

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**19:00 on 15 November 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks (Chair), Janet Craig, Christian Newsome, John Pitts

**In attendance:** Lauren Elliot (Project and Committee Clerk - PCC) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

**Public:** There were two members of the public in attendance (in person)

**106. Welcome**

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

**107. Approval of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Pearce, Barker and Youngman, all had provided reasons. Cllr Page was not present with no apologies received.

Cllr Breakspear proposed acceptance; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour.

**108. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

108.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda.

Cllr Craig declared an interest in item 116 as a member of Most Easterly Community Garden Group (MECGG). Cllr Breakspear declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 112 as a member of the Kensington Gardens Gardening Group.

108.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted

None were received

**109. The draft minutes of the meeting on 18 October 2022**

Cllr Breakspear proposed acceptance; seconded by Cllr Newsome; all in favour.

**110. 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.

Cllr Brooks proposed to bring items 116 and 124 forward in the meeting; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour. It was agreed to allow contributions from the members of the public.

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

It was confirmed there were no changes since the last meeting. It was noted that the majority of expenditure this year was on tree guards, watering trees, purchase mulch and a bulb order.

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**112. To consider review and implementation of the five year plans, including planting plans, in line with budgeting, noting Councillors' comments regarding the following:**

The PCC reported comments received from Cllr Pearce who suggested the Sub-Committee agreed a position based on what was submitted so far and give a delegation to staff in conjunction with Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to decide on recommendations on a standalone meeting ahead of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee (AID) meeting. The PCC confirmed a zoom call would be arranged over the next two weeks before 5 December.

112.1. Normanston Park- It was noted Cllr Pitts visited the site and needed to write up the report. It was suggested it be investigated who pitch fees were being paid to.

112.2. Rosedale Park

112.3. Kensington Gardens

112.4. Gunton Community Park

112.5. Great Eastern Linear Park

112.6 Sparrows Nest

112.7 Fen Park

112.8 Belle Vue Park

112.9 Denes Oval

112.10 Cotman Close

112.11 Britten Road Play Area

112.12 Clarkes Lane

112.13 Pakefield Green Play Area

112.14 The Ness

112.15 Ness Point

112.16 St Margaret's Plain Play Area

112.17 Bentley Drive Play Area

112.18 Gainsborough Drive Pond

112.19 North Denes (and to consider the management of the open space)

112.20 Links Road Car Park

**113. To consider the following regarding Sparrows Nest:**

113.1 An approach from Get Suffolk Reading install a permanent story trail – It was reported that Get Suffolk Reading (GSR) requested to do a scaled down version for the opening of the Sparrows Nest play area. It was decided that as the opening of the play area is a Council event, GSR's proposal should be kept as a separate event and requested the PCC inform GSR of this decision. It was requested GSR be queried further on their idea for the permanent trail and have information sent in for AID in December.

113.2 Development of a Winter Garden – It was requested this be deferred to the next meeting of Parks and Open Spaces. Anyone with interest in winter garden put together proposal to Sub-Committee. It was requested the PCC circulate paperwork compiled by a prior Councillor on this item.

**114. To consider designs for park welcome signage**

It was remarked that the first design has too much text and the second design was favoured by the Sub-Committee. It was suggested the signage could include a brief summary of its history and that QR codes could be used to provide further details on the park. Cllr Breakspear suggested red dots could be used to signify bins and queried if the bike route is represented on the map. It was confirmed the Communications Officer has contacted a company for printing the signage. It was suggested the Communications Officer review signage at Carlton Mashas as an example. Cllr Brooks proposed the

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Communications Officer obtain quotes for printing the signage and the inclusion of a QR code; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

**115. To consider the following regarding The Ness:**

115.1 Planting, including a coastal garden- It was requested this be deferred to the next meeting.

115.2 Advice from an Arborist regarding the trees, and to consider next steps – It was reported that the Arborist speculated the trees weren't healthy when planted and advised that the company who oversaw the planting could be contacted. Cllr Brooks proposed to follow the Arborist's advice and requested staff contact the company who oversaw the planting project for further information; seconded Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

115.3 Making a recommendation on whether to submit an application for Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty grant funding for The Ness, and the detail of any application – It was confirmed applications are not open until next spring and the PCC will monitor. It was requested the PCC forward the two funds the Council meet the criteria for to the Sub-Committee and this be on the agenda for the next meeting. It was suggested that before formal applications are submitted the PCC phone and check if any other areas intended to be submitted meet the criteria.

**116. To consider proposals from the Most Easterly Community Gardening Group**

This item was brought forward. It was agreed to allow a contribution from a member of the public who represented MECGG. MECGG requested to run a public community garden on Town Green and it was confirmed documents were submitted with pictures and proposals. It was noted that the Council had an ongoing neighbourhood development plan with the Town Green designated as an open space so development is restricted. It was stated that as it is a conservation area, planning permission would also be required. MECGG confirmed they would keep it as an open space and the only structures that would be implemented were raised beds. A concern was raised with regards to the upkeep and maintenance of the garden. It was suggested the AID could examine the planning and conservation issues before recommending it to Full Council for a decision in December. It was confirmed there were no plans in place that would run counter to the proposal. It was confirmed that MECGG would be interested in working with the Council on this project. Cllr Pitts proposed recommendation to AID to consider the proposals and progress; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

**117. To consider the installation of games tables in the Town Council's parks**

It was queried if people would bring their own game pieces or if a tenant in a café might be willing to assist. It was noted that it would be best if the public bring their own pieces due to health and hygiene issues, perhaps with competitions being the exception. Cllr Breakspear proposed the Sub-Committee take this forward; seconded by Cllr Newsome; all in favour.

***Cllr Craig left the chamber at 20:17***

It was requested the PCC put together proposals of possible locations, types of games tables and where seating is needed for the next AID meeting.

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**118. To consider whether to progress the provision of water bottle refill stations in the Town Council's parks, including to receive advice from the Health and Safety Consultant**

It was confirmed the advice from the Health and Safety consultant indicated it is manageable, with legionella management take into consideration, and that it would be easier if the refill station is mains fed. It was confirmed funding was offered but it was difficult to progress safely and if the offer is not be valid then the Council would purchase a model suiting the requirements from its own funds.

***Cllr Craig returned to the chamber at 20:20***

It was requested staff investigate if the offer of free water fountains is still available. It was noted the stations should be implemented in other parks depending on cost and availability of running water. Cllr Bob proposed to progress; seconded by Cllr Newsome; all in favour.

**119. To consider a quotation for production of a report assessing and advising on options and methodologies for compiling a Tree Inventory**

It was confirmed the quote circulated was for an initial report and a meeting to establish requirements and then advise what is needed to fulfil requirements and recommend software. The Sub-Committee established that the software is needed to identify the trees, help with maintenance, understand the diversity of the trees and inform planning decision. It was queried if trees planted recently have a record of what and where they are and the PCC confirmed this can be checked with the company. Cllr Brooks proposed this is progressed; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

**120. To consider the criteria for Green Flag status and its incorporation into the Five Year Plans**

It was decided to discuss more at a meeting ahead of AID in December and collate comments for the five year plan. It was confirmed key points are signage and management plans for sites. It was confirmed this can be progressed and over time the Council can review the criteria as it crosses over with current development plans. It was suggested Oulton Broad could be contacted to check criteria and how they acquired it, perhaps with a meeting arranged. It was confirmed the number of sites accredited are not limited and it is approximately £400 per application.

**121. To consider implementation of the Mulch Policy**

It was confirmed this item was already completed.

**122. To receive an update on the bluebell walk and memorial bench for the late Cllr Sue Barnard**

It was confirmed the memorial bench is in production and will be in the paint schedule in a week. The location was decided at Sparrows Nest. It was noted the dove seat for Kensington Gardens is in same order. It was suggested that a ceremony could be held to unveil the memorial benches.

It was suggested when the Bluebell walk is in flower the councillors can have a site visit and

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propose any further enhancements.

- 123. To consider the report on play area refurbishment priorities (confidential)**  
To be discussed in confidential session.

- 124. To consider ownership of the strip of land and trees at the junction of Cotmer Road and Uplands Road North - adjacent to Uplands Pond (confidential)**  
The item was kept as a general discussion in open session.

***Cllr Pitts left the chamber at 19:24***

It was agreed to allow a contribution from a member of the public.

***Cllr Pitts returned to the chamber at 19:26***

The member of public presented the issue of trees near residential area not being cut regularly which presented a health and safety concern. It was confirmed the land was not owned by the Town Council. It was confirmed Cllr John visited the site. Cllr Pitts proposed the Council investigate on behalf on member of public on why the tree cutting was stopped and write a letter to East Suffolk Council (ESC) and Suffolk County Council (SCC); seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

***Cllr Pitts left the chamber at 19:43***

***Cllr Pitts returned to the chamber at 19:44***

- 125. Date of the next meeting**  
13 December 2022 19:00

- 126. Items for the next Agenda and Close**  
Sub-Committee members were asked to email any requests to officers.

- 127. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:**  
Cllr Breakspear proposed go into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

***The Chair closed the meeting and moved to confidential session at 20:43***

- 123. To consider the report on play area refurbishment priorities (confidential)**  
Cllr Breakspear proposed the report be circulated to Full Council with the recommendation from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Craig; all in favour.

***The Chair closed the meeting at 20:50***

Signed: .....  
13 December 2022