



Saxmundham Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Civic and Community Committee held on Thursday
6th November 2025 at the Fromus Centre, Street Farm Road, Saxmundham at 11:30 am

Minutes

21/25CC

Attendees

Cllr John Findlay (Chair)
Cllr Geraldine Barker
Cllr Georgina Burns

Apologies

Cllr Laura Purina
Cllr James Sandbach – none received
Cllr Steve Peck – none received
Cllr Tim Lock – none received

Also Present

Sharon Smith (Town Clerk)
Two representatives from ESC's Economic Development Team

22/25CC

Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations from members on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable interest, or non-registerable interest.

23/25CC

Open Forum

None.

24/25CC

Minutes

It was **unanimously resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2025 as a true and accurate record.

25/25CC

Visitor Economy Support Scheme

Representatives from East Suffolk Council's Economic Development Team attended the meeting and outlined the role of their team and the scope of the Visitor Economy Support Scheme (VESS). They explained that a specific budget has been allocated to each market town, and they are keen to use these funds to support projects that reflect local priorities. The VESS scheme particularly encourages new, locally led pilot projects that unlock opportunities to support the visitor economy.

The Committee then received a report from the Town Clerk outlining project ideas previously discussed with the team. Following exploration of further ideas for potential funding, the Committee **unanimously resolved** to progress an application comprising:

- Commissioning a professional illustrator to produce four bespoke hand-drawn images of Saxmundham landmarks, supplied as high-resolution digital files with a standard commercial licence for use across the new destination website and town signage. (*Annual Delivery Plan 1.2*)
- Commissioning new directional signage for Fromus Square and the supermarket areas to encourage visitors to explore the town centre and Fromus Green. (*Annual Delivery Plan 1.5*)
- Developing a proposal for an iron archway sign linking Fromus Square to the High Street.

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During discussion on the town's wider economic development, the ESC representatives proposed commissioning Suffolk Market Events to undertake a professional audit and review of Saxmundham's markets. The audit would include a site visit and a written report providing recommendations to revitalise the markets and strengthen their contribution to the town's visitor economy. It was noted that Suffolk Market Events have undertaken similar work for Halesworth and Beccles Town Councils, and that ESC has offered to cover the cost of the audit, which could also include consideration of the Market Hall as a potential market venue within its scope. The Committee received the proposal favourably and it was **unanimously resolved** that the Town Clerk should progress arrangements for the audit in partnership with East Suffolk Council. (*Annual Delivery Plan 2.4*)

26/25CC Annual Delivery Plan

The Committee reviewed progress against the current year's Annual Delivery Plan and agreed that outstanding actions would be carried forward to the next year's plan. The Town Clerk reported that Sax Community Fest intends to extend its programme to include a Sunday and proposed that the Town Council provide entertainment on that day, making use of the infrastructure already in place. The Committee received the proposal positively and supported the suggestion in principle.

27/25CC Christmas Fayre

The Committee received an update about plans for the Christmas Fayre. The Town Clerk raised concerns regarding the level of staff time currently required to resource the event, noting that it appears to be taking up most of the Community Officer's 20 contracted hours per week in the three months leading up to the Fayre. Members agreed that this level of input is disproportionate for a four-hour event and that resourcing requirements for future years will need to be carefully considered and monitored. It was also noted that lessons should be learned from this year's planning process to build more effectively upon work carried out for previous events, streamlining preparation in future.

Cllr Geraldine Barker suggested that Cllr Georgina Burns might be able to assist next year, drawing on her professional skills and experience in organising large theatrical events. Cllr Burns welcomed the proposal in principle, subject to her time and availability given her other commitments. (*Annual Delivery Plan 3.11*)

28/25CC Finance

- a) The Committee noted the budget versus actual and expenditure report to 31st October 2025.
- b) It was **unanimously resolved** to ratify expenditure for the Remembrance Sunday commemoration events.

29/25CC Community Grants

- a) The Committee noted the five-year Grants Awarded Report. (*Annual Delivery Plan 3.9*)
- b) An application for £50 from the Women's Institute for £50 to support the Remembrance Sunday events was considered. It was **unanimously resolved** to approve the grant request in full.
- c) An application from Greener Sax Community Garden for £2,000 to carry out tree surgery at the Community Garden was considered. It was **resolved by majority** to approve the grant request in

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full.

- d) An application from the Art Station for £5,000 towards Sax Arts Fest 2026 was considered. It was **unanimously resolved** to approve the grant request in full.

30/25CC Policies

It was **unanimously resolved** to approve the annual review of the Community Events Policy and recommend it to Full Council for approval.

31/25CC Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 8th January 2026 at 11:30 am.

The meeting closed at 1:30 pm

Sharon Smith
Town Clerk

Signed _____ Date _____