

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 11 January 2022

MINUTES

Present (in person): Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Alan Green, Peter Lang, Andy Pearce and David Youngman (Chair)

In attendance (remotely via Zoom): Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee and Project Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance, either in person or remotely via Zoom

123. Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained and the meeting was welcomed.

124. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Paul Page. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

125. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to the Gunton Ward and Fen Park. Cllr Barker declared that she has some feedback to give at item 129 and declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 131, 132 and 136.

126. The draft minutes of the meeting on 7 December 2021

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

127. Public forum

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

128. Monitoring expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority

There had been no expenditure by this Committee from its delegated budget since the last meeting. The Clerk has been in contact with a consultant regarding establishing the Town Council's carbon footprint as part of its aim to achieve net zero. Some raw data has been provided but the cost is not yet confirmed. It had previously been agreed that the expenditure would be taken from the Climate Emergency budget.

129. Any matters to raise with Cllr James Mallinder (East Suffolk Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment) and/or the Environment and Waste Working Group, and receiving feedback on any matters previously raised

Cllr Barker had emailed the local MP regarding her concerns at water companies pumping raw sewerage into rivers and seas. She has circulated the reply to her email to Committee members. Cllr Barker will monitor this issue and report any updates to the Committee. The Environment and Waste Working Group has formed smaller Working Groups to look at different issues, including signage, bulky waste and education. Any specific recommendations will still come from the Environment and Waste Working Group when specific and achievable ideas have been formed. It has been suggested that East Suffolk Council and Norse could jointly arrange for a skip to be made available at certain public locations, to support members of the public in disposing of bulkier waste. It is understood that East Suffolk Council was looking into funding the collection of old electrical items. Any updates will be reported to the Committee.

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130. The provision of Tetra Pak recycling facilities

As discussed at the previous meeting, the Office Assistant has contacted the Beccles Give and Take Group, to enquire why it refocused its activities away from Tetra Pak recycling. The Group has advised that its aim is to educate and encourage people to use alternative packaging. Should the Council wish to consider providing a facility to deposit Tetra Pak items, the Group advised that Tetra Pak has the final decision on what items can be recycled where. A charity can earn money from recycling but this is not something a local Council could benefit from. Items must be cleaned prior to depositing, which the Group had experienced issues with. The Committee agreed that the approach should be to educate and encourage the use of alternative materials. Cllr Pearce proposed inviting a representative from the Beccles Give and Take Group to discuss this further at the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

131. An update on progressing planned projects at Clarkes Lane, including community engagement and seeking professional advice

The Deputy Clerk is liaising with the Elmtree Ward Councillors to develop a public survey. Planting of the trees funded by the Tree Council's Branching Out fund has taken place. The Council is not aware of any community groups in the area but can liaise with nearby schools, nurseries and shops. The survey will include seeking volunteer support. The survey will also cover the various planned projects, including the play area, community orchard and wildflower meadow, and advice will be sought from Norse as to locations and how best to progress them.

132. Any recommendations from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee on Climate Action Day 2022, and the related budget

The Events and Communications Sub-Committee is seeking input from this Committee for this event. It has already been identified as a major event and will therefore have its own budget allocation. COP27 will also be taking place in 2022. There was a discussion as to when the event should be held, taking into consideration the events that have already been scheduled for 2022. It was suggested that the event should take place in late September or early October, but an item will be added to the next agenda to determine the date. It was suggested that the Council could run a campaign alongside the event, including asking the Marina Theatre to show a climate-based film. Cllr Pearce proposed adding an item to the next agenda to consider the date and details of the event; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed that this Committee should take the lead on this event, with updates being provided to the Events and Communications Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It is understood that other national climate-based events may be taking place next year, which should not be confused with this one. It was noted that National Bike Week takes place from 30 May – 4 June 2022.

133. An update on the Town Council's carbon footprint survey

Data has been supplied to the consultant but there was no further update. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

134. A Climate Action Plan

The Clerk is working on a draft Plan but it was not ready to present at this stage. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

135. A recommendation from the Community Safety Committee to further consider lighting in Belle Vue Park, Fen Park and Normanston Park

This has also been considered by the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee, which has endorsed the recommendation from the Community Safety Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed endorsing the recommendation from the Community Safety Committee and the

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proposal from the AID Committee to take this forward. If it would be beneficial, a Zoom meeting could be arranged with Norse, as the requirement for lighting in each of the locations is different, but primarily relates to health and safety and deterring anti-social behaviour. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal. When considering the expansion of its provision of bicycle racks, the Council will need to carefully consider their location and visibility. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour. The AID Committee has asked the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to put together a specification for the lighting. Any Councillors not on that Sub-Committee would be welcome to submit comments for consideration. Cllr Pearce proposed that whilst lighting is being looked at in the longer term, officers take immediate action with Norse to make the bicycle racks in Normanston Park more visible; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

136. The guidance in the Theatre Green Book

The book sets out clear standards about how to run all aspects of a Theatre in a sustainable way, including the building and its productions. The Marina Theatre Trust is fully supportive of it. Rather than having appointed Trustees, the Town Council will be having quarterly management meetings with the Marina Theatre Trust, where implementation of these standards can be monitored. The Town Council would not dictate how the Marina Theatre stages its productions, but would have liabilities where the building is concerned. It may be difficult and expensive to make a Theatre building of the age of the Marina Theatre more modern, sustainable and energy efficient, and this could be difficult for the Town Council to undertake whilst the Town Hall project is ongoing. Professional advice would be required. It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting for a fuller discussion. This item will become an ongoing consideration.

137. A policy review regarding utility supply, including ethical considerations (some aspects may be confidential)

This item was also considered by the AID Committee and it was agreed that it should be discussed during the confidential session.

138. Date of the next meeting

1 February 2022 15:30

139. Items for the next agenda and close

An item was requested to receive an update on East Suffolk Council's Cycling Strategy. It was noted that the public consultation will have only just closed but an update will be sought. It was requested that the item on planned projects for Clarkes Lane is carried forward to the next meeting.

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

140. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

137. A policy review regarding utility supply, including ethical considerations (some aspects may be confidential) – Concerns were raised at the AID Committee regarding one of the Town Council's utility suppliers. Cllr Pearce proposed supporting the recommendation made by the AID Committee; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. Concerns had also been raised regarding another of the Town Council's utility suppliers and officers had been asked to explore alternative providers.

The Chair closed the meeting 16:46.

Signed: 1 February 2022