

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 6 December 2021

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Colin Butler, Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Elise Youngman

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance (either in person or via Zoom webinar)

104. Welcome

As Cllr Breakspear was not in attendance for this part of the meeting, Cllr Butler presided over the meeting as Deputy Chair of this Committee. The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained, and the meeting was welcomed.

105. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Christian Newsome and Paul Page. Cllr Robert Breakspear had not provided apologies and was absent. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

106. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 114.4, 114.5, 115.1, 115.2, 116.2b and 116.3, plus any matters relating to Fen Park and Gunton. Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Gunton.

107. The draft minutes of the meeting on 1 November 2021

Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

108. Public forum

No advance comments had been received. There were no members of the public in attendance, either in person or via Zoom webinar.

109. Monitoring expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

Cllr Breakspear arrived 18:11

The report was displayed at the meeting. The tree watering costs may be less than anticipated. The Committee Clerk is following up technical issues with the Christmas lights. It was noted that £18,000 had been set aside for replacement matting at the Britten Road play area, which has not been reflected in the report.

110. Parks and open spaces:

110.1.Receiving any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meetings on 16 November 2021 – The requested Zoom meeting with Norse is being arranged. The measurements for the over entrance archway signs have been taken and can be used to obtain quotations.

110.2.A request from Cllr Parker to join the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this request; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

110.3.The cost of items relating to the Kensington Gardens centenary – The Friends of Kensington Gardens are holding their Annual General Meeting on 16 December, after which more detail should be available. Officers require details of what the Friends Group would like to see in the park in order to obtain quotations. Anything more time urgent can be added to the Full Council agenda.

110.4.Boundary repairs at the Town Green – A number of Councillors have undertaken a site visit and agree to East Suffolk Norse's recommendation of a fence and mature shrubbery. Certain shrubs can help to remove vehicle emissions from the atmosphere.

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It was queried whether a gate would need to be installed to provide legitimate access to the land beyond, if required. Officers will enquire with Norse. A delegation has already been given to officers to proceed with the work within a maximum budget of £2,500. Cllr Pearce proposed that officers should proceed as discussed, with installation of a fence, plus mature shrubbery, such as hawthorn or another species which can be beneficial to the environment, and liaison with Norse regarding installation of a gate; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

- 110.5. An update on the purchase of a Holocaust memorial lectern – Cllr Pearce is obtaining some photographs from a local historian for inclusion on one of the lecterns. Officers will enquire with Norse how the lecterns can be secured into the ground and will obtain a cost for this. It was suggested that there may be other memorial possibilities which the Town Council could observe. It was agreed to add this to the next agenda for further consideration.
- 110.6. A quotation to carry out works on the circular Holocaust Memorial bed in Kensington Gardens – The quotation is £1,089 plus VAT to build up the height of the bed to support planting. The planting could not be carried out this time of year but work to the bed itself could be done in preparation. It was queried whether the spare bricks at the park could be used and whether this would affect the cost. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the works, within a maximum budget of £1,200 from the parks reserve, with delegated authority to officers to progress the work, in conjunction with the Friends of Kensington Gardens and Norse; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 110.7. A delegation for bulb ordering in 2022 – 2023 and beyond – The horticultural budget is delegated to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee, but that Sub-Committee has a per item expenditure limit of £2,500. This agenda item is intended to support advance planning. Certain sites have specific planting plans included within their five year plans. Cllr Pearce proposed adding an item to January's meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to develop a horticultural calendar, identifying when orders need to be placed, when planting should take place, and which sites require planting. Provision also needs to be included to check when areas are in flower and take photographs to see if any additional planting is needed. Each area should be reviewed individually. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.
- 110.8. Options for the play equipment at The Ness, following recent vandalism – Some comments had been made online regarding the safety of the slide. As with all of the Town Council's play areas, the site is subject to an annual independent inspection. No dangers were identified in this year's report. It is understood that local schools were involved in the selection of the equipment. The agenda item relates to the vandalism of one of the swings. It was previously agreed this should be returned to the manufacturer for analysis. Cllr Butler advised that following a recent site visit, both swings were in place and affixed with chains. Cllr Pearce proposed checking with relevant authorities the status of the swings, and whether the Council can expect an invoice for any remedial work carried out. Should work still need to be carried out, Cllr Pearce proposed that it is carried out on both of the swings, from the ring fenced amount for The Ness within the play areas budget. If the remedial work has been carried out, the Committee would like confirmation of who sanctioned and carried out the work. Cllr Breakspear seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour. It was requested that an item be added to the next Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee agenda to consider vandalism and maintenance of The Ness.
- 110.9. Further considering the diversion (not closure) of footpath 52 across The Ness – The Council has given its approval as landowner. As part of the statutory process with any footpath diversion, a public consultation has opened.
- 110.10. A risk assessment of the Great Eastern Linear Park 'Nature Walk' – The Community Warden and Committee Clerk undertook a site visit and recommend that the steps are removed, the concrete path entrance further along is at least partially taken up and gaps in the border between are infilled with brambles or similar. Quotations will be

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sought for this work. Officers will check with Norse whether safe access would still be required for maintenance or removal of litter. Cllr Brooks proposed seeking Norse's views on re-wilding that area of the park; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

110.11. Installing spotlights at the Normanston Park skate park (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

111. Events and Communications:

111.1. Receiving any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meetings on 25 November 2021 – A few typographical errors were identified. The Deputy Clerk will review the minutes in time for the next Sub-Committee meeting. It was queried why the Spring Beach Clean had been scheduled for September. Officers will make enquiries.

111.2. Recommendations from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee:

111.2a. Supporting a 2022 project with Norfolk and Waveney MIND (major event) – Cllr Pearce met with representatives from MIND to discuss ways in which the Town Council could offer support. The representatives attended the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting and discussed events, including a potential ongoing liaison, and annual event and offering space for MIND to operate from. MIND is looking to run a Festival of Kindness in 2022, which could be licenced and hosted by the Town Council, who could offer use of its land free of charge and make a donation towards it. The Finance and Governance Committee has considered this from a budgeting point of view. Cllr Pearce proposed treating this as a major event, due to the logistics and planning, with delegated authority to officers to progress arrangements, with any Councillors who would wish to be involved; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

111.2b. Sponsoring a 2022 sporting event as a Town Council major event – There had previously been discussions about potentially sponsoring the Scores Race. It was suggested this should be treated as a major event as there could be a lot of organisation involved, although the event organiser should be responsible for much of this. It was suggested that officers should make enquiries with the Waveney Athletics Club for more information. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

111.3. Delegating authority to officers to respond to any urgent enquiries from the press – It was queried whether liaison with Councillors should take place outside of meetings before a response is submitted, but an urgent request may not allow time to do this. Cllr Breakspear proposed approval of this item as it is; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

111.4. Issuing a statement on the removal of the Banksy artwork from the former Lowestoft Electrical building – This is linked to the previous item. The Council could have issued a short statement expressing its disappointment, but this may not have been representative of the views held by all of the electorate.

111.5. Whether to enquire as to the feasibility of placing Grade II listings on the remaining Banksy artworks – None of the pieces are on land owned by the Town Council, so liaison with landowners would be required if this were to be progressed. Cllr Pearce proposed asking the Town Council's Heritage Action Zone representatives to make initial enquiries with Historic England via the Partnership Board; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

112. Reviewing the Town Council's Asset Register

This item is also being considered by the Finance and Governance Committee. It was suggested that the Asset Register may require updating and potential anomalies were identified with the Stoven Close play area. Cllr Butler proposed deferring this item to January's meeting, and in the interim asking the Community Warden to review the inventory of assets; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

113. The Sails and Triangle Market:

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- 113.1.Improvements required to support the intended use of the Sails – Officers are seeking quotations to have the Sails cleaned, which would take place in the spring. Officers are also looking into whether the green struts can be removed.
- 113.2.Licensing the area beneath the Sails for market trading – The Deputy Clerk has enquired with East Suffolk Council’s Licensing Team about extending the market. The advice received now is that a licence would not be required to do this, but there may be highways implications. This is a change to the advice received previously so will need further investigation.
- 113.3.Triangle Market capital investment – Full Council has made provision for £20,000 capital investment in 2022 - 2023, for work not linked to the wider Towns Fund projects. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee has incorporated this into draft proposals which will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council. The refurbishment of the public conveniences should be funded from the Triangle Market reserve and/or funding available from East Suffolk Council which needs to be spent by early 2022.
- 113.4.A request from the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee to determine ownership and maintenance arrangements for the permanent stalls – It is understood that the stalls are owned by the individual stall holders. Revised trading terms will be drawn up, which may encompass condition of the stalls. This will be considered further at January’s meeting.
- 113.5.The delegation from Full Council regarding decision making on market trading applications, and to consider a new application (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

A comfort break was taken 19:47 and the meeting resumed 19:52

114. Play areas:

Cllr Pearce proposed referring items 114 and 115 to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee for consideration; seconded by Cllr Elise Youngman; all in favour.

114.1.The 2021 play inspection reports

114.2.A priority order for play area refurbishments

114.3.Refurbishment options for the St Margaret’s Plain play area

114.4.Repair and maintenance of the damaged matting at Fen Park

114.5.The installation of gates for the gaps in the fencing around the Fen Park play area

114.6.The provision of creative/art spaces within the Town Council’s parks

114.7.Replacement signage

114.8.Commencement of approved works at the Britten Road play area (some aspects may be confidential)

115. Ponds:

This was covered with the previous item.

115.1.Progress with the Fen Park and Gainsborough Drive pond dredging

115.2.The issue of duck feeding at the Gainsborough Drive pond

115.3.An offer from a private individual to install a water fountain in the Kensington Gardens fish pond

116. Public conveniences:

116.1.Receiving the notes from the Toilet Strategy Working Group meeting on 18 November 2021 – The notes were received and noted.

116.2.Recommendations from the Toilet Strategy Working Group:

116.2a. Retaining the Pakefield Street public conveniences as part of the Town Council’s portfolio of public conveniences, following preliminary advice from the Planning Authority – Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve this recommendation from the Working Group; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

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116.2b. Including the public conveniences at the Denes Oval with the wider refurbishment of the pavilion, but address any immediate health and safety concerns in the interim – Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve this recommendation from the Working Group; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

116.2c. For the five remaining public conveniences in the Town Council's portfolio, to refurbish three in year one (subject to budget provision) and two in year two – Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve this recommendation from the Working Group; seconded by Cllr Elise Youngman; all in favour. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee has made budget provision for the refurbishment of three public conveniences in year one.

116.2d. Prioritising the refurbishment of the Normanston Park, Kirkley Cliff Road and Lowestoft Cemetery public conveniences in year one, and Kensington Gardens and Pakefield Street in year two, with any immediate health and safety concerns or minor improvements at any site to be progressed as a priority – Cllr Butler proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve this recommendation from the Working Group; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

116.3. An update on the appointment of a project manager for the refurbishment of the Sparrows Nest and Fen Park public conveniences, and prospective refurbishment of the Triangle Market public conveniences – A Project Manager has been facilitated to carry this out, which is someone the Town Council has worked with previously for a different project at another site.

117. Repair work and any enhanced security measures required following vandalism to the Gunton Community Residents' Meeting Hall

The Community Warden has undertaken a site visit and is looking into reinforced doors and other measures. The incidents of anti-social behaviour have been reported to the police. Norse have helped putting in interim measures until a permanent solution can be found. A Community Halls earmarked reserve has now been set up, as previously only Whitton Residents' Hall had a dedicated repairs and maintenance budget. The outcomes of the Community Warden's enquiries will be relayed to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee as they may need to inform ongoing budgets.

118. Noticeboards:

118.1. The siting and need for noticeboards at the Gunton Estate Residents' Meeting Hall – There have been comments that the noticeboard installed by the Council is too far back from the pathway. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to officers to liaise with Norse and the Ward Councillors to agree a new location within the site, and bring the cost back to the Committee for consideration; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour. There is also a wooden noticeboard at the site, which is in a poor state of repair. The tenant has asked the Council to consider removing it. Cllr Pearce proposed removing the wooden noticeboard from this site; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

118.2. A request from the Friends of Fen Park to install a noticeboard in Fen Park (at no cost to the Council) – It was clarified that this will not be a Town Council branded noticeboard. It has been purchased by the Friends of Fen Park via locality funding, who are seeking landowner permission to install it. The noticeboard can be used to display Town Council notices, but it will primarily be for the purpose of displaying community notices. It was requested that an item be added to the next agenda to consider installing a Town Council noticeboard within Fen Park as well. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the request from the Friends of Fen Park; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

119. Instructing a condition survey of the Denes Oval perimeter wall

A condition survey was carried out in 2018. An asbestos survey has been completed and any

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asbestos removed. Now that the Denes Oval is in a conservation area, the Council may have limited choice as to the style of the replacement wall. Proposals from the Cricket Club regarding the wall will be considered in January. Cllr Pearce proposed progressing a condition survey, and advice from the Planning Authority regarding options for the wall, including the logistical complications of it being in a conservation area; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

120. Quotations received to install a bus shelter on Harris Avenue (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

121. Date of the next meeting

10 January 2022 18:00

122. Items for the next agenda and close

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

Cllr Pearce proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

123. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

123.1. Any legal issues, including those above as required

110.11. Installing spotlights at the Normanston Park skate park (some aspects may be confidential) – East Suffolk Norse had given advice which was read out. The request had arisen from users of the Skate Park. It was suggested that a Zoom call with Norse could be progressed, to discuss any potential alternative options for lighting.

113.5. The delegation from Full Council regarding decision making on market trading applications, and consideration of a new application (confidential) – There was a discussion about a specification application received and wider market terms. Cllr Pearce proposed suspending Standing Order 3y to allow the meeting to continue for fifteen minutes; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

120. Quotations received to install a bus shelter on Harris Avenue (some aspects may be confidential) – The Council has ring fenced funding for this project. Cllr Elise Youngman declared a local non-pecuniary interest in this item. Cllr Pearce proposed approving the installation of a bus shelter on Harris Avenue, with delegated authority to officers, in conjunction with Cllr Butler, to select a quotation, within a maximum budget to £7,500. Insurance and ongoing maintenance need to be considered, but that would not form part of the capital cost. Fees from Suffolk County Council may also be applicable. Local residents did not receive the idea well, as the last bus shelter there was subject to vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Cllr Butler was mindful of this when putting together the specification. Cllr Pitts seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting 20:51.

Signed:

10 January 2022