

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on Friday 17 November 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Neil Coleby (Chair), Andy Pearce and Elise Youngman and non-Councillor member Betty Jarrod (Chair of Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd – LDAL)

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

66. Welcome

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

67. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

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

68. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

68.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Ms Jarrod declared she was Chair of LDAL. The Deputy Clerk notified the Committee that this constituted as an 'Other Registerable Interest' and a dispensation would be required, therefore Ms Jarrod was advised to not vote in today's meeting until the written dispensation has been submitted. Once a dispensation has been granted Ms Jarrod would be able to vote on works and upgrades to the land but not on decisions that confer money or privileges to LDAL.

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

69. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 6 October 2023

The Committee agreed to defer approval of the minutes to the next meeting.

70. 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 in attendance and no advanced comments had been received.

71. Health and safety:

71.1 To consider matters arising from the health and safety inspections of allotment sites – The document cataloguing individual site matters was reviewed. Works were confirmed to be completed or in progress for Sussex Road, Longacre, Water Lane, Stradbroke and Wilmington.

The timber waste on an individual plot at St Margaret's had been cleared. An item was requested for the next agenda to consider whether the landowner needed to make an approach to the adjacent school site whose trees were overhanging the allotment site.

The Rotterdam Road and Blackheath sites would be discussed in confidential session.

An item was requested for the next agenda to discuss the coded locks for sites to be provided by the Town Council.

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on Friday 17 November 2023

The site representative for Kirkley Gardens was dealing with an issue of overhanging trees from the adjacent cemetery. It was noted that the standpipe for water supply on the site would be progressed as part of the lease.

72. 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:

72.1 To receive officer feedback on the leylandii trees at the Normanston allotment site –

The recent tree survey had not highlighted any safety concerns with the leylandii, and a separate site visit conducted by officers had concluded that the trees did not present a health and safety risk from the perspective of the landowner and their removal would be against Town Council policy. Ms Jarrod would obtain full details on the issues plot holders have with the trees, with accompanying photos, and this item would be considered further at the next meeting.

72.2 To consider an approach to tenants of the Fen Park allotments on the possible collaboration with the Friends of Fen Park Group – This would need to be agreed by the plot holders and Ms Jarrod would liaise with the site representative. This item would be considered further at the next meeting. It was noted that the Friends Group was not likely to reconvene until Spring 2024.

72.3 To consider reported issues of access to the Stradbroke allotments site via residential properties – Plot holders had expressed concerns that the gates could be used to access their plots, though LDAL were not aware of any abuse of access in the past. The Committee advised Ms Jarrod to contact the residents in the area and ask that they contact the site representative if they intended to undertake any works on their fences or need to access the allotments site via the gates. A further suggestion was made for Ms Jarrod to query with the plot holders, through the site representative, if any incidents of ingress through the gates had prompted these concerns.

73. To consider the following for the St Margaret's allotment site:

73.1 Note the extensive dumping and covering of household waste at the site – It was agreed to discuss the works on the waste removal in confidential session.

73.2 The costs for removal of the above – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

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

This item would be discussed in confidential session.

75. To receive a report of completed and in progress works

This had been reviewed under item 71.1.

76. To consider the approved changes in the Terms of Reference

It was agreed to defer approval to the next meeting.

77. Date of the next meeting

Friday 5 January 2024 10:00

78. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Ms Jarrod notified the Sub-Committee that she was due to resign as Chair of LDAL in February 2024. An item was requested on legacy planning for the ongoing relationship

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on Friday 17 November 2023

between the Town Council and LDAL.

An item was requested to receive the capital priorities of LDAL and how the Town Council could offer support.

It was noted that LDAL would receive £1,000 for administrative support from the Town Council and Ms Jarrod advised an appointment may be needed to undertake some of her roles and assist with the paperwork. It was queried if the Town Council could advise on firms or individuals who could be approached for this role. This would be considered by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee.

It was noted that LDAL were not a registered charity.

79. 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 E Youngman; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 11:00

71. Health and safety:

Ms Jarrod provided a confidential update on the Rotterdam Road and Blackheath sites.

It was established that the code locks for all allotments sites were required per the health and safety advice received to ensure the Town Council could access site if needed.

73. To consider the following for the St Margaret's allotment site:

73.1 Note the extensive dumping and covering of household waste at the site – Due to the extent of work required there had been an overspend for both the St Margaret's and Normanston allotments sites.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed works had been completed for both sites and the invoice for St Margaret's had been paid whilst the invoice for Normanston had recently been received.

73.2 The costs for removal of the above – Cllr Pearce proposed LDAL cover the overspend of on the St Margaret's site; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce proposed for the Normanston site this Sub-Committee approve an increase in the project budget up to £3,750 per their financial delegation, to be allocated from the Allotments budget or reserve, with the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to be asked to approve the remaining amount; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

An item was suggested for a future East Suffolk Council Quarterly Liaison meeting to discuss the issue of legacy waste on sites under the jurisdiction of Waveney District Council.

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

The Deputy Clerk had chased the lawyer and Ms Jarrod confirmed LDAL had appointed a

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on Friday 17 November 2023

legal representative.

The Deputy Clerk would check when the increased payments from the Town Council to LDAL were due to be made and ensure the RPI index rate would be calculated up to 30 June 2023.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:41

Signed:
5 January 2024