

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Full Council Meeting
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:30 on 5 March 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker (Mayor), Nasima Begum, Wendy Brooks, Janet Craig, John Murray, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

227. Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained, and the meeting was welcomed. Cllr Barker welcomed new Councillors Christine Moore and John Murray and noted that both had signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Moore had given apologies for this meeting. Both Councillors had met with the Acting Town Clerk for an introduction prior to this meeting.

228. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Neil Coleby, Jen Jones, Christine Moore, Christian Newsome, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, John Pitts and Deborah Ray, with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

229. Declarations and dispensations

229.1. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda – There were none.

229.2. Written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

230. The draft minutes and confidential note of the Full Council meeting on 27 February 2024

The minutes were not available for this meeting. It was agreed the minutes would be considered at the next meeting.

231. Public forum

No advance comments had been received and there were no members of the public in attendance.

232. Legal matters (some aspects may be confidential):

Information had been provided to the Members' Area, accompanied by the Acting Town Clerk's notes. All items were to be considered in confidential session.

232.1. Renewal of an existing tenant's lease (confidential)

232.2. The lease for Unit 2 (confidential)

232.3. An update report on legal matters (confidential)

233. Date of next meeting

26 March 2024 at 18:30

234. Items for the next agenda and close

Cllr Barker had attended a session recently regarding the proposed Suffolk Devolution Plan. A consultation was being held between 18 March and 26 May and Cllr Barker requested the addition of an item on the next agenda for the Town Council to consider a response to this.

Cllr Youngman proposed to move the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.

235. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

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235.1. Any matters, including those above as required:

It was noted Cllr Murray could not yet access the Members' Area and would not have therefore seen the accompanying confidential documents.

232.1. Renewal of an existing tenant's lease (confidential) – The advice of the lawyer regarding the rent was considered. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the recommendations of the lawyer regarding the rent; seconded by Cllr Begum; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

The renewal and terms of the lease were considered. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the lawyer's advice and go back to the leaseholders' legal representative on the points raised; seconded by Cllr Brooks; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

232.2. The lease for Unit 2 (confidential) – Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the Heads of Terms, in line with the lawyer's advice and Acting Town Clerk's recommendations; seconded by Cllr Begum. It was agreed for the lawyer to continue to chase regarding an outstanding matter. The vote was taken and eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

232.3. An update report on legal matters (confidential) – The Acting Town Clerk had provided an update on outstanding legal matters, which she had prioritised in order of risk to the Council. The following updates were provided:

War Memorial Museum – An update was provided. Cllr Pearce made a proposal regarding the Council's requirements prior to the Museum's opening; seconded by Cllr Brooks; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

Allotments lease – Cllr Pearce declared he is the Town Council's appointed representative to the Lowestoft and District Allotment Association, but had not yet attended a meeting and was unsure whether he had voting representation. The Allotments Sub-Committee had discussed the lease terms at its last meeting, which would be taken forward by the lawyer. A Land Registry matter relating to one of the sites was still ongoing. Cllr Pearce proposed for the lease to be drawn up to include the sites within the Town Council's ownership, with the remaining site to be dealt with once land registry had been sorted; seconded by Cllr Brooks; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

Homeport – Cllr Pearce noted this could not be considered by the Town Council. An update would be brought to the next meeting of the Charity Board.

Matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with a tenant – The Acting Town Clerk and Facilities Maintenance Officer had attended a meeting, which included a review of compliance. An update was provided on a current outstanding issue. Cllr Pearce proposed for the lawyer to proceed with contacting the tenant as discussed; seconded by Cllr Brooks; eight Councillor voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

Gunton Community Hall – A draft lease had been prepared, pending completion of the Management Committee's constitution.

Uplands Children's Centre – The premises was understood to currently be empty.

Kensington Gardens Café – An update on the lease was given.

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Tennis and Cricket Club licences – Cllr Pearce proposed to add an item to the Finance and Governance Committee’s agenda to consider the licence and a proposal from the Tennis Club, which had been received and considered by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee initially, and make a recommendation back to Full Council; seconded by Cllr Brooks; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

Cllr Youngman left the meeting 19:37

The Cricket Club licence would be added to the Finance and Governance Committee agenda should there be an update to give.

Land transfers – The land to the rear of the Town Hall was being treated as the priority.

Pakefield Green Play Area – The Acting Town Clerk would contact the lawyer again regarding this outstanding matter.

Cotman Close Play Area – This was due to be discussed at the next Quarterly Liaison Meeting with East Suffolk Council.

Belle Vue Park Lodge Cottage – East Suffolk Council’s Housing Officer was working with the Town Council.

Contracts – The Acting Town Clerk provided an update on matters relating to contracts.

The Council offered its thanks to the Acting Town Clerk for all her work on the outstanding legal matters.

The meeting was closed 19:41.

Signed:

26 March 2024