

# Diss Town Council

## Minutes

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the **Town Council** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors: S. Browne, D. Collins, D. Craggs, C. Dente, A. Goulder, S. Kiddie, K. Murphy (Chair), J. Robertson, R. Peaty, L. Sinfield, E. Taylor, J. Welch

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk/CEO)  
County / District Councillor Kiddie  
District Councillor Minshull  
7 members of the public

### EFC0425/01 Apologies

Councillor's Name	Apologies Received	Absent Without Apology	Reason / Approval
A. Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
S. Olander	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

### EFC0425/02 Declarations of Interest

Minute No.	Councillor's Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
EFC0425/09	K. Murphy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This Cllr is a member of South Norfolk District Council & as such has already responded to the consultation.

### EFC0425/03 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025. It was

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

### EFC0425/04 Public Participation

There were 9 members of the public in attendance. County Councillor Kiddie reported that they have filled in lots of potholes along Walcot Green and he helped Diss High School with its Health & Safety briefing. District cllr Minshull reported that the District Council was successful in warm home discount funding of £4m helping over 65s living in older houses. Their homeless prevention grant has reduced by £1m, which should have a minimal effect on the local area. The travellers' stopping place is being used but there was insufficient space to accommodate those currently residing on the Sports Ground site. Cllr Minshull contacted SNDC's Officer in response to the Clerk's contact this morning ref travelling community and this is being resolved. He also reported on the Mindful Towns & Villages initiative which offers a free course for the local community on suicide prevention.

One member of the public asked for an update on the DYCC, which will provided to a future meeting, and questioned the number of Honoured Citizen awards as he felt there should only be one award made.

### EFC0425/05 Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business raised.

### EFC0425/06 Finance

Members considered the movement of funds from the current year-end funds to Earmarked Reserves (EMR) and from the EMR Community Infrastructure Levy to project-related Earmarked Reserves (report reference 01/2526). It was

- Resolved:** 1. To approve the movement of funds from the current year-end funds to Earmarked Reserves.  
2. To approve the movement of funds from the EMR Community Infrastructure Levy to the project-related Earmarked Reserves.

**(Action: Finance Officer; immediately)**

**EFC0425/07 Committee Terms of Reference**

Members reviewed proposed amendments to the committee terms of reference. The Clerk was asked to clarify the main amendments. It was confirmed that three items have moved from the Executive committee remit to Full Council to remove duplication. It was

**Resolved:** To approve the proposed amendments to the committee terms of reference.

**(Action: Clerk; immediately)**

**EFC0425/08 Roles and Responsibilities**

Members reviewed the responsibilities of the Town Mayor, Council Leader, Committee Chairs and Councillor roles. Cllr Taylor proposed an amendment to the proposal to retain the reporting lines of the Clerk to the Council Leader. It was further suggested that the Chair of the Executive committee could act as line manager in the absence of the Council Leader given the committee's oversight of staffing matters. It was also noted that the role of the Council Leader will have more responsibilities given Devolution and requirement to review the Council's strategic plan. It was

**Resolved:** That the Clerk will add a revised version of the responsibilities of the Town Mayor, Council Leader, Committee Chairs and Councillor roles with the minor amendments for review at the next Full Council meeting.

**(Action: Clerk; by 17.04.25)**

**EFC0425/09 Norfolk & Suffolk Devolution Consultation**

Members considered the Town Council's response to the proposal to establish a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas of Norfolk and Suffolk. District councillor Minshull provided an overview of the three unitary options. Option 1 – a single county unitary, the model supported by Norfolk County Council, Option 2 – two unitary divides Norfolk into East & West Norfolk, supported by South Norfolk District Council, Option 3 – three unitary as above but with a separate Norwich area, supported by Norwich City Council & Broadland District Council.

SNDC's decision was partly based on the financial impact of option 3 given their stable financial situation (current precept of £172) and the inevitable Council Tax increases given the precept in Norwich (£320) and funding support required by Great Yarmouth.

The level of devolved services is currently unknown but could include amenities such as play areas. There is concern regarding the potential splitting of social services into adult and children's services as they compete for staff and in education and the possibility of having to apply to two different authorities for school places. SNDC is trying to complete projects such as the John Grose redevelopment before the new shadow Council starts.

It was noted that the current consultation talks more of reorganisation, not devolution and that in effect, we may end up with the same number of tiers of government – central, Mayoral, Unitary and Town & Parish Councils (T&PCs). Town Council representatives who attended the SNDC Summit on Devolution earlier in the week referred to a presentation from the National Association of Local Councils entitled the 'Shift of power'. This considered the opportunities for T&PCs to deliver more for their local communities as principal authorities focus on statutory services, albeit funding and resources to do so is key.

There was discussion regarding the effectiveness of the Mayoral Combined Authority in Norfolk compared with other Unitary areas such as Manchester and a view that the decision will be made by the Minister and that we are unlikely to have any influence.

Members considered the draft response, and it was noted that additional information would be used to tweak the responses primarily the proposed new town of 10,000 homes in addition to the Greater Norwich Local Plan given that the housing need can be met by 2036.

There was also a strong view that there is insufficient information to formulate a view but that a joint response should be submitted by Diss Town Council and Roydon Parish Council before the 13<sup>th</sup> April deadline. It was also noted that SNDC's Managing Director has offered to do roadshows in towns & parishes. It was

**Resolved:** That councillors Peaty, Robertson & Taylor of DTC and cllrs Waterman, Curson & another councillor of Roydon Parish Council to be confirmed to meet w/c 7<sup>th</sup> April to review the draft response and send before the deadline of 13<sup>th</sup> April.

**(Action: Clerk; by 13.04.25)**

**EFC0425/10 Clerk's Report**

Members noted the Clerk's report will be presented at the 23<sup>rd</sup> April Full Council meeting.

**EFC0425/11 Progress Report**

- a) Members noted the progress report for the last meeting of Council will be presented to the 23<sup>rd</sup> April meeting.
- b) Members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting of the Executive committee.

**EFC0425/12 Date of Next Meeting**

- a) Members noted that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 at 7.15pm.
- b) Members noted that the next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed: 8.55pm.

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Councillor K. Murphy  
Chair / Town Mayor