

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee
Whitton Residents' Hall, Hawthorn Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 9BB
19:00 on 21 June 2022

Minutes

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks, Christian Newsome, John Pitts, Janet Craig and Paul Page

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk). Langton Brook Consultants for part.

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

22. Welcome

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

23. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Elise Youngman, Andy Pearce, Sonia Barker, and Graham Parker. Cllr Breakspear asked if all had provided reasons, the Deputy Clerk confirmed she was aware of all the reasons apart from that of Cllr Parker. Cllr Brooks confirmed that she had seen Cllr Parker's apologies and reason for. Cllr Breakspear proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour.

24. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Breakspear declared local non-pecuniary interest as chair of Kensington Friends Group.

25. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 21 June 2022

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

26. Public forum

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

At this stage of the meeting it was agreed to move forward agenda item 38 Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan Local Green Spaces consultation and Andy Robinson of Langton Brook Consultants joined the meeting. Mr Robinson explained the criteria for designation of green spaces and why some sites may not be suitable as well as the explicit need for the sites designated to confirm to para 101 of the National Planning Policy Framework to be included in the NDP.

Cllr Brooks was disappointed that the following areas were not included in the LGS document. The Deputy Clerk would send para 101 to members along with the designation criteria form which members were asked to complete for all sites they felt warranted inclusion in the plan.

- Cotman Close
- Bentley Drive play area
- The Bleaches, Oulton Road
- GELP
- Saturn Close, the football pitch
- St Margaret's Plain
- Compass Street pocket park area
- Town Green

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Cllr Brooks also commented that Foxborough Woods was not described as an ancient woodland, that the photographs were incorrectly labelled and Dip Farm should no longer be called a golf course. Officers would look into these matters.

27. To monitor expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget

Noting the costs listed for watering, members asked for evidence that watering was taking place at Rosedale, Britten and Nightingale. The Deputy Clerk explained that separate contractors were engaged for this work and the contractor for Britten and Nightingale did provide a list of dates they had attended the sites. Councillors requested that they were made aware in advance of these dates and that evidence of watering at Rosedale was provided.

28. To consider the scheduling of meetings of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee

It was proposed by Cllr Breakspear, seconded by Cllr Newsome and agreed; all in favour, that the meeting day and time would remain as is. Therefore, the Planning Committee would continue on the schedule agreed at the June Full Council by meeting at 18.45 on every other of their fortnightly meetings and at 17.00 on the other.

29. To consider progressing a replacement fence and gate(s) at the Pakefield Green play area

It was proposed by Cllr Pitts, seconded by Cllr Page and agreed; all in favour to make a recommendation to the AID Committee to proceed with the works as per quotation provided and to reuse fencing taken from another site to a total cost of £4956.22 + VAT.

30. To consider whether to install murals on the sea wall and Ness Point and to consider any suggestions for designs

The Deputy Clerk advised on ownership of the preferred location of sea wall directly west of Ness Point. The surface of the wall was discussed including the regular indentations of the wall structure. It was proposed by Cllr Breakspear, seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour to approach the College to ask if the surface is suitable for a mural. If it is determined that the surface is suitable for painting, both the College and High School(s) would be asked to consider the project further.

31. To consider designs for educational signage regarding feeding wildlife in parks

Members noted that signs were being progressed by the Community Wardens and Officers.

32. To consider how to progress a community garden at the Parklands

Cllr Breakspear had made initial contact with the organisation responsible for community garden in Kessingland and would contact them again to obtain further information.

33. To consider recommendations regarding the management and ongoing maintenance of the Town Council's ponds and waterways

Members had been provided with the recently commissioned specialist Ponds and Watercourse appraisal report. It was proposed by Cllr Brooks, seconded by Cllr Breakspear and agreed; all in favour that the report be passed to the Community Wardens to consider the recommendations within and prioritise actions needed.

34. To consider management of the grass and weeds at The Ness

Cllrs were concerned for the current appearance of the grass and weeds on the Ness and particularly within the fences off areas. It was proposed by Cllr Pitts, seconded by Cllr Brooks and agreed, all in favour, to; seek confirmation of what the grounds maintenance contractor are employed to do in terms of maintenance of the area, to challenge why the two areas need to remain fenced off as if fencing were removed the grass within could be cut and the

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weeds removed and to confirm if the risk assessment provided by the site developer and the environmental engineer is still current. Cllrs also asked for an update on the condition survey for the drying racks.

35. To note progress with tree mapping

It was noted that specifications and quotations were being obtained from two tree mapping providers.

36. To consider the results of a public survey regarding the installation of an over-entrance archway at Kensington Gardens

Cllr Breakspear and Cllr Brooks had tried to explore alternatives to the original wrought iron designs for which quotations had been obtained and considered. It was noted that there had been some difficulty in finding suitable alternative options. It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

37. The provision of equipment storage facilities in parks for Friends Groups

A visit to the former ammunition bunker in Kensington Gardens had been arranged and this item would be considered further thereafter. The Deputy Clerk reminded members of the current planning consent for the building and possible need for change of use consent to be given.

38. Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan – Local Green Spaces consultation

This item was considered earlier in the meeting.

39. To consider use of mulch in the Town Council's parks and for public use

Cllr Breakspear asked for a date for the Kensington Garden mulch installation and it was noted that this would be progressed by the Community Wardens. Cllr Breakspear also asked that consideration of the purchase of mulch from external suppliers was an agenda item for the next meeting.

40. To consider the implementation of the Community Engagement Policy

Cllr Brooks felt that the sub-committee was, and had, engaging well with the community on Parks projects

41. Date of the next meeting

16 August 2022 19:00

42. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Cllr Brooks asked for an item to consider working with a local farmer who may be able to provide ground maintenance services and products.

Cllr Breakspear asked for an item on engagement between the grounds maintenance contractor and Friends Groups which he felt was currently unsatisfactory.

43. 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

There was no confidential business relating to items on the agenda. However, the meeting was closed to the public and a brief discussion took place on the siting of refuse bins, belonging to residents of Arnolds House, on Town Green.

The chair closed the meeting at 20.50.