

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Community Safety Sub-Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft NR32 1DE
13.00 on Wednesday 22 November 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Jen Jones (Chair), Andy Pearce, John Pitts (Deputy Chair) and Elise Youngman

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

Public: Two members of the public (in person)

46. Welcome

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

47. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Smith with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

48. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

48.1. To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable Interests from Councillors on items on the agenda and to note that there are no written requests and grants of dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests – Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of the Gunton Residents Association.

49. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting of 27 September 2023

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

50. Public forum

50.1. An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public – The member of the public spoke on item 55.1 as Ward Councillor for Kirkley. They had received concerns of assaults at Fen Park and residents not feeling safe in the area, and queries had been made on the possibility of CCTV and lighting for the park. An item was requested for the next meeting concerning crime and disorder at Fen Park against the contents of the report due to be reviewed at item 55.2, noting that the police structure was due to be altered after 4 December 2023, at which time the police may conduct discussions with the local groups.

51. Finance

51.1. To review any expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget – There was committed expenditure for defibrillators. Expenditure for vehicle activated signs may not be allocated to this financial year and would instead be carried forward and ring-fenced in 2024-2025.

52. To consider measures to improve the security of the Town Council's assets, including the following:

52.1. To note vandalism and crime record of Town Council assets and consider which sites to prioritise – The Lowestoft Cemetery toilets had suffered extensive damage and their operating model was due to be considered by the Toilet Working Group and the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee. It was noted there may be potential funding to refurbish these toilets and considerations would be required on making the area more robust. The damage to the tennis courts at Denes Oval would be discussed in confidential session.

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13.00 on Wednesday 22 November 2023

53. To consider the provision of CCTV for Lowestoft Town Council assets

It would need to be established if East Suffolk Council (ESC) intended to progress a CCTV service run from the broadband infrastructure, and if Lowestoft Town Council had an interest in becoming a stakeholder in that service.

Considerations would also be required on the deterrent value of CCTV, data protection regulations and the preferred sites for CCTV cameras, with Fen Park to be considered as discussed in the Public Forum, and the required security budget.

A view from the police force on what they required from Lowestoft Town Council as a landlord in relation to crime prevention would also be beneficial. A standalone meeting was requested with representatives of ESC, the police and all Lowestoft Town Councillors to consider security options for the town.

54. To receive the notes of the meeting with Peter Aldous MP concerning highways arrangements and road safety outside schools.

Officers would contact Peter Aldous MP to query the status of the follow up actions agreed in the meeting.

55. To consider the following regarding Fen Park:

55.1. Reports of anti-social behaviour (some aspects may be confidential) – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

55.2. Receive the Design Out Crime report for Fen Park (confidential) – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

56. Date of the next meeting

Wednesday 24 January 2024 13:00

57. Items for the next agenda and close

Any items should be sent to the office.

58. 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 into confidential session; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 13:32

55. To consider the following regarding Fen Park:

Reports of anti-social behaviour (some aspects may be confidential) – The Deputy Clerk notified the Sub-Committee of an incident where three litre cans of oil were poured on the new tennis courts, however with the cleanup actions taken there would not be any lasting damage.

Cllr Pearce proposed it be made clear in any communications that all tennis courts at Denes Oval would be accessible to the public after the upgrade and no courts would be reserved for clubs or private use, with an emphasis on this being a public asset; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour.

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Community Safety Sub-Committee
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55.2 Receive the Design Out Crime report for Fen Park (confidential) – Mr Gallant was invited to speak as a specialist in crime prevention who had authored the report for Fen Park.

Mr Gallant temporarily left the chamber at 14:09

Mr Gallant returned to the chamber at 14:10

Mr Gallant suggested lighting be implemented along the pathed area at the entrance of the park and monitored for any reduction in the crime rate before lighting is expanded further.

A rope fence or permeable barrier was suggested for the pond to act as a demarcation to deter people entering the water, which the Sub-Committee agreed to consider.

Mr Gallant suggested the Sub-Committee consider park wardens for Fen Park as the site currently had no permanent grounds staff. An item to discuss this further was requested for the relevant Committee.

An item on lighting for Fen Park was requested for the 24 January 2024 meeting with Mr Gallant's previous lighting report and this Design Out Crime report to be recirculated and considered by the Sub-Committee.

Cllr Pearce proposed an item for the next agenda to have a detailed consideration of this report, noting the concerns of the residents and for the assigned officer for Kirkley and Pakefield to be contacted, if possible before the meeting, with Kirkley ward Councillors to be made aware that this is under consideration; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce proposed an item on the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee February agenda to consider lighting and CCTV measures in the parks. Furthermore, Budget and Loan Sub-Committee and Full Council be asked to consider a contingency provision in the 2024-2025 budget in anticipation of a decision on security provision to be reached early 2024; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 14:39

Signed:

24 January 2024