

Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday 01 April 2026

Time: 7:00 PM

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

Present

Chair – Cllr Wiles

Councillors Brewer, Campbell - Robb, Daymond, Grover, Jordan, Lane, Leach, Lewis, Leivers, B. Moyses, S. Moyses, Pegg, Perkin, C Pyatt, J Pyatt & Sims (17)

Claire Dornan (Town Clerk)

There was one member of public present at the meeting until agenda item 3.

The Chair reminded all attendees of the fire exits and to place their phones on silent.

1. To Note Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Cain & Dickson.

These apologies were accepted.

2. To Receive Declarations of Interest and consider requests for Dispensations.

There were no declarations of interest received.

3. Confidential Items

To consider a resolution (under the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960) to exclude members of the public and press

The Town Clerk advised that, based on the information available to Councillors ahead of the meeting, the item did not need to be considered confidential. This is because the information related to quotes rather than formal tenders and was not specifically connected to a staffing matter. It was therefore deemed to be in the public interest for the quotes to be made publicly available.

No explanation was given for the decision to proceed with the vote.

Resolved: That, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed Cllr Pegg, Seconded Cllr Daymond 9 In Favour 8 Against

The meeting went into confidentiality. The member of the public left the meeting.

3.1 To discuss and agree the appointment of an HR consultancy to support the Council.

Cllr Pegg clarified to members that they, along with Cllr Jordan, had requested the following to be debated at Council:

To discuss and agree hiring the services of a new HR company to support the council, Mad HR, based in Norwich.

Cllr Pegg stated this matter had been brought to Full Council for openness and transparency but reminded members that Human Resources Committee had the authority to engage with a HR company without reference to Full Council.

Cllr Pegg explained that the previously agreed engagement of Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd, as resolved at the extraordinary meeting on 9 December 2025, had not proceeded due to unforeseen business circumstances, as advised by Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd.

Cllr Pegg stated that he had researched alternative HR companies and had identified Mad HR, based in Norwich. Cllr Pegg explained that for a one-off matter it would total £2,590 plus VAT, with travel to be reimbursed at 45p per mile, noting that an upfront deposit of 50% would be required. It was clarified that this engagement does not include any appeal.

It was further clarified that the current proposal relates to a one-off engagement and does not constitute an ongoing contract.

Cllr Pegg stated that as a comparison Mustard HR had quoted £850 per day for a seven-hour day, with the expected cost of the one-off engagement being £5,950.

Cllr Pegg also noted that the ongoing contract researched by the Town Clerk, namely Peninsular, would not cover matters arising prior to any contract being in place.

Cllr Pegg suggested that the possibility of establishing an ongoing HR contract could be considered at a future meeting.

The meeting came out of confidentiality.

4. To confirm the selected HR consultancy, the type of contract and agree actions.

Resolved: That Mad HR, be engaged for a one-off matter at a total cost of £2,590 plus VAT, with travel reimbursed at 45p per mile, and that an upfront deposit of 50% be approved.

Proposed Cllr Pegg, Seconded Cllr Daymond 12 In Favour 5 Against

The meeting closed at 7:15pm.