

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:30 on 10 October 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Alan Green, Paul Page (Deputy Chair) and Graham Parker

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk), James Cox (Finance and Information Officer) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

80. Welcome

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

81. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Pearce with reasons provided. Cllr Green proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.
Cllrs Begum and Coleby were absent with no apologies received.

82. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

82.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Brooks declared she was a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust and noted that the grant under item 87.1b was made on behalf of the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership. The Deputy Clerk advised that Cllrs Brooks' membership on the Trust would cause her to have a greater interest in the item compared to a member of the public. Cllr Brooks declared she was on the Marina Theatre Quarterly Management meeting.

82.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

83. To consider the draft minutes and the appended confidential note of the meeting on 25 September 2023

The draft minutes were in progress and would be signed off at the next meeting.

84. 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 advanced comments had been received and no members of the public were in attendance.

85. Budget and Loan:

85.1. To monitor the budget for 2023 – 2024, including delegated Committee and Sub-Committee budgets – Officers raised concerns regarding the tree works budget, noting there had been a large billing for works at Pakefield Green, therefore an increase for the year would need to be considered once the tree audit is completed and the schedule of works is compiled. The Deputy Clerk noted the tree surveyors had highlighted urgent matters that would need to be addressed alongside routine works and resident requests on trees. £30,000 had been budgeted for the audit and tree works, with £14,800 spent on the audit fees and £15,200 remaining for tree works.

85.2. To note any bank reconciliations – August had been completed and September was ongoing.

86. Payments and Receipts:

86.1. To note the income and expenditure reports for September 2023 and October 2023 to date, including payments made under delegated authority (see schedules) – The report was displayed for the Committee, with two notable receipts in September of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the second precept instalment from East Suffolk

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Council. It was clarified that the expenditure for tennis court surface solutions was for resurfacing at Denes Oval.

86.2. To consider any payments for approval (see schedule) – There were no payments for approval.

Table 1 September and October Payments

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
18 September 2023	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Van fuel	£177.26 + £35.45 VAT = £212.71
18 September 2023	Credit Card Account	Credit card payments	£1,012.11
18 September 2023	HMRC	HMRC August 2023	£11,968.03
18 September 2023	Shona Bendix	Travel, parking, stationery and meeting reimbursements	£116.65 + £17.44 VAT = £134.09
18 September 2023	Scuffs & Alloys Anglia	Windscreen repair	£1,260 + £252 VAT = £1,512
18 September 2023	C&C Consulting Services Ltd	H&S support Oct 22 – Sept 23	£934.92
18 September 2023	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage	£240
20 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Triangle Market electric Aug	£462.16
21 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Ken Gardens electric Aug	£79.70
21 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Low Cemetery PC electric Aug	£103.49
21 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Denes Oval electric Aug	£453.32
21 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Pakefield St PC electric Aug	£88.25
21 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Town Hall electric Aug	£796.70
21 September 2023	Billie Box Ltd	Container movement to Unit 2	£456
21 September 2023	Omnex Profilm Ltd	MT cinema screen	£2,532
21 September 2023	Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd	Arien service	£396.40
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	MT asbestos removal	£1,350
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	Various small repairs	£3,054.60
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	Sussex Road fencing	£3,930
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	Marina Theatre stopcock	£282.24
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	Marina sink water heater	£600
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	Water Lane allotments drainage pipes	£2,953.20
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	GELP land movement	£17,446.80
21 September 2023	Matta Products	Matta	£120.90
21 September 2023	North & Hawkins Ltd	Condition survey Unit 2	£960
21 September 2023	Gritbins.net	Salt KG lake	£2,082
21 September 2023	AJ Builders	Normanston tarmac	£1,380
21 September 2023	Austen Group Ltd	Bin liners	£324
21 September 2023	Austen Group Ltd	Bin liners	£189
21 September 2023	Anchor Bloc Ltd	TM kiosks Anchorblocs	£1,140
22 September 2023	Salaries	Salaries September	£33,901.92

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25 September 2023	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Van fuel	£82.16 + £16.43 VAT = £98.59
25 September 2023	British Gas	Whitton Hall gas Mar – Jun	£97.99
26 September 2023	EE Ltd	Mobile Phones October	£594.92
26 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Ken Gardens electric Aug	£112.82
26 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Sparrows Nest electric Aug	£407.39
26 September 2023	Npower Ltd	Normanston electric Aug	£129.28
28 September 2023	C&C Consulting Services Ltd	Health and safety support	£49.50 + £9.90 VAT = £59.40
28 September 2023	Eon Energy	Whitton Hall electric Q1	£30.80
29 September 2023	MLP Traffic Ltd	Pakefield Gr road closure	£1,891.75 + £378.35 VAT = £2,270.10
29 September 2023	Lowestoft Town Cricket Club	LT Cricket Club sponsor 24 25	£4,000
29 September 2023	Mary Moppins Ltd	Gunton Hall cleaning Sept	£239.52
29 September 2023	Disability Advice North East Suffolk	DANES grant	£10,000
29 September 2023	Peter Colby Commercials Ltd	Unit 2 Rent October	£2,050
29 September 2023	Browne Jacobson LLP	Town Hall subsidy advice	£4,200
29 September 2023	Fatstickman Ltd	PPE polo shirts x4	£61.54
29 September 2023	Broadland Security Alarms	TH intruder alarm	£99.60
29 September 2023	Broadland Security Alarms	Asset Manager advert Feb	£120
29 September 2023	Tennis court surface solutions	Denes Oval court paint	£840
29 September 2023	Mary Moppins Ltd	Whitton Hall cleaning Sept	£239.52
29 September 2023	Rouse Forestry	SN sycamore works	£672
29 September 2023	Gearhire Sound and Light	FC amplification September	£534
29 September 2023	The Marina Theatre Trust	MTT management fee Q3	£45,000
29 September 2023	Record UK	MTT automatic doors repair	£258
29 September 2023	Boggis Electrical Ltd	MT emergency lights	£974.64
29 September 2023	Tennis Court Surface Solutions	Denes Oval sockets x2	£1,800
29 September 2023	Mary Moppins Ltd	Toilet cleaning September	£3,078
29 September 2023	Tennis Court Surface Solutions	DO court paint and clean	£5,414.40
29 September 2023	The Play Inspection Company Ltd	Play inspection company	£1,920
30 September 2023	Unity Trust Bank	Service charge	£78.90
2 October 2023	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Van fuel	£214.25 + £42.85 VAT = £257.10
2 October 2023	Taylor Williams	Parking expenses	£53.28 + £10.72 VAT = £64

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2 October 2023	Sarah Foote	Paint, travel and parking reimbursements	£168.40 + £12.12 VAT = £180.52
2 October 2023	Chris Meek	Postage, battery, keys, meeting reimbursements	£79.73
2 October 2023	Wave Ltd	TH water Q2	£51.35
2 October 2023	Wave Ltd	Ken Gardens water Q2	£429.62
2 October 2023	East Suffolk Council	Links Road car park NNDR	£196
2 October 2023	East Suffolk Council	SN Bowls Pavilion NNDR	£104
2 October 2023	East Suffolk Council	Hamilton House NNDR	£996
4 October 2023	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions September	£12,498.71
5 October 2023	C&C Consulting Services Ltd	Health and safety support	£934.92
9 October 2023	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Van fuel	£265.24 + £53.05 VAT = £318.29
9 October 2023	Heathcliff Duncan	Van wash reimbursement	£15
9 October 2023	Wave Ltd	Denes Oval Water	£744.91

Table 2 September and October Receipts

Date	Received From	Description	Amount
22 September 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£142
22 September 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£300
22 September 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£775
29 September 2023	East Suffolk Council	Precept 2 nd instalment	£987,895
29 September 2023	Birds Eye	Pride donation	£500
29 September 2023	Kensington Gardens Bowls	K Gardens Bowls donation	£10
29 September 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£300
2 October 2023	Triangle Market	Triangle Market income	£18.50
2 October 2023	Triangle Market	Triangle Market income	£18.50
2 October 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£60
2 October 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£775
2 October 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£625
2 October 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£213.16
2 October 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£6,300
6 October 2023	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£300

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87. Grants

87.1. To consider the following grant applications:

87.1a. Gunton Primary Academy (amount to be considered) – It was noted that no amount had been specified on the application and a suggestion was made for future applicants to be asked to provide an exact amount on the form. Cllr Brooks proposed approval of a £2,000 grant; seconded by Cllr Green; three in favour and one abstention.

87.1b. Suffolk Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership - £1,665 – Cllr Page declared he was a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust. As the meeting would be inquorate when members of the Trust left the chamber for consideration of the grant, Cllr Page proposed the grant be recommended to Full Council for a decision; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

87.1c. Robert Mayes Charity - £1,500 – A query was raised on whether Councillors should declare a conflict of interest if they were members of the Church of England for this item. The Deputy Clerk advised individual Councillors needed to declare if they feel they have a conflict of interest due to their religious beliefs, otherwise the Committee should proceed with the discussion. Cllr Page proposed approval of the grant; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. It was agreed to allocate the fund from the Social and Food Relief budget.

87.1d. Team Waveney Swimming Club (amount to be confirmed) – The amount was confirmed to be £1,668. Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

88. Other financial and governance matters, including:

88.1. To receive an update on the expenditure against budget for the changes to grounds maintenance operations from 2023/2024, including areas where the budget may be challenged (some aspects may be confidential) – This was due to be discussed by the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee at its next meeting.

88.2. To consider the budget allocation of the following expenditure:

88.2a. A maximum budget of £1,750 for the purchase of a Mayor and Deputy Mayor Consort badge – Cllr Brooks suggested the Events and Communications budget. Cllr Green proposed funds be allocated from to the Civic and Ceremonial Reserve, which the Finance and Information Officer confirmed had projected a year-end figure of £18,000. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal.

88.2b. The installation of a standpipe at Normanston Park at a maximum cost of £5,000 – The Finance and Information Officer suggested the Parks and Open Spaces budget. Cllr Brooks proposed allocation to the Repair and Maintenance budget; seconded by Cllr Green. A vote was held for items 88.2a and 88.2b with all in favour.

88.3. To consider the following in relation to the Denes Oval:

88.3a. To consider the installation and funding of Wi-Fi at the Denes Oval – No update was available at the time of the meeting.

88.3b. To give early consideration to renovation and refurbishment of the Denes Oval clubhouse and toilets, including any additional changing area provision that may be required for use by cricket umpires and the tennis club – This item was deferred to the next meeting.

88.3c. A recommendation to Full Council on commissioning a report for a renovation programme – This item was deferred to the next meeting.

88.4. To receive an update on procurement for the tennis court operator – The Deputy Clerk requested the update be provided in confidential session.

88.5. To consider the consultation on the financial regulations – The Deputy Clerk confirmed she had attended the online consultation and noted it was a statutory process where the National Association of Local Councils would issue a new model of financial regulations for Councils to adopt.

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- 88.6. To consider a request from Marina Theatre to replace the cinema sound processor at a cost of £4,000 – This was confirmed to be a quote and not an invoice. The Marina Theatre reported the sound processor to be at end of life. Cllr Parker proposed approval of the purchase.

In response to a query on whether the Town Council could review the system first, the Deputy Clerk noted that a review had already been undertaken by a sound technician and the Town Council would not be able to provide further expertise. Cllr Green seconded the proposal.

A suggestion was made for the Town Council have more oversight and input on what is purchased as the owners of the building and equipment. The Committee agreed and suggested this be applied to purchases over £10,000 and to revisit this discussion at the next meeting.

A vote was held on Cllr Parkers proposal with all in favour.

- 88.7. To receive an update on setting up the joint Steering Group for D-Day 80th (2024) – Officers have engaged with veterans and Armed Forces representatives and made an initial plan for the celebration to be held on the D-Day anniversary with the beacon lit in the evening, which has been booked. Those contacted had also discussed the possibility for a smaller scale event on the Saturday for Armed Forces Day 2024. The Deputy Clerk suggested the Events and Communications Sub-Committee discuss these events further. There was uncertainty on the constitution intended for the Steering Group and what their work would include.
- 88.8. To receive an update on the preparation of a bid to be the national host town for Armed Forces Day 2025 – The Deputy Clerk confirmed this had been discussed at the Quarterly Liaison Meeting with East Suffolk Council and officers were aware of key officers to contact to progress the preparation.
- 88.9. To receive an update on reconvening meetings with third parties re possible Kindertransport art installation (confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.
- 88.10. To receive an update on contacting other local parish councils to consider periodic formal liaison meetings to discuss issues of mutual interest and possibilities for co-operations – There was uncertainty on which organisation would coordinate this liaison. The Deputy Clerk confirmed there was a quarterly East Suffolk Area Forum organised by Suffolk Association of Local Councils and would send the notes from the last meeting of the Forum on 21 September 2023 to Councillors. The Clerk was due to attend the next Waveney Clerks Forum and would query if there were any plans for inter-council networking.
- 88.11. To understand whether a Councillor delegate is needed to represent the Town Council on any SALC bodies under the terms of membership, with a request to Full Council to schedule the relevant appointment process if agreed – The conferences were open to all Councillors to attend, though some limit attendance to one representative. There were discussions on whether a Councillor should be appointed as a representative for a specific event, or have the Clerk apply to an event and then all interested Councillors meet at the office to stream from one device. The Deputy Clerk would notify Councillors of the date of the next conference.

89. To consider lease and licence arrangements for the following (some aspects may be confidential):

- 89.1. To receive an update on the status of the lease for the Lowestoft War Memorial Museum (confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.
- 89.2. To receive an update on the Cricket and Tennis Club licenses – There was no update at the time of the meeting.

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- 89.3. To receive an update on progress of the Marina Theatre lease, following recent discussions with the legal and VAT advisors – An update would be provided at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting.
- 89.4. To receive an update on progressing the new Martello/Giardino lease – The lawyer had confirmed this was being progressed, if the Committee wanted to discuss any details then this would need to be in confidential session.

90. To consider the updated draft of the Reserves Policy

Cllr Pearce was due to provide the updated draft, therefore this item was deferred to the next meeting.

91. Date of the next meeting

14 November 2023 10:30

92. Items for the next agenda and close

Cllr Brooks requested an item to review agendas in terms of how they are organised and how requested items are added.

93. 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 employment matters and legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda, including the following:

- 93.1. Any legal matters, including those above as required – Cllr Green proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 11:35

- 88.4 To receive an update on procurement for the tennis court operator Tennis court operator – The Deputy Clerk provided a confidential update to the Committee regarding the tennis court operator and it was agreed that further discussions were required at Full Council.

- 88.9 To receive an update on reconvening meetings with third parties re possible Kindertransport art installation (confidential) – Cllr Brooks proposed officers request an update from the project contact; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

- 89.1 To receive an update on the status of the lease for the Lowestoft War Memorial Museum (confidential) War memorial – There was no update at the time of the meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:48

Signed:

14 November 2023