

Minutes of the Property Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday 24 June 2026 Time: 5.30pm

Venue: Town Hall, Bridge Street, Downham Market PE38 9DW

Present

Councillors Lewis (Chair), C Pyatt, Leivers, Wiles, Leach (5)

Non-committee member Cllr Sims

Tina Griffin, Deputy Clerk

The Chair reminded members to turn their phones to silent and explained the emergency evacuation procedures.

1. To note Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Jordan, Pegg, Grover and Lane.

2. To receive declarations of interest and consider requests for Dispensations.

Cllr Leivers declared an interest in item 10.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2026.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2026.

Proposed Cllr Leivers

Seconded Cllr Lewis

All in favour

4. Public Participation

The clerk referred to a request previously circulated from the Festival Committee for free use of the Town Hall during festival week 2027, and for the organising committee's meetings. It was highlighted that this year the various events remained unconfirmed until almost the last minute, which gave insufficient time to organise staffing and negotiate shift changes.

It was agreed that this item be carried forward to the next agenda, and that a draft contract be drawn up covering terms of the hire to include non-negotiable deadlines so that staffing requirements can be properly planned and agreed.

The Chair brought item 9 forward and invited Cllr Sims to speak on the request previously circulated:

9. To consider a request for sponsorship of town planters and agree actions.

Resolved: To decline the offer of sponsorship of the town planters for administration, maintenance and aesthetic reasons.

Proposed Cllr C Pyatt

Seconded Cllr Lewis

4 in favour, 1 against

5. To update on property inspections and agree any actions.

Cllr Leivers highlighted that a couple of yew trees at the JCC appear to have died. It was agreed to monitor them over the summer and for committee to consider replacements in the Autumn.

The clerk advised that the rainwater guttering which runs across the Town Hall kitchen flat roof have come apart and the caretakers have been asked to look at making a repair. They have also been asked to assess some cracks around the upper floor ceiling rose.

The clerk referred to the email from CTS regarding the provision of an uninterrupted power source for the Town Hall alarm system. Cllrs requested more information on which alarm locations are being tripped for discussion at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the area between the Memorial Garden and the private gardens does require a long term solution. In the meantime, the caretakers have been asked to trim back the undergrowth and hedges.

6. To consider and agree actions on the following for the Town Hall:

6.1 Aco drain replacement and step realignment – four site visits have taken place and quotes are awaited – carry forward to the next meeting.

6.2 Bollard flaps and sockets at the entrance/exits to Market Square – Cllr Leach suggested that drop-down bollards should be investigated. It was agreed to invite the contractor who produced the prototype to make a site visit and advise on the best way forward, based on the design provided by Cllr Grover. For further discussion at the next meeting.

6.3 To update – Town Hall windows – The clerk advised that the Conservation Officer had suggested that full replacement of the windows facing the Town Hall car park and those facing the Town Square could likely be agreed as they are of a relatively modern construction. This was not so clear for the side facing Bridge Street which appear to be much older. The Conservation Officer suggested that full replacement might be possible if the original design could be found, if not then repairs with added internal double glazing could then be considered. The architect has been asked to provide a quote for drawing up the plans for listed building consent.

6.4 Replacement guttering Town Square side of Town Hall – The clerk advised that the Conservation Officer will need drawings showing the proposed replacement guttering. If these can be considered a 'repair' it may mean listed building consent will not be required. The architect has been asked to quote.

6.5 Pointing and repairs to front of Town Hall – update – Members were advised that the work to the front corner of the Town Hall has been completed. The Conservation Officer has inspected the work undertaken and is happy with the result. It was agreed to obtain a quote from the contractor to repair the pointing to the lower level on Bridge St and the side facing the Town Square, and to chase quotes for the removal of the vegetation on the upper levels.

6.6 Tie-backs for the new curtains – three options and quotes for tie backs were discussed.

Resolved: To order bespoke tie-backs from the original curtain contractor to include

- Piped bottom edge
- Main fabric used on both the external and internal sides
- Concealed “D” ring for attachment to the tieback hook

Proposed Cllr Leivers Seconded Cllr Lewis 3 in favour, 2 against

7. To consider and agree actions on the following for the Jubilee Community Centre:

7.1 Update on proposed new skatepark – ground survey and agree next steps.

It was confirmed that the ground survey had been completed and the next step would be to consult with the Rob Steele (consultant) and skatepark users on design.

Resolved: To move forward as swiftly as possible and to recommend to HR committee that the process is supported by a Project Co-ordinator.

Proposed Cllr Leach Seconded Cllr Leivers All in favour

7.2 To update on flow plates/speed humps installation/signs/fencing/path

Resolved: To accept the quote from NPS to install a short length of fencing as soon as possible to enable the pedestrian footpath, signage and flow plates to be completed.

Proposed Cllr Leach Seconded Cllr Lewis All in favour

7.3 Adult Gym inspections going forward

Resolved: To accept the quote from The Play Inspection Company to carry out annual safety checks on the Adult Gym equipment.

Proposed Cllr Leach Seconded Cllr Leivers All in favour

7.4 To discuss and agree actions – car park bollards

It was agreed that external contractors be asked to quote for the installation of wooden bollards (with reflectors) along the side and front of the gravel car park, leaving space for vehicles to enter/exit.

8. To update on Car Park Resurfacing tender process and agree actions for recommendation to Full Council.

Members considered the Town Clerk’s analysis of the tenders received for Car Park Resurfacing, concluding that ‘Tender A’ met the contract criteria and offered the best value.

Resolved: To recommend awarding the contract to ‘Tender A’ to Full Council.

Proposed Cllr Leach Seconded Cllr Lewis All in favour

It was agreed to consider renewing the white lining on the other car parks at the next meeting.

9. To consider a request for sponsorship of town planters and agree actions.

See above.

10. To approve the Heads of Terms for the Discover Downham lease.

The suggested Head of Terms negotiated by the Working Group and previously circulated were discussed.

Resolved: To recommend the Head of Terms to Full Council for adoption, subject to an amendment to item 6 'Rent Increase'. Members agreed that the annual rent increase should be fixed at 5% rather than linked to the Retail Price Index which is variable.

Proposed Cllr C Pyatt	Seconded Cllr Wiles	4 in favour
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Resolved: To engage Ward Gethin Archer as solicitors for the preparation of the new lease.

Proposed Cllr C Pyatt	Seconded Cllr Wiles	4 in favour
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Cllr Leivers did not vote on this item.

11. To discuss the Market Square public toilets and agree actions.

Cllr Wiles initiated a discussion on the poor level of cleanliness and the design of the Market Square toilets and asked whether it would be better if the Town Council offered to take them over.

After consideration of the staffing, insurance, and maintenance implications and the issues that have arisen with the design since the renovation, it was agreed not to recommend adoption by the Town Council. The clerk was asked to send a formal complaint to the Borough Council, to include the standards of cleaning, the smell and the lack of extractor fans, together with issues with the threshold into the accessible toilet.

12. To update on potential improvements to access to the Hollies Bus Stop and agree actions.

Resolved: To install the suggested signage warning vehicles of the presence of speed bumps and to indicate a speed reduction to 10mph. Further signage that pedestrians are crossing the road was approved. It was also resolved to wait until the contract for car park resurfacing is awarded and to then discuss the addition of 10mph roundels for the roadway, and possibly lining where pedestrians cross to the bus stop.

Proposed Cllr Leivers	Seconded Cllr Leach	All in favour
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13. To discuss Building Regulations sign-off for No 6 Market Place and agree actions.

The clerk reported that the contractor concerned has had no assistance from the Building Control team in locating records of the sign-offs that happened during the

conversion. It was agreed that the clerk would correspond with Building Control to try to locate the apparent missing records.

14. To discuss and agree a way forward to producing a business/maintenance/budget plan for this committee.

It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting when the budget for the committee would be available. It was also generally agreed to focus on completing the projects currently underway and to include anything further in the budget/maintenance plan. This would exclude the on-going maintenance issues that might arise.

It was suggested that a working group could be considered to produce a draft for further consideration.

15. To consider street lighting ownership and agree actions.

It was agreed to postpone consideration of this matter unless further information is received.

16. To confirm the date of next meeting – 5.30pm 22 July 2026