

Diss Town Council

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the **Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 1st October 2025** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors: D. Collins, C. Dente, A. Goulder (Chair), J. Robertson (ex-officio), L. Sinfield, J. Welch

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk)
Robert Ludkin (Facilities & Buildings Manager)
1 member of the public

AIE1025/01 Apologies

Councillor's Name	Apologies Received	Absent Without Apology	Reason / Approval
S. Browne	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Illness
D. Craggs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Illness
S. Kiddie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Illness
K. Murphy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

AIE1025/02 Election of Vice-Chair of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee for the Municipal Year 2025/26

Members considered the election of the Vice-Chair to the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26. It was

Resolved: to elect Councillor Dente as Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2025/26.
(Action: Admin; immediately)

AIE1025/03 Nomination of Substitute Representatives

There were none.

AIE1025/04 Declarations of Interest

Minute No.	Councillor's Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
AIE1025/09	D. Collins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of Floral Diss

AIE1025/05 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee meeting on Wednesday 2nd July 2025. It was

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee held on Wednesday 2nd July 2025 as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

AIE1025/06 Public Participation

There was one member of the public in attendance.

AIE1025/07 Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business raised.

AIE1025/08 Council Offices

Members considered a quotation received to refurbish the side elevation of the Council Offices building following the recent rear door and window repairs. It was noted that investment in exterior refurbishment meets the Council's maintenance obligations and should help in the event the Council decide to sell the building as part of its asset review project. A final quote is awaited to

paint the exterior of the building and to complete these works. Given the narrow rear entrance to the car park behind the offices, there was a request to consider installing some protection to the building and vehicles as part of the works. It was

Resolved: That the quote received to refurbish the side elevation of the Council Offices be accepted and works scheduled.

(Action: FBM; by 31.12.25)

AIE1025/09

Planters

Members considered recommendations to reduce the number of planters in the town centre to free up maintenance resources for other tasks (report 26/2526 referred). It was stressed that bollards are likely to be required to prevent additional parking. The cost of bollards is not yet known and a discussion with Norfolk County Council will be required to assess suitability and positioning and in light of the proposed changes in the Triangle area to prevent illegal parking. All plants would be recycled wherever possible, and maintenance of the planters will primarily fall to the Town Council with a few traders continuing to water nearby planters. Members requested a press release to publicise rationale for project and those responsible for the existing metal planters would be contacted. It was

Resolved:

1. To remove 25 planters in the town center to free up resources to maintain other Council areas.
2. To re-use the contents of the removed planters for the remaining planters or on other Council sites.
3. To purchase 4 x new one metre² self-watering plastic planters for locations in the Heritage Triangle as per Appendix at an estimated cost of £4k allocated to Community Infrastructure Levy funds.
4. For Diss Town Council to maintain and water all planters other than those watered by traders.
5. To liaise with Norfolk County Council regarding the possibility of bollards vis-à-vis the Parking changes project.
6. To liaise with the Heritage Triangle representatives and draft a press release to explain the rationale for the project.

(Action: FBM / Clerk / Action Group; by 31.12.25)

AIE1025/10

Donations

Members reviewed an updated donations policy. It was agreed that an ongoing maintenance cost would be added as well as the administrative charge. It was

Resolved: to adopt the updated donations policy subject to inclusion of maintenance cost in clause 3.

(Action: Admin; immediately)

AIE1025/11

Parish Partnership Scheme

Members considered a recommendation (report 27/2526) not to submit a bid for parish partnership funding for 2025/26. No projects had come forward, there is already funding in Earmarked Reserves from a previously cancelled project and the Town Council has other priorities. It was agreed that the rationale from Norfolk County Council for not being able to support an additional bus shelter on Shelfanger Road would be circulated and that consideration would be given earlier next year. The feasibility study relating to active travel may identify a suitable project for the following year (also see minute reference AIE1025/13). It was

Resolved: Not to submit a Parish Partnership Bid application for 2025-26 and to consider PPS at the July 2026 meeting to allow sufficient time to consider proposals.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

AIE1025/12

Events

a) Members noted that the next meeting of the Remembrance committee took place on 29th September, following the update received by Full Council on 17th September. The main change for the 2025 event is to reorientate the ceremony layout on the Market Place by 90 degrees anticlockwise to face down Mere St to address feedback received last year. The forming up at the start of the parade has reverted to Mere St to avoid potential trip hazards.

b) Members noted the first meeting of the Christmas Lights Switch-on committee was scheduled for 25th September. Most of the infrastructure and stalls booked for 2024 have already been booked for 2025 following the cancellation last year. Due to inclement weather, only food stalls within vehicles have been booked. Adequate sponsorship was found for 2024 and is being carried

across for 2025. Committee will review the financial situation for 2026.

- c) Members noted that one meeting of the Carnival sub-committee will take place in November to agree the date and theme before planning proper starts from early 2026 to allow time to focus on events leading up to Christmas.

AIE1025/13 Items for Noting

- a) Active Travel - members noted information regarding the active travel feasibility study to improve access to Diss train station for people walking, wheeling and cycling (see also minute reference AIE1025/11).
- b) Progress Report - members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting.

AIE1025/14 Member Forum

Members considered information or issues relevant to this committee from members for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda. Comments have been received about the new humps on Station Road and members are advised to liaise with Norfolk County Council.

It was acknowledged that Mere Street is getting bad press at the moment. The pigeon population has increased considerably this year, which is the primary issue. Cleanliness in this area has been looked at over the years, and various equipment and measures tried to help the situation in addition to the street sweeper visits from South Norfolk District Council. The Council's staff team clean Mere St daily but the problem is so severe that within hours, it looks as if it hasn't been cleaned.

There is a perception that despite these efforts, Diss Town Council is responsible for Mere St (which it isn't) and don't do anything. The SNDC sweeper often has maintenance issues and visits are cancelled and there have been complaints that they sweep the mess into premises. The Town Council staff endeavour to clear this away and work with them. The drains are also often blocked exacerbating the issue.

Members discussed the food source to pigeons being the primary cause of the problem and discouraging this activity particularly given the health consequences of pigeon mess. The automatic feeder on the park was installed to encourage feeding away from the town centre. The Environmental Health Officer at the District Council has previously been consulted and it was agreed it is necessary to arrange a meeting to see how they could assist. Throwing food to the birds can be classed as a littering offence and you can be prosecuted.

Premises owners and tenants also have their part to play in ensuring their buildings are well maintained and pigeon proofed to help alleviate the issue. We are also arranging a site visit from a specialist in pigeon management.

It was agreed that an open letter would be circulated to members of the public to explain what the Town Council has done about this issue, other measures it is investigating and that we need the public to help improve the situation by not feeding the pigeons in Mere Street.

(Action: Clerk / Facilities & Buildings Manager / members; by 31.10.25)

AIE1025/15 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed: 9.04pm.

Councillor A. Goulder
Chair