Minutes of the Property Committee Meeting
Date: Wednesday 22 July 2026 Time: 5.30pm

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

Present

Committee Chair – Cllr Jordan

Committee Members – Cllrs Lane, Leach, Leivers, Lewis, C Pyatt & Wiles (7)

Non-Committee Member - Cllr Sims until agenda item 4 (8)

Claire Dornan - Town Clerk

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

   Apologies were received from Cllr Pegg due to ill health.

2. **Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations**

   Cllr Leivers declared an Other Registerable Interest in agenda item 9.c.

   Cllr Lewis declared an interest in agenda item 9.a. and asked for a dispensation to speak. All members of the Committee agreed to this.

3. **Minutes**
   To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2026.

   RESOLVED:

   'That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2026 be approved as a correct record.'

   Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Wiles All in Favour

4. **Co-option**
   To co-opt a member to fill the vacancy on the Property Committee.

   RESOLVED:

   'That Cllr Sims be co-opted onto the Property Committee.'

   Proposed – Cllr Lewis Seconded –Cllr Leivers All in Favour

   Cllr Sims became a voting member of the Committee.

5. **Public Participation**

   There were no members of the public present and no correspondence had been received for the Committee to consider.

6. **Town Hall and Town Square / Town Hall Car Park Works**
   Town Square

   a. To consider the replacement of the ACO drain and realignment of the steps.

   The Town Clerk confirmed that no quotes had been received from the contractors who had visited the site.

   The Town Clerk was asked to contact Steven Seals and PKS.

   Town Hall Car Park and Town Square

   b. To consider the replacement of bollard flaps and sockets.

   Cllr Lewis advised that he had met with Precision Engineering at 7:00 am on 22 July 2026. The company is to provide a quotation for 21 new sockets, allowing the existing posts to be retained. Of the 21 sockets required, 17 will be located in the drop-off area, 2 at the entrance to the car park, and 2 at the exit to the car park.

   The new socket units will sit flush with the surface to eliminate trip hazards. The lids will be manufactured from stainless steel and secured with 8 mm thick screws positioned 10 mm below the top of the socket.

   A separate quotation will be required for the removal of the existing sockets and the installation of the new units.

   The Town Clerk queried what had been decided regarding the Town Square. As this had not been discussed with Precision Engineering during the meeting, the Town Clerk will contact the company to arrange a site visit to review the available options for the Town Square.

Town Hall

c. To receive a report on the replacement of the Town Hall windows.

RESOLVED:

‘That the Council appoint Darren French Architect to prepare and submit the Planning and Listed Building Consent applications for the proposed replacement and double glazing of the Town Hall windows, in accordance with the quotation received.

The appointment will include an initial site meeting, measured survey, preparation of proposal drawings, completion of the Planning and Listed Building Consent applications, preparation of the Heritage Statement, and liaison with the Planning Authority and Conservation Officer.

The Committee approves expenditure of up to a maximum of £3,000 (plus VAT where applicable), without further referral to Committee, to cover the architect's professional fees, Planning and Listed Building application fees, Planning Portal fees, Principal Designer duties under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, and any reasonable associated disbursements and statutory fees necessary to progress the applications.’

Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Leivers All in Favour

d. To consider the replacement of the guttering on the Town Square elevation of the Town Hall.

The Town Clerk confirmed that this work had been scheduled for 10 August 2026.

e. To receive a report on the pointing and repairs to the front elevation of the Town Hall.

RESOLVED:

‘That the Council accepts the quotation from S Clark Builders Ltd for the additional masonry repair works to the Town Hall in conjunction with the gutter replacement project, comprising:

- **High-level brickwork repairs to be undertaken whilst the scaffolding is in place at a cost of £1,240 plus VAT, including materials.**
- **Removal of weeds and vegetation from the eaves and gable using a spider lift, together with making good any affected mortar, at a cost of £1,020 plus VAT.**
- **Low-level brickwork and mortar repairs at a cost of £1,240 plus VAT, to be undertaken week commencing 10 August 2026.**

All repointing and repair works shall be carried out using NHL 3.5 lime mortar with Middleton Soft White and Sharpe sand, in accordance with the specification previously agreed by the Council.'

Proposed – Cllr Lewis Seconded –Cllr Sims All in Favour

f. To consider the recommendations contained within the LOLER report.

The Council considered the Ehrhart Services LOLER and PUWER Thorough Examination Report dated 23 June 2026 relating to the Grand Hall drape bar and stage equipment.

Members noted that the report identified a D2 defect requiring the replacement of the existing non-rated hauling ropes as soon as reasonably practicable, together with a number of recommendations to improve the safety and operation of the existing manual hemp system. The report also noted that the current system is ageing, contains non-industry standard components, and that a planned upgrade to a mechanised drape bar system had previously been identified as a longer-term solution.

RESOLVED:

'That, in light of the findings and recommendations contained within the Ehrhart Services LOLER and PUWER Thorough Examination Report, the Town Clerk be authorised to obtain three quotations for the replacement of the existing manual hemp drape bar system with a mechanised drape bar system, with the quotations to be presented to a future meeting of the Council for consideration.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane Seconded –Cllr Lewis All in Favour

g. To consider arrangements for the Town Hall lift maintenance contract.

Members were advised that concerns had arisen regarding the standard of service provided by R J Lifts Ltd. In May 2025, the Council received a credit note following poor service. A further issue occurred in May 2026, when it was identified that previous maintenance visits had not been carried out correctly, resulting in the lift operating with no oil in the system.

Members agreed that, in light of the repeated concerns regarding the quality and reliability of the maintenance service, it was appropriate to terminate the existing maintenance arrangements and appoint an alternative provider.

RESOLVED:

'That the Council terminates the Town Hall lift maintenance contract with R J Lifts Ltd and enters into a new maintenance contract with the Council's preferred supplier, with the Town Clerk authorised to make the necessary arrangements to implement the change.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane Seconded –Cllr Sims All in Favour

h. To consider arrangements for the plastering of the Clock Room.

Members were advised that a plasterer had originally been instructed to undertake the works in October 2025, however the work had not been completed. Given the length of time that had elapsed, the Town Clerk recommended obtaining updated quotations before proceeding.

It was agreed that the works would comprise the replastering of the blue wall within the Clock Room. The Town Clerk was requested to obtain quotations from Ricky Stacey, Norfolk Plastering Services Limited (Joe Everitt) & WPS Plastering Contractor, (Nigel Crouch)

No resolution was made, and the matter will be reconsidered once quotations have been received.

i. To consider the purchase of a clock for the Clock Room & Assembly Room.

Members were advised that the Committee had received a generous offer from a donor to fund the purchase of a Large Modern Moving Gear Wall Clock for each room. The cost of each clock is £99.16 plus VAT.

RESOLVED:

'That Committee gratefully accepts the donor's generous offer to purchase one Large Modern Moving Gear Wall Clock for the Clock Room and one for the Assembly Room and records its sincere thanks to the donor. Should the donor be unable or unwilling to proceed with the donation, the Committee agrees to purchase the clocks at a cost of £99.16 plus VAT each.'

Proposed – Cllr Lewis Seconded –Cllr Lane All in Favour

j. To consider the purchase of an evaporative cooler.

Members considered a Portable Evaporative Air Cooler with a 12-litre water tank, cooling fan, ice packs, three-speed settings, 7.5-hour timer, wide oscillation and removable water tank for the Clock Room.

Members discussed the ongoing maintenance requirements associated with evaporative coolers, including the need for appropriate cleaning, legionella management, and the periodic replacement of cooling pads to ensure the units remain safe and effective.

RESOLVED:

'That the Council approves the purchase of two Portable Evaporative Air Coolers at a cost of £79.17 each plus VAT and that appropriate maintenance, legionella

management procedures, and replacement cooling pads are incorporated into the ongoing management of the units.'

Proposed – Cllr Lewis Seconded –Cllr Wiles All in Favour

k. To receive an update on the Assembly Room floor.

Members were advised that, following the inability of the previously approved contractor to complete the works within a reasonable timescale, and in response to regular complaints from hirers regarding the condition of the floor, the Town Clerk sought an alternative quotation.

The alternative contractor attended the Town Hall on a Saturday to inspect the floor and, unbeknown to the Town Clerk, proceeded to complete the work as a gesture of goodwill to the Council.

A Member questioned whether the works should have been permitted to take place, noting that the contractor had not provided copies of their Public Liability Insurance or Risk Assessment prior to undertaking the work. It was acknowledged that, whilst the gesture was appreciated, the Council's normal contractor procedures had not been followed. As the Town Clerk was not on site when the works were undertaken, it had been outside her ability to prevent the work from taking place.

Staff on duty are to be reminded that only works which have been formally authorised and scheduled should be permitted to proceed. Any contractor arriving to undertake unscheduled works should be referred to the Town Clerk before work commences.

l. To consider the hire of the Assembly Room and the introduction of limitations on the types of hire permitted.

The Committee considered the future use of the Assembly Room and the introduction of limitations on the types of hire permitted. Members discussed the need to protect the condition of the room whilst continuing to make it available for appropriate community and commercial use.

RESOLVED:

'That the Committee approves the following conditions for the hire of the Assembly Room:

- **The Assembly Room shall be available for professional meetings and wedding ceremonies.**
- **Low-impact fitness classes, such as yoga and Pilates, may be permitted at the discretion of the Town Clerk.**
- **High-impact fitness classes and heavy weight training sessions will not normally be permitted.**

- **All bookings shall remain subject to the approval of the Town Clerk, and a refundable security deposit may be required where considered appropriate.'**

Proposed – Cllr Jordan   Seconded –Cllr Lane   All in Favour

7. **Jubilee Community Centre**

a. To receive a report on the installation of flow plates, speed humps, signage, fencing and the footpath.

The Town Clerk advised that NPS Fencing and Countryside Management Ltd had completed the fencing works.

Members were informed that the dog control signs being prepared by Masson Seeley & Co. Ltd had been amended following receipt of the draft artwork. Whilst the wording had previously been approved by the Committee, the draft referred to "these fields" when only one field was affected. The Town Clerk requested that the wording be amended accordingly. As production had not commenced, no additional cost would be incurred. Members confirmed that they were satisfied with the amendment.

The Committee discussed the flow plate signage and The town Clerk queried whether members were aware that they had authorised signs without fixing channels. Members agreed that the signs should be amended to enable them to be clipped to posts.

The Town Clerk also noted that there were insufficient suitable posts at the site, and the Town Clerk was authorised to purchase 76 mm diameter posts for their installation.

Members confirmed that a total of 12 flow plates would be installed in two rows.

Members also confirmed that the speed humps had already been purchased.

The Town Clerk reported that N.S. Paving Solutions had notified the Council that it wished to terminate its involvement in the outstanding works after the Council was unable to agree to the contractor's request for seven-day payment terms, as this was contrary to the Council's adopted Procurement Policy.

RESOLVED:

'That, subject to no additional cost being incurred by the Council as a result of the change in contractor, and following confirmation that N.S. Paving Solutions has withdrawn from the outstanding works, the Town Clerk be authorised to appoint an alternative contractor to complete the remaining works relating to the flow plates, speed humps, signage and footpath.'

Proposed – Cllr Sims   Seconded –Cllr Wiles   All in Favour

b. To consider the installation of car park bollards.

The Committee considered proposals for the installation of car park bollards/verge protection.

The Town Clerk advised that enquiries had been made with Fleet Timber and Stoke Ferry Timber, however both suppliers confirmed that they only supplied gate posts and not triangulated-top posts. Members were informed that Glasdon could supply suitable posts at a cost of £155.91 plus VAT per post. Based on 18 posts at approximately 1.5-metre spacing, allowing for a single 2-metre entrance/exit, the total cost of the posts would be £2,806.38 plus VAT, excluding installation materials such as cement, postcrete and reflectors.

Alternative verge protection marker posts (Jakcured, including two reflectors) were also discussed. Members agreed that they did not wish to use posts with metal ground spikes due to concerns regarding underground services and suitability.

The Town Clerk queried whether a single entrance/exit arrangement would be appropriate and whether a safer traffic flow would be achieved by having an entrance at the Jubilee Community Centre end of the car park and an exit towards Rouses Lane. Members agreed that this arrangement would be preferable.

Following discussion, Members decided not to proceed with the posts presented and requested that quotations be obtained for bird's mouth/bird beak fencing as an alternative. Members noted that the fencing would need to be of an appropriate height and design to ensure that vehicles could not mount or become stuck on the fencing. It was also agreed that the fencing should be clearly visible to motorists to reduce the risk of accidental damage.

The Town Clerk queried whether entrance and exit signage would be required. Members agreed that this should be monitored following installation.

RESOLVED:

‘That the Town Clerk obtain quotations for the installation of suitable bird's mouth/bird beak fencing for the protection of the car park verge and, subject to the total cost not exceeding £5,000 plus VAT, be authorised to appoint a contractor and proceed with the works without further reference to the Committee, in order to avoid delay.’

Proposed – Cllr Lewis Seconded –Cllr Leach All in Favour

c. To receive a report on the Skate Park project.

Members were advised of the positive discussions held with Rob Steele of Radii Ramps regarding the next stages of the project. It was explained that the recommended approach was to begin with an informal consultation with skate park users and interested residents to develop a wish list of preferred obstacles. This would allow users to contribute to the design process at an early stage, whilst ensuring that expectations are managed around what is achievable within the available space.

It was also recommended that an online consultation is undertaken to gather wider views and allow users to vote on suitable obstacle options. The results of the consultation would then be used to inform the development of design proposals before the project proceeds to tender.

Members discussed the project timetable and confirmed their aspiration to have works commenced by March 2027. It was acknowledged that this was an ambitious target and that sufficient time would need to be allowed for the consultation process, preparation of tender documents, the minimum 30-day tender period, and the necessary Council approvals before a contract could be awarded.

The Town Clerk will liaise with Rob Steele to arrange:

- an initial informal consultation meeting with users and interested residents to develop the obstacle wish list; and
- a follow-up meeting to review the online consultation responses and consider preferred design options prior to the tender process.

RESOLVED:

'That the Town Clerk arrange an initial consultation with skate park users and interested residents as soon as practically possible to develop a wish list of obstacles and design requirements.

The consultation is to be advertised fully to ensure that all interested parties have the opportunity to contribute, including appropriate online promotion and engagement with local users.

The outcomes of the consultation will be used to inform the next stages of the Skate Park project and the development of design options prior to progressing to the tender process.'

Proposed – Cllr Sims Seconded –Cllr Lane All in Favour

d. To consider the recommendation of the Jubilee Community Centre Business Plan Working Party.

Members were provided with an update on the investigation into the condition of the Jubilee Community Centre roof. The Town Clerk advised that, despite searches being undertaken, no record could be found confirming when the roof was last replaced. It is believed that the existing roof has been in place since the 1960s. The roof has historically shown signs of leaks, although these have been made safe through remedial repairs.

The Working Party advised that, before progressing with any significant upgrade or refurbishment works to the Centre, it was important to ensure that the building was protected by a secure roof with sufficient remaining lifespan. Members agreed that investment in internal improvements should not proceed until the condition and longevity of the roof had been properly addressed.

Members considered the quotations and information received regarding the replacement of the Jubilee Community Centre roof. The Town Clerk advised that Landles had been unable to complete a roof survey. Noble Roofing had undertaken a survey on 14 July 2026 and provided a condition report and quotation. The Morton Partnership advised they do not complete inspection visits.

Members noted the findings of Noble Roofing's report, which advised that the existing flat roof covering had reached, or was approaching, the end of its anticipated serviceable life. The report recommended replacement of the existing roof covering with a new insulated flat roof system, including upgraded insulation, vapour control layer, waterproof membrane, new decking, adaptations to the guttering system, replacement fascias and soffits, and compliance with current Building Regulations. The quotation received from Noble Roofing was £106,945 plus VAT.

The Committee noted that The Morton Partnership could undertake a structural survey at a cost of £750 plus VAT. Members agreed that a structural survey should be undertaken to confirm that the building is suitable to support a new roof system and that the remaining structure has a sufficient lifespan before committing to significant upgrade works. The Town Clerk was requested to obtain alternative quotations for the structural survey to ensure value for money. Any cost for the survey is to be met from the Jubilee Community Centre Maintenance Budget.

It was agreed that further quotations should be obtained for the roof replacement works from New Norfolk Roofing and Proctor Roofing to enable a full comparison and appropriate procurement process to be undertaken.

Members discussed the future development and use of the Jubilee Community Centre.

Proposed improvements to the side room included:

- refurbishment of the side room;
- creation of two additional toilets;
- provision of an office and small kitchen with an external door.

Further improvements proposed included:

- refurbishment of the main room; and
- installation of a kitchen in the rear room.

Members noted that these improvements could allow the Centre to accommodate two separate hirers at the same time, rather than the current limitation of one booking due to the existing single access arrangement.

The Committee requested that the Business Plan Working Party meet to prepare a schedule of proposed works for consideration and approval at the next Committee meeting.
Members also discussed the Boxing Hut and requested that the Town Clerk circulate the plans previously prepared by Ian Bix for consideration.

RESOLVED:

'That the Town Clerk obtain quotations for a structural survey of the Jubilee Community Centre to confirm the suitability of the building for a replacement roof system and the remaining lifespan of the structure, with any approved survey to be met from the Jubilee Community Centre Maintenance Budget up to a maximum of £5,000.

That the Town Clerk obtain further quotations for the replacement of the Jubilee Community Centre roof from New Norfolk Roofing and Proctor Roofing to support the tender and decision-making process.

That the Jubilee Community Centre Business Plan Working Party prepare a schedule of proposed improvement works for consideration at the next Committee meeting.
That the Town Clerk circulate the previously prepared Boxing Hut plans by Ian Bix to Committee members.'

Proposed – Cllr Lewis Seconded –Cllr C Pyatt All in Favour

e. To consider the purchase of five tables for hirer use.

The Committee considered the purchase of additional tables for hirer use within the Town Hall. The Town Clerk advised that three potential bookings had recently been lost as the hirers required more tables than the three currently available.

Members discussed the benefit of purchasing additional lightweight folding tables to increase the capacity of the facility and improve the offer to hirers. Members agreed that the purchase of five additional tables would increase the total number available to eight, providing greater flexibility for a wider range of events and reducing the risk of losing future bookings due to insufficient equipment.

RESOLVED:

'That the Council approves the purchase of five additional lightweight folding tables for hirer use, bringing the total number of available tables to eight, at a cost to be confirmed from the approved supplier.'

Proposed – Cllr Leach Seconded –Cllr Sims All in Favour

f. To consider the outcome of the Land Registry boundary search.

The Town Clerk provided Members with copies of the relevant Land Registry documents for consideration.

Members noted that the Land Registry information did not resolve the query regarding the exact boundary of the land. It was agreed that further information was required before the matter could be concluded.

RESOLVED:

'That the Town Clerk contact the Council's solicitor to request a copy of the relevant deeds to assist in establishing the correct land boundary.'

Proposed – Cllr Leivers Seconded –Cllr Lane All in Favour

8. **Property and Infrastructure**

a. To consider improvements to access to the Hollies Bus Stop.

The Committee considered improvements to access and safety measures at the Hollies Bus Stop.

Cllr Jordan suggested that zebra crossing markings be installed opposite the bus stop and opposite Willows Pharmacy to improve pedestrian safety and provide clearer crossing points. Members agreed that this would be beneficial.

The Town Clerk advised that Supreme Surfacing holds the tender for the resurfacing works at The Hollies and was asked to liaise with the contractor to identify who would be undertaking the associated white lining works. The Town Clerk was authorised to engage the relevant contractor to complete the additional zebra crossing markings and to install 10 mph road roundels on the service road.

Members considered a quotation provided by the Town Clerk for the installation of 10 mph signs and pedestrian crossing warning signs at a cost of £462 plus VAT. Members requested that the Town Clerk also obtain two additional signs warning of speed bumps.

RESOLVED:

'That the Town Clerk be authorised to proceed with the agreed access and safety improvements, including the zebra crossing markings, road roundels and signage, subject to the total cost being contained within the Committee's approved maximum budget of £5,000 for Car Park Road Repairs, and that the works are coordinated with the resurfacing contractor where possible.'

Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Lane All in Favour

b. To receive a report on the Town Sign project.

The Committee received an update on the Town Sign project from the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk advised that the contractor's Public Liability Insurance documentation had been received. The Council is now awaiting receipt of the contractor's Risk Assessment before the works can commence.

c. To receive a report on the Building Regulations sign-off for No. 6 Market Place and consider any further action.

The Town Clerk advised that the Deputy Clerk had attempted to make contact with the relevant parties on 25 June 2026, followed by further attempts by the Town Clerk on 10 July 2026 and 20 July 2026, with no response received at that time.

Members were advised that contact has now been re-established and the relevant parties are engaging with the Council. The most recent correspondence was received on 21 July 2026.

Cllr Jordan advised that Ian Smith, who had attended the initial Building Regulations inspections, may be able to assist, as the inspection reports could not be located by CNCG. Members requested that contact be made with a senior Building Control Inspector, Simon Tarrie, at CNCG to seek assistance in locating the missing information and progressing the matter.

d. To receive the Property Inspection Report following the inspection undertaken on 13 July 2026.

The Committee received the Property Inspection Report following the inspection undertaken on 13 July 2026.

Members discussed the items identified within the report, including the following:

- Yew hedging (Taxus baccata): Members noted that the yew hedging was dead and agreed that it should be removed.
- Containers outside the Jubilee Community Centre: Members noted that the containers were detracting from the appearance of the building and agreed that they should be emptied. The containers are to be retained as they will form part of the Grounds Maintenance Contract commencing on 1 November 2026.
- Memorial bench: The Committee noted that the existing bench at the Memorial was broken. The Town Clerk requested approval to purchase a replacement recycled plastic bench at a cost of £380 plus VAT, in line with benches previously installed at other locations within the town. Members approved the purchase.
- Town Square lighting: The Town Clerk advised that she is liaising with Wescotec regarding the faulty light on the Town Square.

- Paradise Car Park wall: Members discussed the crumbling wall within Paradise Car Park, which presents a potential risk to vehicles. The Town Clerk was requested to contact Hawkins to investigate and advise on the necessary works.

RESOLVED:

'That the purchase of a replacement recycled plastic bench for the Memorial at a cost of £380 plus VAT be approved.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane Seconded –Cllr Wiles All in Favour

e. To receive the Historic England consultation reports relating to the Town Hall and Town Clock.

The Committee received the Historic England consultation reports relating to the Town Hall and Town Clock.

The Town Clerk advised that site visits had been undertaken by Historic England on 19 May 2026 and that the consultation reports were dated 11 June 2026.

Members received the reports and confirmed that they had no queries or questions.

f. To receive a report on the Town Clock refurbishment.

The Committee received an update on the Town Clock refurbishment.

The Town Clerk advised that the works are scheduled to be completed during the week commencing 10 August 2026.

g. To receive a report on the Priory Road street lighting upgrade.

The Committee received an update on the Priory Road street lighting upgrade.

The Town Clerk advised that the works are scheduled to commence in early September 2026.

h. To receive a report regarding the Town Hall Car Park toilet complaint to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

Members were advised that a response had been received from the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk on 15 July 2026 in relation to the complaint submitted by the Town Clerk on 10 July 2026.

The response was noted by Members.

RESOLVED:

‘That Standing Order 3(x) be suspended to extend the meeting beyond two hours for a further 15 minutes.’

Proposed – Cllr Jordan Seconded –Cllr Sims 7 In Favour 1 Against

i. To receive a report on the Hollies and Paradise Road Car Park resurfacing works programme

The Town Clerk advised that the works are scheduled to commence on 2 September 2026. The works at The Hollies Car Park are expected to take approximately three days, following which the contractor will move on to complete the resurfacing works at Paradise Road Car Park.

That the Town Clerk was instructed to ensure the temporary closure is appropriately advertised and to seek publication of the closure notice in the local newspaper.

9. **Leases, Licences and Agreements**

a. To receive a report on the Downham Town Football Club licence and ground report.

Members noted that, following acceptance of the licence by the Downham Town Football Club Committee, they wished for the licence to be signed by 19 August 2026.

b. To receive a report on the Howdale PAX lease.

Members were advised that the lease extension has remained outstanding since February 2026. The Council's solicitor has made contact with Howdale PAX to progress the matter; however, no response has been received.

Members noted that, in the absence of a formal lease, the continued occupation of the site is not supported by a current agreement, exposing all parties to unnecessary risk. Members requested that every effort be made to progress the lease extension and sought meaningful progress by 27 August 2026.

c. To receive a report on the Discover Downham lease.

Members were advised that, following Full Council approval, Ward Gethin Archer LLP had been instructed to act on behalf of the Council. The Heads of Terms were forwarded to Fraser Dawbarns on 22 July 2026 for consideration.

Once the Heads of Terms have been agreed by all parties, a draft lease will be prepared.

Members noted the current position and requested that the Town Clerk continue to progress the matter to completion.

d. To consider the Town Square licence.

Members considered the introduction of a formal licence for the hire and use of the Town Square.

It was noted that a formal agreement would provide greater clarity over the use of the Town Square and help define the responsibilities of those hiring the space. Members were advised that this would also assist in addressing issues such as the placement of tables and chairs on the highway walkway by users of the Town Square, ensuring that appropriate controls and expectations are clearly set out within the licence agreement.

RESOLVED:

Members agreed that the draft Town Square Licence, as presented, be issued to the persons hiring the Town Square. The licence shall include a condition prohibiting the sale or consumption of alcohol on the Town Square.

Proposed – Cllr Leach Seconded –Cllr Leivers All in Favour

Members were advised that Cllr C. Pyatt had been approached by Downham Café regarding the possibility of hiring the remaining half of the Town Square for outdoor seating.

The Committee considered the proposal and noted that any licence would be subject to the same standard terms and conditions as the existing Town Square licence. As the café is situated on the opposite side of the road from the Town Square, Members agreed that any licence would need to ensure the safe movement of food and drink between the premises and the licensed area. Staff would be responsible for delivering all orders to customers seated in the Town Square, and customers would not be permitted to carry food or drink across the public highway. The licence holder would also be required to undertake appropriate risk assessments.

Members further noted that the licence holder would be responsible for providing and removing all tables, chairs and other furniture on a daily basis, as the Town Council does not provide storage facilities.

The Committee agreed that the draft Town Square Licence, incorporating the standard terms and conditions, including a prohibition on the sale and consumption of alcohol, be issued to applicants wishing to hire the Town Square.

e. To consider permitting the Town Clerk to arrange paid public training sessions in the Town Hall.

Members considered a proposal to register the Town Hall as an approved training venue for first aid and workplace safety courses, with the aim of increasing daytime use of the building and generating additional income for the Council.

It was noted that the Town Hall is currently underused during daytime hours and that registration of the venue would enable a range of accredited courses to be delivered locally, including First Aid at Work, First Aid at Work Refresher, Paediatric First Aid, AED Training and Anaphylaxis Awareness.

Members were advised that a qualified trainer, Lucy Mellish, had expressed an interest in delivering the courses from the Town Hall. It was also noted that Sue Dewing had confirmed she would be willing to deliver health and safety training. The annual cost of registering the venue was estimated to be approximately £300, with trainer fees to be negotiated separately.

The Committee noted that the venue could accommodate up to 10 delegates per course and that the proposal had the potential to generate additional income while making greater use of the Town Hall during quieter periods. Members also acknowledged that demand for courses, marketing, insurance requirements and trainer availability would need to be considered before the scheme commenced.

RESOLVED:

'That the Town Clerk be authorised to progress the registration of the Town Hall as a training venue, negotiate terms with suitable training providers, develop a programme of courses and a marketing plan, and report back to the Committee after 12 months on the success of the initiative.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane Seconded –Cllr Wiles All in Favour

f. To consider the request from the Downham Market Festival Committee, referred from Public Participation on 24 June 2026.

The Town Clerk presented a draft agreement for the 2027 Downham Market Festival, prepared following Members' request at the meeting held on 24 June 2026. Members reviewed the draft agreement and considered its terms.

RESOLVED:

'That the draft agreement, as presented, be approved, and that the Town Clerk be authorised to finalise the agreement with the Downham Market Festival Committee.'

Proposed – Cllr Leivers Seconded –Cllr Leach All in Favour

g. To consider the request from Downham Market Twinning Club to install a commemorative plaque on the benches at the Hollies Car Park to mark its 50th anniversary.

Members considered a request from the Downham Market Twinning Club to install a commemorative plaque on a bench located on the Hollies Service Road to mark the Club's 50th anniversary.

Members supported the request and agreed that one commemorative plaque could be installed, with all associated costs to be met by the Downham Market Twinning Club. The Committee requested that the proposed wording for the plaque be submitted to the Town Clerk for approval prior to manufacture. Members also agreed that, once produced, the plaque should be supplied with pre-drilled fixing holes and provided to the Town Council's Caretakers for installation to avoid any risk of damage to the bench.

RESOLVED:

'That permission be granted for the installation of one commemorative plaque on a bench at the Hollies Service Road, subject to approval of the wording, with all costs met by the Downham Market Twinning Club and installation undertaken by the Town Council's Caretakers.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane   Seconded –Cllr Sims   7 In Favour 1 Against

10. **Financial Matters**

a. To establish a Working Party to prepare a maintenance budget plan for the Committee.

Members considered the establishment of a Working Party to prepare a maintenance budget plan for the Committee.

Following discussion, Members agreed that, rather than establishing a Working Party, a special meeting should be convened to consider a 3–5 year maintenance and asset replacement plan for Council properties. It was noted that the plan should identify anticipated maintenance requirements and future capital expenditure, including projects such as the replacement of the Assembly Room carpet and a programme for the replacement of the Grand Hall drapes, together with other planned maintenance works.

RESOLVED:

'That a special meeting of the Property Committee be arranged to develop a 3–5 year maintenance and asset replacement plan for Council properties.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane   Seconded –Cllr Wiles   All in Favour

b. To receive the budget monitoring report.

Members received the Quarter 1 budget monitoring report.

The report was considered and accepted as presented. Members noted the current financial position and confirmed that there were no concerns or issues raised in relation to the figures provided.

RESOLVED:

'That the Quarter 1 budget monitoring report be received and noted.'

Proposed – Cllr Lane Seconded –Cllr Wiles All in Favour

The meeting closed at 7:43pm.

Future Meetings

Following the meeting, Members agreed that the following meetings be scheduled:

3–5 Year Maintenance and Asset Replacement Plan Meeting: Wednesday 19 August 2026 at 5:30pm.

Property Committee Meeting: Thursday 27 August 2026 at 5:30pm.