

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WORKING GROUP MEETING – 13 JANUARY 2026

At the meeting of the Recreational Facilities Working Group held at The Viking Centre on 13 January 2026, the following Councillors were present:-

Councillors (Cllrs.) Present: J Leggett (Chair)

D Coleman - W F Couzens
J H Mallen

Officers: G Ranaweera (Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)
E Elliot (Committee Officer)

26/001. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. M A Booth and M G Callam.

26/002. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 18 NOVEMBER 2025

Minutes from the meeting held 18 November 2025 were agreed without amendment.

26/003. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

26/004. FETE

The Town Clerk confirmed the main events had been organised for the summer fete, including Fool Hardy Circus.

He had booked a new activity, Combat Paintball Laser Tag and Laser Clay Shooting to replace Axe throwing, as this had been running for two years and was felt to be expensive. The new activity will require a large space and the Town Clerk intended to reduce the size of the arena to accommodate this. Foolhardy Circus had been asked to perform three different arena acts which fortuitously did not require a significant amount of room.

231 (Norwich) Air Cadets have confirmed their attendance and would be assisting in manning the gates.

The Foreign Locals will be performing however two further bands will be required. The Town Clerk welcomed suggestions.

Cllr. J H Mallen agreed to contact Mr Whiting with regard to provision of straw bales.

26/005. VIKING CENTRE UPDATE

The Town Clerk reported:

- the final settlement of accounts potential claim for late delivery at the Viking Centre is being delayed by Draper & Nichols Ltd. However, the Town Council is holding a substantial final payment for development until this issue is resolved. There are no timescales for conclusion at the moment;
- repair to the damaged railing remains outstanding;
- he was still waiting for suggestions regarding lighting around the decking perimeter;
- Norfolk County Council Highways (NCC Highways) had informed him that Brown Signs were used for the signposting of Tourist destinations. A white signpost directing people to the Viking Centre and café would be acceptable; and this had been requested of NCC Highways.
- the café had not supplied him with a detailed proposal on any financial information, which meant he had been unable to assist them with applying for a winter pressure grant;
- he had conveyed all suggestions made by Councillors to Claire Butcher with regard to advertising;
- the café is in arrears with their rent. Worst case scenario is for Council to serve notice. He would seek to find a new tenant should the café close;
- the electric charging points are not yet operational at both the Viking Centre and Sprowston Diamond Centre. They had been surveyed with a view to a new provider organising a payment system;
- Jason Menezes had recommended two types of Dado Rail for the Ragnar Hall. The Town Clerk did not feel either one was suitable and has requested an alternative design be sought;

Responding to a question from Cllr. J H Mallen the Town Clerk said Longboats and Lattes café were welcome to advertise their name in the window.

Cllr. J H Mallen agreed to discuss signage with Claire Butcher and see if he could arrange for a sign to be made free of charge for the café to display.

It was noted the pre-loved shop was rarely open.

Councillors approved a location for the Broadland District Council Enhancement Award in the lobby of the Ragnar Hall.

25/006. WHITE HOUSE FARM DEVELOPMENT

(1) Phase 1 (Current)

The Town Clerk advised Persimmon Homes had not updated him on their programme of works timetable, or indeed if they were on track.

Councillors observed the White House Farm site was untidy with detritus left in-situ. The MUGA had not progressed and the whole area appeared abandoned.

It was noted the MUGA was due to be open to the public in Spring. As to the informal football pitch the Town Clerk would pursue this with District Council officer Chris Raine.

Referring to the drainage ditches it was understood that Matt House of Persimmon Homes had indicated the ditches were to be cleared up to White House Farm yet Debi Sherman had inferred only as far as the football pitches.

The Town Clerk commented on the delay with Harrisons woodland not being transferred to Council until late spring. Council's solicitor is waiting for an undertaking from the consortium to pay Council's costs. All but one member of the consortium had agreed to pay the costs which is causing a hold up.

(2) Phase 2 (North of Atlantic Avenue)

Councillors agreed to comment on the planning application for Phase 2 North of Atlantic Avenue when received and speculated on the type of crossings planned for Atlantic Avenue.

(3) Skate Park

The Town Clerk reported the planned Procurement Notice (Expression of Interest) went live on Monday 12 January 2026. The Tender will go live on 26 January 2026 and run for 32 days. The next stage is for tender submissions to be 'officially' opened, recorded and checked for compliance followed by an invitation to suppliers to present their schemes. If the working group makes a recommendation; this will go for approval to the full Council meeting to be held 25 March 2026.

The Town Clerk was still waiting for Chris Raine to confirm if the skate park could be built under permitted development rules. The tender stipulates the applicant should apply for planning permission if it is required.

Bidwell's had recommended a Topographical survey to which the Town Clerk had given permission for them proceed as soon as possible.

26/007. BEESTON PARK

Cllr. D Coleman advised that whilst surveying continued at Beeston Park, Archaeologists had completed their work.

She also reported that Quinn Estates will not be responsible for maintaining the amenities at Beeston Park. The land had been sold to Persimmon Homes and David Wilson Homes. Persimmon Homes is linked to management companies.

Cllr. J H Mallen expressed concern that Council could miss out on having the opportunity to manage the parks and open spaces.

Cllr. J Leggett raised the issue of a site-wide design code and how this would be implemented across the different development phases. To be raised with District Council Officer Chris Reign.

26/008. DEVELOPMENTS SOUTH OF SALHOUSE ROAD

In answer to questions from Cllr. J Leggett the Town Clerk replied that:

- he had not as yet received a response with regard to S106;
- Chris Raine had confirmed some play areas and open spaces on some of the estates on Salhouse Road will be maintained by management companies. The Town Clerk was waiting for Chris to clarify which areas these will be.

26/009. BIODIVERSITY POLICY

The Town Clerk explained a funding allocation had been included in the 2026/27 budget for a Biodiversity Survey. He hoped to progress with the policy during March and April.

26/010. VERGE REWILDING

Currently on hold due to time and staffing constraints.

26/011. AOB

Responding to a question from Cllr. H Mallen the Town Clerk confirmed Council can accept external sponsorship for events.

The Town Clerk hoped to revisit the provision of a mobile Barista on Sprowston Recreation Ground in the spring.

26/012. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for 17 March 2026 at 9:30am to be held remotely.