

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 20 March 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Paul Page and Andy Pearce, plus non-Councillor members Rachel Bunn, Deborah Ray and John Sillett

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

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

186. Welcome

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

187. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs David Le Grice and Peter Lang with reasons provided and Graham Parker, who had not provided a reason. Rachel Bunn had advised she would be late. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

188. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

188.1. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Regarding item 193, Cllr Brooks declared she is Chair of the Environment and Waste Group. Regarding item 198, Cllr Barker advised she was due to attend a meeting on 30 March as the Town Council’s appointed representative and would report back. Regarding item 201, Cllr Pearce declared he is the Town Council’s appointed representative to the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership, and regarding item 195 declared he had attended an ‘Art Eat’ workshop, as approved by this Committee at its previous meeting. Regarding item 200, Cllrs Brooks and Page declared they are supporters of ‘Stop Sizewell C’.

188.2. Written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

189. The draft minutes of the meeting on 20 February 2023

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

190. Public forum

A member of the public in attendance reported that a judicial review relating to Sizewell C was taking place this month.

The Chair agreed to bring item 199 forward on the agenda and a member of the public in attendance provided further information about the item. The East Suffolk Travel Association (ESTA) had produced a discussion document, setting out a number of improvements to the service they would like to see.

199. East Suffolk Travel Association’s ‘Ten Year Look Forward’

Cllr Brooks noted several of the aspirations seemed to be dependent on the development of Sizewell C. Cllr Brooks considered that the regularity and reliability of the bus and train services should be prioritised and services should run for longer into the evening. Cllr Pearce noted that single-track areas of the service can lead to disruption in both directions. The Clerk reminded Councillors of the pre-election period, and to be mindful of any discussions which may have certain political sensitivities.

The member of the public advised that ESTA would welcome any statement of support for its discussion document. Cllr Pearce proposed endorsing ESTA’s discussion document, particularly

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee

First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE

15:30 on 20 March 2023

taking into consideration improvements which would benefit those who use the service for commuting; seconded by Cllr Brooks; six members voted in favour; one member abstained from the vote.

The Clerk advised that during the pre-election period, only essential business should be undertaken, and should be sensitively handled.

191. Expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority

The Project and Committee Clerk advised that officer mileage reimbursements and the purchase of litter picking equipment had taken place since the last meeting.

192. The process of non-Councillor members standing for appointment to this Committee during the elections

The Clerk advised that the Terms of Reference refer to the appointment of non-Councillor members to the Committee, but do not specify how long those members will remain appointed for. Committee membership is agreed at the Annual Meeting, effectively making the appointment of non-Councillor members annual. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to amend this Committee's Terms of Reference to clarify that non-Councillor membership to the Committee will be for the same annual term as for Councillors, and non-Councillor members must signify their intention to join the Committee again in time for the Annual Meeting.

Rachel Bunn arrived 16:16

A member of the public temporarily left the meeting 16:16

Cllr Page seconded the proposal; all in favour.

The member of the public returned 16:18

193. 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 receiving feedback on any matters previously raised

It was agreed to defer this item until after the election.

194. An update regarding liaison with Peter Aldous MP on Lowestoft's Blue Flag status

It was agreed to defer this item until after the election.

195. Feedback from members who attended the Art Eat Events workshops and note if the organisation required further support

Cllr Pearce attended one of the workshops and confirmed that Art Eat do not currently require support from the Town Council. A representative of the Town and Country Planning Association had delivered a presentation on climate resilience. Cllr Pearce proposed asking this representative to deliver the same presentation to members of this Committee and the Planning Committee, following the election; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

196. Implementation of the Earth Protector Town status and the development of a Climate Action Plan, including the following:

196.1. The agenda format of this Committee and the inclusion of sub-headings for the Climate Action Plan – The Clerk displayed the draft Action Plan she had prepared, the sub-headings of which could inform sub-headings on future agendas of this Committee. The Clerk will circulate the draft Plan ahead of a standalone Zoom meeting to discuss implementation of the Earth Protector Town status. Some work is already progressing regarding liaison with other authorities.

196.2. Amending the Terms of Reference in light of the recent Earth Protector Town declaration – This will be discussed as part of the standalone Zoom meeting.

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 20 March 2023

196.3. Contacting relevant organisations regarding implementation of the Earth Protector Town status – This will be discussed as part of the standalone Zoom meeting.

197. The Town Council’s ethical stance regarding its energy supply

The Clerk is looking at the fundamentals to take this forward. There will not be a cost saving in doing this, and the cost may even increase, there should however be an environmental benefit. The analysis of potential providers will be measured against points of principle, including the following: investment in environmentally positive initiatives on buildings, land and services, one hundred percent renewables, the degree to which they are investing in renewables and stability of the supplier. The Town Council is looking at its budgets to invest in building and land management to reduce energy use, and to promote its improved energy use and the promotion of environmentally positive energy initiatives. Obtaining energy performance certificates will provide a benchmark of energy usage and will inform building management. Cllr Pearce requested the inclusion of public/customer policy, which the Clerk will include in the wider ethical issues.

198. The development of First Light Festival CIC’s Environmental Responsibility Task Force

Cllr Barker advised she should receive further information at a meeting on 30 March. Any discussion points can be added to a future agenda. Ms Bunn advised she may be able to assist if the Town Council would like a presence at the Festival. Cllr Brooks requested further discussion in confidential session. Cllr Pearce proposed adding an item to the next agenda to receive an update on the deferred First Light Festival meeting and to consider whether to request a presence at the Festival; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

199. East Suffolk Travel Association’s ‘Ten Year Look Forward’

This item was considered earlier in the meeting.

200. How to receive updates from the nuclear industry

Cllr Pearce suggested any reports from the nuclear industry included in the Councillor update should be balanced with views from the opposing side of the nuclear debate, even if they have not been actively sent to officers. Cllr Brooks considered it should not be for officers to source this information, and organisations with opposing views should consider proactively sending updates to the Council for circulation. The Personnel Committee has agreed a way forward on how information should be circulated. Cllr Pearce requested that officers circulate information without taking a view and Councillors can request the addition of items to relevant agendas if necessary. The meeting to hear both sides of the nuclear debate will be arranged to take place after the election.

201. The Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership Agreement (some aspects may be confidential)

Cllr Pearce reported that Groundwork East has been liaising with residents and businesses affected directly or indirectly by kittiwake nesting, to understand their concerns and discuss options regarding cleaning and non-lethal deterrents. The Partnership is working with offshore renewables companies to try to secure funding. The Partnership has secured funding of £50,000 per year for five years from one organisation, which will help with extra cleaning and non-lethal deterrents.

202. Date of the next meeting

17 April 2023 15:30

203. Items for the next agenda and close

Ms Ray requested an update on the provision of water bottle refill stations and refill schemes. Officers had made enquiries with Lowestoft Vision and a response was pending. The Committee had requested advice on the use of chlorine as a risk management measure for

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 20 March 2023

water storage.

Ms Bunn offered to provide an update at the next meeting on Earth Protector activities schools and the College have been undertaking.

The members of the public left the meeting 16:54

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

204. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

201. The Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership Agreement (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce advised that the draft version of the Agreement had been received and circulated and may be subject to legal advice. The Clerk informed the Committee it would not be appropriate for non-Councillor members to vote during the confidential session. Cllr Pearce proposed referring the Agreement to Full Council for consideration; seconded by Cllr Page; all Councillors voted in favour.

198. The development of First Light Festival CIC’s Environmental Responsibility Task Force – Cllr Pearce requested an item on the next agenda to receive an update on the development of the Environmental Responsibility Task Force and a separate item on whether the Town Council should have a stall at the Festival.

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:07.

Signed:
17 April 2023