

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 5 October 2021

MINUTES

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

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There was one member of the public in attendance (in person)

68. Welcome

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

69. Acceptance of apologies for absence

There were no apologies and all Committee members were in attendance.

70. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Barker declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 75 and 77. Cllr Barker also declared that the member of the public in attendance had personally lobbied her about issues which may arise today. Cllr Pearce declared that he had been appointed Chair of the Gunton Residents' Association and Cllr Brooks declared that she had been appointed Vice Chair.

71. The draft minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2021

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

72. Public forum

The member of the public has been in contact with other authorities, including Suffolk Wildlife Trust, to organise a COP26 event on 6 November. The Events and Communications Sub-Committee will be considering this at its meeting this week.

Cllrs Butler and Newsome had submitted comments for the consideration of the Committee, which it was agreed would be considered at item 79. Cllr Newsome's comment referred to the importance of the bus service, both from a climate emergency aspect but also to help prevent social isolation, and to keep different parts of the town connected. Although this comment could relate to his employment, Cllr Newsome is not a member of this Committee and would therefore not be voting on this item. Councillors would always be expected to be transparent to protect their own interest.

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

Full Council has agreed that the expenditure for the carbon footprint assessment should be taken from the climate emergency budget rather than the consultancy budget. If the Town Council does decide to hold an event to highlight impact of climate change, the expenditure may come from the climate emergency budget or the events budget, but this will be decided once the details of any event are known.

74. Any matters to raise with Cllr James Mallinder (East Suffolk Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment), and to receive feedback on any matters previously raised

At the last meeting, the Committee requested suggestions from Councillors for potential locations. Village Rise, Normanston Park and Thurston Road had been suggested previously. No additional suggestions had been submitted. Cllr Mallinder was seeking suggestions for new locations. Cllr Brooks proposed that if no other suggestions are received by the end of the week, the current list is sent to Cllr Mallinder; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. Following discussions with Cllr Mallinder about street cleaning, it was reported that streets around the town centre have now been cleaned. A new multi-authority working group has been formed to consider environmental and waste issues in Lowestoft. The group has no

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delegations and cannot make decisions on behalf of any of the authorities represented. Cllr Pearce proposed that any recommendations made by the working group are considered by this Committee first, then to Full Council if this Committee is minded to support them; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Councillors have noticed some effort is being made to start cleaning the town. It was suggested this should be by way of a regular schedule, rather than reactive. The working group will be reviewing the arrangements for street cleaning. Cllr Pearce proposed supporting the efforts of the working group to improve the level of street cleaning in the town; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

75. Receipt of feedback and considering any actions required following the site visit to Clarkes Lane

Several projects are underway, including a community garden/orchard, pledging land to WildEast and a separate wildflower meadow. Councillors who undertook the site visit would also like to review the play area. The quotation to develop the wildflower meadow is approximately £24,000 and will require ongoing maintenance. The projects will need to be progressed in stages. The Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee has agreed that this Committee should progress the community orchard. Cllr Pearce proposed endorsing this recommendation from the AID Committee; seconded by Cllr Lang. This will involve community engagement and residents will be asked whether they would consider being involved with a Friends Group, although the Council may need to budget for maintenance as part of the grounds maintenance contract initially. Cllr Barker offered to liaise with the Warren School and this was formally added to Cllr Pearce's proposal. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour. Officers will be contacting the Warren School regarding the play area and will liaise with Cllr Barker to ensure all points are covered under one communication. Community engagement and seeking professional advice will take place before the projects are progressed. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to the Clerk, in conjunction with Cllrs Barker, Lang and whichever Councillors would like to be involved, to liaise with the Warren School and local residents, decide on the best method of community engagement and carry out the community engagement; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

76. How to progress Full Council's decision to work with other authorities to progress on-street cycle storage and any provision of free bicycles

New cycle storage has been installed at the train station. This Committee had previously considered how on-street cycle storage could be progressed, recognising that the Town Council cannot give funding directly to individuals. Cllr Pearce proposed engaging with the town's Member of Parliament to meet with this Committee to discuss how this may be progressed; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. On identifying locations, consideration needs to be given to where it would be safe, appropriate and most beneficial to have this type of storage.

77. Cycle lane provision for Gull Wing and road closures/traffic movements as bridge works progress

It is understood that the plans for Gull Wing include a three metre shared space for cyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users. Cllr Pearce proposed requesting that Cllr Barker, as the Town Council's appointed representative to the Gull Wing Stakeholder Group, asks why the design has changed and whether there will be appropriate signage to notify users of the shared space; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

78. How to progress provision for issues regarding cycle lanes to be reported to the Town Council and collated and passed to the relevant authorities

A representative from Suffolk Highways attends meetings of the Planning Committee quarterly and reports back any issues raised by the Committee. There is a perception that

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there is a biased towards motorists. This Committee would like to know if the Town Council could introduce some form of reporting tool for cyclists on its website, which would enable reported issues to be collated and forwarded to Suffolk Highways. This will be considered when the new Events and Communications Officer is appointed.

Cllr Lang undertook a site visit to the Great Eastern Linear Park, following reports of unauthorised vehicular access. A chicane gate from Evergreen Road has been removed. The chicane gate at Marham Road is still there and did not seem to be causing an issue for cyclists and prams. Chicane gates are present at entrances to Normanston Park and it was commented that they are important in ensuring that cyclists slow down when entering the park. Cllr Pearce proposed considering this matter further at November's meeting of this Committee, when the new Events and Communications Officer should have been appointed; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

79. A Climate Action Plan

The assessment of the Council's current carbon footprint should identify what the Council will need to do to achieve net zero by 2030 or before. A written plan will identify clear actions and targets that the Council wants to achieve, including by way of events, lobbying and ensuring resources are available to achieve the agreed actions. Cllr Brooks proposed that the Clerk, in conjunction with relevant Councillors, releases a public statement regarding COP26, confirming what the Council has committed to do and how it will be doing it, the importance of climate change and how the Town Council will be addressing it; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

80. Feedback from the Lowestoft Kittiwake Management Partnership meeting

Cllr Pearce has been appointed as the Town Council's representative. This is a town-wide issue and the Council does own property where kittiwakes currently nest, or have nested. The Partnership consists of representatives from several authorities. A report will be drawn up for the Partnership to consider early in the new year, assessing what the current issue is and how to encourage kittiwakes to move away from inappropriate nesting sites, to alternative nesting structures on the coast. An artificial cliff installed by Associated British Ports fell into disrepair, but is being brought back into use. The Town Council has had an approach from a company looking to install a nesting structure at The Ness, which is under consideration.

81. Date of the next meeting

2 November 2021 15:30

82. Items for the next agenda and close

The Committee would like to receive an update on East Suffolk Council's map-based cycling consultation. It was agreed that items 76 and 78 would be carried forward. It was agreed that the proposed cycling reporting tool should be discussed at December's meeting, to give the new Events and Communications Officer time to settle in. A discussion about Tetra Pak recycling was requested. A discussion about a climate action event was requested. This may already be under consideration by the Events and Communications Sub-Committee and would require joint working with this Committee.

There were no confidential matters for consideration and the meeting was closed 16:54.

83. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

Signed:

2 November 2021