Diss Town Council

Minutes

Draft

A minute's silence was held in memory of the late Peter Frewin, a dedicated Army Cadet leader and community champion.

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 21st October 2026** at **7.15pm**.

Present:	Councillors	D. Craggs (Chair), C. Dente, S. Kiddie, A. Kitchen, T. Knights, R. Peaty, J. Welch, P. Wilson, S. Willoughby
	In attendance:	S. Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk) County Councillor Porteous District Councillors Kiddie & Minshull 3 members of the public

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FC1026/01 Apologies

Councillor's Name	Absent Without Apology	Apologies Received	Reason	Apologies Accepted
L. Sinfield	☐	☒	Holiday	☒
T. Shava	☐	☒	Work commitments	☒

FC1026/02 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

FC1026/03 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 23rd September 2026.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on Wednesday 23rd September 2026 as a true record. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

FC1026/04 Public Participation

Six members of the public were in attendance.

The Council received a written report from County Councillor Porteous, who also provided an update on local highways matters. He referred to ongoing discussions with County Council officers, the forthcoming town tidy event and preparations for Remembrance Sunday. Members also discussed matters relating to the library area and highway signage.

District Councillor Kiddie provided an update on the introduction of weekly food waste collections, due to commence locally on 9 November, and reported on parking enforcement activity within Diss.

District Councillor Minshull reported on progress with the new leisure centre and the proposed new bus station, including the approved £1.25 million investment. He also reported on Community Action Fund grants awarded to projects in Diss and Roydon, proposals concerning council tax for those receiving end-of-life care, increased parking enforcement outside schools, changes affecting the consideration of planning applications and national preparedness guidance.

FC1026/05 Items of Urgent Business

There were none.

FC1026/06 Finance

a) Members authorised bank outgoings for September 2026 retrospectively.
b) Members noted the Income & Expenditure report for September 2026.
c) Members noted the Earmarked Reserves report for September 2026.
d) Members received and noted the 2nd quarterly financial report.

FC1026/07 Budget 2027-28

Members considered report 39/2627 regarding the first draft budget for 2027/28. It was

Resolved: To endorse the draft Assets, Infrastructure and Events and Executive budgets for 2027/28 as the basis for further consideration, noting that earmarked reserves, potential savings and income-generating opportunities would be considered further by the Budget Action Group and a revised draft presented to Full Council in November.

(Action: RFO/Budget Action Group; November 2026)

FC1026/08 Mere

a) Clear Mere Project

Members considered the detailed proposal for improving water quality within the Mere following the award of a £10,000 Nature Conservation Fund grant. The project includes native marginal planting, floating wetland modules, specialist ecological advice, water testing, volunteer monitoring and community engagement. Members noted that the application identified a £1,000 fundraising aspiration in addition to the grant, without committing Council match funding, and that funded delivery is due by 31 March. It was

Resolved:

1. to accept the £10,000 Nature Conservation Fund grant and approve the Clear Mere project proceeding in principle, based on the application and supporting documentation;
2. to authorise the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Responsible Finance Officer, to complete and return the required grant documentation and oversee grant-funded expenditure and procurement;
3. to authorise the Town Clerk to work with the Friends of Diss Mere and relevant specialists to finalise the project design and delivery arrangements, subject to the necessary ecological, safety, insurance, permission, procurement and landowner requirements being satisfactorily addressed before the relevant works or purchases proceed.

(Action: Town Clerk/RFO; immediately / by 31.03.26)

b) Friends of Diss Mere

Members received and noted the minutes of the first meeting of the Friends of Diss Mere. It was reported that the meeting had been well attended and that the group would provide updates to the Council as the project progressed. The next meeting was noted as 16 November 2026.

FC1026/09 Public Spaces Protection Order

Members considered report 41/2627 regarding South Norfolk Council's consultation on the Public Spaces Protection Order relating to vehicle-related anti-social behaviour. Members noted that the existing Order was due to expire and that the consultation sought views on the existing regulatory controls and their proposed extension for a further three years. It was

Resolved: To support the existing regulatory controls and the proposed extension of the Public Spaces Protection Order for a further three years, and to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to submit the agreed response by 27 November 2026.

(Action: Office Admin; by 27 Nov 2026)

County Councillor Porteous left the meeting.

FC1026/10 Community Grant Scheme

Members considered report 42/2627 and the Grant Panel's recommendations regarding applications from Diss & District Community Shed and Diss Fringe Festival.

a) Diss & District Community Shed

Members considered the application for start-up costs associated with the Community Shed. It was noted that the project had experienced delays in securing its intended premises and had therefore identified temporary accommodation. Members also noted that the organisation had secured other grant funding and that Council funding should not duplicate expenditure funded from another source. It was

Resolved: To award a grant of £1,000 to Diss & District Community Shed towards eligible equipment and start-up costs, with the original £500 rent element reallocated to eligible items from the submitted start-up expenses list.

b) Diss Fringe Festival

Members considered the application for a new Diss Fringe Festival, intended to provide performances and activities across a number of venues within the town. Members noted that the event would be led by the Corn Hall and was intended to support activity within the town and encourage footfall. It was

Resolved: To award a grant of £4,620 to the Corn Hall on behalf of the Diss Fringe Festival towards the management fee, marketing and website costs.

Both grant recipients will be required to comply with the Council's standard grant conditions, acknowledge the Council's support, provide evidence of expenditure on request and submit appropriate post-project monitoring information.

(Action: Town Clerk/RFO)

FC1026/11 Town Centre Parking Scheme

Members considered report 43/2627 regarding the developed proposals for the Heritage Triangle, Mere Street and Market Place parking schemes. Members of the public raised several points regarding the revised proposals, particularly the proposed disabled parking arrangements in the Market Place, parking enforcement and the relative priority of the Heritage Triangle. Questions were also raised about the wider scheme, including the Mere Street proposals, their feasibility and the next stages of the process.

In response, it was clarified that the scheme had been under consideration for several years and that progressing the proposals would enable Norfolk County Council to undertake further work on costs, funding and the necessary highways and Traffic Regulation Order processes. Members subsequently agreed that all three elements should progress to the next stage, rather than risk further delay, with detailed costs and any proposed Town Council contribution to be reported back to Council. It was

Resolved: To approve the developed proposals shown at Appendix B to progress to the next stage with Norfolk County Council, noting that detailed costs, proposed funding contributions and any requirement for further financial approval would be reported back to Council once confirmed.

(Action: Clerk; to progress with NCC; immediately)

FC1026/12 Policies and Governance Documents

Members considered the revised and new policies and governance documents presented for approval. It was

Resolved: To approve and adopt the following documents, subject to the Street Lighting Policy being amended to reflect the updated number of footway lights for which the Council is responsible and the requirement for the Ministry of Defence to sign the Armed Forces Covenant being removed:

a) Proof of Life Certification Policy;
b) Artificial Intelligence Policy;
c) Street Lighting Policy;
d) Scheme of Delegation;
e) Armed Forces Covenant; and
f) Diss Cemetery – Authorised Vehicle Access Policy.

(Action: DTC Admin; immediately)

FC1026/13 Items for Noting

a) Members received and noted the Town Clerk's update report (44/2627). The Town Clerk further reported that the DYCC architect was working through the latest detailed comments, with a further meeting proposed for the week commencing 2 November. An updated portacabin lease and comments on the transfer agreement had also been received, with both documents expected to be brought to Council in November.

b) Members received and noted the Facilities & Buildings Manager's update report (45/2627).

c) Members received and noted a verbal update from the Town Mayor on activities since the last report.

d) Members received verbal updates from other Council members on recent activities.

e) Members noted the minutes of the Remembrance Committee meeting held on 5 October 2026. Members were reminded of the request for assistance with the Remembrance event and further offers of help were received.

f) Members noted the minutes of the Events Committee meeting held on 13 October 2026.

g) Members noted progress on decisions made at the previous meeting of Council. Members raised concerns regarding reported rat activity near the footpath between Park Road and the park. It was agreed that the Facilities & Buildings Manager would be informed and the Council's pest-control contractor asked to inspect the area.

(Action: Facilities & Buildings Manager; immediately)

FC1026/14 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 18th November 2026 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed: 21.15.

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Councillor D. Craggs
Chair / Town Mayor