

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 3 October 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Colin Butler, Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce and Elise Youngman

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

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

89. Welcome

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

90. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Paul Page and John Pitts, who had provided reasons. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

91. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Pearce declared he is Chair of the Gunton Residents' Association and had attended the Annual General Meeting of the Lowestoft Town Cricket Club, where the framed shirt had been presented to the Council. Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 96.1. Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items relating to the Lowestoft Town Cricket Club, the Town Council's sports facilities and Normanston Park. Cllr Breakspear declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to Kensington Gardens. Cllr Youngman declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to the Elmtree Ward.

92. The draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 5 September 2022

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the draft minutes and confidential note; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

93. Public forum

Two representatives from the Sparrows Nest Bowls Club were in attendance regarding item 98.1 and it was agreed to bring that item forward on the agenda. The Club has been running beginners' sessions to boost membership, which have been successful. This has been enabled due to the Council's decision to waive leisure fees this year. The Club has heard rumours that the Council is to reintroduce fees and close the greens at Sparrows Nest. Cllr Pearce advised closure of the greens has not been discussed by Council. Cllr Breakspear will look into how the rumour started. The representatives from the Sparrows Nest Bowls Club advised that members of the public are welcome to use the greens when not in use, if they bring their own equipment. The Club records its fixtures in a diary but considered that a noticeboard may be beneficial so it can display its hours of play. It was reported that signage at Sparrows Nest directs casual players to Kensington Gardens. The Deputy Clerk noted this and will look into. This Committee had previously approved the purchase of signage asking visitors to respect the greens.

98.1. Making a recommendation to Full Council on whether to extend the current policy on not charging for use of Town Council sports and leisure facilities to the 2023 – 2024 financial year, or whether to re-introduce charging – Cllr Pearce advised there had been no discussions so far about re-introducing leisure fees. Leisure fees had not been intended to generate income for the Town Council previously and grant funding had been made available to clubs to offset the impact. Re-introducing leisure fees previously had been problematic practically to implement. Cllr Pearce considered it would be the

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wrong time to re-introduce fees given the cost of living crisis, and the Town Council's commitment to promote sport and recreation. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to extend the policy of not charging for use of the Town Council's sports and leisure facilities for a further twelve months; seconded by Cllr Newsome. The representatives from the Sparrows Nest Bowls Club advised that a membership fee is charged, but this is to cover their costs. The Club maintains the pavilion. A condition of the fee waiver was for clubs to reinvest the funds to improve facilities and/or increase its membership, both of which this Club has demonstrated. The Council has previously required an annual report of clubs to demonstrate how they have reinvested the funds saved. It was agreed this should be required should the policy of not charging be extended. The vote was taken on Cllr Pearce's earlier proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

The two members of the public left the meeting 18:29

The Deputy Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:29

94. Monitoring expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

It was understood there had been no significant changes. This can be reviewed again at the next meeting once the Sub-Committees have met.

The Deputy Clerk returned 18:31

95. Parks and Open Spaces:

95.1. Quotations for the refurbishment of the Rosedale Park and Bentley Drive play areas – The Project and Committee Clerk advised one supplier has not yet submitted their quotations, but would like to present them on 18 October. The Committee had previously delegated authority to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to make a recommendation directly to Full Council on the appointment of a contractor.

The Deputy Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:36

Cllr Pearce proposed that based on the two quotations received so far, the Council commits to refurbishing both play areas this financial year, using funding from the play areas budget and the parks reserve if required. Additionally, of the two quotations received so far, Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to favour the quotation given by the second provider. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposals and all Councillors voted in favour.

The Deputy Clerk returned 18:38

95.2. Quotations to address drainage issues in Sparrows Nest – The Project and Committee Clerk clarified this relates to the area of the rear of the northern building complex. The Facilities Maintenance Officer is looking into the issue and seeking quotations. Cllr Pearce proposed allowing quotations to go straight to Full Council for consideration; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

95.3. Quotations for maintenance to the town sign – The Project and Committee Clerk advised quotations are being sought for works identified. Cllr Butler proposed deferring this item to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

95.4. Quotations to replace areas of wet pour matting in Fen Park – Part of the quotation also includes some refurbishment of the equipment. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to approve the higher quotation, to include the additional work in front of the gates; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

95.5. The budget and scheduling for a replacement footbridge in Fen Park – Officers have recommended this should take place within the current financial year if possible. Two quotations have been received so far. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to act on this advice, with expenditure to come from the parks reserve and recovered in the 2023 – 2024 financial year; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour. Cllr Butler has details of another provider which he will send to officers. Officers are

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regularly monitoring the bridge.

- 95.6. Quotations to install fencing and 'no parking' signage at Stoven Close – A site visit with Councillors had been undertaken. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve this; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
- 95.7. The purchase of a bin for the picnic area at The Ness – Officers had recommended this as there was no provision of litter bins in the picnic area and an issue with littering had been identified. The Project and Committee Clerk displayed the specification of the bin considered for this location. Cllr Pearce proposed approval for the purchase of the bin as displayed; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
- 95.8. Further information regarding the offer of a 'Reading Chair' for Kensington Gardens, and the provision of 'Reading Chairs' in other parks – Cllr Breakspear had circulated images of a prototype used in other areas. Cllr Pearce suggested trialling this in one or two larger parks to see how well received it is. Cllr Brooks suggested the Sparrows Nest Sensory Garden. Cllr Pearce proposed approving the installation of one 'Reading Chair' in Kensington Gardens, with a delegation to officers in conjunction with the Friends of Kensington Gardens to decide its design and location. Cllr Pearce further proposed approving the installation of one 'Reading Chair' in the Sparrows Nest Sensory Garden, with a delegation to officers in conjunction with the organisation assisting the Council with plans for the garden to decide its design and location. It is understood funding is available for the chair for Kensington Gardens, and Cllr Breakspear will check whether this would extend to other locations also. Book cupboards have already been installed in Kensington Gardens. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposals; five Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
- 95.9. A request from the Kensington Gardens Bowls Club to install a wall mounted noticeboard on the pavilion, including noting whether planning consent is required – The Deputy Clerk confirmed it is likely that planning consent will be required. The design proposed by the Club is not appropriate to the setting and a revised design has been requested. It is understood the Club would bear the cost of the planning application. Cllr Brooks enquired whether permission would be required for a freestanding noticeboard. This would need to be checked. As the Town Council would not require permission to erect a freestanding noticeboard to display its notices, Cllr Brooks suggested it could consider the purchase of an additional noticeboard for Kensington Gardens. The Council had agreed to allow recognised community groups to access its noticeboards, in compliance with certain conditions. Cllr Breakspear suggested the Club and the Friends of Kensington Gardens could split the cost of a shared noticeboard. Cllr Breakspear will make enquiries with the Club and will liaise with the Deputy Clerk before reporting back to this Committee. Cllr Breakspear made this a formal proposal; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 95.10. Any methods of water conservation – In addition the composting areas, Cllr Breakspear would like to consider other methods of water conservation, but acknowledged this may carry health and safety risks. Cllr Pearce suggested seeking advice and recommendations from the Town Council's health and safety consultant. Cllr Brooks suggested asking cafes in parks if they would consider conserving their grey water for this purpose. The Deputy Clerk explained the Legionella risks of using water butts. Cllr Breakspear suggested liaising with other Councils. Cllr Butler advised water butts would need to be secured if used. Cllr Pearce proposed seeking advice from the Town Council's health and safety consultant; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

96. Events and Communications:

- 96.1. How to progress the installation of heritage plaques, particularly budget and permission requirements – Cllr Pearce advised the scheduled meeting of the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society had been postponed. It was agreed to defer this item to the next

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meeting.

97. Allotments:

97.1. Any recommendations from the Finance and Governance Committee regarding renewal of the lease (some aspects may be confidential) – The Finance and Governance Committee had deferred this item to its next meeting. It was agreed for this Committee to do the same.

98. Sports and leisure facilities

98.1. Making a recommendation to Full Council on whether to extend the current policy on not charging for use of Town Council sports and leisure facilities to the 2023 – 2024 financial year, or whether to re-introduce charging – This item had been considered earlier in the meeting.

98.2. Promotion of the Town Council's free sports and leisure facilities – The Normanston Park tennis players were appreciative of the fee waiver but considered the Town Council could do more to promote it. Cllr Breakspear proposed asking the Communications Officer to promote this on social media and in the Lowestoft Journal, once a decision has been made by Full Council on whether to extend the fee waiver for a further year; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

99. Community Halls

99.1. A request to purchase a replacement community noticeboard for the Gunton Estate Residents' Meeting Hall – The Project and Committee Clerk advised that there is a Town Council noticeboard at this location, and also a community noticeboard which is approaching end of life. Given the discussion at item 95.9, Cllr Brooks considered the Council should not fund the purchase of this community noticeboard if it would not be prepared to do the same for the Kensington Gardens Bowls Club. The Deputy Clerk suggested deferring this item pending an upcoming meeting regarding the Management Committee of the Gunton Estate Residents' Meeting Hall.

99.2. Setting a budget for a deep clean and painting of the Whitton Residents' Hall – The Hall is cleaned weekly, but given its usage, Cllr Pearce would support this approach. Cllr Brooks suggested an organisation which may be able to supply paint. A deep clean would involve cleaning the walls and the upholstery on the chairs, etc. One quotation had been received, which was within the Finance and Governance Committee's financial delegation. Cllr Breakspear will approach the college for an indicative cost ahead of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting and made this a formal proposal; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

100. What administrative, logistical and funding support the Town Council should offer going forward to recognised Friends/Community Groups, and to consider making a recommendation to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee regarding an associated funding provision in the 2023 – 2024 budget

Cllr Pearce considered those wishing to form groups found the paperwork to be a barrier. The Town Council can assist administratively with template documents and forms. The Town Council would also consider grant applications towards the cost of insurance. Cllr Pearce proposed making administrative support available to new and existing Friends and Stakeholder Groups, including the printing of flyers and grant funding to assist with insurance costs, within a maximum budget of £1,000. Cllr Brooks advised her request for bulk printing of leaflets for the Friends of Dip Farm had been declined. Cllr Pearce advised this would have been a misunderstanding as the Council had agreed to recognise the Friends of Dip Farm as a stakeholder group. Cllr Brooks seconded Cllr Pearce's proposal and all Councillors voted in favour. The Communications Officer was requested to put out an announcement that the Town Council is offering this service.

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101. The scheduling and budgeting of pond maintenance work as identified in the Lowestoft Town Pond and Watercourse Appraisal

Cllr Pearce advised there had been a decision to prioritise the Gainsborough Drive and Fen Park ponds, with a delegation to officers to progress. It had also been agreed to seek quotations for a litter pick of the Great Eastern Linear Park stream bed. Cllr Pearce proposed that once these priority works are underway, the next stage of works should be considered and the budget reviewed before the end of the calendar year; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

102. The donation or disposal of obsolete light fixtures at the Marina Theatre

Cllr Pearce noted there may be health and safety implications of donating obsolete light fittings. Cllr Butler proposed appropriate disposal of them; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. An upgrade of the lighting system was being discussed and it was understood further information was being supplied.

103. Acceptance of a framed shirt from the Lowestoft Town Cricket Club

At 20:00, Cllr Brooks proposed suspending Standing Order 3y for ten minutes to enable the meeting to continue; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Brooks proposed acceptance of the framed shirt with thanks; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

104. An update from East Suffolk Council on the proposed new traffic management system between the High Street and Artillery Way, and any other plans to address traffic and parking issues in and around the Triangle Market site

Regarding this item and item 105, the Project and Committee Clerk had received advice from East Suffolk Council to contact Suffolk County Council, which she had done.

105. An update from East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council on the proposed new bollard/gate to prevent traffic contravening the Traffic Regulation Order and cutting through the Triangle Market

This item was covered with the previous item.

106. A proposal from the Environment and Waste Working Group regarding bulky waste collection to target fly tipping

Cllr Brooks had met with the Clerk and will provide an update to the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee and Full Council.

107. A request for transfer or fencing of land at Turnberry Close, including feedback from a recent site visit (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

108. Making recommendations to Full Council regarding the leaseback provisions in the Waveney District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2017 (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

109. An update regarding non-payment of rent from a tenant (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

110. Date of the next meeting

7 November 2022 18:00

111. Items for the next agenda and close

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There were no requests for items to be added to the next agenda.

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

112. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

112.1. Any legal issues, including those above as required:

107. A request for transfer or fencing of land at Turnberry Close, including feedback from a recent site visit (some aspects may be confidential) – The Deputy Clerk advised a site visit had taken place and the Facilities Maintenance Officer and Community Warden had commissioned immediate repair work, and recommended additional work to address the anti-social behaviour. Cllr Butler proposed proceeding with the recommended approach, with expenditure to come from the community safety budget; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed approving a maximum budget of £2,000; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
108. Making recommendations to Full Council regarding the leaseback provisions in the Waveney District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2017 (confidential) – Cllr Pearce advised this had been discussed in June’s Full Council meeting, but further information and legal advice on the issues regarding each piece of land were required. The Clerk has supplied a briefing paper and this will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed deferring this item to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
109. An update regarding non-payment of rent from a tenant (confidential) – The Deputy Clerk advised there was no update. The lease will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee. The Committee agreed legal advice should be sought in the interim, with any expenditure to come from the legal budget.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:11.

Signed:

7 November 2022