

**Downham Market Town Council  
Property Committee Meeting  
Thursday 13 June 2024 at 7pm**

This meeting was held at the Downham Market Town Hall, Bridge Street,  
Downham Market PE38 9DE

	<p><b>Present</b></p> <p>Committee Chair – Cllr Lewis</p> <p>Committee Members - Cllrs Leach, J Pyatt &amp; Sharman</p> <p>Consultancy Role – Cllr Jordan    Non-Committee Members – Cllrs Hobbs &amp; C Pyatt</p> <p>Town Clerk – Ms C Dornan</p> <p>There were 2 members of the public present.</p>
	<p>The Chair reminded members and visitors of the evacuation procedures and that all mobile phones should be switched to silent.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he was on call and therefore may need to leave during the meeting, explaining that if this was the case, Cllr Leach would step in.</p>
1	<p><b><u>To receive Members’ Apologies for Absence</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that Cllr S Moyses gave his apologies on 20 May 2024 for the meeting dated 16 May 2024 and that Cllr S Moyses had given his apologies ahead of this meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that Cllr Doyle remained in hospital and therefore was unable to attend the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr J Pyatt asked that Committee membership be reconsidered as Cllr S Moyses had been unable to attend the first two meetings of the new Mayoral year, Cllr Doyle was unlikely to be available in the near future and the vacancy left for a new Cllr was unlikely to be filled in the short term as an election had been called. The Town Clerk confirmed that she had already considered adding this to the Extraordinary Full Council agenda on 25 June 2024 or Full Council Agenda on 02 July 2024.</p>
2	<p><b><u>To receive Members’ Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made by members of the Committee.</p>

3

**Public Participation – 15 minutes allowed****In Person**

John Sexton, Downham Market Allotment Association, spoke on behalf of the Association members regarding the extension request to 31 March 2026 at Rouses Lane. Mr Sexton gave an overview of the history of the site explaining that the Association were given a 25-year lease in 2010 and then a third of the way into the lease they were given notice by the Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board. The Association currently have 30 plots but half are overgrown and have flooding issues. It was noted that there are 25-30 people on the waiting list. The Association are unwilling to pay £250 a year for the area provided by the Burial Board, which is the amount the Town Council are invoiced and therefore do not wish to pursue the extension and advised that they will surrender the plot on 31 March 2025. Members of the Association are not willing to pay £17 per plot as they have water rates to pay too.

The Town Clerk explained that the Council had investigated purchasing land but the cheapest piece of land that had been identified as suitable as it had road access was £75,000.

Cllr Jordan explained that he had been in contact with William Ess of Stow Estate who had stated he could provide some land but that there would likely be no parking available.

The Town Clerk noted that the Council had considered some land in Nordelph, with parking available, but the Association had said informally that the land was too far away.

The Town Clerk also confirmed that neither the Environment Agency or Albanwise had replied to her emails.

The Borough Council and Norfolk County Council had been unable to provide any land.

The Town Clerk reminded members that West Dereham had also offered Downham Market residents their spare plots.

The Town Clerk advised that the Nightingale Estate would release some allotments in due course and Mr Sexton asked whether the current allotment holders would have first refusal. The Town Clerk stated that the Council would need to look at a policy but the fairest option appeared to be first come, first served, as this allowed every resident in Downham Market the opportunity to apply for an allotment. It would also need to be decided if the Council would manage the allotments. It was noted that the plot was less than 1 acre in size and therefore Community Allotments may need to be considered.

Mr Sexton explained that the allotment holders and those on the waiting list require approximately 2 acres of land.

	<p>The Town Clerk explained to Mr Sexton that the Town Council had been hopeful of obtaining some allotment land on The Willows Estate, Bridle Lane, as the Wimbotsham Allotment Association had not wanted any more land, however the Parish Council had requested the land and as the allotment land was in their Parish, the Parish Council had first refusal.</p> <p>Mr Sexton thanked the Committee for their time and consideration to the future of the allotment provision in Downham Market.</p> <p><b><u>Email</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk read out an e-mail requesting dog bins and waste bins to be considered near to the Railway Station and along Fairfield Road.</p> <p>Members queried the management of existing waste in Downham Market and the Town Clerk advised that it is currently managed by the Borough Council via Special Expenses. Members asked that the Town Clerk refer the matter to the Borough Council for consideration, as they did not have a budget and did not want to start a precedent for providing waste receptacles outside of Town Council assets.</p> <p><b><u>Non – Committee Members</u></b></p> <p>Neither Cllr Hobbs nor Cllr C Pyatt wished to speak.</p>
4	<p><b><u>To sign the Terms of Reference</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that the amendments requested at the last meeting had been made. The Chair then read out the Terms of Reference to the Committee.</p> <p><b>Proposed – Cllr Sharman                      Seconded –Cllr Lewis</b></p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p><b>‘That the Terms of Reference be accepted and referred to Full Council for adoption.’</b></p> <p><b>All In Favour</b></p>
5	<p><b><u>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2024</u></b></p> <p><b>Proposed – Cllr Leach                      Seconded –Cllr Lewis</b></p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p><b>‘That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2024 be approved as a true record.’</b></p> <p><b>All In Favour</b></p>

6

**To receive 05 June 2024 Property Inspection report and agree actions****Emergency Expenditure**

The Town Clerk advised that three push buttons had failed on the toilets at the Town Hall. It had been necessary to replace the syphons and push buttons with a new style as the existing units are now discontinued. The work had cost £193.35.

The Town Clerk also advised that due to a smell coming from the male toilets at the Town Hall, it had been necessary to call out the drainage contractor, All Clear Drainage Consultants. A camera was placed down the manhole at a cost of £90 + VAT. The investigation showed that there was a severe limescale build up in the drain and that the flexible waste connectors had failed on the toilets meaning that waste was leaking behind the toilet unit. A plumber replaced the flexible waste pipes with 2 mcalpine drain connectors at a cost of £332.64. The Town Clerk has ordered 28& Hydrochloric Acid to resolve the limescale, as recommended by the contractor.

It was noted that a cup had been flushed down the accessible toilet at the Town Hall and blocked the macerator. This was unblocked at a cost of £50.00.

The Town Clerk advised that following the Town Hall Kitchen flood, Anglian Water were still due to attend. Job 25749869 was logged on 23 May 2024 and an engineer allocated on 05 June 2024. This is being followed by the Town Clerk.

19 Padlocks have been purchased following the vandalism outside the Town Hall. This was reported to the Police.

A replacement push bar has been purchased following a further evening of vandalism outside the Town Hall. Again, this was reported to the Police.

**Property Inspection**

Cllr Jordan gave an overview of the inspection completed by himself and Cllr Leach.

It was decided that the following actions are required:

- Contact the Conservation Officer again to discuss the window frames at the Town Hall
- Obtain a quote to install 4 Acrow Props at the front of the stage and box them in
- Obtain a quote to install a 4 inch RSJ at the front of the stage
- Cllr Jordan & Cllr Sharman to reassess the Water Fountain leak
- Obtain quotes for CCTV at Priory Road Car Park
- Obtain a quote for a wider bar at Priory Road Car Park
- Obtain a quote for an additional section of green fencing at the rear of the Town Hall
- Obtain a quote for a piece of fencing behind the Blood Box wall, where youths are climbing over and abusing members of staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screw down the boards on the stage</li> </ul> <p>The Town Clerk noted that there is pooling under the Town Hall stage which was noticed when investigating the swelling of the stage boards. It is hoped that an Aco drain at the rear of the Town Hall will solve this issue. This had been instructed, following the rear of the Town Hall becoming dangerous due to the volume of water collecting.</p> <p>It was noted that there is no call out system at the Town Hall when the Maintenance / Caretaking Team have gone home.</p> <p><b>Proposed – Cllr Lewis                      Seconded –Cllr Leach</b></p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p><b>‘That the quote be accepted from Pure Service Cambridge Ltd for a Securecom subscription including installation at a cost of £270 + VAT for one year.’</b></p> <p><b>All In Favour</b></p> <p><b>Cllr Hobbs left the meeting.</b></p>
7	<p><b><u>To discuss parking at the JCC and agree actions</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the minutes dated 28 March 2024, page 8, agenda item 8, had been queried as they were considered ambiguous. The Town Clerk felt that the decision referred only to the June 2024 2-day event, however the Chair felt that the decision covered long term use. The item was placed on the agenda for clarification.</p> <p>The majority of members agreed that they thought the vote referred to the 2-day event, as the discussion related to correspondence for the day.</p> <p>It was decided to allow the parking on the grass outside the Downham Football Club Clubhouse until September 2024 and then review the weather and quality of the ground.</p>
8	<p><b><u>To receive an update and agree actions following the JCC Regeneration Working Party report. including suggested amendments to Planning Permission &amp; the JCC new car park area preparations</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk had provided a copy of the budget, income and expenditure documents ahead of the meeting so that members were aware of the current financial position.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that she had received quotes for the Car Park from:</p>

**Shane White Plant Hire & Groundworks Ltd** – Estimate £6,500 + VAT with donation of concrete plus waste removal, estimate £2,400. This was not a fixed price quote, only estimates.

**Next Gen Groundworks Ltd** - £9,560.74 + VAT

Cllr Jordan advised that there was one further quote to follow.

The Town Clerk questioned why the quotes did not explicitly match the job specification.

Cllr Jordan advised that he thought the office was sending out his job specification, therefore it became clear that the contractors had quoted on the verbal discussions with Cllr Jordan and not a formal specification.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would send out the job specification and ask that the contractors re-quote.

The Town Clerk asked if the donation of 140 ton of hardcore and 3 kerb packs were enough to complete the job and how much gravel does the Council need to purchase to complete the job. This is to be clarified with the contractors.

The Town Clerk raised concerns that there is no record of Fields In Trust approving the additional Car Park on the Jubilee Community Centre site and that there were still planning conditions that needed to be discharged, namely a Traffic Management Plan and Noise Management Plan along with Condition 6.

Members did not believe that Fields In Trust would reject the plan as the Car Park is being built to support the open space and ensure that more users have access to the space.

It was noted that the Traffic Management Plan could not be submitted to the Borough Council until the signage requirements on site was decided. It was confirmed that the following were still required:

- 2 x No Exit Signs
- 1 x Round One Way Sign
- 2 x One Way Sign
- 2 x Speed Limit Sign
- 1 x No Entry Sign
- 1x Give Way Sign

Cllr Pyatt noted that the current No Entry Sign gives an indication that there is no entry to the cemetery area. Cllr Jordan is going to look at moving the sign.

The Town Clerk noted that the wrapping of recent signage has cost between £17 - £26 + VAT, per item, dependant upon size.

	<p><b>Proposed – Cllr Lewis                      Seconded –Cllr Leach</b></p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p><b>‘That the Town Clerk be provided with a budget of £300 for Health &amp; Safety Signage at the Jubilee Community Centre site.’</b></p> <p><b>All In Favour</b></p> <p>Members discussed the budget for the Car Park work and agreed with the Town Clerk that they required Full Council’s approval to start any work and also sign off from Field’s In Trust and the Borough Council Planning Team.</p> <p>Cllr Pyatt raised concerns about the work being completed piecemeal. The Town Clerk has raised this too with the JCC Regeneration Working Party.</p> <p>The Town Clerk asked for a clear Risk Assessment to document how the Council will protect Downham Football Club and members of the public whilst any work is completed, as members do not plan to ask the football club to remove the clubhouse or close the site for the 10 day period. The Town Clerk is concerned that previous restrictions were ignored and therefore it is possible this will happen again. This is considered high risk in her opinion, given previous experiences on site with the work of the roadway.</p> <p><b>Proposed – Cllr Lewis                      Seconded –Cllr Leach</b></p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p><b>‘That approval from Full Council be sought to use the funds from the £100,000 Car Park repairs budget, to start the work on the new Jubilee Community Centre Car Park.’</b></p> <p><b>All In Favour</b></p>
9	<p><b><u>To receive an update on the discharge request for the Jubilee Community Centre site</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that Darren French Architect@4041 Ltd had submitted the discharge of Condition 6 of Planning Permission 17/00260/F on 04 June 2024.</p> <p>The Borough Council has since advised that the application is due to be considered on 30 July 2024.</p> <p>There had been a query raised regarding the 2010 asbestos report and the Town Clerk had been requested to submit pictures to support the plan.</p>

10	<p><b><u>To discuss the JCC Fire Alarm, Intruder Alarm &amp; Emergency Lighting contract and agree actions</u></b></p> <p>Further to the transfer from CTS Security Ltd to Pure Service Cambridge Ltd at the Town Hall. The Town Clerk had obtained quotes from Pure Service Cambridge Ltd for the Jubilee Community Centre.</p> <p><b>Proposed – Cllr Lewis                      Seconded –Cllr Leach</b></p> <p>It was resolved:</p> <p><b>‘That the quote from Pure Service Cambridge Ltd be accepted:</b></p> <p><b>Fire Alarm System – 2 visits annually</b>  <b>Emergency Lighting – 2 visits annually (1 x 3hr &amp; 1 x 1hr)</b>  <b>Intruder Alarm 0 1 visit annually.</b></p> <p><b>No automatic annual review.</b></p> <p><b>£315.00 + VAT’</b></p> <p><b>All In Favour</b></p>
11	<p><b><u>To discuss the Right To Play Pledge and agree actions</u></b></p> <p>It was agreed by the Committee to ask the JCC Regeneration Working Party to review the whole of the JCC site and incorporate a plan, with costings, to accommodate accessible play equipment.</p> <p>It is accepted that that the Council may need to have a 5-year plan and add to the equipment each year, if CIL or a grant is not available.</p> <p>It was noted that it is important for the community to know the Council are taking their obligations seriously.</p>
12	<p><b><u>To receive update on the Downham Market Allotment Association Allotment Contract and agree actions</u></b></p> <p>This item had been discussed under Public Participation.</p> <p>The new allotment agreement extending the land hire until 31 March 2026 had been rejected by the Downham Market Allotment Association so the Town Clerk will liaise with Downham Market &amp; Downham West Joint Burial Board to advise that the land will be surrendered on 31 March 2025.</p>



13	<p><b><u>To receive an update on signage at 6 Market Place</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the Deputy Clerk was still liaising with the architect regarding the signage.</p> <p>The initial signage proposed by the architect had been rejected and an alternative style was being sought.</p>
14	<p><b><u>To discuss the telephone line at the Jubilee Community Centre and transfer of the telephone line from 15 Paradise Road to 06 Market Place and agree actions</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that Telecom World had called earlier in the week and were progressing the switch of 01366 387770 from the old Town Council Office and the headset order.</p> <p>The Committee did not wish to commit to cancelling the line at the Jubilee Community Centre. Members asked for the figures to be emailed so that they could be reviewed by the Committee ahead of the next meeting.</p>
15	<p><b><u>To discuss solar panels and agree actions</u></b></p> <p>The Town Clerk read the reply from the Heritage Conservation Officer at the Borough Council:</p> <p><b>‘The Town Hall building is grade II listed which covers the whole building including the inside. This means that regardless of where the solar panels are on the roof, you will require planning permission and listed building consent to undertake the works.</b></p> <p><b>The quote shows an indicative location and, while I have not made a site visit, this location appears to be the most sensible in terms of visual appearance as it is unlikely to be visible from anywhere. You will need to consider though whether the roof structure of the Town Hall is able to accommodate the additional loading without any structural support and whether there will be any material that needs to be removed for the installation of the panels. Also, please consider the use of low glare and glint, matt finish panels as these help the panels become even less visible in the street scene.</b></p> <p><b>Can I also suggest that you employ a local architect to undertake your application as often solar panel installation companies are not quite on board with the heritage implications of schemes and do not provide the correct documentations and justifications which can delay applications.</b></p> <p><b>I do not recommend that you order the panels or commence installations without the relevant consents in place.’</b></p>

	<p>Members decided not to progress their interest in solar panels on the Town Hall at present, due to the costs involved. Planning requirements and an architect will add significantly to the costs involved in adding solar panels to the Town Hall.</p> <p>Committee members wished to consider making the Jubilee Community Centre site more eco friendly given there are less restrictions on this site. This will be referred to the JCC Regeneration Working Party.</p>
	<p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 18 July 2024 at 6pm at Downham Market Town Hall</p>
	<p>Meeting closed: 8:54pm</p>
	<p><b>SIGNED</b></p>
	<p><b>DATE</b></p>