

Diss Town Council

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held in the **Ceremony Room** at **Diss Council Office** on **Wednesday 18th December 2024** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors: S. Browne, D. Craggs, A. Goulder, S. Kiddie, K. Murphy (Chair), J. Robertson, R. Peaty, E. Taylor, J. Welch

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk/CEO)
Susan Hurst (Finance Officer)
County / District Councillor Kiddie
District Councillor Minshull
1 member of the public

FC1224/01 Apologies

Councillor's Name	Apologies Received	Absent Without Apology	Reason / Approval
D. Collins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ill health & house move
A. Kitchen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Work commitments
S. Olander	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
L. Sinfield	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Holiday

FC1224/02 Declarations of Interest

Minute No.	Councillor's Name	Personal/Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
FC1224/16	S. Browne	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This councillor presents on Park Radio Ltd
	J. Welch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This councillor knows one of the Park Radio Ltd presenters well.
FC1224/10	K. Murphy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This councillor is a member of South Norfolk Council.

FC1224/03 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 20th November 2024. It was

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on Wednesday 20th November 2024 as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

FC1224/04 Public Participation

There were three members of the public in attendance. County Councillor Kiddie distributed a leaflet detailing help with living costs. He reported that flood prevention works have been taking place in Roydon, Bellrope Lane and in Frenze Hall Lane and patching work in Walcot Green. The gritters have been out and it was reported that the grit bin at Mere's Mouth has not been refilled.

(Action: KK; immediately)

Cllr Kiddie talked about the recent white paper regarding the biggest organisation of local government in England for over 50 years. It is likely that district councils will be incorporated into wider authorities and initial thinking is that areas will encompass half a million people. This could equate to three areas in Norfolk (920k) and Suffolk (700k). Changes are not currently proposed to Town and Parish Councils with a timescale of at least two years.

As previously reported, all districts are required to start collecting food waste weekly from April 2025 (schools, hospitals, 10+ employees) and domestic April 2026. Vehicles are being ordered now for next year to save money. They are negotiating with the Norfolk Diocese to purchase land for a depot to accommodate the additional vehicles and addressing the recruitment challenge.

District councillor Minshull reported that changes to bin collections will be communicated in the Link magazine, on their website and app. He asked people to look out for vulnerable people over the festive period and confirmed that their Early Help Team is available throughout. The Community Connectors are the best source of information regarding support to elderly people and they can attend social groups with them.

The swimming pool is on schedule to re-open on 13th January. The John Grose site will be cleared early 2025 when discussions around moving the drainpipe from under Aldi to this site should commence.

The Octagon building will be closed and rented for retail once the swimming pool re-opens and a member of staff will be on site to deal with customer enquiries. Cllr Minshull is insured to drive their community vehicle (Octagon on wheels) should it be required.

The Town Council was asked to consider locating a dog poo bin on Stuston Road just past Waveney caravan park due to complaints of bags being disposed of via gardens.

(Action: FBM; by 31.03.25)

Given the widespread usage of the Skateboard Park across the district, Cllr Minshull was asked if they could contribute to the cost of improvements. It was noted that grants cannot be transferred from the district to the town council in this way.

Cllr Browne recently attended the Fair Green Neighbourhood Association's AGM and will report to a future meeting.

(Action: Clerk / SB; by 31.03.25)

FC1224/05 Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business raised.

FC1224/06 Finance

- a) Members noted bank outgoings for November 2024.
- b) Members noted the Income & Expenditure report for November 2024.
- c) Members noted the Earmarked Reserves report for November 2024.
- d) Members noted the reconciliations of income and expenditure with the Council's bank account statements for August, September & October 2024.

FC1224/07 Budget

Members received an update (report 41/2425 referred) regarding the draft budget. It was noted that the precept increase for a Band D householder was originally at 7.79%, which has been reduced to 4.79% supported by an increase in the tax base by approximately 70. It was

RESOLVED: To approve the current budget with the increase of 4.79%, pending any further adjustments before the final budget-setting meeting in January.

(Action: Clerk; by 02.01.25)

FC1224/08 Schedule of Meeting 2025-2026

Members considered a proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2025-2026. It was noted that the Clerk had tried to schedule 6 meetings of the proposed merged committee. It was

RESOLVED: To approve the proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2025-26 including the merged Assets, Infrastructure & Events Committee.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC1224/09 Diss Youth & Community Centre

Members received a verbal project update from the DYCC Action Group. It was noted that the online survey had been publicised and several community engagement sessions have taken place in Morrisons with one scheduled on the Market Place on Friday. Diss High School have been consulted. Over 200 responses have been received to date, but these are relatively small numbers and percentages should be considered accordingly. This is the first step in the process to engage. Initial data analysis suggests that few respondents have been affected by the DYCC closure, the majority

of respondents believe that providing refurbished or new youth and community facilities in Diss is a good and worthwhile idea and that the least expensive options 1 & 2 are the most popular.

It was noted that we should consider different days and times for future consultations to increase the reach and that we need to continue to publicise the survey via the Diss Community Noticeboard on Facebook.

The deadline for completion is 13th January and FMG Consulting will present their findings to the February meeting of Council.

Members also discussed Park Radio relocating to the Corn Hall in early 2025 and discussions with the District Council regarding not duplicating any community facility provision.

FC1224/10

Madgett's Walk

Members considered a proposal to incorporate Madgett's Walk in the District Council's John Grose site (report 42/2425 referred). It was

RESOLVED: To approve that the Madgett's Walk sleeper beds are Heras fenced off within the John Grose development site early 2025 with access for maintenance when required and leaving the footpath open for access.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC1224/11

Christmas Lights Switch-On

Members noted a report (reference 43/2425) regarding the cancellation of the Christmas Lights Switch-on event 2024. It was noted that the Council's current insurer doesn't do extreme weather cover. Other brokers do but it is costly.

FC1224/12

Clerk, Council Leader, Town Mayor & Chair Forum

Members considered updates from or questions to the Clerk, Council Leader, Town Mayor and Committee Chairs on their activities since the last meeting. The Clerk was thanked for her report.

FC1224/13

Progress Report

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

FC1224/14

Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 8th January 2025 at 7.15pm.

FC1224/15

Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings)

Members considered 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.

FC1224/16

Corn Hall

Members considered a confidential sublease to Park Radio Ltd for use of space at Diss Corn Hall (report 44/2425 referred). There was discussion regarding the financial risk to the Town Council, whether this risk in the context of leases is routine and if the Corn Hall's insurance would cover the reinstatement of Park Radio space should the organisation fold. Members also discussed the need for a Town Council Trustee on the Corn Hall Trust board and a review of their next financial accounts from January 2025. It was

RESOLVED:

1. To give delegated authority to the Clerk to work with the Chairs of the 'Assets, Infrastructure & Events' and Executive committees to finalise the details of the sublease subject to the amendments and financial risk and insurance queries being answered and in liaison with the Diss Corn Hall Trust and Park Radio Ltd.

2. To allocate £500 towards the cost of the sublease to the legal fees budget code.

3. To liaise with Corn Hall regarding financial situation.

(Action: Clerk / RP / JR; by 18.02.25)

Meeting closed: 8.55pm.

Councillor K. Murphy
Chair / Town Mayor