

DISS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held in the Council Chamber at Diss Corn Hall on Wednesday 13th April 2022 at 7.15pm.

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

In attendance: S. Richards (Town Clerk)
District Councillor Minshull

FC0422/01 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr R. Peaty due to testing positive for Covid-19 and Cllr Browne who is suffering with ill health. Cllr Warren was not in attendance.

FC0422/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

FC0422/03 MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 16th March 2022 were approved as a true record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC0422/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one member of the public present. Apologies were received from County / District councillor Kiddie and District cllr Wilby. District councillor Minshull provided a report on behalf of county / district councils. It was noted that the A1066 in Roydon resurfacing following the drainage works have been postponed until May due to road works on the A11 and the A1066 being used as a diversion route. Works to address flooding by De Lucy house will take place in the summer lasting 6-8 weeks followed by the junction improvement scheme at Vinces Road, which will cause delays for motorists.

The District Council LINK magazine is being distributed and provides an update on activities including an increase in electric car charging in car parks & at the leisure centre. Bins have been booked free of charge for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event. The District has seen a great response to the Ukraine crisis with Diss providing the highest support of any town. South Norfolk House in Long Stratton will act as a rest centre and sessions will be held for Ukrainian refugees to help them settle into way of life in the UK.

Recent advice issued by Natural England concerning nutrient pollution in the protected habitats of the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation and the Broads Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site may have implications for the consideration of planning applications in Diss despite it being outside the area. More information will be provided by the District Council in due course.

FC0422/05 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

FC0422/06 FINANCE

a) Members noted bank outgoings for March 2022. Councillor Gingell has queried four payments with the Responsible Finance Officer. A correction is required to the entry for Hillside Office Supplies on page 2 as the transaction detail does not match.

(Action: RFO; immediately)

- b) Members noted the summary of Income and Expenditure for March 2022 subject to year-end adjustments.
- c) Members noted Earmarked Reserves for March 2022.

FC0422/07 **RISK REGISTER**

Members considered a revised Risk Register. The Deputy Clerk and RFO were thanked for the improved document and minor corrections to the figures in the table have already been notified to the RFO. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the revised Risk Register.

(Action: RFO; immediately)

FC0422/08 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

Councillors considered a new Schedule of Meetings for 2022-23. The Clerk advised that the schedule follows the same format as the current year with the same number of committee and Full Council meetings annually. A few dates have been changed to accommodate councillor / Officer availability. The dates for the Annual Town Meetings and informal meetings of members have been added for ease of reference. The rescheduled Infrastructure committee meeting is proposed for either 25th May or 8th June with a preference from the Clerk for the latter given the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event on 2nd June. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the new Schedule of Meetings for 2022-23.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0422/09 **COUNCILLOR INDUCTION**

Members considered the councillor induction pack and checklist. It was agreed that the word 'appraisal' would be replaced with 'development' at item 16 of the checklist. There was a request for the documentation to be sent to all members and it was noted that access via councillor Office365 accounts to a councillor folder with relevant documentation is being investigated. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the councillor induction pack and checklist.

(Action: Clerk; by 31.05.22)

FC0422/10 **DISS CEMETERY**

Members received an update on the proposals from Scott Properties Ltd regarding the land east of Shelfanger Road and west of Heywood Road. There was concern from several members regarding the maintenance/management fees associated with purchasing new freehold property given Council tax contributions. It was noted that the charges were introduced 10-15 years ago when District Councils stopped adopting areas. Members discussed the Section 106 payment, a charge levied by Councils on a developer up to a certain amount to cover infrastructure required in the area. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the revised annual base figure of £27,182 for Cemetery maintenance.

(Action: Clerk / ET; immediately)

FC0422/11 **COUNCIL LEADERSHIP**

Members considered the response from the Norfolk Association of Local Councils and revised report regarding the role of Council Leader. District councillor Minshull provided some background to the rationale for creating a Council Leader role as he was a Town councillor at the time. Splitting the roles allowed for the Town Mayor to focus on attending the many events and chairing Full Council whilst the Leader provided day to day strategic direction for the Clerk. The plan was to elect the Leader each election period to provide continuity but given there was only 1 year of the period left when it was introduced as a trial. Members could have a vote of no confidence in the role of a member if it was deemed that s/he wasn't doing an effective job. Councillor Minshull has been approached by two other town councils keen to adopt a similar approach. Cllr Olander put forward a proposal for an amendment to remove 'each year' from point 2 under Council Leader role. It was

RESOLVED: That the Council Leader role be agreed as per the protocol provided with the report headed 'Diss Town Council Leader Role and Protocol' with the wording on page 1 to read as,

2. 'The Annual Meeting of the Town Council (in May) shall elect a councillor with the additional title of Council Leader in accordance with Standing Orders. It is expected that the councillor with the Council Leader title, is elected for the electoral term. This

will provide the opportunity for the Leader to develop in the role and provide consistent leadership for the duration of his / her tenure and

3. The Council Leader title may be removed from a councillor at any meeting of Full Council, and they will continue in their role as a Town councillor. Full Council will then decide which councillor should be given the additional title of Council Leader. The motion to remove the title of Council Leader from a councillor must be notified prior to and included in the agenda of that meeting.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0422/12 **ELECTIONS OF TOWN MAYOR AND COUNCIL LEADER**

Members discussed candidates for the roles of Town Mayor and Council Leader prior to nomination. Cllr Olander explained he wanted a more open and transparent process for nominations so members are aware of those who may wish to stand for the roles prior to receiving the nomination papers. Cllr Taylor would like the opportunity to continue in the role of Town Mayor for another year. He's really enjoyed the role and would like to be in the role to see the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan go to referendum given the hours he's committed for more than 5 years. He also feels he's missed out on major events due to the pandemic. It was noted that cllr Taylor has also developed key contacts both in the town and outside. Cllr Kitchen stated that he really enjoyed the role when he was Town Mayor and would like another opportunity. Cllrs Gingell and Valori both stated that they would not be standing for either role.

(Action: Clerk to arrange for nomination papers to be distributed; by 22.04.22)

FC0422/13 **DISS YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Members considered the additional costs of the refurbishment works to the upstairs of the DYCC (report reference 68/2122 referred). It was

RESOLVED: To approve expenditure of £3,684.97 for the refurbishment works to the Diss Youth & Community Centre upstairs space allocated to DYCC R&R and Earmarked Reserves DYCC.

(Action: Clerk / MM / RFO; immediately)

FC0422/14 **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting of Council.

FC0422/15 **MEMBER FORUM**

Members considered information and issues relevant to Council for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda. Cllr Wooddissee advised members that there is a proposal to install a town composter at the rear of the DYCC to complement the community fridge initiative and funds are set aside. It was noted that it would be helpful if the boarded-up shop windows could be repaired prior to the event season and cllr Welch agreed to speak to the owners / tenants. Cllr Olander advised members that Chris Moyse from Park Radio Ltd was grateful to receive a certificate of acknowledgement from the Town Council for his service to the community on his last day at the station.

FC0422/16 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members noted that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for Wednesday 18th May 2022.

FC0422/17 **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 item which is properly considered to be of a confidential nature.

FC0422/18 **DISS CEMETERY**

Members received a verbal update regarding the Cemetery chapel roof contract. Works have stopped following the discovery of a bat and the Council awaits a report from an ecologist regarding recommendations for further works.

Meeting Closed: 8.48pm.

Councillor Taylor
TOWN MAYOR