

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Marina Theatre Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
14:00 on Thursday 7 March 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker (Chair), Wendy Brooks and Andy Pearce. Non-Councillor members Andy Gallant, David Blythe, Robin Townley and Hazel Clover (Marina Theatre Trust) and Emma Bellward (East Suffolk Council Officer)

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

13. Welcome

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

14. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Coleby and Darren Newman with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Emma Bellward; all in favour.
Cllr Webb was absent with no apologies received.

15. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

15.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from members of the Committee on items on the agenda – Cllr Pearce declared a non-registerable interest as the current Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative on the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership. Cllrs Barker and Brooks declared they were members of Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

15.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted:

15.2a. To note dispensation granted for Marina Theatre Trustees due to Other Registerable Interests – The signed dispensations from the Marina Theatre Trust (MTT) have been received, except for David Blythe whose dispensation was due to be submitted to the office. Cllr Pearce proposed all be accepted, including David Blythe with the expectation it was due to be received soon; seconded by Cllr Barker; seven votes in favour and one abstention.

15.3. To note the requirement for Marina Theatre Trustees to complete and submit their Register of Interests to East Suffolk Council – The Acting Town Clerk would provide the link for the Register of Interest to MTT members. Emma Bellward declared she would leave the meeting for consideration of item 19.

16. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 31 January 2023

Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

17. 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.

18. Redevelopment of the Marina Theatre

18.1. To consider a recommendation to Full Council on a preferred contractor to be appointed for design services for redevelopment of the Marina Theatre RIBA Stages 4-7, with a break clause at Stage 4 – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

18.2. To accept the East Suffolk Council Memorandum of Understanding – Emma Bellward has met with the legal team and a draft short-service contract has been produced and was due to be reviewed. This would be provided to members of the Committee for comments by the week commencing 18th March.

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Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to accept the contract without the need of a formal meeting. The Acting Town Clerk advised the delegation be framed to include comments from MTT and for the contract to be approved at Full Council in March. Cllr Pearce amended his proposal as advised; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

18.3. To agree scope of Project Management role – This item was resolved per item 18.2.

18.4. To consider the timetable for project delivery, including the following:

18.4a. The Marina Theatre panto season

18.4b. The Kittiwake nesting seasons

These items would be discussed in confidential session. Cllr Brooks queried if the kittiwake nesting could be discussed in public session. The Acting Town Clerk noted this item's scope related to the timetable of project delivery and therefore needed to be in confidential due to discussions on contractors.

19. To note matters relating to the Party Wall Agreement regarding the works at the Marina Centre

Emma Bellward temporarily left the chamber for consideration of item 19 at 14:14

Andy Gallant declared he had made a public comment on the planning portal on behalf of Suffolk Constabulary in respect of the application of the party wall, this was only related to security around the implementation of the work to be done and not the impact on either building.

The Party Wall Surveyor had visited the site and officers had been assured of their neutrality.

Andy Gallant notified the Committee that the recommendations made by the Public Wall Surveyor would be accepted unless challenged officially in court.

Emma Bellward returned to the chamber at 14:20

20. Lowestoft Ambassador Event

20.1. To note details of the redevelopment project will be presented at the Lowestoft Ambassador Event on 8th March 2024 – The Acting Town Clerk would attend the event to speak on the project and Councillors were notified they could book a place to attend.

21. To consider any additional recommendations to Full Council

Once the project was underway design meetings would be held with the contractor and as the scope of works had been pre-agreed by Full Council, Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council to delegate one or two members of the facilities team to attend the design meetings on behalf of LTC and to make any required decisions in those meetings; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

22. Date of the next meeting

This would be arranged via email. It was requested to arrange a quarterly liaison meeting between LTC and MTT.

23. Items for the next agenda and close

To consider a communications plan.

A standing item for East Suffolk Council (ESC) officers to provide a monthly report on works completed and works expected for the next month.

Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation for this month's report to be received by March Full Council as an initial update with monthly reports to follow and be recommended by this Committee to Full Council for sign off; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

It was agreed for this Committee to meet monthly during RIBA Stage 4 prior to the delivery

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decision. Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting schedule be the second Thursday of the month at 14:00; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour. The meeting date for April would be Thursday 11th at 14:00.

24. 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:

24.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required – Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 14:36

Members of MTT felt it would be worthwhile to have ad hoc liaison meetings to provide updates as the project develops. The topics discussed by this Committee, the quarterly meetings and any other liaison meetings would need to be clearly defined and any decisions would need to come back to this Committee for consideration.

18.1. To consider a recommendation to Full Council on a preferred contractor to be appointed for design services for redevelopment of the Marina Theatre RIBA Stages 4-7, with a break clause at Stage 4 – Officers confirmed Full Council had pre-approved a delegation to this Committee on matters of procurement in November 2023.

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

18.4. To consider the timetable for project delivery, including the following:

18.4a. The Marina Theatre panto season

18.4b. The Kittiwake nesting season

Emma Bellward temporarily left the chamber at 15:09

A delay on the party wall demolition until September may affect the proposed Cultural Quarter, therefore the Committee may need to prepare for an adjudication for the demolition to take place before September and with mitigations in relation to the kittiwakes.

The LTC Planning Committee had received assurance that the demolitions would not take place until November or December, after the kittiwakes have vacated the area.

Emma Bellward returned to the chamber at 15:12

Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council that no decision be made on exercising the break clause until the end of the tender period, with ESC to notify the Acting Town Clerk of any issues this may cause; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 15:20

Signed:

11 April 2024