

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 21 March 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks (Chair), Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Elise Youngman (Deputy Chair)

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk), Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

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

182. Welcome

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

183. Approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Craig, Newsome, Barker, Parker with reasons provided. Cllr Brooks proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

Cllr Page was absent with no apologies received.

184. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

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

Cllr Pitts declared an interest in item 188 as he is acquainted with the member of the public. Cllr Breakspear declared an interest in matters relating to Kensington Gardens. Cllrs Brooks and Youngman declared they had attended a site visit related to item 188. Cllr Pearce declared he is the Chair of the Gunton Residents Association.

184.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted
None were received.

185. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 21 February 2023

Cllr Brooks noted some confusion with the wording on items 170.1 and 170.2 and felt the minutes may not reflect the discussions. Officers confirmed they would check the recording.

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

186. 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.

The members of the public were invited to speak on items 187 and 188.

187. To consider proposals from a member of the public regarding community tree planting

A member of the public discussed the value of tree planting in the community and proposed to plant memorial trees for people who have died from COVID-19, disability and poor health. The Sub-Committee thanked the member of the public for his presentation.

188. To consider the cost of tree works at Upland's Road North and on unregistered land

Cllr Brooks noted that the conversations during the site visit of the trees requiring

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maintenance were not reflected in the paper. It was established that if the Town Council proceeded with the works then it would be considered an exception and not set a precedent. The legal implications needed to be considered first as the trees have a Tree Preservation Order and permission would be required from East Suffolk Council as the planning authority. The Deputy Town Clerk noted the difficulty of proceeding with this as the tree works application form required the name of the land owner and the land is unregistered.

Cllr Pearce proposed the decision be deferred until after the elections and for officers to seek a legal opinion on whether the Town Council has the authority to make a discretionary decision on the case, and to seek further advice in the interim if there is a legal impediment; seconded by Cllr Youngman. Cllr Brooks queried if the proposal could be amended to obtain a second opinion from a different arborist. Cllr Pearce felt that was unnecessary as this Sub-Committee had not stipulated that the works only be undertaken on the grounds of health and safety. A vote was held with all Councillors in favour. The Deputy Clerk noted that the Highways Engineer had suggested to register the land as the owner may come forward, and had confirmed that the regular routine inspections would continue and if any health and safety concerns were perceived then the necessary works would be undertaken. Cllr Pearce requested his previous proposal, to ask Suffolk Highways if they can provide a quote to do the work on the Town Council's behalf, be followed up alongside the attempt to register the land.

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

There had been no expenditure since the last meeting.

The Deputy Town Clerk temporarily left the chamber at 19:49

A member of the public left the chamber at 19:49

The Deputy Town Clerk returned to the chamber at 19:50

190. To consider review and implementation of the five year plans, including planting plans, in line with budgeting, noting Councillors' comments and feedback from a recent zoom meeting, regarding the following:

- 190.1 Normanston Park
- 190.2 Rosedale Park
- 190.3 Kensington Gardens
- 190.4 Gunton Community Park
- 190.5 Great Eastern Linear Park
- 190.6 Sparrows Nest
- 190.7 Fen Park
- 190.8 Belle Vue Park
- 190.9 Denes Oval
- 190.10 Cotman Close
- 190.11 Britten Road Play Area
- 190.12 Clarkes Lane
- 190.13 Pakefield Green Play Area (Wellington Road)
- 190.14 The Ness
- 190.15 Ness Point
- 190.16 St Margaret's Plain Play Area
- 190.17 Bentley Drive Play Area
- 190.18 Gainsborough Drive Pond
- 190.19 North Denes

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190.20 Links Road Car Park

190.21 Triangle Market

190.22 Town Green

190.23 Land at Upland's Road North (including pond)

The Sub-Committee were unable to make decisions on priorities due to the pre-election period but would continue discussions of the five year plans via stand-alone zoom meetings. After the election would be to draft the five year plans and recommend them to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee. It was requested for officers to investigate if there had been a previous agreement or delegation to plant wildflowers at the Great Eastern Linear Park. It was noted that there was no budget set aside for a wildflower meadow.

191. To consider designs and cost estimates for bicycle racks, for inclusion in the five year plans

The budget to install the bicycle racks would be agreed and allocated after the election, in the interim it was requested that the Project and Committee Clerk investigate alternative suppliers and provide an estimated budget at the next meeting. It was suggested that unused bicycle racks, such as those at Normanston Park, could be relocated to other areas. It was agreed to schedule a stand-alone zoom meeting to discuss this further.

192. To receive an update on approved play area refurbishments, including the following:

192.1 Play areas where refurbishment is completed and estimated times for opening

192.2 Play areas approved for refurbishment where procurement of a contractor is complete, with estimated times for works to take place

192.3 Play areas approved for refurbishment where procurement of a contractor is not yet complete, with estimated times for site visits and completion of procurement

Updates had been provided for Sparrows Nest, Rosedale Park, Cotman Close and Normanston Park, and site inspections had been completed for Cotman Close and Normanston Park. It was requested that the Project and Committee Clerk follow up on arranging a site inspection for Wellington Road.

193. To consider planting at the following locations:

193.1 The Denes Oval – Cllr Pearce proposed officers check if East Suffolk Norse are maintaining the flower beds, and to notify the Town Clerk if they are not to claim back the charge, then have the Facilities Maintenance Officer (FMO) and the Parks and Community Officer visit the site and make recommendations to this Sub-Committee after the election; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

193.2 Links Road car park – Cllr Pearce had received correspondence from a member of the public regarding trees planted at the car park, which he would forward to the office. It was requested officers review planting possibilities for the site and assemble a briefing paper and budget for this Sub-Committee to consider after the election.

194. To consider initial advice on the development of a pump track

The FMO had suggested the pump track be located near Links Road car park. It was requested the Project and Committee Clerk liaise with a specialist contractor and bring further information on costs and timescales for ordering, and the subsequent works, to this Sub-Committee after the election.

195. To consider proposals for the Sails area near the Triangle Market

The FMO had suggested to grass the area around the trees rather than remove the trees,

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which could be considered once the proposals have been received and it has been confirmed that there are no health and safety issues. Public consultation had indicated a preference for greening the Sails site or having it as an open event space. It was requested for officers to ascertain if the tree roots were under the toilet block.

196. To note the progress of a noticeboard sited at Kensington Gardens

It was noted that the previous suggestion of relocating a sign from Sparrows Nest to Kensington Gardens was not feasible and Cllr Breakspear would continue attempting to contact the Bowls Club to discuss a joint noticeboard.

197. To consider possible work on North Denes, including the following

197.1 Ascertaining what areas are owned by Lowestoft Town Council – East Suffolk Council had acknowledged their ownership of the land where the sea wall is located.

197.2 Progressing the mural – It was suggested for the Town Council to fund the mural and run a community competition to submit designs, which would inform the mural application to East Suffolk Council. It would need to be made clear that the design is subject to planning consent from East Suffolk Council, with initial ideas sent to East Suffolk Council to check if it is acceptable. It was agreed for this to be addressed by the relevant Committee after the new Town Council is elected.

198. Date of the next meeting

18 April 2023 19:00

199. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Updates would be received from officers for items discussed in this meeting.

200. 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 were no resolutions.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:26

Signed:

18 April 2023