

# DISS TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held in the Council Chamber at Diss Corn Hall on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7:15pm.

Present: Councillors S. Browne (ex-officio)  
M. Gingell  
N. Howard (Chair)  
S. Kiddie  
J. Mason (Vice-Chair)  
S. Olander (ex-officio)  
D. Poulter  
J. Robertson  
E. Taylor

In attendance: Miss S. Richards (Town Clerk)  
1 member of the public

**EX1119/01** **APOLOGIES**  
There were none.

**EX1119/02** **NOMINATION OF SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVES**  
There were none.

**EX1119/03** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute No.	Councillors Name	Personal/ Other Interest	Pecuniary Interest	Reason
EX1119/07	S. Kiddie S. Browne	✓		These councillors are members of the Diss Carnival Committee.
EX1119/14	J. Mason	✓		This councillor is a family member of the contractor quoting at item 14.

**EX1119/04** **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**  
The minutes of the Executive Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were confirmed as a true record.

**EX1119/05** **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**  
There was one member of the public present here to speak on the Carnival item.

**EX1119/06** **ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**  
There were none.

**EX1119/07** **CARNIVAL**  
Members considered a request from the Carnival sub-committee for expenditure on entertainment for Diss Carnival 2020. The Chair of the Carnival Committee explained that she is aiming to improve on the successful event year on year and would like to purchase the services of Titan, a robot with a worldwide following, appearances on many TV shows at a cost of £2640 (inclusive VAT) for the 2020 event. It was noted that this fee includes publicity by the supplier, which will help boost the event's reach. Members reviewed the event's forecasted expenditure and income and it was agreed that the committee has worked very hard to achieve a healthy financial situation and Titan can be afforded. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the request from the Carnival sub-committee for expenditure of £2,640 including VAT on Titan as part of the entertainments programme for Diss Carnival 2020.

**(Action: RFO; immediately)**

**EX1119/08** **COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME**  
Members considered a request from the Diss Organ Festival organiser for grant funding. It was noted that a grant of £2,200 has been requested and that there is £800 remaining in this financial

year's grant pot. There was discussion around the significant increase in footfall brought about by the event in its first year, which benefitted local businesses. It was also noted that attendees visited from far afield. The Norfolk & Norwich Festival is including the event its programme and funding is being sought from various sources including the Heritage Lottery Fund. There was discussion around the importance of supporting events like the organ festival and that is a good example of the type of project that the Council's Community Grant Scheme should support.

It was noted that the request was double that of the grant given by the Town Council in 2018 and members discussed that the difference between the amount requested and the amount available could be considered during the 2020/21 budgeting process. There was discussion around the Council's agreed deadlines for considering grant applications given the date of this event and it was agreed that these should be reviewed as part of the budgeting process. It was

- RESOLVED:
- a) to grant the remaining £800 from the Council's Community Grant Scheme budget to the Diss Organ Festival organiser to support the Diss Organ festival for 2020.
  - b) to consider the deadlines and processes relating to the Council's Grant Community scheme as part of the budgeting process for 2020/21.
  - c) to review the same application from the Diss Organ Festival organiser and consider a grant of the remaining £1,400 as part of the 2020/21 budgeting process.

**(Action: Clerk; immediately)**

**EX1119/09**

### **BUDGET**

Members considered proposals from the Budget Action Group regarding the 2020/21 budget (report reference 18/1920 referred). It was noted that the report summarised the discussion at the Action's Group's initial meeting and that the Group would meet again in two weeks. There was discussion around some of the items such as the Nunnery wall. Should the ownership not be proven, an estimation of 50% of the repair costs had been included. There was also discussion on the proposal to include a cost for purchasing equipment to help clean Mere Street and it was noted this requires a coordinated approach between the South Norfolk District Council (SNDC), traders, the general public and the Town Council. It was noted that cleanliness has improved since the Town Council has been involved and that the maintenance team members would be able to more efficiently undertake this task with the appropriate equipment. Members discussed SNDC's role in supporting market towns given the Future High Streets report, which would be circulated to all and noted that a letter would be distributed to all building owners in Mere Street requesting support in improving the appearance of their buildings via the former Town Team, now Diss Community Team.

Members were reminded that there are several more opportunities to feed into the budgeting process as detailed in the report. The Council's new Responsible Finance Officer advised that this was her first attempt at collating the required information, which would be refined over the next two months prior to approval in January. It was agreed that both positive and negative variances would be explained.

There was discussion on the review of monitoring forms completed by organisations in receipt of grant funds. It was noted that some groups are more reliant on funds than others given account balances/reserves. It was noted that weighting criteria would be difficult due to interrelated items such as 4 & 5. It was agreed that the monitoring form should be reviewed for robustness to determine the amount of operational costs in reserves and how organisations deliver on the Council's vision and objectives. The Clerk also advised before making any final decisions on grant funding, that discussions may need to be held with relevant organisations. It was

- RESOLVED:
- a) for the Budget Action Group to continue its work
  - b) That Councillors Mason and Poulter join Councillor Robertson and the RFO & Deputy Town Clerk in an Action Group to review budget requirements prior to the Facilities committee meeting.

**(Action: BAG / JM / DP / JR / RFO / DepTC; by 21.11.19)**

**EX1119/10**

### **ITEMS FOR NOTING**

- a) Progress Report - Members noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting of the Executive Committee.
- b) S106/CIL Funds - Members noted the updated allocations against S106 monies/Community Infrastructure Levy funds. A revised version was tabled at the meeting. Members were advised that the original estimated cost of the upstairs refurbishment works at the DYCC was based on a

previous quote received from a contractor via a former councillor and it was noted that the specification had changed considerably since receipt. Given the high quotations that have been received to date, there are insufficient funds available to carry out the works. It was also noted that as part of the budgeting process, estimated staffing costs per site would help to ascertain overall true costs versus income, which may determine that the works are not a worthwhile investment. Members discussed whether there is a requirement for office space in the town given planning applications received to convert office space into residential and that pending the staffing cost exercise, the specification of works could be revised to reduce costs. It was noted that three different organisations didn't wish to rent the existing office space due to access arrangements and lack of privacy. It was agreed that the Facilities committee would consider this in more detail.

**(Action: DepTC; by 21.11.19)**

**EX1119/11**      **MEMBER FORUM**

There was no information or issues relevant to this committee from members for brief discussion, action or inclusion on a future agenda.

**EX1119/12**      **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Councillors noted that the next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

**EX1119/13**      **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS)**

Members considered a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 and Standing Orders 1c 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.

**EX1119/14**      **DYCC**

Members considered quotations received for replacing the external staircase at the Diss Youth & Community Centre using monies earmarked in reserves for the DYCC. It was noted that the staircase is the building's secondary fire exit, that all users have been requested not to use the staircase and that advice has been sought from the Council's Fire Risk Assessor. One of the suppliers proposed a straight staircase, which appears large & bulky particularly given the photo provided reflected a staircase approximately half of the height required. There was no photo provided of the spiral option. It was noted that confirmation was required that both options adhere fire escape regulations. It was

RESOLVED: To give delegated authority to the Clerk & Councillor Taylor to approve the preferred supplier of the replacement external staircase at the Diss Youth & Community Centre following further research using up to £9,250 (excluding VAT) of the DYCC Earmarked Reserves.

**(Action: Clerk / ET; immediately)**

Meeting Closed at 8.38pm.

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Chairman: Councillor Howard