

Minutes of a meeting of Lowestoft Town Council
held at 19.30 on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft.

Present: Councillors Sue Barnard, Allyson Barron, Nasima Begum, Peter Byatt, Neil Coleby, Peter Collecott, Tracey Eastwood, June Ford, Amanda Frost, Tess Gandy, Ian Graham (Mayor), Alan Green, Peter Knight (Deputy Mayor), Peter Lang, Keith Patience and Alice Taylor.

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Town Clerk), Brian Mew (LTC finance support, WDC)

Public: Two members of the public were present and two District Councillors were present (Cllr Gooch and Craig)

82. Welcome – The Fire Evacuation Procedure was read by the Mayor and all were welcomed to the meeting which commenced at 19.30.

83. Announcement on Reporting – was read by the Mayor.

84. Apologies for absence - Apologies were received from Cllrs Parker and Bemment. Apologies were accepted.

85. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

The following declaration of interest was declared:

Cllr Lang declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda item 91.3 (employment). The Clerk declared an interest in 90.5ii and Mr Mew declared an interest in 90.9.

There were no requests for dispensations.

86. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2017 were considered and approved (one abstention)

87. Public Forum and Public Service Report

Cllrs Keith Patience, Barker and Gooch had sent reports which had been provided to councillors.

Cllr Gandy asked how frequently reports should be submitted and it was noted that this was only where there was an update on anything that was important to the Town which would be of general interest.

A member of the public noted that it would be better to be able to access the agenda in advance to provide a more meaningful opportunity and whether it would be possible to move the public forum to later in the agenda. The agendas are published in advance of the meeting and concern was expressed that if the forum were after the agenda items, decisions would be made by the Council before hearing the public comments. A question was raised about seeing papers in advance and it was noted that all reports submitted to the Council would be put on the website. The Mayor noted that the Council was still establishing its staffing and processes but would try and keep the website up-to-date. A question was also asked about how the public influence items on the agenda and the Mayor confirmed that items could be raised through councillors for their area. It was noted that all councillors for the district and county had been emailed to request reports. It was noted that it would be helpful if Cllrs Craig and Gooch were introduced along with any other councillors from other authorities at the beginning of the public forum in case anyone wanted to ask them questions. It was noted that there should be more publicity about the council's activities. A request was made that the Lowestoft Journal should be provided with information about when council meetings take place.

88. Deputy Mayor

Nick Webb's resignation was noted. Great appreciation of his work for the Town Council was expressed. He was acknowledged as a dedicated servant of the Town and the appreciation would be expressed to him. There have been three expressions of interest in standing for the Deputy Mayor position from Cllrs Green, Knight and Taylor, all of whom made a brief statement before the vote. Cllr Knight was appointed Deputy Mayor.

89. Vacancies

It was noted that vacancies are being advertised in Kirkley and in Elmtree but the period in which the Council could co-opt was after this meeting but might be possible at the next meeting. It was noted that candidates had to be eligible. Cllr Frost noted that in order to stand for the Kirkley ward, which was her preference as that was where she lived, she would have to resign her position and reapply for the Kirkley ward but was not intending to do so in case she lost a seat on the council. It was noted that all councillors make decisions for the whole of Lowestoft.

Minutes of a meeting of Lowestoft Town Council
held at 19.30 on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft.

90.1 Budget and budget monitoring

Mr Mew had provided the budget and a budget monitoring statement in advance of the meeting and highlighted certain points.

The bulk of the expenditure and income is still passed through the District Council's account. However, the decision today later in the agenda was to start this expenditure going through the Council's own account. There would be some changes to the format in future e.g. the amount of VAT to be reclaimed would be included and the pattern of expenditure through the year would be noted in line with discussions at the Finance and Governance Committee.

It was noted that there was to be an Open Day for the Third Crossing at Hollingsworth Hall. A question was asked about where income collected was allocated. Mr Mew would respond on this matter, circulated to all. There was clarification provided that the Town Council could be VAT registered and reclaim VAT. The decision from HMRC on VAT registration was awaited (next agenda).

It was noted that in due course there was a need to review the constitutional arrangements set up for the various halls and support where required to get them on track (future agenda).

90.2 Budget for pensions

The outlay foreseen for expenditure on the Local Government Pension Scheme in the budget was insufficient. However, Cllr Coleby noted that the Personnel Committee had reviewed the position and anticipated that the overall actual staffing expenditure would mean that a commitment could be made to the Local Government Pension Scheme and proposed that this was applied to staff being recruited currently. Cllr Lang seconded, and this was carried with one vote against.

90.3 Bank reconciliations and statements

Statements had been made available and arrangements would be made for Cllr Coleby to conduct bank reconciliations now that more detailed financial information was available.

90.4 Invoicing and tenant income

All invoices have been issued and are going through the Council's account as they arrive. Not all were received but so far there were no known problems with collecting arrears.

Cllr Patience left the room at 20:04

A concern was raised that various stalls set up regularly at the Triangle Market but it is not clear that rents are being collected. It was agreed that this situation needs to be explored (future agenda).

Cllr Patience returned at 20.07

90.5 i) Reimbursement to Suffolk Association of Local Councils for Suffolk Cloud website payment £225.

Proposed by Cllr Coleby; Seconded by Cllr Lang; All in favour.

Shona Bendix left the room at 20.08

90.5 ii) Payment to Suffolk Association of Local Councils for consultancy and clerking services £21,875 [+VAT £4,375]. Proposed by Cllr Barron; Seconded by Cllr Ford; All in favour.

Shona Bendix returned to the room at 20.15

90.5 iii) Reimbursement to Suffolk Association of Local Councils for Broadland District Council civic procedure training £320. Proposed by Peter Byatt; Seconded by Peter Knight; All in favour.

90.5 iv) Payment to Waveney District Councils recharging the costs for Lowestoft Town Council's Waveney Norse grounds management costs for April to July 2017 £316,800.

The Council accepted that this was a contractual obligation that arose owing to the Reorganisation Order determined by Waveney District Council having specified that the contract as well as the relevant assets transferred. However, there was concern that Lowestoft Town Council still did not have the information it required from Waveney District Council and Waveney Norse to enable it to thoroughly review the contractual position and assess the required budget and options for the future. Among the discussion points were that:

- The length of contractual obligation and opportunities for review were unknown.
- Although the budget provided a clear breakdown of how the costs were allocated to particular assets, the reasoning behind this allocation and the work specifications (and hence potential contract monitoring points) had not been provided.

Minutes of a meeting of Lowestoft Town Council
held at 19.30 on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft.

- Waveney District Council and Waveney Norse must provide more information, including about the extent of any sub-contracting.
- The lack of detail about the service meant that there was a danger that the extent of the delivery by Waveney Norse could be under or over-appreciated e.g. there might be services being delivered and back office staffing about which the Council was unaware.
- The Finance and Governance Committee could ensure that there was greater scrutiny going forward (agenda).
- The figures include significant VAT to be reclaimed and Mr Mew assured the Council that the expenditure was exactly in line with the budget and presented no cashflow issue.
- The amounts vary month on month owing to seasonality of the work and there was a pre-arranged schedule of payments, some of which were appropriately front-loaded.
- The contract payments are quite holistic in terms of being total costs for each area including back office.
- Although in this case the £316k is a recharge to Waveney District Council who had made the payment on Lowestoft Town Council's behalf, subsequently this would become a direct payment. The delay had been owing to setting up the Town Council's bank account.
- A process would need to be set up for the renegotiation of the contract and this might involve the Implementation Committee.
- There is a meeting between the Town Council and Waveney Norse on 19th September.
- Waveney Norse charge for some services to the public e.g. grass-cutting, plumber and electricians and Waveney District Council as a joint partner in Waveney Norse get the income. There was a concern that the Town Council should be receiving income from this too.

It was agreed to authorise the payment and that Waveney Norse should provide additional information in relation to future payments. Proposed by Cllr Byatt; Seconded by Cllr Ford. Ten in favour; 5 against; 1 abstention.

90.5 vi) Payment to Waveney District Council recharging the costs for Lowestoft Town Council's income and expenditure for April to July 2017 £27,212.83.

Mr Mew explained that the recharge covered the net of expenditure and income and that income had been accounted for and banked and expenditure had been paid by Waveney District Council on the Town Council's behalf. This payment was to be referred to the Finance and Governance Committee and paid (agenda).

Proposed by Cllr Byatt; Seconded by Cllr Coleby; All in favour.

90.6 Bank accounts and Signatories

It was noted that, following the previous agreement that the Deputy Mayor should be a bank signatory, Cllr Knight would replace Nick Webb as bank signatory as he was now appointed as Deputy Mayor.

90.7 VAT registration – Noted above – expectation of agreement from HMRC shortly.

90.8 Further s.106 expenditure – expenditure of s.106 amounts by 12 December and 7 November had been notified and it was noted that Sentinel need to be contacted in this regard. It was also noted that information was needed on the progress with works previously authorised (Normanston, Rosedale and Stoven). There was funding in Pakefield which also needed further information as it had not previously been raised by Sentinel.

Mr Mew left the room 20:35

90.9 S.113 agreement – Waveney District Council had not provided.

Mr Mew returned 20:37

90.10 An annual demand for business rates at the Town Hall for £46,346.82, £6620.82 arrears payable immediately, had been received. However, this matter had been taken up and it was expected that this was a simple error from an automatically-generated process when a new owner is noted.

90.11 Mayor's challenge award

This had been discussed at Finance and Governance Committee. It was noted that there were other awards and clarification was sought about how this would be different. The idea was to encourage Children to visit museums and describe their favourite exhibit and also what they think is good about the town. It was important for the Council to find out what children think. Children entering would receive a prize such as a badge. In future years it might be possible to obtain sponsorship but seed-funding was needed to get this off

Minutes of a meeting of Lowestoft Town Council
held at 19.30 on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft.

the ground. It was possible that it would be open to youth groups such as the guides and negotiations with the museums could take place to try and get support for the process of encouraging young people in. It would potentially launch next summer. Allocation in the budget and agreement to the Award was proposed by Cllr Lang; seconded by Cllr Ford; All in favour.

91.1 The Wayfinder proposals

These have received planning consent but it is not clear that plans are yet being executed.

Cllr Frost left the meeting at 20:48

91.2 Heritage Action Zone

It was noted that there had been an interview in-person at Cambridge and it was believed the application remained on track although it was not yet at the stage when the bid for regeneration of the heritage in the North Lowestoft area would be decided.

91.3 Anti-incursion measures

The Council had previously considered anti-incursion measures and it was agreed that consideration of the measures and dealing with matters arising from liaison on these measures should be dealt with by the Implementation Committee. Proposed by Cllr Graham; Seconded by Cllr Green. All in favour.

91.4 Trustee Arrangement's for Arnold's Bequest

Work being conducted by Waveney District Council and still underway.

91.5 Land registrations

Work being conducted by Waveney District Council and still underway.

91.6 Changes to land registrations for Kirkley Sports and Social Club

It was agreed that this matter and related land issues should be dealt with by the Implementation Committee along with land issues at Uplands. Proposed by Cllr Gandy; Seconded by Cllr Begum; All in favour.

91.7 SCC Most Active County work

It was agreed that the Clerk should progress work with SCC Most Active County team, in consultation with the Mayor, to help ensure Lowestoft's interests were best represented in a bid for funds. Proposed by Cllr Gandy; Seconded by Cllr Coleby; All in favour.

Cllr Lang left the room at 20:53

91.8 Meeting with Waveney Norse on the CCTV contract

The importance of a meeting on CCTV had been raised earlier that day with the Waveney District Council Head of Operations and would be continued to be pushed for.

20:53 Cllr Lang returned to the meeting.

91.9 Meetings on the Marina Theatre

A meeting with the Waveney District Council Head of Operations had taken place earlier that day on the contractual negotiations that had taken place to date between the District Council and the Marina Theatre Trust. The Mayor and Clerk were due to meet with the Trust on 24 August. It was agreed that the Implementation Committee should consider the draft contracts and negotiations. Proposed by Cllr Green; Seconded by Cllr Barnard. It was requested that clarification should be sought about the reasons why Wonderland had been cancelled.

92.1 i) Proposals for Town Council branding

It was noted, and it was accepted, that the report was incorrect in stating that eastern coachworks had specific colours and potentially this was a confusion with the colours for corporation buses. There was some discussion about the possibility of involving young people in design ideas but, in practice, their ideas might be sought for uses of the design but there was insufficient time to consult. Publicity needs to be increased and it was noted that the new branding should be publicised. It was also noted that should the Town Council develop its own Lowestoft Youth Council, it could design its own logo. A short period followed when councillors had an opportunity for a further review of the branding options presented in the paper, prior to the vote.

Cllrs Coleby and Green left the room at 21:03

Cllr Gandy left the room at 21:06 and Cllr Coleby re-entered.

Cllr Green re-entered at 21:07

Cllr Gandy re-entered the room at 21:07

Option 5 was agreed with 13 in favour and 3 voting for other options.

Minutes of a meeting of Lowestoft Town Council
held at 19.30 on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft.

92.1 ii) Progress with Town Council noticeboards

It was agreed that this matter would be transferred to the Implementation to deal with. Proposed by Cllr Graham; Seconded by Cllr Coleby; All in favour.

93.1 Committee Membership changes

The Council noted the revised membership table and agreed the changes. Proposed by Cllr Coleby; Seconded by Cllr Barron; All in favour.

93.2 Planning and Environment Committee

The minutes of the meeting at 17.30 that day were not yet available and Cllr Taylor advised that the Town Council's Local Plan response would be dealt with through a special Planning and Environment Committee meeting on 18 September. Any councillor with views could submit them to Cllr Taylor by the 14 September. She will collate and this will then be considered at the meeting on 19th. Hard copies of the Local Plan had been requested from the Planning Authority.

93.3 Finance and Governance Committee

The minutes of 8 August 2017 were not yet available. Cllr Green noted that the Committee were requesting a reduction of the quorum from five to four. This was agreed. Proposed by Cllr Byatt; Seconded by Cllr Begum; one vote against. It was noted that this could be reviewed at a later stage.

93.4 The Implementation Committee

This would meet on 29 August 17:00

93.5 Personnel Committee

- i) It was noted that Waveney District Council HR are supporting the recruitment process.
- ii) The comment was made that it was difficult for the Council to sign off the post when it had not seen the Job Description and Person Specification. However, the terms of the posts and the framework for the process had been agreed by Council and they had asked the Personnel Committee to progress this. The advertisement and associated papers for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk (Finance and Governance) posts had been produced and agreed by the Personnel Committee. There was a discussion about interview and relocation expenses. It was confirmed that the Personnel Committee would not agree to extra costs without Council approval. The interviews would continue without interview expenses being payable and, if relocation expenses were sought, this would come back to Council. It was noted that this was a permanent contract and that there would be sick pay. Although key worker insurance was not being considered at this stage, a small team would be built which should build in depth of cover.
- iii) The likely advertising costs were noted as within budget and would be out for at least 2 weeks. SALC, NALC, the EDP, Advertiser, Facebook and LinkedIn would be among the routes for advertising these posts.
- iv) The shortlisting and interviewing process was outlined and Waveney District Council HR would support. Interview rooms were booked at Riverside. It was essential that there was a special meeting of Town Council on 11 October to agree any appointment.
- v) The next step in the recruitment process was the advertising.

The Council noted the position and it was agreed to progress recruitment on the basis outlined.

Proposed by Cllr Coleby; Seconded by Cllr Barron. This was approved with one against.

- vi) A paper on Council office space and costs was received which included delegated authority and a budget to the Finance and Governance Committee to conclude this matter for an initial period of 12 months. The CAB offices in Gordon Road are being considered and they are purchasing new furniture and refurbishing to make the office fit for improved office and meeting space. Any purchase of equipment by the Council itself would have a long-term use as it could be moved to other locations. Council could meet with the public there and the space can just about accommodate Full Council. If there were a controversial issue with likely high attendance, there would be a need to hire elsewhere. It was noted that it seemed appropriate to meet there as Lowestoft people contribute to the cost of the CAB.

Minutes of a meeting of Lowestoft Town Council
held at 19.30 on Tuesday 22 August 2017 at Riverside, Canning Road, Lowestoft.

A question was raised about the benefits compared to Riverside. A small team need to be based somewhere together which was difficult at Riverside. The pursuance of the CAB office space in line with the paper presented was agreed. Proposed by Cllr Coleby; Seconded by Cllr Lang. This was approved with one abstention.

It was agreed to suspend Standing orders to provide for a 30 minute extention. Proposed by Cllr Lang; Seconded by Cllr Graham. All in favour.

94.1 Charter Tree initiative update

Not progressed owing to unavailability of staff linked to the Charter Tree initiative (next agenda).

94.2 Coastal Communities Team meeting report

This had been circulated in advance and was noted.

94.3 Lowestoft Summer Festival minutes

A councillor said they had not received the paper but it was confirmed by other councillors that this was in batch 2 of the papers. The minutes were noted.

94.4 Lowestoft Development Group note

This had been circulated in advance and was noted.

95 New East Suffolk Council

It was understood that the planned briefings had been cancelled. It was hoped these would be rearranged. Cllrs Knight, Begum and Byatt and substitute Cllr Coleby were appointed.

96 SCC A47 Improvement Schemes and local transport issues affecting Lowestoft

It was noted that this was an important meeting. Cllrs Collecott, Barron and Taylor and substitute Byatt were appointed.

97 Heritage champion

It was proposed that two champions were appointed. Cllr Ladd had contacted the Town Council suggesting representatives. Cllr Coleby proposed Cllrs Patience and Knight (as Deputy Mayor). Cllr Byatt seconded.

Agreed.

98 Next meeting – 19 September

99 Next agenda

Lowestoft Railway Station development – this had been explored following discussions at a previous meeting. Waveney District Council had advised that they did not feel Town Council representation was appropriate. It was understood that they have reviewed representation on the body and were no longer including local authority representation. It was agreed the position needs to be clarified as the Town Council was disappointed with this position and would wish to make these concerns known publicly. A considerable change is proposed at the station and it was strongly felt that the Town Council's voice should be heard to ensure a community and democratic voice alongside business voices.

100. Closure for confidential matters – no matters considered.

Meeting Closed at 21.50

Signed.....

Date 19 September