

DISS TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 19th April 2023** at **7.15pm.**

Present: Councillors D. Collins
M. Gingell
S. Kiddie
A. Kitchen
K. Murphy
S. Olander (ex-officio)
J. Robertson
L. Sinfield
E. Taylor (ex-officio / Chair)
G. Waterman
J. Welch
J. Wooddissee

In attendance: S. Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk)
1 member of the public

FC0423/01 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Browne & Peaty.

FC0423/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Minute No.	Councillors Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
FC0423/16	J. Wooddissee	X		One of the nominees is a former family member of this councillor.
	G. Waterman	X		One of the nominees is a good family friend of this councillor who also nominated the councillor for the award last year.

FC0423/03 MINUTES

It was.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 15th March 2023 approved as a true record and were signed by the Town Mayor.

FC0423/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillors considered a resolution under Standing Orders 3d to 3h to suspend the meeting to receive reports from the County and District Councillors, and to hear comments from members of the public on items to be discussed on the agenda.

There was one member of public in attendance who spoke on lobbying the District and County Councils for improved infrastructure notably highways and leisure provision in Diss particularly compared to neighbouring towns. It was noted that this was not an item on the agenda, that the Town Council is working with higher tier authorities in both areas and will continue to do so and the member of the public is welcome to put forward comments for future discussion or consideration by the appropriate committee.

FC0423/05 **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business which the Town Mayor or Town Clerk had previously been informed at least 24 hours before the meeting.

FC0423/06 **FINANCE**

Members noted:

- a) the bank outgoings for March 2023. Cllr Gingell will discuss a couple of points with the RFO.
- b) the provisional summary of Income & Expenditure for March 2023, which is subject to year-end adjustments.
- c) the provisional Earmarked Reserves for March 2023, which are subject to year-end adjustments.

FC0423/07 **QUARTERLY REPORT**

Councillors considered virements from General Reserves to two budget cost headings relevant to the 3rd finance quarterly report reference 59/2223 following consideration by the Executive committee. It was

RESOLVED: That the cost heading "Council Properties" receives a £15K virement from General Reserves and the cost heading "Administrative Overheads" receives a £11K virement from General Reserves.

(Action: RFO; immediately)

FC0423/08 **CEMETERY**

a) Councillors considered a proposal to remove the overage on the sale of the Cemetery bungalow to improve the likelihood of a purchase (report reference 67/2223 referred). It was noted that marketing the property with more than one agent would incur additional fees. It was

RESOLVED:

- 1) To remove the current condition of sale regarding the overage on the Cemetery bungalow.
- 2) To terminate the agreement with Abbots and appoint Whittley Parish to market the Cemetery Bungalow with an initial purchase price of offers of over £275k.

(Action: COO; immediately)

b) Members considered a report (reference 68/2223 referred) regarding the cemetery chapel roof works. Cllr Peaty, as a member of the project action group, commented in advance of the meeting that over £6k of additional costs related to the discovery of bats with further expense in completing extra works outside the original project scope namely replacing beams and repainting fascias whilst the scaffolding was in place. The work appears to be of a high standard and if they fulfil their warranty terms, there should be no further expense for many years to come. It was

RESOLVED:

- 1) To approve expenditure of £15,295.44 to nail every tile as per Appendix B.
- 2) To approve expenditure of £7,656 for the additional timbers and fascia decoration as per Appendix D.
- 3) To approve the request for payment of £24,826 from M&J Group.
- 4) To allocate additional funds of £20,319 from General Reserves to Earmarked Reserves Cemetery Chapel roof at year end to cover the shortfall in total project costs.

(Action: RFO; immediately)

FC0423/09 **PARK**

Councillors received report reference 69/2223 referred regarding recommendations to enhance the appearance of the park, one of the town's greatest assets. It was agreed that consideration must be given to arms on benches to maximise accessibility and that the proposed budget allocation had considered approximate costs of high-quality items. It was

RESOLVED:

- 1) To appoint a working party of councillors Collins, Kiddie, Olander and Waterman and staff (Deputy Town Clerk / COO & Facilities & Buildings Manager) to work on the park enhancement project.
(Action: DC / SK / SO / GW / COO / FBM; by 12.07.23)

- 2) To fund up to £55k for the park enhancement project with the balance of the Park Security Earmarked Reserves allocation to be transferred alongside funds making up the difference from the EMR Community Infrastructure Levy.
(Action: RFO; immediately)

FC0423/10 **ELECTIONS OF TOWN MAYOR AND COUNCIL LEADER**

Councillors discussed candidates for the roles of Town Mayor and Council Leader prior to nomination. Cllr Taylor advised that he has undertaken the role of Town Mayor for two years which has been hugely rewarding albeit a big-time commitment. He has attended many events, has learnt a lot about how other Councils outside of Diss do things and feels that he has given credibility to the Town Council during his tenure. He would like to nominate himself again for both Town Mayor and Chair of Planning due to the extension of the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan, which he has worked so hard on for so many years.

Cllrs Murphy and Kitchen also put themselves forward for the Town Mayor role. Cllr Murphy explained that he feels he would be able to manage his time to effectively carry out the role alongside his work commitments and potential District councillor role and is planning to be able to drive soon.

It was noted that the Council currently regards the Town Mayor role as a one-year role and the Council Leader for the four-year electoral term albeit elected each year. Cllr Olander will be nominating himself again for the Council Leader role and is keen to continue as the Chair of the Infrastructure committee. Cllr Gingell will also be putting himself forward for the Leader role and is keen to continue as Chair of the Executive committee.

Cllr Robertson is also keen to continue as the Chair of the Facilities committee.

(Action: cllrs to submit their nomination papers for TM / CL; by 10.05.23)

FC0423/11 **PROGRESS REPORT**

Councillors noted the progress on decisions made at the last meeting of Council. It was noted that the art sculpture, Flock, destined for the Mere's Mouth, is due to be installed the early hours of 28th April and appropriate access arrangements have been made.

Cllr Waterman would like to have an informal BBQ gathering for members at his house over the summer.

FC0423/12 **MEMBER FORUM**

Councillors considered information or issues relevant to Council from members for brief discussion, action, or inclusion on future agendas. It was noted that the Travelodge correspondence would be disseminated in due course.

Given that all 14 councillors were elected unopposed, the Council is in a position at the May meeting to adopt the General Power of Competence and more information would be provided to members prior to the May meeting.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0423/13 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Councillors noted that the Annual Meeting of the Town Council is scheduled for Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7.15pm.

FC0423/14 **PUBLIC BODIES (Admissions to Meetings)**

Councillors considered a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Orders 3d to exclude members of the public and press to discuss the following item which is properly considered to be of a confidential nature.

FC0423/15 **TELEPHONE & BROADBAND CONTRACT**

Councillors considered a recommendation from the Infrastructure committee regarding the Council's telephone & broadband provision (confidential report reference 66/2223 referred). There were comments regarding the timeline for the Council Offices refurbishment and the necessity for a wired telephone system. It was

RESOLVED: To include this item on the May Full Council agenda with more information regarding a timeline for the Council Offices refurbishment and requirement for a wired telephone system.

(Action: Clerk; by 11.05.23)

FC0423/16 **HONOURED CITIZEN AWARDS**

Councillors considered nominations received for the Honoured Citizen awards. There was discussion around making two Honoured Citizen awards and a proposal to make a special long service award to one nominee given her dedication to a local school for so many years. It was

RESOLVED: to award Gabrielle Pagan as the Honoured Citizen for Diss 2023-2024 and to award Yvonne Henson with a special long service award for her years of dedication to a local school.

Meeting Closed 9.05pm.

Councillor Murphy
TOWN MAYOR