

# DISS TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the **Infrastructure Committee** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Members: D. Collins  
S. Kiddie  
A. Kitchen  
K. Murphy (ex-officio)  
S. Olander (Chair / ex-officio)  
R. Peaty  
L. Sinfield  
E. Taylor (ex-officio)  
J. Welch  
J. Wooddissee (Vice-Chair)

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte Richards (Town Clerk/Chief Executive Officer)  
Cllr G. Waterman

**INF1023/01 APOLOGIES**  
There were none.

**INF1023/02 NOMINATION OF SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVES**  
There were none.

**INF1023/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST<sup>1</sup> AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Minute No.	Councillors Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
INF1023/09	A. Kitchen	X		This councillor lives on one of the roads put forward for the Residents Parking Scheme.

**INF1032/04 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**  
It was

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Infrastructure Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were a true record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

**INF1023/05 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**  
There were no members of the public in attendance.

**INF1023/06 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**  
There were no items of urgent business.

*The following items were brought forward to allow councillor Waterman to speak on the items before departing thereafter.*

**INF1023/07 GREEN CORRIDORS**  
Members received an update (report reference 28/2324 referred) regarding developing more green corridors in Diss as part of the Council's green agenda. Cllr Waterman has surveyed the town, received some suggestions from members that can be added and has identified a few areas where the biggest difference could be made. If the project is taken forward correctly, it shouldn't be too costly or resource intensive. Flexibility will be required regarding planting dates due to weather and the work should be monitored and publicised. It was also noted that consultation with stakeholders is key so there is a holistic approach.

This includes collaboration with the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan members as works will cross parish boundaries. There were recommendations for how to optimise cutting and planting certain

species to attract wildlife. The mound on the mini roundabout connecting Denmark St & the A1066 by the Park hotel was identified as a potential site and it is understood to be Norfolk County Council owned. It was

**RESOLVED:** To appoint an action group of councillors Peaty and Welch from the Infrastructure committee and representatives from appropriate Steering Groups including Quaker Wood, Frenze Beck, Fair Green, the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan and neighbouring parishes to assess the options for improving Diss' Green Corridor Network and draft a plan for implementation.

**(Action: JW / RP; by 31.05.24)**

**INF1023/08**

### **BIODIVERSITY POLICY**

Members considered a new Biodiversity policy (report reference 29/2324 referred) required by the strengthened Environment Act 2021 and as part of the Council's green agenda for future adoption by the Executive committee. There was discussion regarding the requirement for a balance between maintenance and maximising biodiversity / cost reduction for example, from a wildlife perspective it would be best not to trim around the memorial stones at the Cemetery and to use any cut branches for wildlife. It was noted that there is a wildlife management plan for the Cemetery and this could be reviewed in light of proposed Cemetery extension including wildflower area. Installing bat, bird and bee boxes around the edge of the Mere should be easy to implement and low cost particularly through engagement with local organisations, volunteers and schools. It was agreed that managing expectations, a planned approach with other stakeholders and publicity is essential. It was

**RESOLVED:** To recommend the adoption of the Biodiversity policy with two amendments to the Executive Committee and to consider an action group to take it forward.

**(Action: Clerk; by 30.11.23)**

### **MEMBER'S FORUM**

Cllr Waterman updated members on his changing work and personal commitments, requiring him to spend much more of his time at work due to a promotion. He has therefore decided to step down from his role as councillor from the end of November so he can focus on other aspects of his life. He will still continue to support the Council as much as he can e.g. leading on the litterpicking group, acting as Dinsdale and he would still like to be involved in event planning and other projects relevant to his skillset. Since joining the Council in September 2022, he has fully committed to the councillor role and does not feel he would be able to give it the time it deserves to carry out the role as effectively. Cllr Waterman was thanked for his considerable contribution to the Town Council over the past year with very best wishes for his future.

**(Action: KM to conduct exit interview; by 30.11.23)**

It was noted that the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan has now been fully adopted by South Norfolk District Council with Mid Suffolk & Babergh Council about to consider it.

There was a request to re-do the disabled bay markings on St Nicholas St.

**(Action: Clerk to report to NCC; immediately)**

**INF1023/09**

### **RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME**

Members received a verbal update on the Residents Parking Scheme following the first stakeholder group meeting with the three local authorities yesterday. It was noted that the project was first initiated in 2018 but Diss had to await project completion in Trowse & Cringleford and can benefit from that experience. Discussions centred around priority areas with the town centre including Mere St & the Triangle being number one due to the frequent reports of illegal parking. Norfolk County Council's (NCC) legal team is checking to see what can be achieved within the current Traffic Regulation Order. A third Enforcement Officer has been agreed by South Norfolk District Council. Potential displacement will be considered from the centre of Diss outwards, funding is available via NCC, re-positioning of planters and other street furniture will likely be a feature alongside quick wins from the Mere St pedestrianisation project.

**INF1023/10 BUDGET**

Members considered budget requirements for the Infrastructure committee (report reference 30/2324 referred). It was

RESOLVED: To approve a budget allocation of £14,500 for Infrastructure committee related projects as set out in the Appendix and subject to change.

**(Action: RFO; immediately)**

**INF1023/11**    **ITEMS FOR NOTING**

- a) CCTV – Members noted that the Cemetery chapel was broken into weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> October with up to an estimated £5k of equipment stolen. An insurance claim will be submitted and CCTV for his site and particularly the Chapel will be investigated with a cost proposal to the appropriate committee.
- b) CIL Funds – Members noted that the Council will be in receipt of an additional £48,734.05 of Community Infrastructure Levy funds on 30<sup>th</sup> October totalling £111,638 in Earmarked Reserves.
- c) Strategic Plan – Members noted that an update regarding the Council’s Strategic Plan will be presented to the next Full Council meeting.
- d) Progress Report – Members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting.

**INF1023/12**    **MEMBER FORUM**

Members considered information and issues relevant to this committee for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda. Given the recent incident near Hughes on the A1066, it was suggested that a safety audit of the area should be undertaken with potential improvement to barriers. It was also noted that signage on the Denmark St roundabout is barely visible due to tree growth, Waveney Park residents cannot get down Stuston Road due to parked cars (enforcement issue) and 70 new electric buses will be used in Norwich with the older buses being relocated to rural areas.

**(Action: Clerk; by 18.01.24)**

**INF1023/13**    **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Infrastructure committee is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Meeting Closed at: 9pm.

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Chairman: Councillor Olander