

DISS TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the **Town Council** held in the Council Chamber at Diss Corn Hall on **Wednesday 9th January 2019** at **7:15pm**.

Present: Councillors S. Browne
K. Button
M. Crawford
A. Kitchen
C. Liggett
J. Mason
S. Olander
J. Robertson
E. Taylor
F. Wenman
T. Wenman (Town Mayor)

In attendance: Sarah Richards, Town Clerk
Sonya French, Deputy Town Clerk
County / District Councillor Kiddie
District Councillors Minshull & Palmer
3 members of the press
2 members of M Scott Properties Ltd
75 members of the public

FC0119/01 **TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Howard & Gibson.

FC0119/02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Minute No.	Councillors Name	Personal/ Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
FC0119/14	Councillor S. Browne	✓		This councillor is a governor at Diss High School and employee of the Diss Citizens Advice Bureau.

FC0119/03 **MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 12th December 2018 were signed by the Town Mayor as a true record of the meeting.

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

FC0119/04 **PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION**

Members considered a pre-planning application proposal for the Parish Fields site situated on land between Shelfanger Road and Mount Street. The agent, M Scott Properties Ltd, presented their proposed development to build 24 single storey retirement dwellings to deliver accommodation for the ageing population on a designated site in the South Norfolk Local Plan. It was noted that this proposal constitutes 45% of the total site area, the remaining area would be 'unlocked' for public access & that the current proposal reflects engagement with the emerging neighbourhood plan process and the Town Council. New accesses are proposed for vehicles, pedestrians & cyclists along with 76 parking spaces (3.1 per dwelling). It was noted that the site is in private ownership and is identified as an Important Local Open Space falling within the wider conservation area, which permits development only where it retains the open character and appearance of the site. Several category C trees/group and one category B group would need to be removed to accommodate the proposed development, which would be offset by additional planting. The next stage is to agree a statement of common ground with stakeholders for use in pre-application discussions with the Planning Authority prior to full public consultation, which is likely to be in the next 3 months.

Members of the public raised concerns regarding land suitability & potential for future changes to the planning consent and development of the eastern side of the site. It was acknowledged that strong conditions would need to be agreed with robust legal agreements in place to ensure they were met.

Further questions related to security for nearby residents & the figure quoted from the neighbourhood planning public consultation which stated that there was 86% support for 'agreeing acceptable development proposals to 'inlock' the Parish Fields for public access'. One of the biggest concerns was consideration of this area as a hugely significant historic and ecological site and the distinction of it from other areas of green open spaces in the town.

It was agreed that there would be a public consultation event scheduled for a day and evening, which would be well promoted and provide opportunities for the public to put forward their views. There was also a request for the agent to discuss the current proposals with the Health Centre.

FC0119/05

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

County / District Councillor Kiddie:

advised that the future of the Diss Children's Centre would be decided at the end of January following his positive meeting. NCC Highways is investigating the perceived lower level of lighting at the new tiger crossing by the leisure centre. Resurfacing works are being scheduled for Stanley Road and Uplands Way & a dropped kerb will be installed on Denmark Hill to aid safer road crossing. Diss High School will be considering travel scholarship awards from its Taylor Hammond Fund & Councillor Kiddie currently has responsibility for waste & recycling.

District Councillor Palmer:

updated members of the forthcoming upgrade to rail carriages with sliding doors.

There were questions on the budget specifically the impact of the Town Council taking on the responsibility for the toilets and streetlighting from the District Council and it was noted this would be considered under the relevant agenda item.

FC0119/06

ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Councillor Mrs Wenman was welcomed back after a short break recovering from illness.

FC0119/07

FINANCE

a) **Payment of Accounts**

Councillors noted payment of accounts since the last meeting of Full Council.

b) **Summary of Income and Expenditure and Earmarked Reserves**

Councillors received a summary of income, expenditure and Earmarked Reserves for the month ending November 2018.

c) **Interim Internal Audit Report 2018-19**

Councillors received the Council's interim internal audit report 2018-19.

FC0119/08

BUDGET 2019/20

Councillors considered the budget and precept request for the financial year 2019/20 (report reference 15/1819 referred). An explanation for the proposed impact on Band D householders was provided including the significant transfers of responsibility for assets previously maintained by the District Council. It was noted that income, by way of a central government grant, has reduced by approximately £60k over the last 4 years & that taking these factors into account, the remaining percentage increase sits between the current CPI & RPI rates. It was noted that the Spring issue of the Council's quarterly publication, Diss Matters, would be used to disseminate budgetary information prior to the Council Tax mailing being received by taxpayers & that there is an opportunity to include a Diss specific budgetary insert as part of the District Council's mailing. There was also discussion on the hire charges review and a request to consider the financial viability of a Sports Ground user given the proposed increase. The user was advised to make representation to the Town Council to consider specific circumstances. It was

- RESOLVED:
- i) To approve the recommendations set out in the hire charges review report (14/1819) with a minor amendment to the Park as follows ix) no change to existing fees.
 - ii) To approve the budget for 2019/20 which reflects a £49,213 increase of 8.83% for Band D household.
 - iii) To approve a precept demand to South Norfolk Council of £548,985 or £202.73 for Band D household.

(Action: RFO/Clerk/TW; immediately)

FC0119/09

COUNCIL LEADER/ TOWN MAYOR

Members considered the interim arrangements for the Town Mayor / Council Leader roles to cover the period from January until the May elections. It was noted that Councillor Mr Wenman agreed to cover both roles during the Christmas period and that Council would consider a way forward until the end of the electoral term at this meeting. There was a proposal for two deputies, one for Council Leader and the other for Town Mayor to support the current Town Mayor / Council Leader and Councillor Olander put himself forward as Council Leader. It was

- RESOLVED: i) that Councillor Mr Wenman would continue as Town Mayor / Council Leader until the end of the electoral term in May
 ii) to elect Councillor Sonia Browne as Deputy Mayor until the end of the electoral term in May
 iii) to elect Councillor Olander as Deputy Leader until the end of the electoral term in May.

(Action: TW/SB/SO/Clerk; immediately)

FC0119/10

EASEMENT

Councillors referred the proposal for an easement to extend the boardwalk as part of the Wetherspoons development in Kingshead Yard car park to the Facilities committee, which was meeting the following week. It was

- RESOLVED: to refer the proposal for an easement to extend the boardwalk as part of the Wetherspoons development to the Facilities committee.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

FC0119/11

ITEMS FOR NOTING

a) Elections - members noted that the nomination packs for the May elections will be changing with details confirmed on the District Council's webpage at <https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/residents/elections-and-registration/current-elections> and a candidate briefing is scheduled for 11th February 2019.

b) Progress Report - Members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting of Council. It was noted that the contract for Gig in The Park would be actioned by the Deputy Leader and Leader.

(Action: TW/SO; immediately)

FC0119/12

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillors noted that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for 20th February 2019.

FC0119/13

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 in order to discuss the following item, which is properly considered to be of a confidential nature.

FC0119/14

ONE PUBLIC ESTATE

Councillors considered the Town Council's response to the One Public Estate project request. It was

- RESOLVED: to draft a letter to SNC requesting further information in order for the Town Council's to consider its response to the One Public Estate project request.

(Action: Clerk; immediately)

Meeting Closed: 21.38.

Councillor Wenman
TOWN MAYOR