

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**19:00 on 18 April 2023**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks (Chair), Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Elise Youngman

**In attendance:** Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

**Public:** There were two members of the public in attendance (in person)

**201. Welcome**

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

**202. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Sonia Barker, Janet Craig, Paul Page and Graham Parker, with reasons provided. Cllr Youngman proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

**203. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

203.1. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Breakspear declared he is Chair of the Friends of Kensington Gardens. Cllr Pearce declared he is Chair of the Gunton Residents' Association. Regarding item 206, Cllrs Brooks and Pitts declared they had been in contact with the resident who had raised the issue regarding the trees.

203.2. Written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

**204. The draft minutes of the meeting on 21 March 2023**

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

**205. Public forum**

The Chair had agreed that the members of the public would be welcome to speak at the relevant agenda item(s).

**206. An update regarding tree works at Uplands Road North and on unregistered land**

The Project and Committee Clerk advised that initial legal advice had been received, and would provide an update during the confidential session.

**207. Monitoring expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget**

The Project and Committee Clerk advised that since the last meeting there had been expenditure of £8,168 to purchase four noticeboards, £840 for installation of the noticeboards, and £465 to install a memorial bench in Sparrows Nest, which should be recovered via an invoice to the applicant. Cllr Pearce proposed asking officers to check which budget the noticeboards purchase had been allocated to, and if necessary requested the addition of an item to May's Finance and Governance Committee agenda to consider budget allocation, as it may be appropriate to allocate the expenditure across more than one budget; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

**208. Reviewing and implementing the five year plans, including planting plans, in line with budgeting, noting Councillors' comments regarding the following:**

208.1 Normanston Park

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208.2 Rosedale Park – The Project and Committee Clerk advised that installation of the new play area had started that day.

208.3 Kensington Gardens

208.4 Gunton Community Park

208.5 Great Eastern Linear Park

208.6 Sparrows Nest – The Project and Committee Clerk advised an update on the opening of the play area could be given during the confidential session.

208.7 Fen Park

208.8 Belle Vue Park

208.9 Denes Oval

208.10 Cotman Close – The Project and Committee Clerk was seeking quotations for the refurbishment of the Cotman Close play area and a replacement piece of equipment and new surfacing for the Normanston Park play area.

208.11 Britten Road Play Area

208.12 Clarkes Lane

208.13 Pakefield Green Play Area (Wellington Road)

208.14 The Ness – The Project and Committee Clerk advised a site visit had taken place with a representative from Suffolk Wildlife Trust. An area had been identified as a potential location for the coastal garden. The Suffolk Wildlife Trust representative had recommended that the Council engages with a landscape architect regarding the design and content of the garden. The trees had been assessed and although some were showing signs of budding, others appeared to be in poor condition. It was agreed the trees should be monitored over the next month. Due to the challenging environment, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust representative recommended lower level planting at the site if the trees do have to be removed, and to consider planting replacement trees at an alternative site.

208.15 Ness Point

208.16 St Margaret's Plain Play Area – Cllr Brooks requested an update on the information panel. Cllr Pearce advised that text on the history of the site had been provided and a local historian had offered to provide illustrations. Cllr Brooks proposed delegating authority to officers to liaise with local historians and agree the content for the information panel; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

208.17 Bentley Drive Play Area

208.18 Gainsborough Drive Pond – Cllr Pearce advised that the paint had been ordered for the planter and the agreed works to it (including the painting and removal of the keel) would be taking place on 30 April. It was anticipated that planting would take place from early May.

208.19 North Denes

208.20 Links Road Car Park

208.21 Triangle Market

208.22 Town Green – Cllr Pearce advised that community group will be seeking permission for a small event at Town Green on 14 May, and had enquired whether the refurbishment of the town sign would be completed by then. The Project and Committee Clerk will check. Regarding the five year plans in general, the Project and Committee Clerk advised she would put together draft plans and arrange a Zoom meeting for further discussion.

208.23 Land at Upland's Road North (including pond)

### **209. The cost for bicycle racks, for inclusion in the five year plans**

The Project and Committee Clerk had produced and circulated a meeting paper of recommendations. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee to approve the purchase of the bicycle racks as per the recommendations in the meeting paper, within a maximum budget of £5,000. Cllr Pearce

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requested the addition of an item to the Finance and Governance Committee agenda for 23 May to determine the budget allocation, pending the decision of the AID Committee at its meeting the following day; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Cllr Brooks asked the Project and Committee Clerk to make recommendations on the colours of the bicycle racks to the AID Committee.

### **210. An update on a noticeboard for the Friends of Kensington Gardens**

Cllr Breakspear advised the Friends Group and Bowls Club would like a wall-mounted noticeboard of similar style to the noticeboard recently installed at Sparrows Nest, but with double doors. The Project and Committee Clerk will send Cllr Breakspear the planning consent criteria the noticeboard will need to comply with. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to officers to progress with the Friends Group, on the basis there will be no cost to the Council, including obtaining any planning consents; seconded by Cllr Newsome; all in favour.

### **211. Options for repair/replacement of a vandalised basket swing at The Ness**

The Parks and Community Officer is exploring options to ensure the replacement swing is as robust as possible. Cllr Brooks suggested that a different type of swing could be considered, as one basket swing is still in place. It was agreed an update should be received at the next meeting of this Sub-Committee and the next AID Committee meeting.

### **212. A maximum budget of £200 for prickly planting at the Pakefield Street Toilets**

Cllr Newsome declared that he lives near to the Pakefield Street toilets. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the purchase of prickly planting, with the plants to be as established as possible, within a maximum budget of £300; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

### **213. The purchase of one bin for the Bentley Drive play area**

Cllr Pearce proposed progressing the purchase of a rustic style bin (as installed in Sparrows Nest), to be more in keeping with the street scene of the Bentley Drive entrance, within a maximum budget of £900, including installation onto a concrete pad; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour. Cllr Pitts noted the lack of dog waste bins and was advised by Cllr Brooks that dog waste is not separated from general waste. The Project and Committee Clerk advised that the Council had increased the provision of general waste bins in its parks. It is understood that waste disposed of in recycling bins in the town is not being separated from general waste.

### **214. An approach from the site representative at Normanston Allotments regarding removal of rubbish from the embankment bordering the Great Eastern Linear Park**

Cllr Pearce explained that the embankment borders the section of the Great Eastern Linear Park owned by East Suffolk Council. Asbestos removal has uncovered loose and embedded litter. The loose litter is on the allotments site. The site representative would like to liaise with the Council to get a vehicle onto the site to remove the litter. With regard to removal of the embedded litter, the land ownership boundary of the embankment will need to be determined and an approach to East Suffolk Council may be required. Cllr Youngman also noted there are several dead trees on the embankment. The Council has approved the installation of a fence and it was agreed this should not be progressed until the litter extraction has taken place. It was agreed the Parks and Community Officer should consider the approach and provide a recommendation to the AID Committee.

### **215. How to support the Bumblebee Conservation Trust's 'Bee the Change' campaign**

Cllr Brooks read out a recommendation from the Project and Committee Clerk, that the Town Council can support the campaign by promoting it on its website and social media,

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and to ensure that any planting plans include pollinator plants where possible. The Council can also sign the 'Bee the Change' pledge to receive free resources and inspiration. Cllr Pearce proposed supporting these recommendations as a starting point, and urged caution in encouraging bee nesting on any land close to residential properties. Cllr Breakspear advised that an insect friendly area had been created in Kensington Gardens, and will circulate images. It was suggested that nesting boxes for solitary bees could be considered and Cllr Pearce added this to his proposal. Cllr Youngman seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

**216. Date of the next meeting**

30 May 2023 19:00

**217. Items for the next Agenda and Close**

Cllr Youngman requested an update on the installation of the hopscotch pad at the Cotman Close play area and the games tables at various sites. Cllr Pearce requested a general update item on all of the play area sites.

*The members of the public left the meeting 19:57*

*Cllr Breakspear temporarily left the meeting 19:57*

Cllr Pearce proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

**218. Resolution to close the meeting to the public**

*Cllr Youngman temporarily left the meeting 19:58 and returned 19:58*

Cllr Breakspear returned 19:59

206. An update regarding tree works at Uplands Road North and on unregistered land – Initial legal advice had been received and was relayed. The Deputy Clerk had submitted a further enquiry for more detail. Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

208.6 Sparrows Nest – The Project and Committee Clerk provided an update and the Sub-Committee requested that a public update be given. The Project and Committee Clerk advised that the clock-face planting for the Sensory Garden would be due to start in June. The Sub-Committee requested a public update on this project also.

208.10 Cotman Close and 208.1 Normanston Park – The Project and Committee Clerk advised she was seeking quotations for the refurbishment of the Cotman Close play area and replacement piece of equipment and new surfacing for the Normanston Park play area. The Project and Committee Clerk will clarify the budget for the Pakefield Green (Wellington Road) play area with the Finance and Information Officer, which had been agreed as the next priority. The Britten Road play area had also been identified as a priority but had been deferred pending the results of a land survey. Cllr Pitts enquired whether any responses had been received from the football clubs regarding the refurbishment of the Normanston Park changing rooms. The Project and Committee Clerk had received one response, which would welcome an upgrade to the changing facilities, but suggested removal of the lockers as they are not well used. Cllr Brooks requested detail in the five year plans to track the decisions of the Council, including detail of when projects are agreed and scheduled.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:38.

Signed: .....

30 May 2023