

Diss Town Council

Minutes

Draft

Minutes of the meeting of the **Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 26th November 2025** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors: S. Browne, D. Craggs (ex-officio), C. Dente (Vice-Chair),
J. Robertson (ex-officio), L. Sinfield, J. Welch

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk)
Robert Ludkin (Facilities & Buildings Manager)
Colin West (Office Administrator)
3 members of the public

AIE1125/01 Election of Chair of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee for the Municipal Year 2025/26

Members considered the election of the Chair to the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26. It was

Resolved: to elect Councillor Dente as Chair for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26.

AIE1125/02 Apologies

Councillor's Name	Apologies Received	Absent Without Apology	Reason / Approval
S. Kiddie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ill health
K. Murphy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

AIE1125/03 Election of Vice-Chair of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee for the Municipal Year 2025/26

Members considered the election of the Vice-Chair to the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26. It was

Resolved: to elect Councillor Sinfield as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26.

AIE1125/04 Nomination of Substitute Representatives

There were none.

AIE1125/05 Declarations of Interest

Minute No.	Councillor's Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
Item 11	S. Browne	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Presenter of Park Radio who are based at the Corn Hall

AIE1125/06 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee meeting on Wednesday 1st October 2025. It was

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee held on Wednesday 1st October 2025 as a true record and were signed by the Chair with one minor amendment as cllr Murphy was not present.

AIE1125/07 Public Participation

There were three members of the public in attendance who wished to speak on items 10, 14 and 15.

AIE1125/08

Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business raised.

AIE1125/09

Tree Management

- a) Members considered quotations for a tree inspection of Council-owned trees across all sites to inform a three-year management plan to commence in April 2026 (report 35/2526). Comments were made regarding the wide range in prices against the same specification & that the most cost-effective one will meet the Council's requirements. It was

Resolved: 1. To approve the appointment of Company B at a cost of £525 to undertake the tree survey.
2. To approve the contract period for the tree management contract of 1st September 2026 – 31st August 2029.
3. To approve the advertising of the tree management contract on the Find-Tender website given it's expected value over the £30k threshold.

(Action: FBM / Clerk; 1. by 30.01.26)

- b) Members considered a quotation from the Council's tree surgeon to reduce the height of the Liquidambar tree in St Mary's churchyard to improve visibility of the newly refurbished church clock. It was noted that the tree works application has been sent to the Planning Authority by the Council's tree surgeon so the decision will be subject to consent. It was

Resolved: to reduce the height of the Liquidambar tree in St Mary's churchyard to improve visibility of the newly refurbished church clock subject to planning consent.

(Action; FBM; by 31.03.25)

AIE1125/10

Heritage Garden Maintenance

Members considered a report reviewing the Heritage Garden maintenance and considered a proposal from the Diss Community Woodland Project (DCWP) for ongoing management. The Chair of the DCWP spoke about the works completed over the last year, which focused on hedge cutting, pruning, watering, path maintenance and new planting to improve biodiversity. It was noted that these works are the responsibility of the Heritage Trust, and they have seen the report and are happy with their work.

Given the DCWP is about to finalise the purchase of additional land on the east side of Diss and expanding reach, they need to raise funds to cover the costs of managing their sites and have the public liability insurance in place. They will ensure the site is safe and attractive to visitors whilst considering the biodiversity of the site such as cutting different sections at different times of the year to improve habitats. It was agreed that the grounds maintenance contract considered by the Council last week would exclude the heritage gardens except for the weedkilling task.

Members discussed the current agreement between the Heritage Trust & DTC regarding the garden maintenance, and this would be updated accordingly. It was

Resolved: 1. To approve a one-year contract with the Diss Community Woodland Project to maintain the heritage gardens excluding weed spraying to be carried out by the ground's maintenance contract.
2. To review the Memorandum of Understanding between the Heritage Trust and Diss Town Council and update accordingly.

(Action; Clerk; by 31.03.25)

AIE1125/11

Corn Hall

Members considered a contribution towards the cost of replacing the emergency lighting at Diss Corn Hall. There was discussion regarding landlord / tenant responsibilities, and it was noted that a precedent has been set as it has been previously paid for jointly. A request was made to ensure this is budgeted every 2-3 years. It was

Resolved: to contribute 50% towards the costs of replacing the emergency lighting at Diss Corn Hall.

(Action; FBM; by 31.03.25)

AIE1125/12

Property Flood Resilience Scheme

Members considered Norfolk County Council's existing Property Flood Resilience Scheme and questionnaire response. It was noted that Roydon Parish Council completed the survey in October. One of their councillors is a habitat expert & undertaken a lot of work on flooding. He emphasised the need to focus on the correct land management with landowners fulfilling their riparian responsibilities. It was agreed that the feedback from Roydon PC would be acquired and this item reconsidered at the next meeting.

(Action: Office Administrator; by 15.01.26)

AIE1125/13

Acquisition of Go-East Anglia and Passenger First Network Engagement

Members considered the consultation offer from Transport Made Simple Group with a view to improving our local transport network. It was noted that correspondence has already been shared with Transport Made Simple who are engaging with groups in Diss and planning to hold a meeting in Diss with dates to be agreed. It was agreed that the Council should be involved in the consultation and this provided an opportunity to follow up the meeting councillor Welch and the Clerk had with the company several months ago. Topics discussed included a new bus route to Thetford & route from the train station to Diss. It was

Resolved: That Councillors Welch & Browne would join a meeting to be scheduled with Transport Made Simple regarding improvements to our local transport network.

(Action: JW / SB / Clerk; as required)

AIE1125/14

Shelfanger Road Development Street Naming

Members considered a request from Norfolk Homes for street names relating to the new Shelfanger Road housing development including proposals from Roydon Parish Council. One of their parish councillors explained that the proposals were historically & geographically relevant / contextual. There were several additional names suggested including 'Well Place' given the archaeological wells on the site and it was noted that 'Heywood View' is the name of the development. The Clerk will circulate the District Council's street naming convention, and it was

Resolved: 1. To forward the Roydon Parish Council considered names to the developer

(Action: Office Administrator; immediately)

2. That each member would consider two additional street name ideas for review at the next meeting.

(Action: all members; by 28.01.26)

AIE1125/15

Events

- a) Members noted that the debrief of the Remembrance committee takes place on 24th November. The event was well attended and improved on the Market Place format from last year. Areas for improvement include traffic management, sound, timing around the wreath laying and memorial names & announcing disabled access area. It was also noted that changes are likely with the new Rector starting at St Mary's church in January.
- b) Members noted that the Christmas Lights Switch-On takes place on Saturday 29th November.
- c) Members noted that the date and theme for Carnival 2026 will be announced in the New Year.
- d) Members considered a new format events committee to improve planning and reduce duplication. Changes seek to improve operational efficiency and ensure compliance around event safety / GDPR legislation particularly given considerable workload attached to potential future site development and Local Government Review. The key role played by volunteers in organising events and working on the day was emphasised, and the importance of retaining their goodwill in the new format. There are also general support roles for volunteers.

It was noted that most of the administrative work is carried out by staff members, hours spent on events are being recorded & it would be possible to pare down events to reduce workload. The importance of active involvement from all committee members both in planning the event and on event day was muted. It was noted that other Town Councils have partnered with local organisations to deliver similar events or outsourced them completely and that such approaches could be considered in future. It was also proposed that councillor recruitment should emphasise the requirement to support events.

It was

Resolved: to trial the new format events committee to improve planning and reduce duplication for 2026.

(Action: Marketing & Comms Admin / Clerk; by mid-January)

AIE1125/16 Progress Report

Members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting. The Clerk spoke to Norfolk County Council representatives earlier this week and they will be prioritising work on the Parking Stakeholder project from the Spring due to staffing issues. They will consider combining all three elements of the scheme into one given the time delays. The Traffic Regulation Order will take 18 months so it is estimated that the scheme would be delivered by the end of 2027.

AIE1125/17 Member Forum

Members considered information or issues relevant to this committee from members for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda. It was suggested that the old infant school could be considered as for potential site for development for the new Unitary Mayoralty however logistically and timewise, this would be unlikely.

AIE1125/18 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 28th January 2026 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed: 20.55.

Councillor Dente
Chair