

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00am on Thursday 12 January 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, John Pitts (Deputy Chair) and Elise Youngman (Chair)

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

Also in attendance: Betty Jarrod (Chair - Lowestoft and District Allotments Association)

27. Welcome

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

28. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Cllr Page was absent with no apologies provided.

29. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

29a. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda.

Cllr Patience declared an interest on matters relating to Sussex Road as an East Suffolk Councillor.

29b. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted.

None were received.

30. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on Thursday 1 September 2022

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

31. Public forum

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public.

No comments were received.

32. To consider the Lowestoft and District Allotments Association's (LDAA) priorities and aspirations, and any support that may be required from Lowestoft Town Council, including:

32.1. Fencing at Normanston site – The Community Warden and a contractor met with the Allotment Site Manager and a quote of £6,200 was obtained to install a 1.8 metre high chain link fence at the eastern boundary. There were concerns new fencing would not secure the site. Cllr Brooks proposed to proceed with the fencing; seconded by Cllr Patience.

There were concerns that chain link fencing would not secure the site from vandals and consideration of a different fence would require another site meeting. It was suggested to combine chain link fencing with prickly plants as a deterrent. Cllr Pearce requested an amendment to Cllr Brooks' proposal for the Finance and Governance Committee (F&G) to approve the expenditure for fencing and a delegation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee (AID) to decide budget allocation. Cllr Brooks accepted the amendment. It was noted the cost of additional planting with the fence would need to

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00am on Thursday 12 January 2023

be agreed by AID and it was requested the Facilities Maintenance Officer obtain indicative figures for the planting. All Councillors voted in favour.

32.2. Tyres on allotment sites – The Chair of LDAA confirmed there were 173 tyres across the sites. It was noted Kwik Fit would dispose of the tyres at a cost of £3 per tyre. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to officers to progress the Kwik Fit option, with a budget of £600 to dispose of the tyres and a budget of £750 for officers to hire a vehicle, collect the tyres and transport them to the site for disposal. Cllr Brooks seconded but requested officers confirm how Kwik Fit dispose of or re-use the tyres and provide that information to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee. All Councillors voted in favour.

32.3. Work on Sussex Road – It was noted there was a recurring issue of plant growth from the allotments that encroached on the highway. It was previously agreed, in principal, that north of the fence on Sussex Road was under the jurisdiction of the allotments and south of the fence was under the jurisdiction of Suffolk Highways/National Highways. Cllr Patience proposed to contact Suffolk County Council and arrange a site visit with a Suffolk County Councillor, the site representative and the chair of this Sub-Committee to reach an agreement on clearing the area. Cllr Pearce seconded; all in favour.

Potential works for the surface inside the allotments area off Sussex Road were previously discussed with an indicative quote of £1,820. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to staff to verify the £1,820 quote and proceed, with the confirmation from the Facilities Maintenance Officer that the works are feasible, with a maximum budget of £2,500. Seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour. Cllr Pearce amended the proposal with a recommendation to F&G to decide the budget allocation, the amendment was agreed by the Sub-Committee.

33. To consider planning/budgeting for capital investment in and maintenance of allotments, including potential expansion of the provision of allotments, community gardens and community orchards

Sites had been previously identified for potential community gardens and orchards to support growing food. Cllr Brooks proposed to progress this decision and AID make a recommendation to Full Council in February, however, a previous residential survey indicated low interest in the volunteer work required for community gardens and a follow up was suggested to check if there was demand for community gardens. It was suggested the survey be re-visited at the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee and the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee to decide how to progress.

Cllr Brooks proposed applying for an East Suffolk Council grant to support food growth.

LDAA reported a shortage of committee officers and this could impact on any commitment to provide additional allotments on behalf of the Town Council. Cllr Brooks proposed the Communications Officer advertise the need for a secretary for LDAA on the Town Council's website and Facebook page. It was noted applicants did not need to be a member of the LDAA to apply. Cllr Pearce seconded and added that all enquiries must be sent to the LDAA; all in favour.

34. To consider renewal of the lease/management services agreement with the Lowestoft and District Allotments Association in 2023 (some aspects may be confidential)

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00am on Thursday 12 January 2023

To be discussed in confidential session.

35. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 2 March 2023 at 10:00am

36. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Cllr Brooks requested an item on applying for grants for community gardens.

37. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda

Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 11:11

Cllr Patience temporarily left the chamber at 11:12

Cllr Patience returned to the chamber at 11:14

34. To consider renewal of the lease/management services agreement with the Lowestoft and District Allotments Association in 2023 (some aspects may be confidential)

An update was provided to the Chair of the LDAA concerning the lease agreement.

Community Gardens were to be considered separate from new allotment sites and any discussion on the latter would be subject to the lease, adjustments to the lease and the agreement of the LDAA.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:22

Signed:

2 March 2023