

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
19:00 on 3 July 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks, Jen Jones, Christian Newsome (Deputy Chair), Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Bernadette Rappensberger, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman (Chair)

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

42. Welcome

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

43. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

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

44. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

44.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Breakspear declared a non-registerable interest as a member of Friends of Kensington Garden. Cllr Newsome declared he plays bowls at Sparrows Nest. Cllrs Brooks and Pearce declared they were Town Council representatives on the Marina Theatre Quarterly Management meetings. Cllr Pearce declared he was a Town Council representative on the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership and Chair of the Gunton Residents Association. Cllr Brooks declared she was Ward Councillor of Gunton.

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

45. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 24 May and 5 June 2023

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

46. 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 no members of the public were in attendance.

47. To monitor expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

The expenditure was summarised by the Project and Committee Clerk and it was clarified that all tree works have their own budget and should not be allocated from the Horticulture budget. Expenditure on public conveniences had increased as part of the in-house grounds maintenance.

48. Parks and Open Spaces:

48.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 20 June 2023 – The minutes would be approved at the next meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee.

48.2. To consider a planting plan for a circular bed in Belle Vue Park, including an appropriate budget and delegation to progress – The trip hazard highlighted by Cllr Brooks had been addressed and officers had suggested a planting plan to rejuvenate the area as tarmacking would not be an effective permanent measure. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve and progress the officer proposal; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

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- 48.3. To receive an update on the screens for bins – As bins had been taken into direct management, officers were reviewing the sites and considering where compounds and screening was required. This will be brought back to the next Parks and Open Spaces Committee meeting if an update could be provided, and this Committee would be notified if prices had changed compared to the previous recommendation.
- 48.4. To receive and consider an assessment of all Town Council play areas – The Project and Committee Clerk confirmed the works for Cotman Close and Normanston play areas had been instructed.
Cllr Pearce requested an item on the next agenda to review Fen Park and set a budget for upgrades short of a full refurbishment.
The next two parks to be refurbished were Britten Road and Pakefield Green, which officers would begin seeking quotes for.
Cllr Pearce requested an item on the next agenda to consider the intrusive ground survey for Britten Road. Officers were attempting to schedule a standalone zoom meeting with the consultant who compiled the report to receive clarification on what works can be done and where. If refurbishment could not proceed with Britten Road due to the extensive earthworks, then it could be delayed and a different play area brought forward.
- 48.5. To consider teenage gym equipment for Rosedale Park – An item was requested for the next agenda to review the installation of teenage gym equipment at Rosedale Park, with adult gym equipment to be considered for Fen Park. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee would need to prepare a budget timetabled for April 2024, with the research and commissioning to commence this year. An item was requested for the next Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee agenda to consider the implementation of a pump track.
Cllr Pearce proposed the teenage gym equipment be planned and commissioned this year; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.
- 48.6. To consider interim activities for children at the Cotman Close play area ahead of the refurbishments – Officers were asked to check the boundary and what land the Town Councils owns as it is currently thought to be only the play area, which presents difficulties with interim activities such as the games table being installed. Cllr Brooks proposed officers ascertain what is owned by the Town Council and if only the play area is owned to then open dialogue with East Suffolk Council on allowing the Town Council to install benches and games tables on their land, or if the Town Council could acquire some of the surrounding land; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
- 48.7. To consider the following for Sparrows Nest:
48.7a. To note that no repairs are required for the Sparrows Nest bowling green – Officers had confirmed no repairs would be required and it would be reviewed at the end of the season. Officers would check if the sparse patch of the green required seeding.
48.7b. Whether to fence off the bowling green – This had been suggested due to the security concern, however security measures had since been introduced.

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the chamber at 19:45

Cllr Pearce proposed the decision to fence off the bowling green be deferred until after the assessment on the current security measures in September.

Cllr Brooks returned to the chamber at 19:47

Cllr Jones seconded the proposal and a vote was held with eight in favour and one abstention.

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48.7c. A community space for young people – Cllr Pearce proposed to consider what provision could be made for young people on the land adjacent to the bowls green and hold discussions with stakeholders on joint provision for the youth in Lowestoft; seconded by Cllr Youngman. Cllr Brooks suggested the Bowls Club be encouraged to run sessions for young people and Cllr Pearce amended his proposal to have ideas submitted to the office, or a standalone zoom meeting scheduled, to consider how to progress provision for the youth and Cllr Brooks' suggestion, with a letter to be sent to the Bowls Club to query their interest. A vote was held with all in favour.

48.7d. Changing the Jubilee sign on the beacon – It was clarified that the suggestion was to add a sign to the existing Jubilee sign to read 'Welcome to Sparrows Nest'. Cllr Pearce proposed to leave the existing sign in situ and include a welcome sign as a twin bracket; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; a vote was held with eight in favour and one abstention.

48.8. To receive a report on the grounds maintenance and litter management – New arrangements were ongoing during this period of transition. The need for additional larger bins had been identified and further details would be brought to the next meeting. The Project and Committee Clerk would confirm if there is an existing delegation to officers to cover the purchase of bins, with an item to be added to the Finance and Governance Committee (F&G) agenda if a delegation is required.

49. Events and Communications:

49.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 28 June 2023 – These would be signed off at the next meeting.

49.2. To consider any recommendations from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee on the following:

49.2a. An amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee's meeting schedule – Cllr Pearce proposed approval to alter the schedule to a monthly meeting; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

49.2b. Any recommendation regarding a memorial to the Lowestoft Witches – Cllr Pearce proposed to progress a memorial on the Triangle Market or Sails site, with a delegation to officers, the Events and Communications Sub-Committee and Mr Bunn who would draft the inscription. Cllr Brooks requested that the women be referred to by name in both the memorial and any agenda items. Cllr Rappensberger seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour. An item was requested for the next relevant agenda to consider approval of a provisional budget for the project.

49.2c. To make the proposed Rock n Roll event in Sparrow's Nest a major event for 2024 – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the recommendation to make this a major event for 2024 and to request that the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee, via Full Council, approve this as major event with a maximum budget of £10,000 from the 2024-2025 budget. As a similar annual Rock n Roll event has been established in Lowestoft, it was queried whether this proposal would be a duplicate or competing event. When the delegation is made, officers could explore potential partners for the event and contact the organiser of the current Rock n Roll event. Cllr Jones seconded the proposal and a vote was held with eight in favour and one against.

49.2d. To make an application for National Armed Forces Day to be held in Lowestoft in 2025 and consider multi-agency working and resources – Cllr Webb declared he was Vice-Chairman of the Lowestoft and District Royal British Legion and had been privy to conversations regarding this event. Cllr Pearce proposed to submit a bid and establish a Steering Group with the relevant stakeholders, including

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East Suffolk Council and the Lowestoft Armed Forces Day organisational members and progress as a partnership project; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour. In order to prepare the budget, information would be sought on the costs associated with the bid.

A five-minute comfort break was taken at 20:23

The meeting was resumed at 20:30

50. Allotments:

- 50.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Allotments Sub-Committee meeting on 8 June 2023 - These would be signed off at the next meeting.
- 50.2. To consider an amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee to meet on a bi-monthly schedule – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the amendment to a bi-monthly schedule; seconded by Cllr Breakspear. The alteration of the meeting date to Friday to accommodate a co-opted member was queried and it was clarified this would only relate to the two extraordinary meetings. Cllr Pearce proposed approval to amend the Terms of Reference to a bi-monthly schedule, with two extraordinary meetings scheduled for July and August, and a delegation to the Sub-Committee members to agree on a suitable permanent schedule; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
- 50.3. To consider the following recommendations from the Allotments Sub-Committee:
 - 50.3a. A maximum budget to progress the fencing at the Sussex Road site – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the quote; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
 - 50.3b. Budget and specification for levelling of the communal area on the Sussex Road site – This work has already been completed with a contractor per the budget that had been previously agreed and allocated.
The hedging on Yarmouth Road coming from the allotments site was highlighted as an issue due to the overgrowth which the Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd are responsible for. This would be discussed further at the next Allotments Sub-Committee meeting.
 - 50.3c. Fencing at the Normanston site and how to progress the removal of embedded litter – A quote was pending after a contractor had reviewed the site and would be brought to this Committee for consideration once received. The fencing would be progressed separately to the litter removal which would be conducted via the allotment site.

51. Community Safety:

- 51.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting on 14 June 2023 – These would be signed off at the next meeting.
- 51.2. To consider the Terms of Reference of the Community Safety Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the Terms of Reference and, per item 51.3, for the delegated budget and reserve to remain with the Sub-Committee and the expenditure per item capped at £3,750; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 51.3. To note decisions made at the meeting under delegation – This item was resolved as part of 51.2.
- 51.4. To decide the meeting schedule for the Community Safety Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to the Sub-Committee members to agree on a permanent meeting schedule; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

52. To review the following Town Council policies:

- 52.1. Acquisitions and Disposal Policy
- 52.2. Arts Policy

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Cllr Brooks proposed approval of both policies and a recommendation be made via F&G to Full Council for adoption; seconded by Cllr Pearce who noted that the Acquisition and Disposal Policy would require revision with respect to the heritage element as the Town Hall Project evolves; all in favour.

53. Public Toilets

- 53.1. To consider a proposal regarding the refurbishment of public toilets – Cllr Pearce proposed to schedule a Toilet Working Group meeting to review the proposals; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
- 53.2. To consider quotations for the Fen Park toilets – No quotes had been received at the time of this meeting.
- 53.3. To consider additional information from the contractor regarding the Triangle Market Toilets – As officers were awaiting the additional information an extraordinary Full Council would be scheduled once the information has been received, with a placeholder item on the next Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee (AID) agenda.

54. To consider re-flying the Ukrainian Flag

Cllr Brooks proposed to re-fly the Ukrainian flag and for officers to research the costs for a second flagpole on the Town Hall; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

55. To consider art acquisition

It was queried when the two John Reay paintings offered to the Town Council would be collected as they would be accepted on the behalf of the people of Lowestoft and remain in the Town Hall. Officers were asked to check the minutes concerning acceptance of the offer of two paintings.

Cllr Brooks proposed to accept the paintings; seconded by Cllr Pearce as they would form part of the Lowestoft collection; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce propose an item for the next agenda to consider buying the remaining John Reay painting, with a discussion on the possibility of having an Acquisition budget with a delegation to officers to purchase items from auctions; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

56. To consider the possibility of including some paintings from the LTC-owned collection in a maritime-themed exhibition at The Grit

The paintings provided would come from the collection in storage. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to officers to contact The Grit and query what security provisions would be made and if they would insure the paintings whilst in possession of them, and if satisfied then the paintings be made available for the exhibition.

At 21:01 Cllr Pearce proposed to suspend standing orders for twenty minutes; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

A concern was raised on the security of the items and whether The Grit was an ideal location to exhibit Lowestoft owned art, compared to the post office building. An item was requested for the next agenda to consider an approach to East Suffolk Council for an exhibit at the post office.

Cllr Youngman seconded Cllr Pearce's proposal and a vote was held with all in favour. Cllr Pearce would check the exhibition dates of 9 August – 24 August 2023 and confirm with the office.

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57. To consider plaques for VJ Day for the cherry trees in Kensington Gardens

VJ Day was 15 August and a quote had been received for £100. Cllr Brooks proposed to install a plaque with the cherry trees at Kensington Gardens; seconded by Cllr Pearce with the agreed amendment of a delegation to officers, in conjunction with this Committee, to draft the inscription; all in favour.

58. To consider the Town Council's relationship to Friends Groups

Concerns were raised on the difficulties for a Councillor to act in a dual role on the Town Council and any Friends Groups, and whether it was appropriate for Councillors to hold positions on these external Committees as it could be unintentionally substituting members of the Friends Groups on Town Council meetings. Officers would progress scheduling a meeting between the Committee and Friends Groups.

59. To receive an update on the public survey regarding the drying racks

The Communications Officer was finalising the content at the time of this meeting and the survey was due to go live in due course. It was requested to receive an update at the next Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting.

60. To consider operational issues with avian deterrent and resolutions

The Avishock systems had been deemed insufficient for its purpose and the provider had responded with an offer to reset the system after the Kittiwakes had left and clean the front fascia of the theatre, they had also confirmed there would be no effect on the warranty. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the providers' offer as a resolution; seconded by Cllr Youngman; a vote was held with eight in favour and one abstention.

61. To consider a budget and authorisation of works for the Marina Theatre boiler

Cllr Pearce proposed the works that had been arranged for August be allocated from the Marina Theatre Repair and Maintenance budget; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

At 21:20 Cllr Youngman proposed to suspend standing orders for 10 minutes; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

62. To consider the implementation of a Youth Forum on Lowestoft Town Council

Cllr Youngman proposed to schedule an informal meeting in September with the youths and Councillors. It was clarified that the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee had agreed to consider the formation of a Pupil Forum to focus on climate issues, whilst this forum would address issues related to assets.

Cllr Pearce proposed to schedule an exploratory meeting where students, school faculty, the Mayor and the Chair of AID be in attendance. If the Youth Forum is established then it would be recognised as an external body with representatives to be appointed by Full Council.

Officers would clarify if all Councillors involved in the forum would require CBS checks. Cllr Jones seconded the proposal and a vote was held with eight in favour and one abstention.

63. To receive an update on the Gunton Estate Residents Hall Management Committee (confidential)

The update would be discussed in confidential session.

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64. Date of the next meeting

Monday 7 August 2023 – 19:00

Cllr Breakspear gave apologies with reasons.

65. Items for the next agenda and close

Any items would be sent to the office via email.

66. 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:

66.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required

Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 21:25

63. To receive an update on the Gunton Estate Residents Hall Management Committee (confidential)

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

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

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

The Chair closed the meeting at 21:32

Signed:

7 August 2023