

# Diss Town Council

## Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held in the **Council Chamber** at **Diss Corn Hall** on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025** at **7.15pm**.

Present: Councillors: D. Collins, D. Craggs, A. Goulder, K. Murphy (Chair), J. Robertson, R. Peaty, L. Sinfield, E. Taylor.

In attendance: Sarah Villafuerte-Richards (Town Clerk/CEO)  
County / District Councillor Kiddie

### FC0125/01 Apologies

Councillor's Name	Apologies Received	Absent Without Apology	Reason / Approval
S. Browne	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
S. Kiddie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ill health
A. Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>N.B. Apology was received post-meeting that he was 'out of county'.</i>
S. Olander	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
J. Welch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical appointment

### FC0125/02 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

### FC0125/03 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024. Members liked the new format for the apologies in the minute template and thanks were extended to the new Admin Officer who suggested it following recent training. It was

**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

### FC0125/04 Public Participation

There was one member of the public in attendance. County / District Cllr Kiddie reported on progress towards devolution. He has an emergency meeting tomorrow regarding legal deadlines to delay elections until May 2026. Norfolk / Suffolk need to identify what they want to do, how the Counties will be split into half a million unitaries and will be asked whether they wish to be involved in the devolution programme. Concerns were raised around devolution to Town & Parish Councils and appropriate resources to deliver services.

There are burst water main issues on Frenze Hall Lane and gritting and filling potholes giving weather conditions. The A1066 has been running pretty well particularly given Aldi development. The plan to bury the pylons has been quashed due to expense. The Leader of Norfolk County has written a letter of objection, as has Suffolk & Essex.

Diss swim centre re-opens on Monday. They are busy training up lifeguards. The site is being secured at John Grose with demolition to follow. A public consultation will be held in February on their plans. There is an electrical recycling event on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 10am-2pm on the medical centre's car park. Apologies were given from District Cllr Minshull who is poorly.

Cllrs Taylor, Goulder & Sinfield keen to attend the swim pool opening. It was agreed the Clerk would follow up with a request.

**(Action: Clerk; immediately)**

- FC0125/05 Items of Urgent Business**  
There were no items of urgent business raised.
- FC0125/06 Finance**
- a) Members noted bank outgoings for December 2024. It was noted that there is a trailer selling coffee in the Park Road car park. Members asked what the Mere's Mouth electricity charge was for and the considerable electricity expense at the DYCC for November.  
**(Action: Clerk; immediately)**
- b) Members noted the Income & Expenditure report for December 2024. It was noted that the financial position following the Christmas Lights switch-on was summarised in the Clerk's latest report and that compensation for the staging, sound and lighting would be sought.  
**(Action: Clerk; immediately)**
- c) Members noted the Earmarked Reserves report for December 2024.
- FC0125/07 Budget**  
Members received an update (report reference 45/2425) regarding the draft budget. Members thanked the budget action group for their work. It was
- Resolved:** To approve the precept demand to South Norfolk Council of £717,191 or £247.05 for each Band D householder for the financial year 2025/26.  
**(Action: Finance Officer; 13/01/25)**
- FC0125/08 Deputy Mayor**  
Members reconsidered the election of a Deputy Mayor prior to the May elections. One view was that as the Town Council already has a Council Leader and Mayor and each should deputise for the other, there would be little for a Deputy Mayor to carry out. It was noted that councillor attendance at mayoral events is low compared to other events attended in a mayoral capacity.
- The rationale for having the two senior roles and splitting out the strategic duties of the Council Leader and the civic responsibility of a Town Mayor was explained. This model has worked well for many years particularly given that many councillors still work and it helps to reduce the workload.
- There was discussion regarding the frequency of the Council Leader election. One member aspires to be the Town Mayor and, therefore, sees an opportunity to shadow the current Mayor until the May election to better understand and gain experience in the role. This also allows a member to step up and support the Clerk in the absence of a Mayor or Council Leader.
- Members discussed succession planning and separating out senior leadership tasks given the absence of the Council Leader. Mayors traditionally only operate for one year primarily due to the heavy workload when they do not also have a Council Leader however from a continuity and administrative point of view, two years is preferable. It was
- Resolved:** That the February meeting of Full Council consider not having a Deputy Mayor but a Mayor elect to learn from Mayor role leading up to the May election.  
**(Action: Clerk; by 19.02.25)**
- FC0125/09 Clerk's Report**  
Members noted the Clerk's report will be presented to the February meeting of Council given the Christmas break.
- FC0125/10 Progress Report**  
Members noted progress on decisions will be reviewed at the February meeting of Council. There will be another update on the DYCC at the February Full Council meeting.  
**(Action: Clerk; by 19.02.25)**
- FC0125/11 Date of Next Meeting**  
Members noted that the next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed: 8.20pm.

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Councillor K. Murphy  
Chair / Town Mayor