

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 2 October 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Jen Jones, Christian Newsome (Deputy Chair), Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman (Chair)

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

103. Welcome

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

104. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Breakspear, Brooks and Pitts with reasons provided. Cllr Jones proposed approval of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. Cllrs Coleby and Smith were absent with no apologies provided.

105. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

105.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Pearce declared a non-registerable interest as Chair of the Gunton Residents Association.

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

106. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 4 September 2023

Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; four in favour and two abstentions from members who had not attended the previous meeting.

107. 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 advance comments had been received.

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

An updated position would be considered as part of the budget review by the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee.

109. Parks and Open Spaces:

109.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 19 September 2023 – To be signed off at the next meeting.

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

109.2a. The development of pink and white beds, and a snowdrop planting plan for Belle Vue Park, in line with the five-year plans – Cllr Pearce proposed approval, noting there would be no expenditure this year for year one of the snowdrop plan, with a delegation to officers to liaise with Cllr Coleby to provide costs that can be budgeted for; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

109.3. To receive a report on the grounds maintenance – There were no further updates since the previous Full Council meeting. Cllr Pearce requested a query on this item be answered in confidential session.

109.4. To consider the following regarding The Ness:

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- 109.4a. Receive an update on the replacement of the basket swing at The Ness play area – The replacement parts have been ordered to be affixed back to the frame and repair to the damaged underside would be complete in-house. Officers would check if there would be metal covers installed on the swing chains and Councillors would be updated once the works have been completed.
- 109.4b. Approval of a £75 landscape design consultation fee for the coastal garden – Cllr Pearce proposed approval with a delegation to officers to confirm if funding is available in the Consultancy budget for the allocation; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.
- 109.5. To consider works required for Fen Park Pond – Organisations have been approached for water testing on the pond and officers confirmed the aeration device, originally scheduled for installation in November, would not be installed until the cause of the discolouration of the pond has been determined.

Cllr Pearce proposed this item be on next month's agenda, with a briefing paper supplied by officers clarifying the previous situation with a water company, confirming the water inflow and outflow through the sluice gates, and provide an opinion on the whether the gates were important to the health and vitality of the pond and if the gates could have contributed to the problem. Seconded by Cllr Rappensberger and a vote was held with all in favour.

- 109.6. To consider the following regarding Belle Vue Park:

109.6a. To consider miscellaneous preparations and works for the 150th anniversary of Belle Vue Park and the required budget – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the listed items of expenditure with a maximum budget of £750, in expectation that costs would be kept under the set budget; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

Any issues or works identified by officers concerning the elephant statue that incur costs could be reviewed and delegated by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee.

Officers were asked to check the James Paget Hospital rose bed, as there had been reports of concerns for the health of the roses. Officers would further monitor the general health of all flower beds in Belle Vue Park.

- 109.6b. An application for a memorial tree – The applicant had requested an ash or silver birch tree be located near the cemetery. Cllr E Youngman proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce with the requested amendment that officers agree on the species and location with the applicant. Cllr E Youngman accepted the amendment and a vote was held with all in favour.
- 109.7. To consider two applications for memorial benches at Sparrows Nest – As Sparrows Nest was reaching capacity for benches, the Committee discussed alternative methods for commemoration, including adding memorial plaques to existing features in the parks such as railings and the bandstand wall at Sparrows Nest. A virtual memorial similar to the James Paget Rose Garden was suggested, however as not all residents had smart phones it was agreed that this would not be accessible option.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of both applications with a delegation to officers to agree locations with the applicants. Furthermore if officers conclude Sparrows Nest is approaching capacity for benches, then consideration would be given to including in the policy that Sparrows Nest is not a viable location for future applications as it has reached capacity. Cllr Rappensberger seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour. An item was requested for the next agenda to consider different ideas for memorials in parks and open spaces.

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109.8. To consider the costs and installation of a standpipe at Normanston Park – This request had been received from the Grounds Maintenance officers as the standpipe would allow them to wash line painting equipment, which they currently had no means to wash, and for possible watering of the area, the cost of which should not exceed £5,000. Cllr Pearce proposed approval, with a delegation to the Finance and Governance Committee to determine the budget allocation; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

110. Events and Communications:

110.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 27 September 2023 – To be signed off at the next meeting.

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

110.2a. Options for a consort badge for Mayor and Deputy Mayor and any costs involved – Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation, with the added clarification that a maximum budget was needed to cover two badges, and to approve a maximum budget of £1,750 to purchase two badges, with a delegation to the Finance and Governance to consider the budget allocation; seconded by Cllr Jones; four in favour and two against.

111. Allotments:

111.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Allotments Sub-Committee meeting on 15 September 2023 – To be signed off at the next meeting.

111.2. To consider cost of removal of waste at St Margaret's allotment site – Quotes for the waste along the boundary had been chased. There was a separate issue concerning one plot on the site which the Sub-Committee would discuss at their next meeting. Facilities Officers were asked to visit the site and assess the partially collapsed fence, as one area of the fence was noted to be upright, to ascertain if there are other issues to resolve besides the waste accumulation.

112. To receive an update on the Bulky Waste Collection trial (some aspects may be confidential)

The selected contractor was due to meet with the Health and Safety consultant next week to for routine checks on risk assessment and a method statement. An item to provide an update was requested for the next AID agenda.

113. To receive an update on the following standalone meetings:

113.1. Friends of Groups – Officers would re-schedule the meeting with a 19:00 start time and ensure two-weeks' notice is provided to Committee members.

113.2. Stakeholder

114. To receive an update on the commencement date for works by the Lawn Tennis Association

Works on the courts were due to start at Normanston Park and Kensington Gardens in February 2024, with an expected completion date of April 2024. Officers had raised concerns with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) on the proposed position of the new gate at Normanston park and were discussing this further. Officers were asked to confirm whether the procurement for the removal of the court surfaces would be done separately, as the Town Council were paying for the removal of the current surfaces on the six courts, or if the LTA would use its own contractor to complete all works together.

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115. To receive an update on the commencement date for preventative repair works at Sparrows Nest

As the £136,000 in the Sparrows Nest Capital budget would not cover the toilet refurbishments and window replacements this year, officers were asked to decide what needed to take priority and to obtain an updated preventative repair report for the duration of the project as the costs of the current report were outdated.

116. To consider possible grant funding options for Town Council projects

Officers would review Hornsea Community Fund as an option as they specialise in parish councils and have categories such as climate and community projects.

Grant funding could be explored for the replacement nets for the Cricket club, alongside how to reflect capital contribution from sports club in their licenses.

Officers were exploring the possibility of grant funding for the Denes Oval wall, including a Public Works Loan, to cover the indicative cost of £200,000.

117. To receive feedback on the relocation of the John Reay mural

There had been difficulty in locating an area with enough wall space to accommodate the mural and if it were floor mounted at the Triangle Market, then there would be issues of ground excavation due to utilities running through the site.

Alternatives were discussed and it was suggested for officers to approach East Suffolk Council on whether they had a suitable building in the vicinity of the sea front, or to query the reason for its removal with the landlord and establish if it could be left in situ.

118. To consider works on the Denes Oval clubhouse for 2025-2026

Cllr Pearce proposed an initial condition survey of the building be obtained to advise on the condition of the roof and structural integrity of the building, followed by the commissioning of a refurbishment or preventative repair report with recommendations on priority order; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

119. To consider the installation of solar panels on the Martello building

It was requested to discuss this item in confidential session.

120. Date of the next meeting

Monday 6 November 2023 – 19:00

121. Items for the next agenda and close

Items should be emailed into the office a week before the agenda is published.

122. 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:

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

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

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The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 19:55

109.3 To receive a report on the grounds maintenance – An update was requested for the next meeting regarding finalisation of the Unit 2 lease.

119. To consider the installation of solar panels on the Martello building

Cllr Pearce proposed this be recommended, without commitment, to review the viability and costs and produce indicative proposals for the Town Council to consider; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:00

Signed:

6 November 2023