

DISS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the **Infrastructure Committee** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 24th January 2024** 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
Vacant (Vice-Chair)

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte Richards (Town Clerk/Chief Executive Officer)
1 member of the public

INF0124/01 **APOLOGIES**
There were none.

INF0124/02 **NOMINATION OF SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVES**
There were none.

INF0124/03 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST¹ AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Minute No.	Councillors Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
INF0124/08	A. Kitchen	X		This councillor lives on one of the roads being considered under the Residents Parking Scheme.

INF0124/04 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**
It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Infrastructure Committee held on 18th October 2023 were a true record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

INF0124/05 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
There was one member of the public in attendance who spoke on item INF0124/07.

INF0124/06 **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**
The height of the Mere water levels was raised given significant rainfall, which is impacting on effective drainage. It was noted that there are several stakeholders required to act. The development of the John Grose site by South Norfolk & Broadland District Council and proposed move by Aldi would provide a good opportunity to discuss requirements. The landowners behind the premises in Mere St which back on to the Mere are working together to fill in the potholes in the rear access via the Kingshead Yard. It was agreed that the Clerk would schedule a meeting with the stakeholders to discuss the Mere water levels and drainage issues.

(Action: Clerk; by 31.03.24)

This item was brought forward to allow the member of the public to speak.

INF0124/07

GREEN CORRIDORS

Members received a verbal update regarding developing more green corridors in Diss as part of the Council's green agenda. Additional trees have already been planted on the Old High Road between Diss & Roydon. Given the ownership of Rectory Meadow by Diss Town Council, this is a relatively straight forward site to improve next. Planting is proposed around the fringes of the site to avoid use by Diss & District Cricket Club. They propose improving the connectivity of the hedgerow adjacent to the Junior school given gapping. The Skelton Road end is bare & a trap for litter. It is proposed to remove the ivy and instal hedgerow plants and smaller trees to allow animals to move about.

It was noted that large trees were removed from this area due to anti-social behaviour so this would need to be carefully considered. The repair café and / or men's shed have been approached to help supply bat & bird boxes. Possible tree species include flowering cherries, which are attractive and don't grow too big and a variety to keep interest throughout the year & increase pollen. Contact details for the Cricket Club would be forwarded.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

A wildflower area could be planted alongside verges in Bramley Close & Orchard Grove and a few bags of seed have been acquired. It should be relatively straightforward to sow wildflower seed in the grassed area at the end of Mere St as permissions have been acquired. The Morrisons recycling centre has been tidied with agreement from the supermarket that this will be regularly monitored. Members wanted to improve the Morrisons roundabout albeit this is land owned by G W Padley.

There is traffic island mud build up and grass growth along Park Road and this would be added to the task list for the next Highways Rangers visit.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

There was discussion regarding a working party to plant the trees / hedgerows. Five or so volunteers would be sourced from Council and the public. Roydon is having a Green Day at 4pm on Sat 3rd February and Cllr Welch agreed to attend and speak about the Green Corridors project.

(Action: cllr Welch; by 03.02.24)

Members considered the area on the Park near the Nunnery and it was proposed that bat boxes could be installed on the three oak trees near water and away from path lights and iris' would be planted in this area. Content would be provided on this project for the forthcoming issue of Diss Matters.

(Action: G. Waterman; by 15.02.24)

It was also noted that the Quaker Wood Steering Group had contacted the Denmark Lane landowner as they are interested in taking over management of the space.

INF0124/08

RESIDENTS PARKING SCHEME

Members received a verbal update on the Residents Parking Scheme following the second stakeholder group meeting with the three local authorities. The Heritage Triangle would be the priority given the amount of illegal parking. Some quick wins can be considered from the original pedestrianisation of Mere St project and site visits are scheduled to Vines Road, Owen Road, Uplands Way, Willbye Avenue, Mount St & Sunnyside to determine requirement. Members raised double parking issues on Uplands Way, which is an area for consideration.

Mission Road is no longer considered problematic, but Stuston Road would be included. Permit holder schemes are only feasible for large areas where the costs can be met. The east – west link road constructed as part of the development next to the Cemetery should alleviate traffic on Sunnyside. Hedges are overgrown along Roydon Road & Norfolk County Council would be requested to write to the landowners.

(Action; Clerk; immediately)

INF0124/09

RAILWAY STATION ACCESS

Members received a verbal update regarding the near completion of the railway station access / egress project including consideration of another westbound bus stop near Station Road on the A1066. It has transpired that the project has been signed off on a bus access / egress only when an exit out only specification for all was agreed. This followed a preference for dual access and egress, which didn't gain support from Network Rail / GA franchise holder. County Councillor Kiddie is following up on this with relevant members at Norfolk County Council as considerable funds were invested in the project not to realise all the benefits and it required his authorisation. Once this has been determined, members can consider the location of a proposed additional bus stop on the A1066.

(Action; County Councillor Kiddie; immediately)

INF0124/10 POST OFFICE CONSULTATION

Members considered the responses received regarding the Post Office consultation and the banking hub. It was noted that the Area Manager for the Post Office franchises, nor the owner of the proposed new premises were unaware of the proposal. The District Council has introduced the Post Office to a business innovation space developer so they can engage regarding potential development or innovation use of the site. It was noted that a banking hub is being considered for Harleston which still has ATMs in Barclays and the Post Office and the removal of ATMs would make it more challenging for local businesses to make cash deposits.

INF0124/11 ROYDON PRIMARY SCHOOL CONSULTATION

Members considered a response to Roydon Primary School's consultation regarding a proposal to establish a 16 place Specialist Hub of Inclusion Practice. Cllr Murphy attended the school consultation and raised concerns regarding the infrastructure impact with the Headteacher. It was noted that the pupils attending are unlikely to move into the area and would travel by taxi if they do not live in Diss already, which would not impact on demand for doctor or dentist services. The additional students would be using the side gate with space to build a taxi turn around point, impacting minimally on the highway particularly given the size of school. The positives of the student experience were discussed including individual support. Roydon Parish Council is considering the consultation before the end of January and Diss Town Council's view on parking impact would be shared with the neighbouring parish. It was

RESOLVED: To support Roydon Primary School's proposal to establish a 16 place Specialist Hub of Inclusion Practice provided it doesn't supplement the existing vehicular flow issues on the highway outside the school.
(Action: Clerk; by 16.02.24)

INF0124/12 ITEMS FOR NOTING

- a) Kingshead Yard – members noted that the owner(s) plan to re-instate a car park on the Kingshead Yard temporarily and from February 2024 until they develop the site. Landowners responsible for the rear access behind Mere St through the car park are pooling resources to fill in the large potholes and information to be shared with the District Council as they are reviewing car park charges.
(Action: KM; immediately)
- b) Flooding on Burston Road – members noted that due to flooding issues on the Burston Road concerning properties located in Diss, Burston & Shimpling Parish Council whose residents are predominantly affected, will be contacting the landowner and relevant authorities to find a solution.
- c) Progress Report – members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting.

INF0124/13 MEMBER FORUM

Members considered information and issues relevant to this committee for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda. Cllr Taylor has been approached by Walcot Rise asking how they can reduce speed limit to 20mph. It was agreed that Norfolk County Council would liaise with residents. Cadent also left the site in a poor state following recent works and a request would be sent for this to be addressed.

(Action: NCC; by 31.03.24 / Clerk; immediately)

INF0124/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Infrastructure committee is scheduled for 24th April 2024.

Meeting Closed at: 9.15pm.

Chairman: Councillor Olander