

# DISS TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held in the Marriage Room at the Town Council Offices on Wednesday 11th December 2019 at 7.15pm.

Present: Councillors S. Browne (ex-officio)  
D. Collins  
M. Gingell  
N. Howard  
S. Kiddie  
A. Kitchen  
S. Olander (ex-officio)  
D. Poulter  
J. Robertson  
E. Taylor  
J. Welch

In attendance: Sarah Richards, Town Clerk  
Alex Jamieson, Responsible Finance Officer  
County Councillor Kiddie  
District Councillor Minshull  
2 Diss Youth Councillors

**FC1219/01 TO CONSIDER APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Mason.

**FC1219/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

There were none.

**FC1219/03 MINUTES**

It was

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> November were confirmed and signed as a true record.

**FC1219/04 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were two members of the Diss Youth Council present who will be speaking on item 9 along with County Councillor Kiddie & District Councillor Minshull. District Councillor Wilby gave her apologies but provided a written report on which there were no questions. County Councillor Kiddie provided a verbal update including the progress made towards the Compulsory Purchase Order to enable the Vincas Road two-way exit scheme. He also advised that a grant for Diss Bowls Club to improve their field irrigation scheme had been received. District Councillor Minshull has been busy with his Chair's responsibilities and enjoyed the Town Mayor's carol concert. He reported that a grant has also been secured for a new set of colours for the army cadets and that the Community Action Fund is considering a grant of £4k to the Diss Athletics Club for a replacement hammer cage in February.

**FC1219/05 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were none.

**FC1219/06 FINANCE**

- a) Councillors noted payment of accounts for November.
- b) Councillors received the summary of income, expenditure (I & E) and Earmarked Reserves for the month ending November 2019. Comments were raised on the I&E report regarding expenditure to date & budgeting e.g. postage, meeting room hire & HR support. Members were advised that the budget item (8) may address these queries and that the RFO would investigate otherwise.

**(Action: RFO; by 08.01.20)**

- c) Councillors received the Council's end of quarter two report for the month ending September 2019. It was

RESOLVED: to approve the allocation of income budgets to headings to allow for more accurate and relevant forecasting.

**(Action: RFO; immediately)**

- d) Councillors received an end of second quarter bank reconciliation statement. It was noted that there is an action for the RFO to review investment funds post budgeting.

**(Action: RFO; by 31.03.20)**

**FC1219/07 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019-20**

Councillors received the Council's interim internal Audit Report and councillors thanked the staff involved in the process.

**(Action: RFO; immediately)**

**FC1219/08 BUDGET**

Councillors considered recommendations from the Executive committee on budgeting decisions for 2020/21 (report reference 28/1920 referred). It was noted that Earmarked Reserves would be easier to understand during the next financial year as the data will be generated and displayed on the Income & Expenditure reports. Thanks were extended to the RFO for the preparation along with the Clerk into this year's budget setting process. It was

RESOLVED: To approve as recommended by the Executive Committee:

1. A 0% increase in the staffing budget for 2020/21
2. An allocation to cover the potential cost of replacing a member of the maintenance team from Earmarked Reserves.
3. An increase in hire fees of 2% for the Cemetery Bungalow, Sports Ground, Allotments & Mere.
4. The continuation of a £20k grant scheme allocation
5. The re-profile of the current allocation of councillors' allowances including the Town Mayor to reflect the additional responsibilities of the four committee Chairs, the Council Leader and the Town Mayor
6. Approval of the budget publicity plan as detailed.

Members also considered a budget contingency of 3.85% for 2020/21, which would result in a 0% increase on the precept. It was noted that the recommendations from the Infrastructure committee (up to £19k expenditure) would impact on the available contingency if agreed. District Councillor Minshull advised against a 0% increase given that small increase can be more easily justified. There was also discussion about the significant reserves. It was agreed that this recommendation would be considered at the January meeting.

**(Action: Clerk; by 02.01.20)**

**FC1219/09 DISS YOUTH COUNCIL**

Councillors received an update from the Diss Youth Council Chair, Kieran Murphy. The Youth Councillors have been busy at various events throughout the year including the Council's Annual Town Meeting, Mayor's civic service and represented at the Police information stand. They also attended the Cyclathon, Fair Green spider equipment opening, South Norfolk Council's On Show the Diss remembrance parade and Christmas Lights Switch-on events. The Youth Council has also given its time to helping to tidy up the plant pots & maintain the wildlife gardens and arranged an intergenerational lunch connecting both the young and older people in the community. Youth Councillors are currently reviewing what they can do regarding climate change and have talked at a Diss Junior School assembly.

Town Mayor & Youth Council link Councillor Browne thanked the Youth Council for their input across the year particularly regarding the research they undertook at the High School regarding the expenditure of the Section 106 funds and also extended thanks to Julia Fairbrother who also facilitates the Youth Council.

**FC1219/10 PROGRESS REPORT**

Councillors noted progress on decisions made at the last meeting of Council. There was a request for an update on the Diss & District Neighbourhood Plan and it was agreed this would be added to the Infrastructure committee progress report.

**(Action: Clerk; by 12.12.19)**

**FC1219/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Councillors noted that the next meeting of Full Council is scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

**FC1219/12**     **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS)**

Councillors 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.

**FC1219/13**     **CEMETERY CHAPEL**

Members considered information received to undertake a structural survey of the Cemetery Chapels to determine future maintenance costs to inform the budgeting process for 2020/21. It was noted that two quotations have been received to undertake an invasive survey and that a schedule of remedial works would be required in order to tender. It was

RESOLVED:     to appoint Griffiths & Taylor to conduct an invasive survey on the Cemetery Chapels with delegated authority to the Clerk to negotiate fees to include a schedule of remedial works proposed for the January meeting of Council.

**(Action: Clerk; immediately)**

Meeting Closed: 8.52pm.

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Councillor Browne  
TOWN MAYOR