

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 19 December 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks (Deputy Chair), Peter Lang, Paul Page (Chair) Graham Parker and Andy Pearce, plus non-Councillor members Deborah Ray (attending via zoom) and John Sillett

In attendance: Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

114. Welcome

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

115. Approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Rachel Bunn with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce sent his apologies that he may be late to the meeting with reasons provided.

Cllr Brooks proposed acceptance of apologies; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

Cllr LeGrice was absent and had not provided apologies.

116. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

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

Cllr Brooks declared interest in item 120 as a member of the Environment and Waste Group (E&W Group) and item 131 as a representative on the Coastal Erosion Group. Cllr Parker declared he is a member of the E&W group and he is Vice Chair of the Gunton Residents Association. Cllr Barker declared she is a member of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Cllr Page declared he is a member of the E&W Group.

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

None were received.

117. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 21 November 2022

Cllr Brooks proposed approval be deferred to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

118. 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 members of the public were present.

119. To monitor expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority

It was queried if any clarification was received concerning the £10,000 funding for a Kittiwake Officer. The Project and Committee Clerk (PCC) confirmed as of last meeting the transaction was pending and this needed to be checked with the Finance and Information Officer.

120. To consider any matters to raise with Cllr James Mallinder (East Suffolk Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment) and/or the Environment and Waste Group, and to receive feedback on any matters previously raised

Cllr Parker explained at the Bulky Waste Working Group meeting it was requested a letter be sent to Suffolk County Councillor James Reader querying if they are prepared to waive the

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£100 cost at the Hadenham Road Recycling Centre. Councillor James Reader was unable to progress this and suggested the Town Clerk send an official letter from Lowestoft Town Council to Suffolk County Council asking them to waive the cost. It was also established that the Bulky Waste Work Group agreed on the period of September to December 2022 being used as the base measurement to compare against any decrease of fly tipping next year.

It was queried if the Town Clerk can investigate the possibility of Lowestoft Town Council licensing themselves for waste removal.

It was suggested further options be discussed at the next Bulky Waste Working Group meeting on 3 January, such as alternative recycling centres. However the Town Council would need to ascertain what recycling services are provided at different depot sites.

It was queried what costs are expected if the Town Council proceeded with the collections themselves such as health and safety implications and procurement of vehicles. It was confirmed health and safety would be taken into account but the trial is not yet at the stage of considering further costs.

Cllr Lang queried if East Suffolk Council (ESC) is proceeding with the planned glass collection and it was agreed to raise this with Councillor James Mallinder.

Cllr Pearce joined the meeting at 15:54

Cllr Parker proposed the Town Clerk send a letter to Suffolk County Council explaining the service of the bulky waste trial and what the Town Council aims to achieve through the trial, and requesting the charge at the recycling centre be waived, for which Cllr Parker will assist as needed. Furthermore, for this Committee to accept the Bulky Waste Working Group considering alternative recycling depots to be used in the trial or Lowestoft Town Council obtaining their own waste license. Cllr Barker added the letter must copy in both the Suffolk County Councillor James Reader and the ESC Councillor James Mallinder. Seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Cllr Brooks proposed the Town Clerk contact Councillor James Mallinder to request an update on the planned glass collections; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour. The PCC confirmed at this time the proposal of glass collection was going through Parliament and will seek an update on this.

Cllr Brooks requested this item be discussed further in confidential session.

121. To consider making a recommendation to Full Council on declaring an Ecological Emergency and recognising that the Climate and Ecological Emergencies are interlinked and require joint considerations

It was noted that one of the criteria for becoming an Earth Protector Town is declaring an ecological emergency. Cllr Pearce proposed the Town Council do declare an Ecological Emergency and make a recommendation to Full Council for the title of this Committee be renamed to Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee. Once passed by Full Council information on the website and terms of reference would then be updated. Seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

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122. To consider making a recommendation to Full Council to amend the title of this Committee to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee

This item was discussed and agreed as per above proposal.

123. To receive an update regarding liaison with Peter Aldous MP on Lowestoft's Blue Flag status

The PCC confirmed an update was requested but not received. Cllr Barker suggested that when the PCC next contacts Peter Aldous MP, an update also be requested on the legislation going through Parliament that relates to this issue. Cllr Parker commented ESC could be copied in to the letter to Peter Aldous MP.

Cllr Barker requested those announcing polluting incidents be informed that they need to be clear on relating where exactly the pollution occurred.

124. To consider acceptance of the Earth Protector Town declaration

Cllr Brooks proposed this item be deferred to the meeting in January 2023 and the Committee consider how to progress. It was agreed Full Council need to first approve the Ecological Emergency declaration. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to staff in consultation with members of this Committee, including the non-Councillor members, to discuss items 124 and 125 on a separate zoom call in January 2023; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

125. To consider implementation of the Earth Protector Town status

This item was discussed and agreed as per above proposal.

126. To consider supporting or submitting an application for the Suffolk Greenest County Award

The PCC confirmed the Communications Officer received details of it and the Town Council can submit projects for an award or apply to sit on the panel as a judge. It was confirmed the deadline for entry is 1 February 2023. The Bulky Waste trial project was suggested for submission under the Waste Reduction and Recycling category.

Cllr Pearce proposed an item be on the next agenda for January to discuss and agree what project is submitted; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

It was requested the PCC confirm if the Committee requires approval from Full Council to submit a project for an award.

127. To consider the Town Council's involvement with the Green Peace 'The Cost of Living' Question and Answer session

Deborah confirmed the event is scheduled for 21 January 2023 and remarked that as an Earth Protector Town there needs to be communication with public to emphasise problems associated with the climate emergency and attending this session is one method of this Committee relating the emergency to the community. It was agreed Councillors can attend as individuals in a personal capacity and not represent the Town Council and be mindful of not speaking on the behalf of the Town Council. It was requested the PCC circulate the link for the film. Cllrs Pearce and Barker confirmed interest in attending the panel in a personal capacity.

128. To consider the Town Council's ethical stance regarding its energy supply

It was confirmed the Finance and Governance Committee requested this Committee consider and review alternatives. Cllr Pearce proposed the staff research alternative providers and the

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implications of changing provider in the current climate, and for the Councillors to individually consider alternatives and the Town Council's ethical stance. Then have an item on the agenda for January to receive and consider this information. Seconded by Cllr Barker who added that the Committee need to know where energy of these suppliers is sourced from and the percentage of renewables against fossil fuels; all in favour.

129. To consider the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership Agreement

To be discussed in confidential session.

130. To receive a written report from the 'Seabirds on the Move' Urban Kittiwake Conference and to receive an update from the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership

Cllr Pearce confirmed this item was covered in the report presented at the previous meeting.

131. To receive feedback from the Coastal Partnership East Conference and to consider the Town Council's involvement

Cllr Brooks, as one of the representatives, provided feedback to this Committee. It was confirmed they are Risk Management Authorities and are researching how to manage and mitigate the coastal erosion and are keen for community involvement. Cllr Brooks provided the contact for the Partnership to the Councillors.

132. To consider any methods of water conservation, including to receive advice from the Town Council's Health and Safety Consultant

It was confirmed the Committee need to decide on specific locations that can be reported back to the Health and Safety consultant. Cllr Pearce proposed, if the Committee members have not had time to consider the item, to have this item deferred to the January meeting, with the written report from the Health and Safety consultant circulated to the members of this Committee, subject to the proviso that the report is not shared widely; seconded Cllr Page; all in favour.

133. To consider environmental aspects of the specification for surfaces in open spaces

It was confirmed the Committee will consider environmental aspects of surface and open spaces with alternatives to tarmac considered for any new projects.

134. Date of the next meeting

16 January 2023 15:30

135. Items for the next agenda and close

Cllr Barker suggested an item reviewing the impact of the development on the neighbouring Gunton Meadow Nature Reserve, how it is monitored and what can be done as a Town Council going forward. John Sillett mentioned the ESC Travel Association's 'Ten Year Look Forward' is due to be circulated and could be reviewed at the January meeting, which can be connected to the bus survey.

136. 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 Page proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Parker;

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all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 17:00

120. To consider any matters to raise with Cllr James Mallinder (East Suffolk Council’s Cabinet Member for the Environment) and/or the Environment and Waste Group, and to receive feedback on any matters previously raised

Further discussions took place regarding private waste contractors and it was requested they be invited to the Bulky Waste Working Group.

It was suggested that the two conditions of waiving the depot fees and agreeing on a measurement criteria be considered at the January meeting as benchmark data will be required to determine if there was a reduction of fly tipping of the items collected during the trial. It was confirmed recent data on fly tipping before the trial can be received from Norse with an agreement from Norse to provide comparative data after the trial to determine the trend. Data will also be required from contractors the Town Council worked with to determine how many households, particularly the number of households in each ward, participated in the trial.

It was requested an item be on the January agenda to receive feedback on the cost conditions and to give consideration on the measurement criteria condition. Cllr Pearce proposed the Committee allow for standalone zoom meetings to ensure the conditions are progressed and give a delegation to staff in consultation with the members of this Committee to discuss the proposal between scheduled meetings if required. Cllr Parker seconded the proposal with an amendment to have one or two guests from this Committee attend the Bulky Waste Working Group meeting, Cllr Pearce accepted the amendment; all in favour.

129. To consider the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership Agreement

Cllr Pearce confirmed an update on the Partnership Agreement will be provided in January 2023.

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:19

Signed:
16 January 2023