

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council Meeting

Held via Video Meeting

19:30 on 15 December 2020

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Amanda Frost, Alan Green (Mayor), Jacqueline Hardie, Peter Knight, Paul Page, Andy Pearce, Alice Taylor and David Youngman

Also participating: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

134. Welcome

Councillors and members of the public were reminded of the right to report and the application of the video meeting protocol, and the meeting was welcomed. Cllr Collecott has resigned, just couple of hours before FC. Clerk has sent formal thanks and formal thanks were given at this meeting

135. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby, Tracey Eastwood, Peter Lang, Graham Parker, Keith Patience and John Pitts. Cllrs Tara Carlton had not provided apologies and was absent. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour. 10 in favour 1 abs.

136. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllrs Barnard, Hardie, Pearce and Taylor declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 141.2d. These Councillors have sponsored the applications but are not personally acquainted with the intended recipients.

137. Receipt of any comments and noting that the draft minutes of the meeting on 24 November 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

The draft minutes were noted.

138. Any advance comments from the public on any matters on this agenda

A letter had been received in objection to the purchase of luxury hampers. The letter had been dated October but had only been received in December. The content of the letter was noted but Full Council has already made the decision to proceed with the purchase of the hampers.

139. Finance

139.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 10 December 2020, and noting that any recommendations will be considered at the next Full Council meeting – The draft minutes were noted and have not yet considered been considered by the Finance and Governance Committee.

139.2. Receipt and consideration of the following:

139.2a. The 2020 – 2021 budget position – There were no comments, but there will be further consideration at item 139.2f, during the confidential session.

139.2b. The draft 2021 – 2022 budget and precept – The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee has worked through the draft budget in detail. Funds have been ring fenced where possible and figures increased only where necessary, but nothing in the suggested budget has or will jeopardise the service currently provided by the Town Council. On behalf of the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee and the Finance and Governance Committee, Cllr Green proposed approval of the draft budget, which presents a 1.54% reduction on Lowestoft Town Council's element of the Council Tax bill, compared to the 2020 – 2021 year. It is understood Suffolk County Council will be increasing the budget for social care by 3%, East Suffolk Council is aiming for a 0% increase, and the

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Police are looking at a 2.5 – 3% increase. The Town could alternatively consider a 0% increase on last year's figures, which would increase its reserves, as it is aspiring to maintain general reserves equivalent to six months' precept. The proposal however is for a 1.54% reduction, as it was felt this would be the most appropriate for the 2021 – 2022 year. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal for a 1.54% reduction. Despite the reduction, budgets for parks, play areas and public conveniences would be increased, and there will be a confidential discussion about the staffing budget. No service budgets are being cut to fund the decrease, and some funds will be allocated to reserves. Should the proposal be approved, the precept would be £1,689,097, as opposed to last year's figure of £1,837,731. That amounts to a Council Tax Band D figure of £142.68, as opposed to last year's figure of £144.91. Thanks were offered to the Councillors and staff who had been involved with the budget preparation process. The vote was taken and nine Councillors voted in favour of the draft 2021 – 2022 budget and precept as presented; two Councillors abstained from the vote.

139.2c. Any bank reconciliations – November's bank reconciliation is still to be completed.

139.2d. Payments, including those made under delegated authority, any Covid-19 grant awards and any for approval, and income and expenditure reports for the month ending 30 November 2020 and December 2020 to date – No Covid-19 grant applications had been received since the last meeting. The income and expenditure reports were noted as follows:

November income

Date	Received from	Description	Amount
2 November 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income 2 November 2020	£42.50
2 November 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£213.16
3 November 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income March 2020	£85
5 November 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income 9 November 2020	£42.50
12 November 2020	HMRC	VAT return Q2 2020-21	£30,040.92
13 November 2020	Screen Suffolk	Drone filming at The Ness and Normanston Park	£125 + £25 VAT = £150
16 November 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income 16 November 2020	£42.50
20 November 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income 23 November 2020	£42.50

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30 November 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income 30 November 2020	£42.50
30 November 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£213.16

November expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
2 November 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC business rates	£122
2 November 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC business rates	£210
2 November 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest bowls pavilion business rates	£110
2 November 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road car park business rates	£187
2 November 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC business rates	£117
4 November 2020	East Point Business Services		£8,877
4 November 2020	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage	£200 + £40 VAT = £240
5 November 2020	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions October 2020	£3,977.69
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£225.94
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£369.60
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£757.83
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£210.80
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£158.80
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£202.09
9 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£121.14
16 November 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas	£45.70
16 November 2020	Lloyds Bank	Credit card charges	£20.39
16 November 2020	Joshua Freemantle Creative	Remembrance Day 2020 video	£225

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16 November 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	Legal advice	£285.12
16 November 2020	Royal British Legion	Poppy wreaths	£50
16 November 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	Legal advice	£763.20
16 November 2020	Guy McGregor	Payslips	£77.40
16 November 2020	SLCC	ILCA Fees Events and Communications Officer	£99 + £19.80 £118.80
18 November 2020	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage	£200 + £40VAT = £240
19 November 2020	NPower	Electric charges	£114.20
19 November 2020	HMRC	HMRC October 2020	£3,925.19
23 November 2020	NPower	Electric charges	£661.43
23 November 2020	Salaries	Salaries November 2020	£10,247.81
23 November 2020	British Hamper Co	Covid 19 thank you hampers	£1,466.92 + £82.15 VAT = £1,549.07
24 November 2020	MS Oakes	Town Hall repairs	£850 + £170 VAT = £1,020
26 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£100.23 + £5.01 VAT = £105.24
26 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£344.26 + £17.21 VAT = £361.47
26 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£118.15 + £5.91 VAT = £124.06
26 November 2020	NPower	Electricity charges	£119.24 + £5.96 VAT = £125.20
27 November 2020	Lord Kitchener MHC	Covid-19 grant	£1,500

December income

Date	Received from	Description	Amount
1 December 2020	Lamarti	Use of Links Road Car Park	£360 + £72 VAT = £432
7 December 2020	Market Income	Weekly market income 7 December 2020	£42.50

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December expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 December 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC business rates	£122
1 December 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC business rates	£210
1 December 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest bowls pavilion business rates	£110
1 December 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road car park business rates	£187
1 December 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC business rates	£117
1 December 2020	Zurich Municipal	Insurance for the Ness	£527.96
4 December 2020	SCC Pension Fund	Pensions November 2020	£4,438.65
7 December 2020	Blachere Illuminations	Christmas Light uninstillation	£2,349 + £469.84 VAT = £2,819.04
7 December 2020	Liquid DJ	VJ Day event Sound	£400
7 December 2020	Michlmayr	Annual service to Town Hall clock	£314 + £62.80 VAT = £376.80
7 December 2020	Henry Baker	Lest we Forget Video	£175
7 December 2020	BSA Security	Gunton Hall Alarm	£80.40
8 December 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£214.11
8 December 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£124.79
8 December 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£74.70
8 December 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£71.42
8 December 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£93.37
8 December 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£63.18
10 December 2020	NALC	Leaders Talk Planning for the Future Webinar	£43.09 + £8.62 VAT = £51.71

139.2e. A request for funding from Lowestoft Rising – The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee will be continuing its meetings to consider the budget structure, and it was suggested this item could be referred to that Sub-Committee with delegated authority to consider and make recommendations. It has been confirmed that Lowestoft Rising is constituted under East Suffolk Council. It was agreed to consider this item at this meeting. Lowestoft Rising had submitted a Covid-19 grant application to the Town

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Council of £5,000 for a specific project. It is understood general funding for a year would be £15,000 as a funding partner. It is understood the Town Council would be offered a position on their Board alongside this, however this will be clarified. The Town Council did previously approve a budget of just under £15,000 to support the free school meals programme, but it is understood this funding will not now be required for that purpose. Cllr Pearce proposed approval for the Town Council to become a funding partner of Lowestoft Rising, at a cost of £15,000, subject to clarity being sought as to whether the Town Council will be represented on the Management Board; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee will consider an appropriate source for the funding in the budget. There are funds available in the Covid-19 grant fund, and this should not affect the 2021 – 2022 precept.

139.2f. The cost of repair work to the Jubilee Bridge (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

140. Governance

140.1. Actions by the Town Council in response to the COVID-19 pandemic – There have been no Covid-19 grant applications received since the last meeting. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee is considering what can happen next year.

141. Assets, Inclusion and Development

141.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 7 December 2020 – The draft minutes were noted.

141.2. The following recommendations from the AID Committee:

141.2a. Trialling the reinstatement of the land of the former Parklands play area as unlocked public open space, subject to inspection of the land – The AID Committee has had a thorough discussion about this item. Cllr Barnard proposed approval of the recommendation to trial the reinstatement of the land of the former Parklands play area as unlocked public open space, subject to inspection of the land; seconded by Cllr Pearce; ten Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

141.2b. Installing a bin at the entrance to every Town Council owned park and play area, and bicycle racks and benches where necessary – This has been discussed in detail by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee, who would like a criteria sheet for each park to assess the current provision. This is aspirational and will be incorporated into the five year plans. Cllr Coleby is creating draft plans based on the parks' inventory, which will be considered by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee and the AID Committee. It is anticipated bins and benches can be progressed within the first two years of the plans. Cllr Barnard proposed approval of the recommendation to install a bin at the entrance to every Town Council owned park and play area, and bicycle racks and benches where necessary; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

141.2c. Purchasing and installing a wheelchair accessible picnic bench for the Stoven Close play area, within a maximum budget of £1,000 and with delegated authority to the Clerk to progress – Thanks were offered to staff for their efforts in obtaining quotations. Cllr Butler suggested Gunton Community Park as a potential alternative location as it is more accessible. A specific request was received for Stoven Close by a wheelchair user who frequents the park, and it is understood there are no issues accessing the park currently. Cllr Barnard proposed installing wheelchair accessible bench in both the Stoven Close play area and the Gunton Community Park; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

141.2d. Approving requests received to award Freedom of the Town (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

141.2e. Approving a request to trade at the Links Road car park in 2021 (confidential) – To be

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discussed during the confidential session.

142. Planning and Environment

142.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meetings on 24 November and 8 December 2020 – The draft minutes were noted.

143. Climate Emergency

143.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 1 December 2020 – The draft minutes were noted.

144. Community Safety

144.1. Appointment of the Chair of the Community Safety Committee – Cllr Lang was not present at the meeting, but had indicated that he would be interested in becoming Chair of the Community Safety Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed Cllr Lang as the Chair of the Community Safety Committee; seconded by Cllr Green. There were no other nominations. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour. As Cllr Lang was the Deputy Chair of that Committee, the Committee will now appoint a new Deputy Chair.

145. Personnel

145.1. Appointment of the Chair of the Personnel Committee – Cllr Green proposed Cllr Hardie as the Chair of the Personnel Committee; seconded by Cllr Frost. There were no other nominations. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour.

145.2. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 3 December 2020 – The draft minutes were noted.

145.3. Staff terms and conditions, including recommendations from the Personnel Committee (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

146. Date of next meeting

26 January 2021 19:30

147. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for items to be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Knight proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. The Mayor thanked those who had been viewing the meeting via live stream and the live stream was closed as the meeting went into confidential session. It was confirmed the meeting would end following the confidential session.

148. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

148.1. Any legal matters, including those above as required:

139.2f The cost of repair work to the Jubilee Bridge (confidential) – The latest position regarding the repair work was discussed. Cllr Taylor made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

A five minute comfort break was taken 20:39 and the meeting resumed 20:44

141.2d Approving requests received to award Freedom of the Town (confidential) – Cllr Taylor proposed approval of the AID Committee's recommendation to approve the applications received to award Freedom of the Town; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. The Clerk has researched and confirmed that the Town Council can award Freedom of the Town to objects and organisations, but currently has no policy to do so. Cllr Taylor proposed an amendment to the existing policy to allow the Town Council to consider applications to award Freedom of the Town to organisations and objects, subject to there being no legal impediment preventing the

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Council from doing so; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. It was queried whether the existing policy should also be amended to 'Freeperson' rather than 'Freeman' or 'Freewoman'. The specific legal provision is 'Freeman' and it was agreed to keep the policy the same in that respect for now.

141.2e Approving a request to trade at the Links Road car park in 2021 (confidential) – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the request to trade at the Links Road car park in 2021; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

148.2. Any employment matters, including those above as required:

145.3 Staff terms and conditions, including recommendations from the Personnel Committee (confidential) – *Councillors went into a breakout room to consider this item, without staff present*

Cllr Green made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of a confidential recommendation from the Personnel and Finance and Governance Committees, regarding staff terms and conditions; seconded by Cllr Frost; all in favour.

Regarding item 141.2c, it was clarified that the hardstanding for the picnic benches will be an additional £450 each. The Council confirmed it made its decision assuming that both benches would be installed onto a hardstanding base and is happy to proceed on this basis.

The Mayor closed the meeting 21:04.

Signed:

26 January 2021