

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on Thursday 8 June 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Keith Patience, Andy Pearce and Elise Youngman

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

Also in Attendance: Betty Jarrod (Chair of Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd - LDAL)

1. To appoint the Chair of the Allotments Sub-Committee

Cllr Patience nominated Cllr Coleby with the proviso that the meeting be scheduled for Fridays; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

7.2 To appoint the Deputy Chair of the Allotments Sub-Committee – This item was brought forward in the meeting. Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Patience; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

Cllr Patience requested a precaution be added to the fire evacuation notice to not use the lift during evacuation.

2. Welcome

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

3. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Pitts and Coleby with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

Cllr Brooks was absent with no apologies received.

4. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

4.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – None were declared.

4.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – No requests for dispensations had been received.

5. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 2 March 2023

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the draft minutes; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

6. 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 advance comments had been received and there were no members of the public in attendance.

7. To consider Sub-Committee arrangements:

7.1 To note the membership of the Allotments Sub-Committee – The current members are Cllrs Elise Youngman, Andy Pearce, Keith Patience, Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby and John Pitts.

7.2 To appoint the Deputy Chair of the Allotments Sub-Committee – This item was brought forward in the meeting.

7.3 To review and adopt the Terms of Reference of the Allotments Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed adoption of the Terms of Reference, with the proposed variation that the Sub-Committee schedule a monthly meeting for the next two months, after which it

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will continue to meet bi-monthly; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

7.4 To note the delegated budget of the Allotments Sub-Committee – The Allotments budget is delegated to this Sub-Committee, with over £27,000 of the £29,375 allocated to the repair and maintenance of allotment sites.

8. Health and safety:

8.1 To receive an update on matters arising from health and safety inspections of Sussex Road, Church Road, Longacre and Fen Park allotment sites; namely standardising access to sites, noticeboards, asbestos, number of sheds/greenhouses – Currently after 18:00 fires are permitted on the allotments with changes due to be made in September. The Chair of LDAL requested the Church Road site be referred to as Rotterdam Road and it was agreed that the new lease would standardise the terminology used by Lowestoft Town Council and LDAL. At Rotterdam Road, two new tenants would be dealing with the excess sheds.

8.2 To consider matters arising from health and safety inspections of the Water Lane North and South and Normanston allotment sites – The inspections had been completed and the reports sent to LDAL for any actions. The health and safety reports would be available on the members-area of the website before the next meeting. The Chair of LDAL mentioned that the new Secretary had observed uncovered water in the water butts which had not been raised in the health and safety report. The Normanston and St Margaret's site were noted to have barbed wire which is not permitted in the tenancy agreement. It was requested to have the Chair of LDAL's comments fed back to the Health and Safety Consultant and bring a response to the next meeting.

9. To consider the Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd priorities and aspirations, and any support that may be required from Lowestoft Town Council, including the following:

9.1 Drainage at the Water Lane South site – Cllr Pearce proposed, if this is a safety issue, for officers, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Consultant, to obtain a specification and quote to be brought to the next meeting in July; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

9.2 Levelling of the communal area on the Sussex Road site – The intention is to install a composting toilet on the site and levelling the area would be complementary work. Facilities staff need to obtain a specification and quote for the works to level the site and provide the information to the next meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee. Cllr Youngman proposed to progress levelling the surface of the communal area; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

9.3 Fencing at the Sussex Road site – Cllr Pearce proposed that as the works and budget had been approved, an update would be provided to the next Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee meeting or the next Allotments Sub-Committee meeting; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

9.4 Fencing at the Normanston site and how to progress the removal of embedded litter – The fencing works had been instructed and officers were considering the logistics of progressing the works in conjunction with the litter removal. It was requested to receive an update from the facilities officers at the next Assets, Inclusion and Development meeting on how to proceed. An update was requested for the next meeting on the removal of bushes encroaching on the pathway of Worthing Road to Sussex Road.

9.5 The removal of garden waste from the boundary fence at St Margaret's allotments – The Chair of LADL noted that concerns had been raised of people jumping over the fence to damage the allotments, however LADL felt that removal of the waste would not deter this. Prickly bushes were suggested as a natural deterrent which would integrate with the wildlife. Cllr Pearce proposed the comments be passed to officers for

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review and to receive an opinion from the facilities officers on whether there is any health and safety risk in the garden waste being left in situ; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

10. To receive an update on the renewal of the lease/management services agreement with Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd (some aspects may be confidential)

Cllr Pearce proposed the solicitor be instructed this month to prepare the lease based on the agreed terms, or an update be provided if this is not feasible, and as the financial terms had already been approved, when the first payment from the Town Council is due it should be paid at the new increased rate and not at the rate of the old lease; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

11. Date of the next meeting

7 September 2023 – The next meeting was arranged for Friday 7 July at 10:00 am. This meeting would be arranged as an extraordinary meeting until the new schedule is approved by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee.

12. Items for the next Agenda and Close

An item was requested on the watering of Kirkley Gardens.

13. 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 Pearce proposed the meeting be moved to confidential session; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 10:43

Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

It was requested to have a standing item on the agenda for the Chair of LDAL to raise any issues or concerns, and in confidential session if required.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:01

Signed:

7 July 2023