

MINUTES of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL** meeting held at **Felixstowe Town Hall** on
Wednesday 4 March 2026 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr C Franklin (Mayor of Felixstowe) Cllr T Gale
Cllr N Barber Cllr S Harkin
Cllr S Bennett Cllr M James
Cllr S Bird Cllr B Price
Cllr J Candy Cllr D Rowe
Cllr M Deacon Cllr M Sharman
Cllr A Folley Cllr W Underwood

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjrishi (Town Clerk)
Mr S Congi (Finance Administration Assistant)

IN ATTENDANCE: 5 members of the public (*in person*)
4 members of the public (*via Zoom*)

MOMENT OF REFLECTION

The meeting was preceded by a moment of reflection from Reverend Paulson Devasahayam, Trinity Methodist Church.

414. COUNCILLOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Council noted that in accordance with Section 83 (3) of the Local Government Act 1972, Cllr Tristan Gale, who was elected to Felixstowe Town Council following the Walton byelection on 12th February, had made their Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the Town Clerk.

Cllr Gale addressed the Council, introducing himself and thanking the Mayor and Members for their welcome.

415. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public enquired on the proposed 20mph scheme, querying the rationale for its introduction and whether there was to be any further consultation.

Council noted, that traffic surveys had been conducted by Suffolk County Council on 13 roads within the Felixstowe Conservation Area, following the motion passed at Full Council in March 2025. The survey confirmed that the majority of roads met SCC's criteria for a self-enforcing 20mph limit. Further consultation was being planned.

Another member of the public enquired as to the possibility of the Town Council endorsing the Marmot principles to support reducing inequalities of health and wellbeing locally. The Mayor confirmed that the Town Council was represented, having attended a recent Marmot Place meeting hosted by East Suffolk Council.

416. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from **Cllr D Aitchison** and **Cllr S Wiles**.

417. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Other Registerable Interests, to which no matters on the agenda were directly related, were noted:

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr S Bird Cllr S Bennett	All	Other registerable interest (as Members of Suffolk County Council)
Cllr S Bennett Cllr J Candy Cllr M Deacon Cllr A Folley	All	Other registerable interest (as Members of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr S Harkin	All	Other registerable interest (as an employee of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr A Folley	425	Non-registrable (as having attended BID meeting)

Members were advised that, should any other matters arise in the meeting that directly relate to any of their interests, they should make appropriate declarations at that time.

418. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR

There were none.

419. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 14 January 2026 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

420. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor provided an update on recent Mayoral engagements.

The Mayor highlighted the churches together meeting, and the 'Quick Chat' job club at Salvation Army. The moving experience shared by survivors of the 1953 Floods was also a key focus of the Mayoral Engagements this time of year.

The Mayor spoke of her honour to attend the House of Lords as the Town Council had been a finalist in the NALC Star Council Awards for ongoing environmental awareness.

The Mayor also highlighted a Certificate of Gratitude and Recognition from the High Sheriff of Suffolk which had been awarded to the Town Council on 26 February 2026 in appreciation of Council's hard work, dedication and outstanding service that enhances the life of the community.

It was RESOLVED that the Mayor's communications be noted.

421. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the following meetings be received and, subject to their accuracy being confirmed by those committees, adopted:

- a) Planning & Environment Committee 14 January 2026**
- b) Planning & Environment Committee 28 January 2026**
- c) Finance & Governance Committee 28 January 2026**
- d) Planning & Environment Committee 11 February 2026**
- e) Civic & Community Committee 11 February 2026**
- f) Assets & Services Committee 18 February 2026**
- g) Planning & Environment Committee 25 February 2026**

422. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

None.

423. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

Committee approved the appointment of Cllr Gale onto the Planning & Environment committee and Cllr Franklin as Vice-Chair of that committee, with Council noting that future outside body vacancies will be appointed at a later date.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the appointment of Cllr Tristan Gale to the Planning & Environment Committee for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year be approved; and,**
- ii. the appointment of Cllr Corrine Franklin as Vice-Chair of the Planning & Environment Committee be formalised; and,**
- iii. that all remaining vacancies on Committees and Outside Bodies will be reviewed at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2026.**

424. PROCEDURAL REVIEW AND RATIFICATION

Council considered the report on the procedural framework for convening Extraordinary Meetings. Formal ratification was sought of the decisions made

at a meeting of 22 January 2026, ensuring the Council's representations regarding local education are legally robust.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Record of Proceedings from the Meeting of 22 January 2026 were noted; and,**
- ii. Resolutions 1 and 2 from that meeting, be confirmed as formal Council resolutions for the 2025/26 civic year; and,**
- iii. an amendment be made to Standing Order 6(a) to read: "The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time, subject to the statutory three-clear-day notice requirements."**

425. FELIXSTOWE BID RENEWAL BALLOT

Council received the report. The Felixstowe BID is in its renewal period and under ballot conditions, under a two year as opposed to the more typical five year extension. Committee was advised that votes are by ratepayers, meaning Town Council will have one vote to exercise by virtue of the Town Hall sitting within the BID area.

Members discussed the merits of the BID, noting the successful Christmas events, the strength of their marketing and the positive ambition shown. However, the quality of some of the other events needed improvement and it was agreed that the next two years would provide a good opportunity to demonstrate value for money.

It was RESOLVED that :

- i. the arrangements for the Felixstowe BID renewal ballot and the proposed two-year term be noted; and,**
- ii. the Council's would vote Yes in the BID renewal ballot; and,**
- iii. the Town Clerk be authorised to sign and return the ballot paper(s) in accordance with the Council's decision by the 26 March deadline.**

426. SALC AUDIT ENGAGEMENT LETTER

Council received the report regarding internal audit arrangements. Committee has been asked to formally recognise that SALC has been appointed as auditor.

RESOLVED that Council approve the SALC Letter of Engagement for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026; and, formally appoint SALC as the Council's internal auditor for the 2025/26 financial year.

427. NEW AUDIT RULES: ASSERTION 10

Council received the report on the new audit rules for Assertion 10 and were given an outline of the necessary steps to align its ICT and Data Protection frameworks with the 2025 Practitioners' Guide and the NALC Roadmap. This will ensure Felixstowe Town Council satisfies the mandatory requirements of Assertion 10 in the 2025/26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

Assertion 10 compliance is built around NALC's Confidence building roadmap, understanding why Council holds personal data and implementing a risk assessment "Privacy by Design" screening tool for new projects. The ICT policy has been updated to reflect multi-factor authentication and personal device usage. Council already uses .gov email addresses and website domain.

Committee was advised that certain elements of the website – such as captioning images to ensure those with visual impairments can access information appropriately – would need to fully comply with WCAG 2.2 standards in future. The same will be applied to PDFs and scanned documents, although it was accepted that some PDFs, particularly those originating from third-parties, may not be fully compliant. Councillors were asked to sign a statement of understanding to keep credentials secure and use multi factor authentication when prompted.

It was RESOLVED that :

- i. the new mandatory requirements of Assertion 10 and the technical specifications 1.47–1.54 of the 2025 Practitioners' Guide be noted; and,**
- ii. Council's existing strengths in digital identity and transparency be acknowledged; and,**
- iii. The Council delegates authority to the Finance & Governance Committee to formally review, update, and adopt the following governance documents at its meeting on 18 March 2026:**
 - Revised ICT Policy (2026-2030): To include mandatory WCAG 2.2 standards, MFA, and BYOD security protocols.**
 - Data Protection Policy: To align with the NALC Roadmap and current ICO "Privacy by Design" best practices.**
 - Data Retention Policy: To include specific retention schedules for digital assets and official email archives.**
 - Website Accessibility Statement: To be updated following the manual audit methodology.**

- **Information Asset Register: To formally record the Council's data mapping, lawful bases for processing, and technical security measures.**
- iv. **the Finance & Governance Committee be delegated the authority to implement any immediate procedural changes required to satisfy the audits rules for the 2025/26 municipal year.**

428. UK TOWN OF CULTURE 2028 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Council received the report on preparatory work for the UK Town of Culture 2028 Expression of Interest (EOI) and considered its formal endorsement for the submission, as well as the establishment of a time-limited Steering Group to oversee the final delivery by 31 March 2026.

Council was advised that significant effort had gone into this expression of interest in the form of workshops and surveys in support of the UK Town of Culture 2028 award. It was agreed that a dedicated Steering Group would be established, comprising representatives from community and commercial stakeholders, to oversee the development and submission of the EOI bid.

Council received information on the categories and shortlisting process, and the nature of the competition.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. **the ongoing engagement programme and survey phase as endorsed by the Civic & Community Committee be noted;**
- ii. **an submission of an Expression of Interest for UK Town of Culture 2028 on behalf of the town be formally endorsed;**
- iii. **the establishment of the UK Town of Culture Steering Group and its proposed membership be approved; and,**
- iv. **the Town Clerk be delegated the authority to finalise and submit the Expression of Interest by the 31 March 2026 deadline, in consultation with the Steering Group.**

429. CIL WORKING GROUP REPORT

Council received the report from the CIL Working Group and was reminded that CIL funds have a five-year time limit upon which they need to be spent.

Council considered the recommended grant towards the Felixstowe and Walton Football Club Clubhouse project and agreed that funding should be released upon planning permission being granted and confirmation that all funding is in place.

Members discussed the proposed consultancy fee for a design proposal for a pump track, querying the feasibility and cost commitment to deliver the project.

It was noted that all the locations proposed so far were East Suffolk Council assets, requiring that authority's support. The areas visited by members of the CIL Working Group and East Suffolk Council officers were being considered by East Suffolk Council for their suitability.

Council considered the uncertain price of materials and suggested a contingency amount of 10% headroom to the a quote for the new Cemetery Gates. Pre-planning advice was being sought before the gates could be commissioned .

It was RESOLVED that the following expenditure is recommended to be taken from CIL Earmarked Reserves:

- i. £20,000 towards the new Clubhouse at Felixstowe and Walton Football Club to be released once planning permission and all funding is in place;**
- ii. £750 towards a site-specific consultation and fully costed design for a pump track once a suitable site has been confirmed by East Suffolk Council; and,**
- iii. in respect of the new cemetery gates, the authority to commit a sum of £34,655 + 10% contingency, be delegated to the Assets & Services Committee in order to commission the gates to be built, subject to pre-planning advice.**

430. EARMARKED RESERVES EXPENDITURE

Council received the report on Earmarked Reserve spending approved by Committee.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the expenditure from Earmarked Reserves by the Assets & Services Committee under delegated authority be approved; and,**
- ii. the cumulative position of the Earmarked Reserves for the 2025/26 financial year be noted.**

431. YEAR END BALANCES AND EARMARKED RESERVE TRANSFERS

Council received the report on Year End balances and Earmarked Reserve transfers.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the projected year-end balances for 2025/26 be noted; and,**

- ii. the scheduled transfers from General Reserves to Earmarked Reserves to take effect on 1 April 2026 be approved.

432. INVESTMENT POLICY & STRATEGY 2026/27

Council considered its Annual Investment Policy & Strategy for 2026/27 as updated to reflect current investments as recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee (*Minute #367 of 2025/26*).

RESOLVED that the Investment Policy & Strategy for 2026/27 be approved and adopted as presented in the report.

433. INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2026/27

Council considered its insurance arrangements for 2026/27 as per the recommendation of the Finance & Governance Committee (*Minute #368 of 2025/26 refers*).

It was RESOLVED that the Council’s arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks be approved and confirmed as adequate for 2026/27.

434. OCCASIONAL GRANTS POLICY

Council considered its Occasional Grants Policy as recommended by the 11 February 2026 Civic & Community Committee (*Minute #390 of 2026/27 refers*).

RESOLVED that the Occasional Grants Policy be approved and adopted with the amendments as presented in the report.

435. PRESS & MEDIA POLICY 2026/27

Council considered its Press & Media Policy as recommended by the 11 February 2026 Civic & Community Committee (*Minute #391 of 2025/26 refers*).

RESOLVED that the Press & Media Policy be approved and adopted as presented in the report.

436. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council considered the schedule of accounts for payment.

RESOLVED that the schedule and payment of accounts be received and approved as follows:

Date	Voucher Nos.	Total Payment
15/01/2026	327 – 343	£5,475.12
30/01/2026	344 – 361	£55,870.00

13/02/2026	362 – 372	£8,660.98
25/02/2026	373 – 397	£65,805.60
	TOTAL	£135,811.70

437. CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 9.23pm. It was noted that the next Meeting of the Council is the Annual Council Meeting scheduled for 20 May 2026 at 7pm.

Date: _____

Town Mayor: _____