

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

Date: Tuesday 15 September 2026

Time: 7:00 PM

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

Livestream Link: [YouTube Channel](#)

Present

The Mayor – Cllr Wiles

Councillors Brewer, Cain, Campbell - Robb, Daymond, Jordan, Lane, Leach, Lewis, Leivers, S Moyses, B Moyses, Pegg, Perkin, C Pyatt, J Pyatt, Sims & Webb (18)

NCC Cllr Gould

BCKLWN Cllr Osborne

Claire Dornan (Town Clerk)

Darren Martin (Deputy Clerk)

3 Member of the public were present at the start of the meeting.

The Mayor reminded all attendees of the fire procedures and mobile phone requirements.

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive and note apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr Dickson (Bereavement) & Cllr Grover (Bereavement)

2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interest and consider any requests for dispensations. Members are reminded to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, in accordance with the Town Council's Code of Conduct.

The following declarations of interest were made:

Cllr Brewer – Agenda Item 7 (Personal)

Cllr Lewis – Agenda Item 9e

Cllr Leach - Agenda Item 9e

Cllr Campbell-Robb - Agenda Item 9f (Personal)

Cllr B Moyses - Agenda Item 9e

Cllr S Moyses - Agenda Item 9e

3. Public Forum

3.1 County Councillor and Borough Councillors

Norfolk County Cllr Gould provided an update on Local Government Reorganisation and advised Members of his views, and those of Norfolk County Council, regarding the proposals. He advised that the proposed Local Government Reorganisation would no longer

proceed and that Central Government was expected to reimburse the costs incurred in relation to the reorganisation.

Cllr Gould advised that the devolution proposals would continue to progress and that an election for a Mayor was expected to take place in May 2028. He further advised that a £1.1 billion investment fund was proposed to support investment.

In relation to local matters, Cllr Gould advised that he had reviewed the footpath on Wimbotsham Road, in connection with development by Bennett Homes and was seeking further information on the matter.

Cllr Leivers requested the provision of a pedestrian crossing on the A10 near Arbuckles, noting that the current speed limit on that section of road was 60 mph. It was advised that the current priority was the proposed speed limit reduction on the A1122.

Cllr Campbell-Robb requested an update regarding the traffic lights and was asked to submit the request by email.

Cllr C Pyatt raised the issue of accessibility on Rouses Lane, referring to the previous cutting back of vegetation by past Norfolk County Cllr White. Cllr C Pyatt was asked to submit the matter by email.

Cllr Gould advised that Norfolk County Council was reducing expenditure on the cutting of hedges and verges as part of wider savings of approximately £40 million. Members were advised that adult social services was currently a priority for expenditure.

Borough Cllr Osborne advised Members that a meeting regarding the Town Hall car park toilets was scheduled for 21 September 2026 at 3.00 pm.

Cllr Osborne referred to Cllr Gould's comments regarding Local Government Reorganisation. He advised that, although he had not seen the letter referred to, there remained some uncertainty regarding the position and that he understood the Government intended to continue progressing the proposals.

Cllr Osborne advised that the Borough Council elections would proceed in 2027, alongside the Town Council elections. He also advised that budgeting would be challenging for the Borough Council, but considered it positive that a shadow unitary authority would not be required to be established.

Cllr Leivers asked why an amnesty day was not provided at Crimplesham Recycling Centre for the disposal of paint and similar materials.

Cllr Gould responded to the question, advising that waste services were the responsibility of Norfolk County Council and fell within his portfolio. He explained that an amnesty for such materials was provided once a year during the autumn at the larger recycling centres. He advised that the frequency and availability of the service were linked to the cost of providing it.

Cllr B Moyes thanked Borough Cllr Osborne for attending the meeting.

3.2 Members of the Public

(Three minutes per person, maximum 15-minute session.)

A member of the public raised concerns regarding declarations of interest in relation to Agenda Item 7. It was stated that several members had previously been involved in submitting the codes which had resulted in the matter being brought before Council, and that those codes had subsequently been overturned by the Borough Council's legal officer.

The member of the public questioned why those members had not declared an interest or indicated that they would withdraw from the meeting, given their previous involvement. Concerns were also raised regarding potential predetermination and whether those members could consider the matter impartially.

The member of the public asked those involved to clarify whether they considered they had an interest under the Council's Code of Conduct and whether they would withdraw from the meeting and take no further part in the discussion or vote.

4. Chair's Report

To receive the Chair's Report, including report on the meeting with BCKLWN

The Mayor advised Members of his recent engagements and meetings, including:

- a meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive of the Borough Council on 21 August 2026;
- attendance at an event at Thetford Town Council on 18 July 2026;
- attendance at the Mildenhall Family Day on 23 July 2026;
- attendance at Ashwell House and the Horticultural Show on 25 July 2026;
- attendance at the Mad Shrek performance on 7 August 2026;
- attendance at the March Armed Forces Fair on 23 August 2026;
- a visit to Lakenheath Air Base;
- attendance at the Heritage Discover Downham Heritage Centre on 4 September 2026, where he viewed the Deputy Mayor's talk on RAF flight simulators; and
- attendance at an event at Houghton Hall.

The Mayor also advised that he had visited March Skate Park to review their provision ahead of the Town Council's consultation.

5. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 14 July 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 14 July 2026 be approved as a correct record.

Proposed Cllr Lane Seconded Cllr Sims All In Favour

6. Committee Minutes

a) To note the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 30 June 2026, 15 July 2026, 29 July 2026, 17 August 2026 & 26 August 2026.

RESOLVED:

‘That the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 30 June 2026, 15 July 2026, 29 July 2026, 17 August 2026 & 26 August 2026 be received and noted.’

Proposed Cllr Daymond Seconded Cllr Wiles 17 In Favour 1 Against

b) To note the minutes of the Property Committee held on 24 June 2026, 22 July 2026 & 19 August 2026.

RESOLVED:

‘That the minutes of the Property Committee meeting held on 24 June 2026, 22 July 2026 & 19 August 2026 be received and noted.’

Proposed Cllr Jordan Seconded Cllr Lewis 17 In Favour 1 Abstention

c) To note the minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 07 July 2026.

RESOLVED:

‘That the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 07 July 2026 be received and noted.’

Proposed Cllr Pegg Seconded Cllr Cain 14 In Favour 2 Against 2 Abstentions

d) To note the minutes of the Events Committee held on 07 July 2026 & 06 August 2026.

RESOLVED:

‘That the minutes of the Events Committee meeting held on 07 July 2026 & 06 August 2026 be received and noted.’

Proposed Cllr Lane Seconded Cllr Leach 17 In Favour 1 Against

7. Resolution of Full Council – 9 June 2026

This is a motion to rescind the proposal and subsequent result of the vote at Full Council on the 9th June 2026, agenda item 8.

Motion proposed by Cllrs Pegg, Lewis, Leivers, Jordan and Wiles.

Cllr Brewer left the meeting.

Cllr Campbell-Robb raised concerns that some members may have had a conflict of interest in relation to the matter and should have declared an interest.

Cllr C Pyatt stated that, in his view, the motion was incorrect as the complaint had not been upheld and referred to Standing Order 3U, suggesting that the matter should now be concluded.

Members were advised that the motion had been brought forward to address a technical issue relating to the previous vote. It was explained that the minutes recorded the vote as witnessed by the Town Clerk and could not be amended to reflect a different outcome. Members were further advised that the discrepancy had resulted from a counting error and that the purpose of the motion was to reverse the error and correctly record the vote.

Cllr Campbell-Robb requested a named vote.

RESOLVED:

‘To rescind the proposal and subsequent result of the vote at Full Council on the 9th June 2026, Agenda Item 8.

Proposed by Cllrs Pegg, Lewis, Leivers, Jordan and Wiles.

Cllr C Pyatt Against

Cllr Cain For

Cllr B Moyses For

Cllr S Moyses For

Cllr Perkin Against

Cllr Lane Against

Cllr J Pyatt Against

Cllr Daymond For

Cllr Webb For

Cllr Leivers For

Cllr Leach For

Cllr Jordan For

Cllr Lewis For

Cllr Pegg For

Cllr Campbell-Robb Against

Cllr Sims For

Cllr Wiles For

17 voting members - 12 In Favour 5 Against

Cllr Brewer returned to the meeting.

8. Human Resources Committee

To consider a request to increase the Human Resources Committee budget.

Members considered a request to increase the Human Resources Committee budget for HR Advice.

Members were advised that expenditure against the HR Advice budget had exceeded the agreed budget by £1,095.97. It was explained that a small proportion of the expenditure related to the preparation of employment contracts, which was a legal requirement and could not reasonably be delayed. The remainder of the expenditure related to advice on employment matters.

Cllr Pegg proposed that the HR Advice budget be increased to £10,000, stating that a value could not be placed on employees and their welfare.

Cllr Brewer raised concerns regarding the operation of the Human Resources Committee and stated that, in her view, the Committee had been operating contrary to the Council's Procurement Policy and the Committee's Terms of Reference. The following matters were raised:

- Since 25 June 2025, the Committee had held 18 meetings, of which 12 had been unclerked.
- One meeting had reportedly been held without an agenda.
- There had been delays in the production of minutes.
- Voting outcomes had not consistently been recorded.
- Concerns had been raised regarding transparency.
- The Committee had included 10 Councillors, including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- A non-member had remained present after the meeting had entered confidential session.
- Concerns were raised regarding the length of time taken to change HR provider. It was stated that the Council had been aware in December 2025 that the chosen contractor could no longer work with the Council, but that it had taken approximately four months to make the change.
- It was also stated that the Council had incurred a penalty in connection with leaving Croner.

Cllr Pegg referred to a number of changes in employment legislation during 2025 and 2026 which, he considered, had required professional HR advice. Members were advised that employing a dedicated HR professional could cost between £35,000 and £80,000 per annum.

Members discussed the difficulties associated with using HR advice on an hourly, pay-as-you-go basis. Concern was expressed that this approach made it difficult for the Council to accurately budget for the remainder of the financial year. It was noted that a retained HR service could potentially provide a more cost-effective option.

Cllr J Pyatt asked whether the Committee could provide an assurance that no further increase to the budget would be required. Members were advised that no such guarantee could be given, although it was hoped that the outstanding matter requiring advice would be concluded by the end of the week.

Cllr Pegg advised that he had investigated alternative HR providers and stated that some

providers only offered a basic service. By way of example, he referred to a disciplinary investigation quoted by one provider at £1,000 per day, subject to a minimum of four days. It was also noted that some providers charged separately for the preparation of employment contracts. Cllr Pegg further advised that Mustard HR had quoted £5,000 to undertake a disciplinary investigation.

Cllr Cain advised that many HR providers did not offer face-to-face meetings.

Cllr Brewer stated that the Council's office had provided three quotations from providers considered capable of undertaking the required work and that these options had, in her view, been dismissed without proper consideration.

Cllr Webb suggested that, once the current matter had been resolved, alternative arrangements could be considered, rather than continuing with a pay-as-you-go HR advice service.

Cllr Cain stated that the Council needed to move forward and stop revisiting historical matters, noting that continued discussion of previous issues was costing the Council both time and money. She expressed the view that the Council should draw a line under the historical matters, start afresh and focus on moving forward.

Members were advised that the single matter for which advice had been sought had been concluded. However, it was noted that the matter had highlighted wider issues which could present a risk to the Council if further work was not undertaken.

It was noted that employment matters were a collective responsibility of Full Council and were not solely the responsibility of members of the Human Resources Committee.

Concerns were expressed regarding confidence in the operation of the Human Resources Committee, with a view expressed that there was a lack of confidence in the Committee.

Members acknowledged that some matters were outside the control of Committee members and that employment law was complex. It was also acknowledged that the complexity of the individual matter had not been anticipated.

Members expressed differing views regarding the proposed increase. It was noted that the Council incurred expenditure in other areas and that, given the importance of employee welfare and the complexity of employment matters, there was a view that the Human Resources Committee should have sufficient funds available to obtain appropriate professional advice.

Members requested sight of the HR contract. Cllr Pegg advised that the contract contained individuals' names and was therefore considered confidential and could not be provided to members.

RESOLVED:

That the Human Resources Committee budget for HR Advice be increased from £3,126.55 to £10,000, excluding the single-item matter, which is budgeted for separately at £2,590 plus VAT.

Proposed Cllr Pegg Seconded Cllr Cain 12 In Favour 6 Against

9. Finance & General Purposes Committee Recommendation

To consider the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee:

a) Financial Regulations – Adoption .

This item was withdrawn as the agenda item should have said Standing Orders not Financial Regulations.

b) Risk Register – Adoption.

Members considered the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the additional amendment by the Town Clerk of page 23 which still quoted a previous Human Resources contractor.

RESOLVED:

‘That Full Council adopt the updated Risk Register recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.’

Proposed Cllr Lane Seconded Cllr Leivers 17 In Favour 1 Against

c) Jubilee Community Centre – Parking Measures / Expenditure of £6,100 + VAT.

Members considered the recommendation of the Property Committee as the work was in excess of the £5,000 Committee limit and the Overspend review of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

It was noted that a previous contractor had withdrawn from the work after being asked to provide a copy of the Risk Assessment for the works. Another contractor had declined to quote when advised that they would need to provide a copy of their Public Liability Insurance and a Risk Assessment for the works.

RESOLVED:

‘That Full Council support the request of the Property Committee to spend £6,100 + VAT to improve parking measures at the Jubilee Community Centre also noting the support from the Finance & General Purposes Committee.’

Proposed Cllr Lane Seconded Cllr Campbell-Robb All In Favour

d) Monthly Councillor Financial Checks – Proposed Rota.

Members considered the suggestion of the Finance & General Purposes Committee that the responsibility for monthly finance checks to be shared across all Councillors providing greater transparency and independent in the checking process.

Members were reminded of the importance of maintaining an appropriate separation of duties and agreed that Councillors responsible for payments should not undertake monthly checks.

Members were asked to contact the Town Clerk if they were able to assist.

Cllr Leach offered to complete the checks moving forward.

e) Market Licence – Transfer of Responsibility to Market & Tourism Committee.

Cllrs Leach, Lewis, B Moyses & S Moyses left the meeting.

Members considered the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee that the newly established Market & Tourism Committee take responsibility for reviewing, managing and making future recommendations in relation to the Market Licence.

RESOLVED:

‘That Full Council support the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee in relation to the responsibilities for the management of the Market Licence.’

Proposed Cllr Lane Seconded Cllr Sims 11 In Favour 3 Against

Cllrs Leach, Lewis and B Moyses returned to the meeting. Cllr S Moyses did not return.

f) Breast Screening Van – Unbudgeted Emergency Expenditure – To note.

Members considered the minutes from the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting.

It was noted that the Town Council had been praised by the NHS for working so closely with them to ensure that the Breast Screening Van could still attend until 11 November 2026 despite the need to relocate the van.

Members noted that the insurance obligations would fall to the Town Hall if the temporary gantry was damaged and the costs needed to be recovered.

Cllr S Moyses returned during the discussion.

RESOLVED:

‘That Full Council note the emergency, unbudgeted expenditure of £4,530 + VAT approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee for the safe accommodation of the NHS Breast Screening Van.’

Proposed Cllr Lane Seconded Cllr Daymond 17 In Favour 1 Abstention

10. Property Committee

To consider the recommendation of the Property Committee regarding the replacement of the ACO drain and realignment of the steps at the Town Square.

Members considered the 4 quotations noted in the Property Committee minutes as the work was in excess of the £5,000 Committee limit.

RESOLVED:

‘That the recommendation of the Property Committee to appoint Supreme Surfacing Ltd at a cost of £6,770 + VAT be supported.’

Proposed Cllr Jordan Seconded Cllr Campbell-Robb All In Favour

11. Budget Monitoring

To receive and review the Budget Monitoring Report.

Members noted that the Budget report had been received at all recent Committee meetings. There were no questions raised.

RESOLVED:

‘That the Budget Monitoring report be accepted as presented.’

Proposed Cllr Leach Seconded Cllr Lane All In Favour

12. Outside Body Reports

To receive reports from Council representatives on the following outside bodies:

a) Fen Line Users Association (FLUA)

Cllr Campbell-Robb reported that there had been no recent meetings.

b) Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP)

Cllr Leivers reported that the top crimes reported In July 2026 were:

Violence & Sexual Offences 66

Anti-Social Behaviour 19

Public Order 15

Shoplifting 14

The next meeting was reported as Tuesday 06 October 2026 between 7pm – 8pm at Downham Market Town Hall in the Clock Room.

It is also possible to attend online and a link can be provided by emailing sntdownhammarket@norfolk.police.uk.

Cllr Wiles reported that the last meeting was not well attended. Cllr Wiles encouraged residents with complaints, concerns and problems to attend as local beat officers are in attendance.

c) Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board

The Town Clerk confirmed that Cllrs Daymond and J Pyatt were Town Council representations.

Cllr Pegg, as a representative of Downham West Parish Council rather than Downham Market Town Council, advised that Downham West Parish Council had applied for a loan of £50,000 which was initially rejected and then awarded upon appeal. Work on the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board property can now be undertaken with a view to renting out the property as per the action plan.

Cllr Daymond confirmed there were no further points to report.

d) 100 Acre Charity

Cllrs Daymond and Wiles were unable to attend the last Trustee meeting; however it was reported that a property inspection had been carried out and all findings were satisfactory.

13. Councillors' Questions and Future Agenda Items

To receive Councillors' questions and suggestions for future agenda items.

Cllr Lane reminded Council that the future of the Youth Council was scheduled to be discussed after September 2026. It was agreed that this would be considered by the Events Committee rather than Full Council.

14. Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Full Council will be held on Tuesday 13 October 2026.

The next Full Council Meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 13 October 2026.

The meeting closed at 8:31pm