

DISS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

A minute's silence was held to consider those affected by the conflict in the Ukraine and Russia.

Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held in the Council Chamber at Diss Corn Hall on Wednesday 16th March 2022 at 7.15pm.

Present: Councillors S. Browne
M. Gingell
S. Kiddie
A. Kitchen
K. Murphy
S. Olander (ex-officio)
R. Peaty
J. Robertson
E. Taylor (ex-officio)
C. Valori
S. Warren
J. Welch
J. Wooddissee

In attendance: S. Richards (Town Clerk)
A. Jamieson (RFO)
County / District Councillor Kiddie
2 members of the public

FC0322/01 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr D. Collins due to cough and cold. Cllr Kitchen was not present.

FC0322/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Minute No.	Councillors Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
FC0322/18	M. Gingell	x		Knows the Junior Good Citizen award nominees.
FC0322/12 FC0322/18	J. Wooddissee	x		Involved in the community fridge project and knows one of the Honoured Citizen award nominees.
FC0322/18	S. Browne	x		Involved in the community fridge project and knows the Junior Good Citizen award nominees.
FC0322/18	K. Murphy	x		Knows the proposers & seconders for the Junior Good Citizen awards.

FC0322/03 MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 12th January 2022 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC0322/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were three members of the public present. County / District councillor Kiddie gave apologies on behalf of District councillor Minshull. He reported that the works at the Roydon garage have gone well and that the resurfacing of the highway at this location is scheduled for late summer. There should be an update regarding the Mere St pedestrianisation project next week and works to deal with drainage issues on the A1066 near De Lucy House are also scheduled for this year. The Vinces Road junction improvement scheme is scheduled to start in the summer and the beacon cycle route signage has been installed paid for from his member's grant and is being checked.

Cllr Kiddie has also granted funds to the Parish Fields boundary walk project to plant oak trees and a honeysuckle corridor and is arranging funding to support a tree initiative on Fair Green in the Autumn. Liaison continues with Roydon primary school regarding replacement of their outdoor play equipment with support from the Cooperative Society. He has attended several pre-exclusion meetings at Diss high school and will also be a member of the permanent exclusion panel.

South Norfolk Council is planning for refugee arrivals and considering the use of South Norfolk house as a refugee reception centre. Cllr Kiddie and the Town Mayor have shown their support to the Ukrainian Supporters Facebook initiative, and he acknowledged the support of Diss and District including the considerable funds raised by the local Rotary clubs for Ukraine.

Cllr Kiddie has attended numerous scrutiny meetings including the budget and recommended the Council consider acknowledging the work of Canon Tony Billet who is retiring in the Autumn.

There were several questions regarding whether there is more detail explaining the Council Tax bill received as in past years.

Two members of the public spoke on the community fridge item on the agenda. It was noted that the originally agreed location of the kitchen at the DYCC is not suitable in terms of health and safety of the volunteers and didn't meet the community ethos of bringing people together. The new proposed location is larger, provides better access and achieves the group's objectives. There was also discussion regarding the urgency of getting the fridge up and running to ensure the help gets to those who desperately require it.

FC0322/05 **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business.

FC0322/06 **FINANCE**

- a) Members noted bank outgoings for January and February 2022.
- b) Members noted the summary of Income and Expenditure for January and February 2022.
- c) Members noted Earmarked Reserves for January and February 2022.

FC0322/07 **INTERNAL CONTROLS**

Members considered the recommendations regarding the Council's internal controls presented to the Executive committee on 2nd March including the interim internal audit recommendations (report reference 65/2122 referred). It was

RESOLVED: 1) To approve the adoption of the following internal control documents:

- a) the financial regulations as amended
- b) the income and expenditure internal controls
- c) the insurance schedule for 2022-23 – subject to minor change
- d) the internal audit plan
- e) the governance and management risk register as amended
- f) the investment policy and financial reserves policy
- g) the statement of internal control

2) To note the findings of the 2021/22 interim audit report and approve the proposed actions as appropriate responses to the report's recommendations.

(Action: RFO; immediately)

FC0322/08 **DISS CEMETERY**

Councillors considered proposals from Scott Properties Ltd regarding the land east of Shelfanger Road and west of Heywood Road. The attenuation basins will be offered to Anglian Water for adoption, but that Anglian Water are likely to ask for the maintenance to be handled by the development management company.

The on-site open spaces will be offered to the Town Council for maintenance as per the South Norfolk SPD along with a 10-year commuted sum. We can refuse this and ask that the site maintenance also sits with the management company in perpetuity. The developer would not expect to pay a maintenance contribution for the cemetery extension land, which is gifted. However, they have offered to pay a 10-year maintenance contribution as a gesture of goodwill providing we agree that the open space in can sit with the management company.

The Town Council would have the ability to call for the cemetery land at any point within a set period following commencement of the development. The land would be seeded and fenced off from the development site (wooden post and rail fencing proposed) with landscaped planting on the site side of the fence. They have also made an allowance for a single 5 bar wooden gate and two pedestrian gates from the site, to allow for maintenance access and pedestrian access if required.

There was discussion regarding the maintenance contribution figure that requires negotiation and that £5 per square metre would be a reasonable figure given costs associated with wildflower maintenance. It was noted that the District Council's website stipulates that open spaces are offered to the Town/Parish council. Members also requested consultation on the cost to residents for the management costs and that the government cap should be checked. The detail on any plans for streetlighting particularly on the main route through the estate would come through on the full application for consideration. It was

- RESOLVED:
1. That we agree to the open spaces on this site being managed by the developer's management company in perpetuity subject to consultation with the Town Council on the management cost to residents.
 2. We agree to the developers offer to pay a 10-year maintenance contribution on the cemetery extension and delegate the agreement on fee to the Town Clerk.
 3. That we ask the developer to seed the cemetery extension as a wildflower meadow as soon as possible after starting work on the site and that Diss Town Council use the area as a quiet place of reflection for those using the cemetery until we need to use the land for burials.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0322/09

DISS PARK

Members considered a recommendation from the Facilities committee to change the park security project to a park enhancement project (report reference 66/2122 referred). It was noted that this has been a potential issue since the first encampment several years ago. With two major summer events pending, there is a risk of impact if this project is delayed. Various options for security have been investigated including fencing, in planting and bollards.

There was discussion that the mound option would be a natural barrier that would discourage children from running onto the busy road but that the timescales would be tight for delivery prior to the mid May event. Members suggested temporary options such as heras fencing and security around Park prior to events. It was also noted that although there is secure access via the car park, a separate secured gate would be required to allow for the larger event vehicles to access the site. It was agreed that the Council's gravedigger would be approached regarding costs and timescales. Cllr Browne abstained from the following vote. It was

- RESOLVED: To continue to support the principle of securing Diss Park from potential encampments with a target date of implementation of the mounds option by mid-May.

(Action: AG / Clerk; by 14.05.22)

FC0322/10

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

- a) Members received a report from the Town Mayor regarding his year to date in his role. Cllr Browne confirmed that she was pleased there were now regular meetings between the Town Mayor, Council Leader and Clerk.
- b) Members received a report regarding the role of Council Leader from the Chair of the Executive Committee who explained that there was no provision in Standing Orders to cover the Council Leader if s/he was no longer able to perform her / his duties and that the proposed protocol intends to make the role as transparent and open as possible. Cllr Gingell was thanked for the work undertaken on the report.

It was noted that it had been written for presentation to the Executive committee originally but that due to timescales, the overlap with the Mayor's report and that the roles and responsibilities of members is considered by Full Council, the Clerk had requested it was considered by Full Council. Advice had been sought from the Norfolk Association of Local Councils regarding the legalities of the proposals and it was agreed that further checks would be required prior to adoption. It was

RESOLVED: for councillors Gingell, Olander and Clerk to review the legalities of the Council Leader protocol and bring back to the April Council meeting or an extraordinary meeting if necessary for adoption prior to the elections in May.

(Action: MG / SO / Clerk; by 7.04.22)

c) Members considered the revised roles and responsibilities document. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the revised roles and responsibilities document.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0322/11 **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members considered a new model Code of Conduct for Diss Town councillors. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the new model Code of Conduct for Diss Town councillors.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0322/12 **COMMUNITY FRIDGE**

Members considered a motion from four councillors to reconsider the agreed location for the community fridge at the Diss Youth & Community Centre. It was noted that a smoke detector would need to be installed in the area at a cost of £200. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the relocation of the fridge and freezer to the upstairs glass room at the Diss Youth & Community Centre as per the floorplan.

(Action: DepTC; immediately)

FC0322/13 **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members noted the progress on decisions made at the last meeting of Council. Cllrs Valori and Kiddie were thanked for work on QPJ / Carnival events.

FC0322/14 **MEMBER FORUM**

Members considered information or issues relevant to Council from members for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda. It was noted that Royal Mail is working on project with the Pride Rescue charity shop to support animals affected by the Ukrainian crisis. Members were also advised that the demolition at 9 Park Road, a South Norfolk Council owned site, is due to health and safety concerns and that there are currently no plans for redevelopment.

FC0322/15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for Wednesday 13th April 2022.

FC0322/16 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS)**

To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Orders 3d to exclude members of the public and press in order to discuss the following items which are properly considered to be of a confidential nature.

FC0322/17 **INTERNAL CONTROLS**

Members considered the appointment of a new Internal Auditor for the financial year starting 2022-23 (report reference 67/2122 referred). It was

RESOLVED: To appoint Victoria Waples to undertake Diss Town Council's internal audit from October 2022 until 2025.

(Action: RFO; immediately)

FC0322/18 **HONOURED AND JUNIOR GOOD CITIZENS**

Members considered nominations received for the Honoured and Junior Good Citizen awards. There was discussion regarding arranging a special award to recognise Canon Revd Billett's contribution to the town and churches given his retirement later this year. It was noted that there are plaques in St Marys Church acknowledging previous Rectors. It was

RESOLVED: 1. To award two Honoured Citizens for 2021/22 to George Waterman and Lou Hines.
2. To arrange a special recognition award for Revd Tony Billett.
2. To award the Junior Good Citizen for 2021/22 to Plamena Marinova.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

Meeting Closed: 8.58pm.

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The meeting was followed by a presentation from Philippa Taylor, one of Norfolk's Deputy Lieutenants, of a commemorative plaque to acknowledge the community's resilience in the year of the pandemic 2020-2021. It was noted that the plaque would be installed as part of the Park Beacon extension project.

Councillor Taylor
TOWN MAYOR