

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 4 September 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks, 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)

87. Welcome

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

88. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Coleby, Jones, Newsome and Smith with reasons provided. Cllr Breakspear proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Pearce; a vote was held with six in favour and one abstention.

89. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

89.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of the Gunton Residents Association and Treasurer for the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society. Cllr Breakspear declared he was Chair of Friends of Kensington Garden.

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

90. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 7 August 2023

Cllr Brooks proposed approval; Cllr Pearce seconded regarding the public minutes but requested an amendment on item 72.1d of the confidential note, where he proposed the Toilet Working Group only consider the unisex and single sex toilets for Sparrows Nest and not the overall toilet policy of the Town Council. Cllr Brooks accepted the amendment and a vote was held with all in favour.

91. 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 – One advanced comment had been received regarding item 99.3, this was displayed for the Committee to review and would be considered with item 99.3.

Cllr Pearce requested item 93.7 and 98 to be discussed together.

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

The Project and Committee Clerk confirmed the updated position would be reviewed by the Finance and Governance Committee (F&G) and the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee.

93. Parks and Open Spaces:

93.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 15 August 2023 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting.

93.2. To consider any recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee on the following:

93.2a. The approval of a maximum budget for an information panel at Belle Vue Park

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(some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.

- 93.3. To receive an update on the screens for bins - The screens had been installed by a contractor and it was queried if gates would be installed.
- 93.4. To receive a report on the grounds maintenance – A recent report had been provided to Full Council and there were no further updates for this Committee. The increased littering at St Margaret’s Plain had been noted and officers would monitor the situation.
- 93.5. To receive the intrusive ground survey report for Britten Road (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.
- 93.6. To consider a request from the Friends of Kensington Gardens for the installation of painted stones – The Friends of Kensington Gardens were seeking site owner permission from the Town Council. Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce with the requested amendment of a delegation to officers to evaluate the risk assessment and confirm permission to the Friends of Kensington Gardens. Cllr Brooks accepted the amendment and a vote was held with all in favour.
- 93.7. To consider an application for a replacement memorial tree at Belle Vue Park – The existing memorial tree had been damaged and deemed dead after an assessment. The applicant requested to plant a different species of tree.

98. To review the following policies:

98.1 Memorial Bench Policy

98.2 Memorial Planting Policy

This item was brought forward and considered in conjunction with item 93.7. Due to the withdrawal of Norse services, the purchase and maintenance of memorial trees would now be carried out by the Town Council, therefore policy wording and pricing models needed to reflect this with any profit markup charged by Norse needed to be removed and a new pricing model agreed.

Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the application of item 93.7, with a delegation to officers to assess the viability of the species and liaise with the applicant for the location, and to price a cost for this application, pending the review of the pricing model in the Memorial Bench and Memorial Planting policies; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

93.8. To consider any additional budget required for the 2023-2024 planting plans – £3,750 had been approved by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee and the Project and Committee requested the full £3,900 planting budget be delegated to ensure all costs were covered. Cllr Pearce proposed approval to increase the delegated budget to £3,900; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

93.9. To consider the following for Sparrows Nest:

93.9a. Feedback on security measures for the Sparrows Nest Bowls Club

93.9b. If fencing is required for the bowling green

Cllr Pearce proposed no changes be made with respect to both items and for the Town Council to continue monitoring the situation; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

93.10. To receive an update on the replacement of the basket swing at The Ness play area – Officers were reviewing the feasibility of carrying out the repairs internally. This item was deferred to the next meeting.

93.11. To consider a quotation of £2,125 plus VAT for replacement matting and swings at Thirlmere Walk play area, and a delegation to the Clerk to progress – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce who requested an amendment for the cost to be allocated from the Community Safety budget due to the health and safety reasons for the repairs. Cllr Brooks accepted the amendment and a vote was held with all in

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favour. The Project and Committee Clerk would verify if the quote included repairs for the swings and matting.

93.12. To consider the following regarding the Denes Oval retaining wall:

93.12a. Receive an update on the condition survey – This has been instructed and officers would verify the date as it was one of several surveys in progress.

93.12b. A strategy for dealing with the needed budget allocation of £200,000 for works on the wall and turrets – Cllr Pearce proposed this item be referred to Full Council with an accompanying briefing paper outlining costs so that the budget allocation strategy and funding options could be considered.

Cllr Brooks requested an item on the appropriate agenda to scrutinise the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) document. It was noted that the CIL document had an allocated amount for the Normanston Park changing rooms and officers were asked to verify this. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

93.13. To consider a recommendation to Full Council for the purchase of eight EasyGates for Stoven Close and Normanston Park within a maximum budget of £15,000 – The requirement of eight gates was queried and the Project and Committee Clerk explained these would replace the existing gates which included maintenance gates.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval on the basis that these are replacement gates, with the budget allocation to be decided by F&G; seconded by Cllr Brooks who requested clarification on the number of gates and their distribution.

Cllr Pearce amended his proposal to a recommendation to Full Council that in principle the purchase be approved, with clarification to be received on the number of gates and F&G to consider and recommend the budget allocation to Full Council; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

93.14. To consider the installation of soakaways in the following locations, with a delegation to the Clerk to progress:

93.14a. Kensington Gardens, within a maximum budget of £2,650 plus VAT

93.14b. Denes Oval, within a maximum budget of £3,250 plus VAT

93.14c. The Maritime Museum, within a maximum budget of £2,000 plus VAT

Cllr Pearce proposed approval for all three locations and costs, with a delegation to the Clerk to progress and the budget allocation to be decided by F&G. Cllr Breakspear raised concerns that the location for Kensington Gardens would not solve the issue of floods for all areas. Cllr Pearce amended his proposal for officers to consider Cllr Breakspear's concerns and review other areas at risk of flooding in Kensington Gardens. Cllr E Youngman seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

94. Events and Communications:

94.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 23 August 2023 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting.

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

94.2a. To consider the budget allocation for additional flags and an annual budget for the raising of flags – Cllr Brooks proposed an England flag be added to the Town Council's assets; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

94.2b. To consider the proposed heritage plaque plan for the civic year 2023-2024 – As the heritage consultees had already drafted the text and plaque plans, Cllr Pearce proposed to not consider changing the plaque design and to progress the original agreed plan; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

94.2c. To consider appointing a preferred supplier for heritage plaques (some aspects

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may be confidential) – As per the above proposal, there should be no procurement of a new supplier unless they can confirm the plaques would be supplied in the same material and colour to match the existing plaques.

- 94.3. To consider the cost of transferral of the Lowestoft Borough coat of arms to Lowestoft Town Council – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the £4,375 cost and to progress the transfer this year, with the cost to be allocated from the Arts and Heritage Earmarked Reserves; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

The Committee Clerk noted that the College of Arms offered to paint the coat of arms on the transferral certificate at a cost of £725. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the cost to have the coat of arms painted on the certificate for display, with the cost to be allocated from the Arts and Heritage Earmarked Reserves; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour. The College of Arms also provide digital artwork at a further fee of £1,500 but it was agreed to discuss this initially with the Communications Officer and be considered by the Events and Communications Sub-Committee if required.

- 94.4. To consider a maximum budget for a climate event for 2024 – Cllr Brooks proposed a maximum budget of £5,000; seconded by Cllr Pearce with the amendment that the Officer Administrator notify the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee of any increased costs by the end of this calendar year so that it can be factored into the 2024-2025 budget. Cllr Brooks accepted the amendment and a vote was held with all in favour.

95. Public Toilets

- 95.1. To receive the notes of the Toilet Strategy Working Group meetings on 9 August and 4 September, and consider any recommendations regarding the Council's policy on single-sex and unisex toilets – The notes of the meeting on the 9 August were received. The meeting on 4 September did not take place.

A discussion took place concerning the Council's policy and a suggestion was made to have single cubicle unisex toilets with a disabled toilet and baby changing facilities. An alternative suggestion was a case-by-case approach with single occupancy unisex cubicles, avoiding shared space where practicable, or in cases where shared space was part of the existing layout, such as at Sparrows Nest, and significant expenditure would be needed to alter the space to single occupancy cubicles, then consider the area the toilets are situated and how to ensure single sex and unisex spaces are provided. The toilets owned by the Town Council at Sparrows Nest were currently single sex and it was suggested to approach the tenants of Giardino on allowing park visitors to use their unisex toilets so that both preferences would be accommodated.

Cllr E Youngman proposed this item be referred to Full Council for a decision; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

- 95.2. To consider for Fen Park the updated quotation, review the specification of the roof, the requirement and cost of planning consent and consider the cost of incorporating Resan – The change from an eco-roof to a pitched roof would result in savings of £12,425, plus the extra £5,000 for planning consent which would also delay the refurbishment. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the updated quote with the pitched roof as recommended by the supplier, and delegate the decision for usage of Resan to officers, in conjunction with the Committee members, on the basis that it has no material impact on cost; seconded by Cllr E Youngman. Cllr Brooks noted that an eco-roof would have been good for the environment. A vote was held with six in favour and one abstention.

- 95.3. To consider a delegated budget allocation of £2,000 to the Clerk for anti-vandalism measures at the Triangle Market toilets – The Committee were notified that the costs may increase to £2,500 but the contractor would undertake the installation free of charge. Cllr Brooks proposed approval.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the budget delegation to the Clerk, with the decision on budget allocation to be delegated to F&G to verify if this can be accommodated in

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the £200,000 budget; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

- 95.4. To consider the cost of incorporating Resan into the specification for the Triangle Market toilets – Costs had yet to be confirmed by the contractor and the Project and Committee Clerk noted that the change in material should not significantly alter the quote. Cllr Pearce proposed approval in principle and to delegate the decision to officers on the basis that it is cost neutral; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 95.5. To consider the following for Pakefield Street toilets:
- 95.5a. A maximum delegation to the Clerk of £7,000 plus VAT for external works – Cllr Pearce proposed approval, noting that the cost savings for the Fen Park pitched roof specification would offset this additional cost; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
- 95.5b. The inclusion of Resan in the specification – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 95.5c. A maximum delegation to the Clerk of £7,000 plus VAT for security measures – This budget covered the palisade fencing. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the budget delegation to the Clerk, with the budget to be allocated from the Fencing budget; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; a vote was held with six in favour and one against.
- 95.6. To consider proposals for toilet refurbishment – It was agreed that this paper could be consulted for future refurbishments, as the suggestion of Resan material had been adopted for the current refurbishment projects.
- 95.7. To consider the nomination of Normanston Park toilets and changing rooms as the next refurbishment project – Cllr Pearce proposed both Normanston Park and Lowestoft Cemetery toilets be approved in principal, and for officers to obtain quotes or indicative costs in 2023 that can be factored into the 2024-2025 budget, on the basis that procurement be completed in the first quarter of 2024 and work commence in the second quarter of 2024. Cllr Brooks noted the CIL money East Suffolk Council have allocated for the Normanston Park changing rooms in their report. Cllr Pitts seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.
- 95.8. To consider the feasibility of refurbishing the Lowestoft Cemetery toilets alongside Normanston Park toilets – This was included in the proposal of item 95.7.

- 96. To consider a quotation for waste clearance from the St Margaret's Allotments boundary**
No quote had been received and the item was deferred.

97. To receive the notes of The Ness Working Group meeting on 17 August 2023

The notes of the working group were received. The next meeting was scheduled for October to formulate the recommendations for this Committee.

Cllr Pitts suggested the plants at Rifle Range in Pakefield be reviewed to inform plans for the coastal garden. Cllr Pearce requested an amendment to the notes clarifying that the left side of the ramp contained the rare invertebrate whilst the fenced off right side of the ramp, which is the area being considered for the coastal garden, was a historical cesspit. Clarification was required from Suffolk Wildlife Trust on whether the recommendation in their report to not interfere with the native vegetation included the fenced off contaminated area.

At 20:59 Cllr Pearce proposed to suspend standing orders for twenty minutes; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

98. To review the following policies:

- 98.1. Memorial Bench Policy
98.2. Memorial Planting Policy

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These items were considered earlier in the meeting.

99. To consider the following items regarding Gunton Estate Residents Community Hall:

- 99.1. Installation of CCTV – Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the additional items of CCTV and bench installation in principle, with the Facilities Maintenance Officer to discuss these, alongside the items approved at the previous meeting of this Committee, with the Gunton Estate Residents Community Hall Management Committee (Gunton Hall Management Committee) and feedback the specifications and costs to this Committee. Furthermore, once locations and costs for the CCTV element are ascertained then an item would go on the Community Safety agenda to discuss with funding from the Community Safety budget. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.
- 99.2. Installation of benches – This item was included in the proposal for item 99.1.
- 99.3. Making the hall available for warm spaces in the winter – Cllr Brooks noted the hall was made available last year and proposed to do the same this year. Cllr Pearce declared he was a Town Council representative on the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal with a request for officers to put the Gunton Hall Management Committee in contact with the East Suffolk Communities team who can provide more information on the warm spaces programme. A vote was held with all in favour. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for the East Suffolk Communities team to speak to this Committee or Full Council. Cllr Pitts suggested Whitton Hall be considered for warm spaces, which could be discussed with East Suffolk Communities.

100. Date of the next meeting

Monday 2 October 2023 – 19:00

101. Items for the next agenda and close

Any items should be emailed to the office. Cllr Brooks requested an item to consider acquiring the John Reay outdoor mural from Another Angle Studio and re-locating it to the Triangle Market. It was noted that the Town Council had provided a grant for its installation on the studio wall.

102. 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:

- 102.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required
Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved to confidential session; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 21:11

93.2a The approval of a maximum budget for an information panel at Belle Vue Park (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It was suggested for the wording on the panel to read ‘installed by’ rather than ‘erected by’.

93.5 To receive the intrusive ground survey report for Britten Road (some aspects may be confidential) – The report confirmed play area refurbishments can be progressed. The situation would need to be monitored and any contractors notified, which may increase

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the costs as they would to factor in contingency. Cllr Pearce proposed to go out for procurement on Britten Road and Wellington Road and obtain costs before the end of December 2023 to inform the budget; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21:17

Signed:

2 October 2023