed under the Nolan principles.</p>	<p>ESC confirmed that an election had not been called.</p> <p>Vacancy has been advertised and the application form now includes a section about the declaration of personal interests:</p> <p>https://woodbridge-suffolk.gov.uk/news/co-option-to-woodbridge-town-council-seckford-ward/</p> <p>Two applications already received.</p>
17	<p>Further to the Council's efforts to comply with Assertion 10, the Council authorised the Town Clerk to purchase from ReciteMe their 'Accessibility Checker' tool at a cost of £2,850.00 ex VAT; the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Chair of the Finance Committee were mandated to agree the nominal coding for the expenditure.</p>	<p>Agreement in place to proceed with Recite Me – Town Clerk and F&A Support Officer to undertake first use of the tool in late October/ early November.</p> <p>See item 25 for more on an IT policy.</p>
18	<p>With the amendments proposed by the Council's three Policy Review Working Parties, the following policies were adopted for use by the Council:</p>	<p>F&A Support Officer has uploaded all newly agreed policies to the website.</p>
19a	<p>The Council agreed that funding for either the full cost, or a</p>	<p>Finance Committee considered the funding requirements at their meeting in October – decision in place for funding</p>

	match funding amount, be delegated to the Town Clerk, Town Mayor and Chair of the Finance Committee, and to be reported back to Council once the project is complete. The project is expected to cost £15,000.	with or without match funding from ESC Thriving Places fund.
20	The Council agreed to provide a grant of £2375.00 to the Salvation Army, Woodbridge Branch,	Grant paid in early October.
21	The Council agreed that £3,500 from EMR 325 (Amenity Projects) be provided to fund the creation of a Blossom Garden in Elmhurst Park.	Groundwork undertake during week beginning October 12 th – significant change to Elmhurst Park! 
24	The Council asked the Town Clerk to continue, as a matter of urgency, his investigations into an insurance policy for volunteers working in Elmhurst Park, possibly through the Elmhurst Park charity of which the Council is the sole managing trustee.	See item 24
28	The Council agreed the advertising particulars for a replacement hire, agreeing that weekend	Advert placed – recommendation expected at November meeting:

	working would not be part of the job role, the main focus of which would be plant care.	https://jp.horticulturejobs.co.uk/jobdetail/31512/assistant-gardener
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c. To note the feedback from the Beccles Town Council Peer Review

The Town Mayor was involved in a recent peer review of Beccles Town Council – at his request the introduction and executive summary from the report are provided on the agenda, with the full report and supporting documentation provided on SharePoint for consideration:

1. Introduction

At the invitation of Beccles Town Council (BTC), a team of local government peers administered by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) undertook a peer challenge of the Council on 22 September 2026. This was the Council's first peer challenge and the first pilot of its kind in Suffolk.

The Suffolk Peer Challenge (SPC) is a condensed and proportionate adaptation of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge framework. It is designed as an improvement and assurance tool that offers local councils robust, strategic and credible challenge and support.

The invited peer team comprised experienced senior local government councillor and officer peers, selected for their knowledge and practical insight.

The challenge focused on the following key lines of enquiry:

- Local priorities and outcomes.
- Organisational and place leadership.
- Governance and culture.
- Financial planning and management.
- Capacity for improvement.

As set out in the specification document, communications formed a cross-cutting theme across all five lines of enquiry.

This report presents the peer team's findings and provides BTC with high-level recommendations, supported by further recommendations under each core area. The Council is expected to publish the report together with a clear action plan setting out its response to every recommendation.

Executive Summary

The review was informed by discussions with councillors, officers and a range of stakeholders, alongside consideration of key Council documents and activities. The evidence presents a Council that is ambitious for its community, committed to public service and active across a broad range of initiatives that support the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of Beccles.

BTC demonstrates civic leadership, strong local knowledge and a clear commitment to improving outcomes for residents. It benefits from dedicated officers, engaged councillors and positive relationships with local organisations and community stakeholders.

Stakeholders regard the Council as a constructive and valued local partner that is willing to step forward, support local priorities and respond to community needs.

Notable strengths include an established Strategy and Action Plan, a positive organisational culture and a series of successful local initiatives. Projects such as the Waveney Meadow Project, Vibrant Beccles, Climate Weekend, Business Champions and support for young people show the Council's willingness to innovate, work with partners and invest in the town's long-term wellbeing.

The Peer Team identified no significant barriers to progress. The principal opportunities are to strengthen the alignment between strategic ambition, organisational capacity, financial planning and communications. Although substantial work is already being delivered for the community, its achievements, priorities and impact are not always visible enough to residents, partners and councillors.

Communication therefore emerged as the central cross-cutting theme. The Council has strong foundations, including an informative website and positive engagement by civic leaders, but would benefit from a more structured and strategic approach to explaining its ambitions, decisions, delivery and achievements. In doing this, opportunities should be taken to raise the profile of all Councillors within the Town.

By building on these strengths and addressing the opportunities set out in this report, the Peer Team is confident that BTC is well placed to increase its impact, strengthen its local leadership role and continue delivering positive outcomes for the community.

While the report contains a substantial number of recommendations, the Peer Team's intention is that these should be brought together and considered as a coherent programme of action. They are for the Council, as the corporate body, to consider, prioritise and take full ownership of in deciding how it wishes to move forward. A more detailed suggested priority plan is provided at the end of the report.

- First three months: reaffirm strategic priorities, begin the Communications Strategy and review capacity, skills and resources.
- By six months: develop a medium-term financial plan, strengthen reporting on progress and outcomes, and widen opportunities for community feedback.
- By twelve months: implement the Communications Strategy, publish an annual report, review progress and confirm the capacity needed for sustained delivery.

- d. To receive a report from Cllr. Sanders regarding matters arising from the Sizewell/NSIP meetings.

NSIP and A12 MRN report for Woodbridge Town Council October 2026

Sealink (Applicant National Grid Electrical Transmission (NGET))

As reported last month the SoS unusually sought further responses from all Interested Parties on the responses to her range of questions posed on 28 August. These responses are to be in by 22 October 2026. Whilst no response is planned by WTC an ESCEP response is in final draft. Simultaneously the Applicant has been asked further questions on the Kent section of the project.

The SoS decision on the application is due on 30 October and will be reported next month.

Lionlink (Applicant expected to be National Grid Ventures)

No further development since last month but the Examination on this project is now expected to commence in early Q2 of 2027.

Sizewell C

Sizewell C has applied to the Environment Agency for a water abstraction licence modification for a well location in the Temporary Construction Area (TCA) – it seeks to take more water and over a longer period than so far licenced.

The Sizewell C Community Forum (CF) will be on 23 October at the Sizewell Visitor Centre but Cllr Sanders is not in a position to attend. ESCEP will have two attendees from parish council members of the Steering Group and two questions are being raised.

- The construction phase desalination plant appears to be behind schedule, and water continues to be imported, when will the desalination plant be operational?
- SZC has had numerous complaints and observations submitted particularly related to driver behaviour and off route traffic but to date parish and town councils have had no feedback on actions taken by SZC. Can feedback be provided?

To date there has been no issue with noise or vibration from the freight trains reported to Ruth or I but we are aware of a dispute between one Woodbridge householder and Sizewell C on the offered noise mitigation works.

There has been no resolution to the Station Hotel accommodation obtaining funding for noise insulation from night-time Sizewell C trains.

A12 MRN

The planning application for the A12 MRN was debated at Endeavour House yesterday SCC and Cllr Leach as our county councillor and Cllr Sanders presented the concerns that WTC and Melton Parish Council have. After debate the application was approved with a note requiring SCC to examine the potential for a revised speed limit (30 rather than 40mph) between Woods Lane and Grundisburgh Road roundabouts and through Grundisburgh road roundabout. We sought a condition that SCC seek and TRO for such but as TROs are under separate legislation that matter could not be a condition on the planning application. Cllr Sanders did raise that the new NPPF requires a construction phase logistics and traffic management plan to address severe adverse road network effects of construction for planning and post meeting was advised this will be produced.

SALC

SALC has arranged a number of 1hour webinars on NSIPs, the first of which Cllr Sanders attended. Further webinars are planned for November.

Item 15

To consider the significant projects of the Council.

a. The Shire Hall

- i. Receive an update and recommendations from the Shire Hall Working Party.

We've had no full meeting of the group since the last council meeting. But myself, Nigel, Katharine & Liam continue to meet with many local groups & businesses who may be interested in using Shire Hall in future and a "story" is emerging of a possible "Cultural Hub" idea, where any renovation can be tailored towards a space (or spaces) that facilitate performance, singing, recitals, rehearsals, exhibitions, etc. Whilst not excluding our usual revenue generators of weddings, yoga classes, craft fairs, ad hoc meetings, etc.

We're repeatedly told that a "Cultural Hub" idea potentially opens up other grant avenues to compliment National Lottery.

We've recently met & toured Shire Hall with Colchester & Ipswich Museums, Woodbridge Festival, Woodbridge Choral Society & Woodbridge Ambient Festival plus local events businesses Riverside Cinema, New Street Market & The Bull.

Upcoming meetings include BrittenPears/Snape Maltings, Dance East & Woodbridge Museum, and we're contacting Art Haven, Company Of Four, Suffolk Singers, Woodbridge School, Excelsior Band and other performance societies. Some of these meetings are being held in conjunction with the Woodbridge & Melton Society. Each group we're meeting are being asked to write 3 or 4 paragraphs on how they see Shire Hall, how they might use it in future and any specific requirements they might have in a renovation to make the building suitable for their use.

An architect has strongly advised that for our grant application "story" it's important to reach out to less affluent groups away from the centre of town, so we're considering who to approach - other schools will be included, but any other ideas are welcomed.

Within all of this, we will in the process be considering how we generate revenue from the building - but it's difficult to assess until we've had a full feasibility study completed. We have now requested feasibility study quotes from 2 architects which we're expecting shortly, and if either of these are above the already authorised £10k spend, then we may need some time in this council meeting to discuss. Following a suggestion at the recent Property Working Party meeting, we're also now asking both architects to consider whether use of the Theatre Street toilet land may help broaden our plans for Shire Hall (perhaps by offering external offices and/or storage?)

On other matters - full architect drawings of Shire Hall are due to be completed by the end of the month. Repairs to the foul water drains have been completed. Other authorised repairs (to east end door, steps & arch) are due November. (Town Clerk addition – measured survey completed on Wednesday 14th October).

b. Local Government Reform

- iii. To receive an update from the green spaces due diligence working group;

The Property Working Party considered the latest position of ESC in relation to asset transfer and asked the Town Clerk to respond – that meeting note and email is provided as part of the Property Working Party minutes. Uploaded to SharePoint is research

undertaken by Officers into the four priority sites – further research into the remaining sites owned by ESC will be undertaken shortly.

- iv. To receive an update on the built spaces project

The Town Mayor has been in communication with the ESC Funding Manager, Mr Benjamin Porter, and his email to Nigel in relation to funding on offer to support the project is provided on SharePoint.

Members are asked to consider the agreement of match funding to that amount, payable from the Councils Local Government Reorganisation budget (4930 – current balance provided below)

16/10/2026		Woodbridge Town Council Current Year				Page 1	
16:44		Nominal Ledger Report by CENTRE				User :G.DIAPER	
A/c Code	4930	LGR				Annual Budget	15,000
Centre	180	Fees & Charges				Committed	0
Month	Date	Reference	Source	Transaction Detail		Debit	Credit
Opening Balance						0.00	
1	17/04/2026	HMLA01	Purchase Ledger	Land Registry Search re LGR		14.00	
1	17/04/2026	HMLA01	Purchase Ledger	Land Registry Search re LGR		14.00	
1	17/04/2026	HMLA01	Purchase Ledger	Land Registry Search re LGR		14.00	
1	17/04/2026	HMLA01	Purchase Ledger	Land Registry Search re LGR		14.00	
2	26/05/2026	COCH01	Purchase Ledger	Deben Campus Mtg Works		1,023.75	
4	01/07/2026	COCH01	Purchase Ledger	Deben Campus Invest. Works		195.00	
6	02/09/2026	COCH01	Purchase Ledger	Deben Campus Proof of Concept		1,950.00	
		Account	LGR	Account Totals		3,224.75	0.00
		Centre	Fees & Charges	Net Balance Month 8		3,224.75	

- c. Greater Whisstock's area matters (Floodgate, Foreshore, POS etc)

As reported elsewhere on this agenda, the Town Clerk and Estates Manager are progressing quotations in relation to the deteriorating condition of the Tide Mill Quay.

- d. Kingston Field improvements

The Amenities Committee have agreed to focus the attention of this project on the internal and external improvements required to the Kingston Pavilion. By the time of this meeting an architect will have been appointed to undertake design studies of the inside of the building further to recent meetings with both of the Council's tenants in the building.

The Estates Manager has identified an organisation to undertake the removal of the cricket wicket; quotations are being sought for new calisthenic gym equipment.

It has been identified that the metal football goals require immediate replacement, whilst the 'Bears Wood' multiplay will require full replacement in the next 2-3 years.

September 2026 Report – Woodbridge and Melton Ward

Cllr Ruth Leach

07738 517756 – ruth.leach@suffolk.gov.uk

Council predicts £7.8m overspend this year

At Cabinet on 17 September, the most recent financial forecasts for the council were discussed, based on the outturn for quarter one of 2026-27. The council is currently predicting that it will overspend by £7.8m by 31 March 2027, and the overspend will need to be funded by the council withdrawing money from its risk reserve. The council is required to hold 5% of its annual revenue budget in unallocated reserves in order to be considered financially resilient, and the £7.8m drawdown means that the unallocated reserves would be £3.7m short of this 5% figure, at 4.6%. If this happens, the council will need to write to the government to inform them. The overspend at the council is in a number of areas, mostly in adult social care (care purchasing), children in care, inclusion (Special Education Needs and Disabilities or SEND), and home to school transport for pupils with SEND. The council needs to save as much money as it can between now and the end of the year to reduce the amount it will take out of its reserves.

The council's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit, which funds education, is predicted to increase by £104.8m by the end of the year, mostly the high needs block which funds SEND education. The government has a statutory override in place for this debt until 31 March 2028, after which date the government is due to take over funding SEND provision from local authorities. The council also expects the government to write off £147.5m of this debt this autumn via High Needs Stability funding. However, the rate at which this debt continues to grow means that the council will still owe many millions to the government by March 2028, as even after the £147.5m is taken off the debt, the council is still predicting a deficit of £121.2m by March 2027. The council will be hoping that the government will provide more funding or write off more of this debt.

Update on Local Government Reorganisation

On 7 September, the government announced that it was withdrawing plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in a number of areas including Suffolk. This means that the plans for three unitary councils for Suffolk are currently off the table and subject to a government review. The announcement follows decisions by several councils, including Suffolk, to mount legal challenges to the government over LGR decision-making. This means that there will no longer be elections to the unitary councils in May 2027, with the elections for districts and Ipswich Borough going ahead as they would have normally. At the moment, the mayoral election for the

new mayoral authority for Norfolk and Suffolk is also due to go ahead, with the government announcing no changes to this programme. Councils in Suffolk will need to wait to hear from the government on the outcome of its LGR proposals review, there is currently no confirmation on when this will be completed.

Legal breaches at the council (Section 5A Report)

At Cabinet on 17 September, the council's legal breaches over the LGR challenge to the government were discussed, with the council maintaining that the breaches were 'minor and inadvertent'. The council was in breach of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 in two respects in June, when the Leader of the Council made an executive decision to lodge a legal challenge against the government:

- When an executive decision is made, it should be published as soon as 'reasonably practicable'. In this case, the decision was made on 18 June but not published until 26 June. This meant councillors were not aware of the decision in time to formally challenge it (decisions have to be 'called in' for scrutiny by 4pm on the second working day after the decision was made). This meant the Leader's decision was effectively made behind closed doors and could not be challenged as per the council's constitution
- When a member of the council's Scrutiny Committee requested information about the executive decision, they should have received the judicial review information within 10 days of their request, but this deadline was not met

The Cabinet decided that additional training on these processes would be a suitable measure to prevent future breaches. Section 5A reports are very rare and a serious matter for councils, as they are only produced when a council has admitted maladministration or breached the law.

A14 and Transport Resilience

The case for an Ipswich northern route or an alternative crossing over the River Orwell was also discussed at Cabinet on 17 September, with the council agreeing to pay consultants £300k to look again at the options for improving traffic in Ipswich when the Orwell Bridge is closed. The council last looked at options for this a few years ago, with plans for an Ipswich Northern Route scrapped by 2020 due to opposition from the communities where the routes were proposed, and the lack of funding. It is likely that any major infrastructure options, such as a northern bypass, tunnel or second bridge, would cost between £500m to over £1bn. The A14 is a trunk road and the responsibility of National Highways rather than the council, and any major project would need government funding as the council would not be able to afford it. This funding is not guaranteed to become available. The Cabinet report also noted the importance of improving rail routes for the port, such as the long-promised works on junctions at Ely and Haughley. Improving the Ely junction would enable an additional 2,900 rail freight journeys, meaning 98,000 fewer lorry journeys for the port. Fewer lorries on the A14 would benefit communities all along the length of the A14 which suffer excess traffic when the road is closed.

Impact of Better Recycling

While household waste and recycling are collected by district and borough councils, Suffolk County Council is responsible for processing the waste. Residual waste,

which is waste that cannot be used for something else, dropped from 4,077 tonnes per week in April/May to 3,225 tonnes per week since June. Mostly this is due to food waste being collected separately and processed in anaerobic digestors. Over a year, that would be equate to a reduction of over 40,000 tonnes for all of Suffolk. Due to the engagement work and publicity undertaken by councils about the changes, an increased amount of glass, plastics and cartons are also now being collected since June.

Funding for the Fire Service

The wildfires occurring across the county this summer due to dry weather and extreme heat have highlighted shortfalls in the equipment needed by Suffolk Fire and Rescue. The current budget for equipping fire and rescue workers covers replacing the standard equipment they use, but wildfires such have the one at Dunwich Heath require different and specialist equipment for the fire service to fight them safely and effectively, including off-road fleet for areas their existing vehicles cannot access, clothing and personal equipment (PPE) for firefighters that can protect them for prolonged incidents, and boots with better grip for outdoor terrain. The fire service is still calculating the cost and preparing a debrief on the Dunwich Heath fire, this may mean they require more investment to be adequately prepared for future wildfires, given the hot summers are likely to continue or worsen. It is also possible that they may need more investment for equipment used in flooding incidents, as these are also likely to increase in number and severity. The Fire Brigades Union in Suffolk has written to the government to request increased funding for fire services across the country to deal with the new dangers they are facing.

Care Leavers Winter Ball

Suffolk County Council acts as a 'Corporate Parent' to the children and young people who are taken into its care, and as many young people in care miss out on events like their school prom, the council is holding a Winter Ball for its care leavers on 27 November during National Care Leavers Month. The council is requesting donations of prom dresses, suits/formalwear, shoes and accessories and financial contributions towards the evening, and the Leaving Care service have set up a Go Fund Me so residents and businesses can donate. Donations of clothing, shoes and accessories can be dropped off at the Info Bar, Constantine House, Ipswich, IP1 2DX.

The link to the Go Fund Me site for the event is here: <https://gofund.me/71c92855d>

East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update

Council Celebrates National Environmental Protection Award Success

East Suffolk Council's Environmental Protection Team has been recognised in the RSPCA PawPrints Awards 2026, with three awards.

On Wednesday 3 September, the team were delighted to receive confirmation that they have been awarded both gold and silver recognition across three service areas:

- Gold PawPrints Award in stray dog services

- Gold PawPrints Award in kennelling
- Silver PawPrints Award in animal activities licensing

The Environmental Protection Team has previously been recognised in the stray dog services and kennelling categories. However, achieving the silver recognition for animal activities licensing represents a new achievement.

GLI Cllr Sally Noble, East Suffolk cabinet member for the Environment, said:

"I am delighted that the Environmental Protection Team has once again been recognised through the RSPCA PawPrints Awards. Achieving Gold Awards for stray dog services and kennelling, alongside a Silver Award for animal activities licensing, is a fantastic achievement and reflects the team's ongoing commitment to protecting animal welfare across East Suffolk. I would also like to thank the contractors and partner organisations we work with to deliver these important services.

"Furthermore, the new Silver Award for animal activities licensing highlights the team's dedication to working closely with licensed premises across the district, providing advice and guidance and supporting the highest standards of animal welfare."

Council Amplifies Call for National Climate Crisis Briefing

East Suffolk Council is urging the Government to deem climate change an issue of national security and answer calls for a televised emergency briefing.

In an open letter, GLI Councillors Tom Daly and Katie Graham – cabinet member and assistant cabinet member for Energy and Climate Change – underlined the need for a prime-time public service broadcast on the risks of climate and nature breakdown.

Other local leaders, cross-party politicians, public figures and campaigners have added their names to a parliamentary petition – launched by environmentalist and television presenter Chris Packham – calling for the UK-wide public briefing.

It follows community screenings of the People's Emergency Briefing – a 50-minute documentary, released earlier this year, examining the impacts of climate and nature crises on health, food security, the economy and national security.

Modelled after government updates broadcast during the Covid-19 pandemic, a briefing would bring together leading experts to explain the evidence and present strategies to adapt.

The open letter reads:

Councils are on the frontline of the climate and nature crisis. Together with our health service, our care and education sector, we are the boots on the ground when emergencies hit.

When Storm Babet raged through our parishes of East Suffolk in October 2023, we responded immediately with the creation of a new Resilience Fund, bringing immediate support to residents facing flood damage. And when accelerated coastal erosion due to climate change ravaged the sandy cliffs at Thorpeness, the council was on hand to support residents at risk of losing their homes, offering housing and financial assistance.

This summer, elsewhere in our district alone, catastrophic wildfires at Dunwich Heath made international headlines, as drought and extreme temperatures made an area of global ecological importance vulnerable to fire, wiping out the habitat of some of our country's rarest species. Farmers are reporting economically unsustainable yields and vulnerable and elderly residents have been suffering as hospitals warn of escalating impacts of the extreme heat across health and social care.

The scientific consensus is clear – climate change and nature breakdown are posing a major risk to the UK's food security, health, infrastructure, economy, and national security, with a recent government report warning that we are living in the least extreme climate we will know in our lifetimes.

Acting on this information, on 27 November 2025, leading experts from across the UK health sector, national security, food systems, economists and environmental scientists set out the evidence in a formal National Emergency Briefing at Westminster to 1,200 national decision makers from across government, the media, business, culture and faith sector.

However, despite record drought and extreme temperatures, and a new prime minister, there remains a lack of urgency in public messaging on the scale of the crisis, together with a lack of commitment to enable councils on the frontline of climate shocks to protect and support our residents.

Therefore, as elected representatives, we are taking this opportunity to join thousands of individuals across Suffolk and beyond in calling for a live, televised National Emergency Briefing to be hosted by the Prime Minister Andy Burnham and the UK's Chief Scientific Advisor Prof Dame Angela MacLean, to be delivered by independent experts.

A televised National Emergency Briefing would not set out specific policies or be party political. It is a means for clear, evidence-based communication on the state of climate change and nature loss, so that citizens are equipped to engage with decisions that will shape the country's future. It follows historic precedents of public safety messaging such as those given during the Covid 19 pandemic, and in times of war.

We welcome the support for such a briefing already pledged by our district members of parliament Jess Asato for Lowestoft MP, and Adrian Ramsay for Waveney Valley MP, and call additionally on our Suffolk Coastal MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter for Suffolk Coastal MP and Minister at the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs to join the campaign.

We also acknowledge support from MPs elsewhere in East Anglia, Clive Lewis for Norwich South, Terry Jermy for South West Norfolk; Charlotte Cane for Ely and East Cambridgeshire; Pippa Heylings for South Cambridgeshire.

We call on other representatives in the region to share in this growing public campaign for such a briefing: Ian Sollom for St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire; Ben Obese-Jecty for Huntingdon; Steve Barclay for North East Cambridgeshire; Sam Carling for North West Cambridgeshire; Andrew Pakes for Peterborough; Nick Timothy for West Suffolk; Jack Abbott for Ipswich; James Cartlidge for South Suffolk; Patrick Spencer: for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich; Peter Prinsley for Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket; Jerome Mayhew for Broadland and Fakenham; Rupert Lowe for Great Yarmouth; George Freman for Mid

Norfolk; Steff Aquarone for North Norfolk; Jeff Wilds for North West Norfolk; Alice MacDonald for Norwich North, and Ben Goldsborough for South Norfolk.

As elected politicians across all levels of government, have a responsibility to be straight with our communities, show leadership, and work together so that we can be on the front-foot when crisis hits.

Free Classes to Help Older People Improve Their Balance

Older people in Suffolk are being encouraged to take part in free exercise classes to help improve balance, fitness and flexibility.

Delivered by East Suffolk, Babergh and Mid Suffolk and Ipswich Borough Councils, the 12-week Strength and Balance programme aims to improve the balance, co-ordination, flexibility and confidence of residents aged 65 or over who have had a recent fall or feel unsteady on their feet.

The strength and balance classes are aligned to an evidence-based programme called OTAGO, which is a mixture of both strength and balance exercises led by a qualified instructor in a safe space.

Classes take place each week over a 12-week period, and each class lasts approximately 60 minutes. The exercises are designed to help people feel more confident on their feet, to get in and out of a chair and provide an opportunity to socialise with other members of the community with a shared goal to increase activity.

GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Culture, Leisure and Tourism said:

"Keeping active is essential for all ages but especially important as we get older. Most falls can be prevented, and some simple strength and balance exercises make all the difference to your mobility and confidence. The classes are also a great way to meet other people in your community, and ahead of this year's Falls Prevention Week, I would encourage anyone over 65 who feels they may benefit from the programme to sign up."

The programme is open to those over 65 years old who are at risk of falls, or who have recently had a fall, and who are registered with a GP within the East Suffolk, Mid Suffolk and Babergh or Ipswich Borough Council districts.

Healthcare professionals are also able to refer patients to the classes.

The form is available at: tinyurl.com/yc45h5xa

Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit:

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

View the Well Minds East Suffolk booklet: tinyurl.com/9xhka624

Local Matters:

A12 planning application: this has been granted. I, along with Cllr Sanders, addressed the Development and Regulation Committee on the 20.10.26. This can be heard here: Cllr Sanders at 59.31 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfQDLseH2p4> and myself at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfQDLseH2p4> at 1.06.05.

We were highlighting concerns over the bottleneck that exists at the Woods Lane roundabout where the A12 continues for 2.4 km before becoming dualled. We were advised that this is out of the scope of this project - I remain concerned that there is a knock-on effect of queuing traffic for Woodbridge and Melton. This causes delays, congestion and risks increasing air pollution. I will now collaborate with my adjacent SCC'llrs to take this up with the SCC NSIPs team in the hope that future NSIPs will be able to secure funding to consider dualling the section from Woods Lane to the Wickham Market bypass.

Secondly, we raised concerns over the proposed 40 mph speed limit on the strip of road between Woods Lane roundabout and Grundisburgh roundabout. There are two crossings, multiple driveways, the petrol stations and the entrance and exit from Prentices Lane in this strip which sits between the reach of the work proposed for the adjacent roundabouts. I asked for consideration that the speed limit be reduced from 40mph to 30 mph between the two roundabouts to make it safer for pedestrians crossing and drivers trying to access Prentices Lane, their homes, and the petrol stations. A reduction in speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph northbound will only incur a 32 sec delay to drivers. We were advised that speed limits are a separate set of legislation and did not fall under the planning application. In response to this the committee requested that a note be added to the planning document that the applicants could consider a TRO to reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. I will continue to lobby for this and am considering a petition in this regard as the biggest crossing not only joins both sides of Woodbridge together but is used by pupils to access Farlingaye School.

Finally, we remain concerned about the two proposed crossings associated with the Grundisburgh Rd roundabout - Cllr Robin Sanders/Woodbridge Town Council presented the evidence underlying our concerns about stopping distances at 40 mph in relation to the position of these crossings and the likelihood of increasing congestion at peak times. We were assured by the applicants that safety audits were compliant and that they were therefore satisfied with the location. I have asked for a meeting with the

project manager and the Active Travel Woodbridge team to see if there can be any joining up of the plans with the crossing that will be going in on Grundisburgh Rd further down.

So unfortunately no condition was made with regards to the position of the two crossings at the Grundisburgh roundabout and my concerns remain.

From the redacted Decision Notice:

Notes from the Development & Regulation Committee: The Committee wishes for the applicant to give careful consideration to future speed limit changes through the Traffic Regulation Order process, taking into account community concerns outlined through the planning consultation process.

From here the final business case goes to the Dep of Transport

The **next action** here is to collaborate with adjacent Cllrs to submit a request to SCC NSIP team to start to consider dualling the A12 after Woods Lane, possible sources to consider could be Sea Link and Lion Link. I will continue to lobby for a 30mph speed limit at Grove Rd and a meeting has been requested with SCC to discuss the pedestrian crossings at Grundisburgh Rd.

Emergency Plan WTC: Funding has been applied for to cover the cost of the boxes.

Pedestrian crossing at Station Rd/Kingston Rd – I have received complaints about the length of time they take to signal so this is being evaluated by SCC Highways.

Melton Hill – updated that this is still under consideration and as it is not a reactive work the budget may not be available at this stage to carry out any work at this location

Cycle box at intersection Thoroughfare/Lime Kiln Quay/Melton Hill/St Johns St: work has been ordered

Woodbridge Primary School – comprehensive and productive meeting with the head teacher, Miss Crossley. We discussed parking outside the school, access to driveways, speeding, school signage, Pytches Rd zebra crossing signage, and the 5 year plan for the school. I have inspected the area with the SCC Highways Liaison Officer and will be making a number of suggestions which we will take forward.

Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for waiting restrictions across the whole of Woodbridge, sites have been identified and a preliminary inspection for feasibility has been done, the possible sites for Double Yellow lines to protect junctions include; Beaconsfield Rd, Deben Rd, Warren Hill Rd, Warwick Ave, vicinity of Woodbridge Primary School. From here the suggestions will go to the design team and there will be local public consultation on the proposed strips.

Street marking replenishment has been ordered for Old Barrack Rd T junction, Angel Lane, The Avenue, Kingston Farm Rd.

Inspection of the Thoroughfare - I have called for this and am currently escalating my request. Many of the newly replaced flagstones are damaged and the existing edge stones

are unstable. I believe this to be caused by vehicles and I am seeking support from SCC for a size/weight restriction to be considered.

Deben Estuary Plan – I have sought support from SCC for this plan, agreed in principle by Cllr Hadwen

Melton to Martlesham Heath CATS bus service –please continue to promote.

MELTON & WOODBRIDGE SHOPPER BUS STARTS SOON

WOODBRIDGE

MELTON

TESCO

Bus passes accepted!

Wheelchair booking is advisable

SHOPPER TIMETABLE

Morning Timetable:

- 11:05 Melton Chapel
- 11:07 Hall Farm Bus Stop (Woods Lane)
- 11:09 Bredfield Rd Bus Stop (Woods Lane)
- 11:10 Bury Hill (Bredfield Rd)
- 11:11 Warwick Ave Bus Stop (Bredfield Rd)
- 11:13 The Grove Bus Stop (Pytches Rd)
- 11:16 Woodbridge Turban Centre
- 11:20 Hillyfields Bus Stop (Warren Hill Rd)
- 11:21 Claire Ave (Old Barrack Rd)
- 11:23 Deben Seal/Duke of York Bus Stop (Old Barrack Rd)
- 11:28 Crown Point Bus Stop (Main Rd)
- 11:30 Black Tiles Bus Stop (Main Rd)
- 11:35 Martlesham Tesco

Afternoon Timetable:

- 13:40 Martlesham Tesco
- 13:45 Black Tiles Bus Stop (Main Rd)
- 13:47 Crown Point Bus Stop (Main Rd)
- 13:52 Deben Seal/Duke of York Bus Stop (Old Barrack Rd)
- 13:54 Claire Ave (Old Barrack Rd)
- 13:55 Hillyfields Bus Stop (Warren Hill Rd)
- 13:59 Woodbridge Turban Centre
- 14:02 The Grove Bus Stop (Pytches Rd)
- 14:04 Warwick Ave Bus Stop (Bredfield Rd)
- 14:05 Bury Hill (Bredfield Rd)
- 14:06 Bredfield Rd Bus Stop (Woods Lane)
- 14:08 Hall Farm Bus Stop (Woods Lane)
- 14:10 Melton Chapel

Starting on the 3rd of September and travelling every Thursday and Friday*

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CATS **Woodbridge TOWN COUNCIL**

Thursdays and Fridays only, except for public holidays. During all other times, the service reverts to its usual pre-bookable on-demand service. To book, call 01728 830516

Pedestrian crossing/Pytches Rd – road markings completed

Flooding at New Quay Lane – have had a final meeting at this location with Network Rail, subject to confirmation from Anglian Water regarding their access rights to the area I will prepare my final feedback report.

Bench outside Seckford Care – due to be removed by the 24/9 which proved incorrect, I was given a further date of the 20/10 – it remains in situ and I have escalated my complaint with the contractors.

Graffiti in Woodbridge – no further graffiti

20 mph TRO for Woodbridge - Objections and any other representations relating to these proposals, specifying the grounds on which they are made, must reach Suffolk County Council Legal Services at the address below or at Jacob.Davis-Sturman@suffolk.gov.uk no later than **6th November 2026**. Please note that any such correspondence cannot be regarded as confidential and may be inspected by any interested party. I am fully in support of this speed restriction, and I am happy to discuss any objections raised.

Angel Lane T junction with Theatre St – I have now included Cllrs Turner and Sadler to represent WTC Highways committee as I continue to work with a residents group from Angel Lane to find a solution to this junction. The hedge on the corner of Chapel St and Bredfield St has been trimmed back improving the sight line for pedestrians and drivers, street markings are to be replenished once pothole repairs have been carried out on Angel Lane.

Crossing Ipswich Rd – following extensive review I have submitted a request that the Active Travel Woodbridge team consider including a crossing on Ipswich Rd at the junction of Sandy Lane – awaiting an outcome

Crossing Station Rd – considering extensive review I have requested that the ATW team consider a crossing at the Tide Mill Way junction at Station Rd to accommodate the pedestrian desire line – awaiting an outcome

SCC bench assets – I am attempting to map benches on SCC land – we can then request to create a community self help group to consider taking on this project

Double glazing requests to Sizewell C – as part of the noise mitigation scheme double glazing is available to be applied for by households who are near to the train track – I continue to work with two applicants who have not achieved the desired outcome.

Newnham Rd play area has been opened and is proving very popular.

1st Woodbridge Scouts – the situation with this youth group remaining unhoused in Woodbridge is of immense concern and I continue to work with their leaders on resolution.

Skate Park – repairs were carried out by the original construction company last week and now I am engaging further with ESC to make more improvements.

Foul odour near Melton - ? related to Anglian Water Waste water recycling plant at Melton – I am investigating this however as the weather is cooler it does not appear to be present.

Congestion at the Bredfield Rd/Woods Lane intersection – I continue to investigate what could be done here – this will require collaboration with Cllr Ramsay.

Thriving Places funding applications – I continue to support a number of applications.

Buttrum's Mill – I have convened and participated in a meeting with the owners and the Economic Development team at ESC, I continue to support the refurbishing of this mill, reinstatement of the cap and the sail lift is scheduled for the end of November. I continue to develop the Mill to Mill walk concept with the owners.

ASB – reports of speeding and anti-social scooter riding are significantly reduced – I have only received one complaint in Sept. This could be partly seasonal but can also be attributed to the hard work done by both the police and the public, for which I extend my thanks. I have asked the public to report ASB, even if no action is able to be taken at least it creates a picture which attracts resources. The Suffolk Constabulary have carried out a number of action days which according to the reports have been effective. I hope the presence of the

20 mph speed limit will facilitate further traffic police enforcement and would like to thank the public for the reports which they submitted and our Community Police Officers for their efforts. It only takes one irresponsible driver for people to feel that their street is a race track so please keep on reporting.

I do however receive complaints of alcohol related antisocial behaviour – as I understand it urinating, or, vomiting as a result on intoxication, in a public place is treated as a criminal offense or public nuisance under [Public Order Act 1986](#).

Graffiti has also been reported – please continue to report. We are slowly building up a picture of who the culprits are – in some cases their work has been carried out in broad daylight in full view of the public.

Graffiti may only be an unsightly inconvenience to our community but if we don't object to this behaviour it means we tolerate it, and toleration can become a silent permission or even passive endorsement which we don't want.

A welcome addition to the Suffolk Constabulary would be a PC just for this area who could work flexible shifts to offer correction on these and other behaviours.

Ruth Leach 21/10/26

Item 20

To consider and vote on the nominations received for the Potter Community Cup.

The Potter Cup is an award that since 1992 has been presented annually by Woodbridge Town Council along with a cheque for £50.

Each year nominations are invited for an individual or organisation that has made an outstanding contribution to the life or name of Woodbridge in the preceding twelve months.

A list of all previous winners can be found on the Council's [website](#), with more recent winners provided below:

Year Awarded	Recipient
2025	5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts, Mr John Ager and 432 Woodbridge Air Force Air Cadets
2024	Cordelia Richman
2023	Mrs Charmian Berry
2022	Brenda Jackson, New Horizons Club
2021	Mr Prity and Yogi Patel, Warwick Convenience Store
2020	Mrs Jane Healey
2019	Friends of Woodbridge Library
2018	Messrs Kevin and Cliff Baldock
2017	The New Horizons Club
2016	432 Woodbridge Air Force Air Cadets

Uploaded to SharePoint are the nominations received for the award of the cup for 2026, and **Members are asked to agree, by way of an anonymous vote, to whom they wish to award the Potter Cup for 2026.**

Item 21

To consider a recommendation from the Finance Committee in relation to the request for grant funding submitted by the Deben Climate Centre.

Members will recall the presentation and subsequent discussion at the September meeting of the Council in relation to a grant application from the Deben Climate Centre.

Item 9

To consider a request for grant funding from the Deben Climate Centre.

Council considered the following (redacted – Salvation Army info removed) item at its meeting on September 23rd:

Item 20

To consider requests for grant funding from the following organisations:

- a. Salvation Army, Woodbridge Branch.**
- b. Deben Climate Centre.**

Uploaded to SharePoint are grant funding requests (outside of our normal grant scheme) from the Salvation Army, Woodbridge Branch, and the Deben Climate Centre.

Deben Climate Centre

The following was received by the Town Clerk and Town Mayor on 15 September:

Dear Councillor Phipps and Town Clerk,

Please find attached an application from the Deben Climate Centre for funding support for their Community Garden at Grange Farm. We would appreciate the funding application being considered at the upcoming Council meeting on the 23rd of September, 2026, since the autumnal weather is now perfect for preparing the ground for planting.

I have included both pdf and doc.x versions of the application. Please let me know if you have any questions about the application.

Yours sincerely,

*Wendy Herniman
Director*

Members are asked to consider requests for grant funding from the following organisations.

The (redacted) minutes from that meeting state:

20. To consider requests for grant funding from the following organisations:

- a. Deben Climate Centre** – The Council agreed an in-principle position of support for the provision of funding to the Deben Climate Centre and remitted the first consideration of the matter to the Finance Committee. Members suggested options including grants, loans and support from the County and District Councillors as a shared means to raise the funds required.

Uploaded to SharePoint is the application from the Deben Climate Centre.

Members will recall that the Council used to maintain an EMR for 'Community Projects' – it was decided at the October meeting of the Council in 2025 that the entire funds provided in this EMR be reallocated to fund the start up costs required for the in-house gardening of the Council's estate:

EMR 360 – Community Project

Earmarked reserves are funds set aside for specific projects, initiatives, or expenditures – of all of the Council's EMR's, the Community Project EMR, is the most poorly defined and at risk of being questioned by the public and auditors as to why the Council are holding public funds without clear reason.

These funds were nominally set aside for a potential project in the Melon Pit (which was scuppered by the threat of legal action by the neighbour – that space would be used to keep the Council's vehicles), and to support the potential develop of a Community Garden at Grove Court, which the Council understands has not been successful.

The balance of EMR is £35, 274.

At the request of Full Council, the **Finance Committee are asked to consider the potential of financially supporting the Deben Climate Centre in their attempts to create a Community Supported Agriculture Project' at Grange Farm, Hasketon.**

The minute/ recommendation from the Finance Committee is provided below:

9. To consider a request for grant funding from the Deben Climate Centre.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Full Council that due to the lack of a full business case and detail as to how the proposals would be to the benefit of Woodbridge residents, that the request for funding to the amount of £17,000 is not provided to the Deben Climate Centre.

The Committee was also concerned that the provision of such a significant sum of money to a single organisation in order to seed fund the start-up/ capital costs of their project was not in the best interests of the parish or its inhabitants, nor commensurate with the amount spent, as is the guidance on grant giving provided in section 137 of the Local Government Act.

There remained in the room support and enthusiasm toward the project, and at the point when the Deben Climate Centre can demonstrate the direct benefit of the project to Woodbridge residents, that organisation will be encouraged to apply to the Woodbridge Town Council grant scheme for funding in line with amounts provided to other organisations operating in the town who support the needs of parishioners.

Members are asked to consider a recommendation from the Finance Committee in relation to the request for grant funding submitted by the Deben Climate Centre.

Item 22

To consider the project plan for the Fen Meadow play area improvements and agree the next steps.

As Members are aware, the Amenities Committee have been working for some time on a project to renovate the Fen Meadow play area. The Committee considered the following item at their meeting in early October:

Item 9

To receive an update on the Fen Meadow play area and agree next steps.

In September 2025, the committee agreed:

To consider the results from the Fen Meadow community engagement survey and agree a position for the play area.

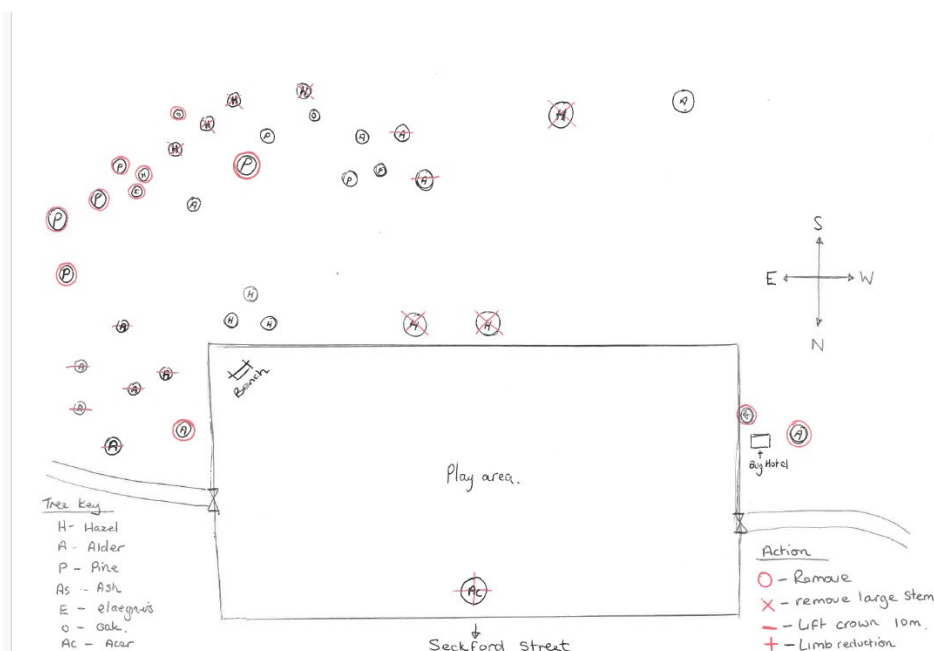
Members considered the results of the public engagement and agreed that the refurbishment of the existing play be preferable than relocating new equipment in the open Fen.

Members agreed that regular maintenance of the surrounding nettles and undergrowth be undertaken once the new equipment is installed, and that Officers should seek professional advice regarding the surrounding trees, including the potential of lifting/crown reduction.

The Estates Team have met with East Suffolk Council's (ESC) Tree Officer to discuss the tree's surrounding the play area in Fen Meadow.

The following plan has been created to show the required works to the trees in the area. Planning permission is being submitted for the work outlined in the plan.

Initial investigation with Seth, ESC's preferred contractor, shows that the tree works and scrubbing of the undergrowth could cost up to £10,000.



Further work is required to establish three quotes for this work.

In July 2026, the committee agreed:

To consider the quotes and designs received for the redevelopment of the Fen Meadow play area.

The Committee voted in favour of using Wild Wood as the approved installer for the play equipment and agreed once appropriate requirements for groundworks are established then these can be recommended to Town Council for approval.

It was noted that the Chair of the Climate Ecological Emergency Committee would like to be involved with the habitat creation and replanting of the area.

In order for this to happen officers are working on a project plan to present to Town Council, to include a fully costed breakdown of costs against the secured funding costs.

- Establish quotes for the tree works required
- Gain a site plan from Wildwood UK.
- Establish the ground works requirements and quotes.

Members to receive an update on the Fen Meadow play area and agree next steps.

The minutes from the meeting state:

10 To receive an update on the Fen Meadow play area and agree next steps.

The Committee received an update on the Fen Meadow play area project, noting progress on the work required to clear the trees around the site, the removal of the existing equipment and ongoing dialogue with the Committee's preferred supplier (Wildwood).

The Committee agreed that Officers should produce a project plan for consideration by Full Council, including a request that if the Council are satisfied with the proposals that the Amenities Committee be mandated to manage the project without any further requirement to seek funding or design approvals from the Council.

Further to the above, this item is prepared to provide Council with an update on the work undertaken so far and for the plans for next year, in the hope that Council can remit/mandate to the Amenities Committee decision making responsibility for the remainder of the project.

Funding

The Council has an EMR for 'Play area equipment' to the value of £82,891.69; we have also received to date funding from East Suffolk Council toward the project of £24,249.60, which represents 90% of the allocated amount – the final 10% will be provided on completion.

As part of that application to East Suffolk Council, it was forecast that the budget for the project was £86,000 – the application to ESC is uploaded to SharePoint which provides further background this item.

Since that time, some costs have been reduced (see removal quote), whilst some have increased (tree works). Whilst the majority of the costs will be represented by the installation of the play equipment (see quote from Wildwood), Officers

Tree/ Landscaping requirements

As Fen Meadow is located within the Woodbridge Conservation Area, a planning application (TCA notice) will be required to undertake works to trees to enable this project to proceed. The following is excerpt from an email from the Town Clerk the ESC Tree Officer summarising the requirements of the work, along with an update plan to that provided above:

1 – The tree cover is so dense that our play area inside of the park is dark and cold (see photo attached) – parents are both unwilling to spend time in there with children, nor are they able to watch their children playing in the space from the centre of Fen, as used to be the case.

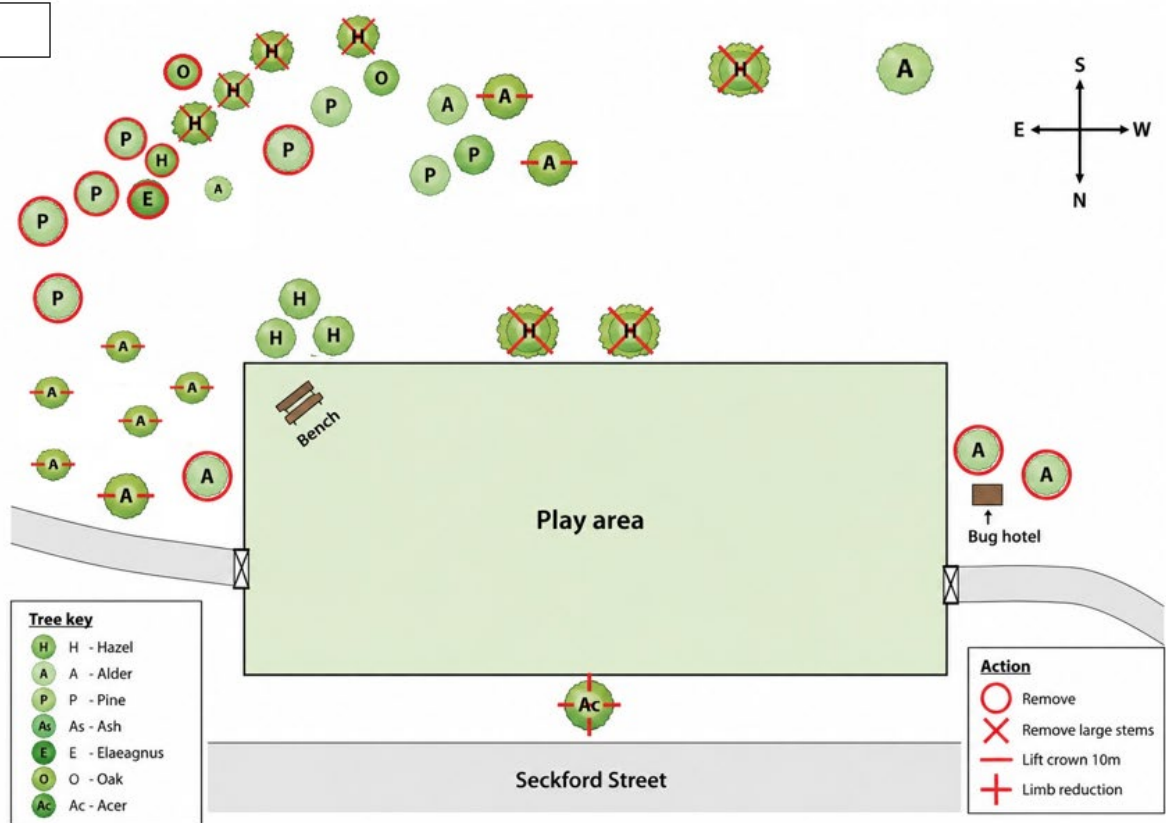
2 – To enable us to renovate the play area, access for machinery is required – to facilitate this, some lower limbs of some of the larger trees need to be removed – in line with the above, this will also make the space brighter and more welcoming.

3 – There is also a large lime right on the boundary which is now touching and dropping limbs on the power cables. For safety reasons, these needs to be removed.

4 – I'm also advised that some of the species are 'non-native', so we are looking to remove these and replace with native tree species.

5 – A number of large willow trees, planted around 40 years ago in an attempt to reduce soil moisture, are now dropping limbs, and hence require pollarding or reducing (not shown on the map below but loosely located where the directional arrow is placed)

WTC/ FEN 1



The view looking out from the play area!



A quotation for the work has been received from the Council's preferred arborist, Seth Lord from Native Gardens and Forestry, and this is uploaded to SharePoint.

The ESC Tree Officer has offered to meet on site with Officers prior to the submission of the TCA application – it is hoped to have this meeting before the end of October, from where the six week notice can be submitted to ESC with a view to undertaking the tree works before Christmas.

Removal of existing play equipment

All current play equipment is to be removed.

Kieron Ellis, the ground worked/ contractor who recently impressed with his work in Elmhurst Park, can undertake the removal and lawful disposal of the existing play equipment for £1,600.

Installation of new play equipment

The Amenities Committee preferred partner for the installation of play equipment is an organisation called 'Wildwood' – their website is provided below and a quotation and compliance statement received is uploaded to SharePoint:

<https://www.wildwooduk.com/services>

Whilst the final designs are yet to be agreed, the type of play equipment produced by this organisation are felt to be the perfect match for the 'wild' setting within Fen Meadow:

<https://www.wildwooduk.com/projects>

The original quote forecast expenditure of around £55,000, which will represent the majority of the budget required to complete the project.

The foremost item of work in the project is that once the existing play equipment has been removed, it to establish what, if any, groundworks are required to prepare the site for the installation of the new play equipment – to facilitate this, a site meeting will be held with Wildwood, post removal, to establish and understand the requirements on the Council to enable for their equipment to be installed. Once that matter is solved, Wildwood will provide a final design and quotation for approval.

Signposting

In order to advise users of the upcoming work and closure of the play area once the existing equipment is removed, the Amenities Committee have purchased signage to be installed at the location – see that design overleaf (the final sign has slightly different wording following some changes made by the Amenities Committee).



What started as seemingly a normal play area improvement has developed into a multi-faceted project due to the difficulties and challenges presented by the site's location. This item has been prepared to provide Council with an overview of the work undertaken and forthcoming, and also to request a mandate for the Amenities Committee to complete the project, including the authorisation of spending above the limits normally provided to Committee (within budgetary limit of the play area EMR plus grant funding). The Committee would provide a final report to Council at the conclusion of the project.

Members are asked to consider the project plan for the Fen Meadow play area improvements and agree the next steps.

Item 23

To consider a recommendation from the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee in relation to the signing of an agreement with the Bee Café CIC.

As Members are aware, the Council, via the CEE Committee, have supported and funded the installation of Bee Cafes throughout Woodbridge – the Estates Team care and water the plants within:

- Market Hill
- Elmhurst Park
- Kingston Field
- Whisstock's Place
- Quay Street
- Ipswich Road (Deben Seal)

The CEE Committee considered this item at their October meeting (document mentioned are provided on SharePoint); the minute is provided below:

Item 10

To consider the proposed contract between WTC and the Bee Café CIC.

The proposed contract sent from Paul Martin is uploaded to SharePoint along with the email exchange with the Estates Manager, asking him to consider the commitment to the Council.

Members are asked to consider the proposed contract between WTC and the Bee Café CIC.

10. To consider the proposed contract between WTC and the Bee Café CIC.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council that the contract proposed by the Bee Café CIC to manage the ongoing care and maintenance of the Bee Cafes purchased by this Committee and installed throughout the town, is entered into by the Council.

Members are asked to consider a recommendation from the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee in relation to the signing of an agreement with the Bee Café CIC.

Item 24

To receive the minutes from the October meeting of the Property Working Party and consider the recommendations therein:

- b. Shire Hall toilet renovation**
- c. Submission to HM Land Registry for the freehold ownership of Elmhurst Park and Kingston Field.**
- d. Insurance cover for volunteers working in the Elmhurst Park kitchen garden.**

The Council's Property Working Party met on October 9th and considered items in relation to the following Council assets or ongoing projects:

- 1 – Minutes from the meeting held 29.07.26.
- 2 – Changing Places
- 3 – Woodbridge Community Hall
- 4 – Volunteer insurance and Green Spaces
- 5 – Theatre Street
- 6 – Shire Hall
- 7 – ESC Assets
- 8 – Deben Campus (Verbal update from the Mayor)
- 9 – AOB

The full agenda, supporting documents and minutes are provided on SharePoint.

The Property Working Party made three recommendations for Council to consider:

a. Shire Hall toilet renovation

The Council's Admin. Officer, as part of her work managing the hiring of the Shire Hall, has been seeking quotations for the renovation of the toilet in the reception area of the building. This is the main toilet in the building, used by Officers during the working day and by those hiring the building. The Property Working Party agreed the following:

The Property Working Party agreed to recommend to Town Council that the renovation of the main toilets should proceed. As a third quotation was yet to be received, the WP were not able to recommend a contractor at this time.

Since the meeting, a third quotation has now been received, and all three are provided on SharePoint – the quotes range from £3,800 – £5,900.

If the Council are agreeable, the cost of the work could be met from any of the Shire Hall EMR's (Officers would recommend EMR 341).

340	EMR SH Building Mainenance	78,794.15	2,938.00	71,947.40	9,784.75
341	EMR Shire Hall Development	37,102.71	0.00	0.00	37,102.71
342	EMR Shire Hall Project	215,642.00	0.00	2,101.50	213,540.50

Members are asked to consider the recommendation from the Property Working Party and if agreeable, appoint a contractor and agree the EMR from which the spend will be made.

Recommendation b and c both relate to minute no. 4 for the Property Working Party meeting, which is provided in full below:

4 – Volunteer insurance and Green Spaces

The WP considered the quotation from Zurich Charity Insurance which would provide insurance cover for volunteers working within the bounds of the Elmhurst Park Kitchen Garden. **The Property Working Party agreed to recommend to Full Council that the quotation be accepted and the insurance cover be purchased.**

The WP also considered the future status of the Elmhurst and Kingston charities of which the Council is the sole trustee. The WP noted that a submission has been made to HM Land Registry to register the freehold ownership of the parks to the Town Council, which would essentially negate the requirement for the charity to operate.

With a view to the Council in the future creating a single charity to control the management of its assets, **the Property Working Party agreed to recommend to Council that the decision to seek to register the freehold of Elmhurst Park and Kingston Field be rescinded, and that solicitors are instructed to review the mechanism of forming a new open spaces charity, for which the Town Council will be sole managing trustee.**

Post meeting – Town Clerk has contacted Fairweather Law solicitors to ask that our request with HM Land Registry be paused, and advice how, if the Council agree, that the submission be withdrawn.

b. Submission to HM Land Registry for the freehold ownership of Elmhurst Park and Kingston Field.

Council agreed in April 2025 to appoint solicitors (Fairweather Law), to prepare a request to HM Land Registry to register the freehold title of Elmhurst Park and Kingston Field to the Council. After much back and forth and investigative work by Officers and Fairweather, this submission was made in May of this year.

The Property Working Party, minded that the Council may in time take control of significant areas of green space in Woodbridge, and hence require additional volunteer support to care for those environs, propose that holding those green spaces under the management of a single charity, for which the Town Council would be the sole managing trustee, provides greater protection for those assets than being owned directly by the Town Council.

Council are therefore asked to consider a recommendation that the Council's request to HM Land Registry to register the freehold ownership of Elmhurst and Kingston be rescinded, and that legal advice to be sought to review the mechanics of creating a new open spaces charity.

Members are reminded that if the Council operates as the sole managing trustee of a charity, regulations require that the finances of that charity are managed separately from those of the Council – at the current time the Council states as part of it's annual return that charity spending is contained within the Council's accounts – a position it may not be able to retain for much longer. Hence, the main driver to register the freehold ownership of Elmhurst and Kingston was to avoid this potentially tricky accounting situation – if the Council does want to hold it's green spaces under a single umbrella charity, there will be a requirement to open new bank accounts and budget and spend in a completely different way to the current.

c. Insurance cover for volunteers working in the Elmhurst Park kitchen garden.

Uploaded to SharePoint is a quotation from Zurich which would provide insurance cover for volunteers working unsupervised in the Elmhurst Park kitchen garden.

Members are asked to consider a recommendation from the Property Working Party that this quotation be accepted. If agreed, the cost would be met from the Council's insurance budget.

Furthermore, **Members are asked to agree that part of the Elmhurst Park kitchen garden be retained for community gardening activities.**

Item 25

To note the receipt of interim internal audit and consider the comments provided by the auditor.

The Council are audited twice per year by an independent internal auditor, which in line with the decision taken by the Council is the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) for 2026/27 financial year. The interim audit was undertaken on Tuesday 13th October, the auditor working on behalf of SALC being Colin Poole, Clerk of Haverhill Town Council.

To provide Members with an understanding of the level of auditing undertaken, also uploaded to SharePoint are the documents provided to the auditor (which excludes details about Officer pay), as well as the additional questions and clarifications requested by Vicky as part of the audit. The full audit report is also uploaded separately to SharePoint

The report provides the following recommendations and comments which require further consideration:

1

Have pension re-declaration duties been carried out	Yes	The RFO advises this was done 1 st July 2026 Comment: A minute reference reporting this to council was not found. Recommendation: As the council body-corporate are the employer, it is important that fulfilment of legal obligations is reported to councillors so they know their duty has been exercised.
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2

Does the Council have appropriate and adequate insurance cover in place for employment, public liability and fidelity guarantee and has been reviewed on an annual basis?	Yes	The council noted its insurances at the meeting held 20 th May 2026 (minute 34) The Council's Insurance document was seen, Zurich insurances expiring 31-10-2026. Public liability cover is £15million Hirer's Liability cover is £2million Employer's liability cover is £10million Fidelity Guarantee cover is £1million Comment: As at 30 th September 2026, the total bank balances for the council totalled £1.089m. Technically that means your fidelity insurance is insufficient. Council may wish to consider whether this is a short-term blip in funds held or whether in future years total funds will regularly exceed the fidelity guarantee cover.
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3

Is the asset register up to date and reviewed annually?	Yes	At the meeting held 18 th March 2026, the council noted the asset register report and value of £980,319.45. The RFO advises the register is updated annually.
Cross checking of insurance cover	Yes	The sums insured can be found on the insurances and asset register.
Additional comments: Dynamically updating the asset register ensure that the register can support the review of insurances which takes place later in the year, and helps ensure that any very recent purchases are include din the insurance.		

4

Does the council have an IT policy that is tailored to the council? ¹⁶	No	This remains work in progress. Recommendation: As a temporary measure the council could try to adopt a cut-down model policy without any clauses that are proving contentious. Then at least there is a policy in place to protect as many aspects of the council's use of IT as possible.
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5

Has the Council confirmed the appointment of an internal auditor? ¹⁷	Yes	The full council agreed to re-appoint SALC as the internal auditor, at the meeting held 20 th May 2026 (minute 24) Comment: If the internal auditor is re-appointed as opposed to the contract being extended, a fresh letter of engagement for the internal auditor may be expected, particularly by the External Auditor
Has the letter of engagement been approved by full council? ¹⁸	Not seen	

1 – The minutes from the Council’s annual meeting advised the Town Clerk would undertake the pension re-declaration duties. Documents 8c (x2) uploaded to SharePoint confirm that the re-declaration has been undertaken, and **Council are asked note that this duty has been exercised.**

2 – As provided at item 11, the balance of the Council’s accounts exceeded £1,000,000; our fidelity guarantee is limited to £1 million. The auditor asks if this is ‘short term blip’ – Officers would forecast that our balance will be reduced to less than £1,000,000 by mid November, however some consideration should be given as to whether or not the balance will exceed that amount on a more regular basis as the Council continues to grow in size. Council may wish to consider an increase in guarantee when considering insurance quotes later in this agenda.

3 – The Council’s Finance and Admin. Support Officer will from now on manage a live asset register.

4 – Colin enquired as to the Council’s lack of agreed IT policy and ‘No’ answer to Assertion 10 on the AGAR – he understands the sensitives of agreeing such a policy but encouraged the Council to consider his own organisations policy, which had been through a number of iterations and finalised following updated by two IT professional Councillors:

<https://haverhill-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/IT-Policy-2026-04-28.pdf>

The updates, in red at section 2.2.2, may allay some of the major concerns held about other model policies and the use of personal equipment by Coucillors:

2.2 Use of own devices

2.2.1 The Council recognises that staff and other authorised users may wish to use their own smartphones to access servers, private clouds or networks for reading their emails. Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the council, but consent for standard systems will normally be permitted. Such devices must be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating system, or other software on the device, are appropriately patched or updated including the use of up-to-date anti-virus software.

2.2.2 The Council recognises that some Councillors may wish to use their own smartphones, tablets, laptops etc to access servers, private clouds or networks for reading their emails. Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the council, but consent for standard systems such as MS Windows, Mac OS X or Linux-based systems will normally be permitted. Such devices must be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating

system, or other software on the device, are appropriately patched or updated including the use of up-to-date anti-virus software.

Members are asked to consider if the Haverhill Town Council IT policy would be suitable for Woodbridge Town Council.

5 – Document 13d was the Council's formal appointment of SALC as internal auditor. Colin required additional information detail for future letters and has provided a template (based on his own letter to Haverhill Town Council's auditors), which the Clerk will use next May.

Members are asked to note the receipt of interim internal audit and consider the comments provided by the auditor.

Item 26

To consider the quotations received for the renewal of the Council's Insurance cover.

The Council's existing three-year insurance policy is due to expire on October 31st, 2026. In preparation, the properties on the Council's estate were re-valued by an external organisation in the summer and this information fed into the quotation schedule.

The following organisations were approached for a quotation:

Zurich

James Hallam

The Clear Group

At the time of writing (16.10.26), the quotation from Zurich is uploaded to Sharepoint; James Hallam have withdrawn, and a final position from the Clear Group is awaited.

In the expectancy of increased insurance costs this year, the Council's budget for insurance cover was increased to £17,870 (not including the insurance costs for the Council's two vehicles).

A recommendation for Members to consider will be provided once a response is received from the Clear Group.

Item 27

To consider the feedback received from the Whisstock's Place public engagement and agree future outreach.

Following discussing at the September meeting of the Amenities Committee, a community engagement session was held at Whisstock's Place on September 19th. A summary of the feedback gathered is provided below, with the full report available on SharePoint:

56 Members of the public participated in the Mayors public engagement event and gave feedback on several areas including.

- Parks and amenities (*6 participants*)
- Parking and traffic (*6 participants*)
- Climate and environmental action (*1 participant*)
- Woodbridge as a tourist destination (*7 participants*)
- What improvement would you like to see? (*20 participants*)
- What do you like about Woodbridge? (*14 participants*)
- Other (*2 participants*)

Members are asked to consider the feedback received from the Whisstock's Place public engagement and agree future outreach.

Item 28

To consider if the Council wishes to comment on the proposal to record a public footpath along the route known as Doric Place.

The Town Clerk received an email from David Last, the Suffolk County Council Definitive Map Officer in early February advising that an application had made to register Doric Place as a public footpath – the Planning Committee considered his request for comment at their meeting that month:

10. To consider a request for comment from Suffolk County Council Definitive Map Officer in regard of Doric Place.

The Committee agreed that the Town Mayor be asked to sign a letter a support for the designation of Doric Place as a public footpath.

The Committee agreed that in their opinion Doric Place is considered a public footpath and members have always used it as such.

The letter from the Town Mayor sent to Mr Last is available on SharePoint.

Subsequently, in early October, further communication was received from Mr Last detailing his research into the application and his recommendation to SCC Development and Regulation Committee – those documents are also provided via SharePoint. Mr Last has asked that *'If you have any comments to make on the reasoning in this report, please do so in writing to me within 14 days of the date of this letter'*. As the date of this meeting is the fourteenth day since the date of his letter, the Town Clerk has requested an additional days grace should the Council wish to provide further comment.

Members are asked to consider if the Council wishes to comment on the proposal to record a public footpath along the route known as Doric Place.

Item 29

To consider the 'Quarterly Business Review' provided for the Council by React IT.

As part of the Council's agreement with React IT for them to monitor and protect the Council against cyber-attacks, uploaded to SharePoint is a quarterly review provided for consideration, summarised as:

This review covers the security monitoring carried out on your environment, your dark web and security awareness position, the service desk activity recorded alongside them, and the two pieces of infrastructure reaching end of life in the coming year.

The Town Clerk is progressing the following 'high risk' observations:

Payroll Server – The Council's existing payroll supplier does not operate 'in the cloud' – as the only piece of software still be controlled by the server in the office, this is a minor inconvenience. However, the server is now reaching the end of its supported life, therefore we either need to find a different way of supporting the payroll software or move to a cloud based provide. React also use Moneysoft and have proposed a seemingly convoluted solution; Claire is preparing a report of the payroll software companies who do operate in the cloud to whom we could switch – the preference was to switch at year end, this may now not be possible.

Multi-factor authentication – Officers are beginning to use MFA – this is required when working from home, not every office log in. Once rolled out to Officers, Councillors will also need to use MFA in some way.

Members are asked to consider the 'Quarterly Business Review' provided for the Council by React IT.