

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Town Hall Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on 15 February 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger and Elise Youngman. Non-Councillor members Helen Johnson and Ben Porter (East Suffolk Council Officers)

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk), Chris Meek (Events and Administration Officer) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

Also in Attendance: Sheila MossKing (Project Manager)

Cllr Youngman nominated Cllr Brooks as acting Chair for the meeting; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

45. Welcome

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

46. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Barker and Patience with reasons provided.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

47. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

47.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from Councillors and members on items on the agenda – There were no declarations.

47.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – None written requests for dispensations had been received.

48. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 11 January 2024

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

49. 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.

50. Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report):

50.1. To note and consider income and expenditure, including:

50.2. To monitor the budget – The Project Manager noted expenditure to date was under £189,000. No queries were raised.

50.3. To consider any payments for approval – There were no payments to approve.

50.4. To consider any reporting and work required for the completion of the Towns Fund Agreement – Ben Porter reported there was no outstanding work and the first two payments for the Towns Fund and East Suffolk Council's (ESC) contribution were prepared.

51. To consider a report from the Project Manager, including progress with the following:

51.1. An update on the procurement of the Construction Design Manager – No further progress had been made on the appointment of a Construction Design Manager and the Project Manager would notify the Committee when procurement has progressed.

51.2. Interpretation and Activity Plan – Dates for activities had been provisionally scheduled so that when the Heritage Manager has been recruited after receiving Permission to

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Start (PTS) they will have projects to work on.

Updated general arrangement drawings from the Interpretation Designers had been shared with the Design Team and integration discussions were ongoing.

52. To note procurement and invitation to tender for Renovation, Conversion and Extension

It was agreed that the role should be named 'Main Building Contract'. A pre-qualification process for the tender had been considered but it was decided to go out to market in May 2024 with the tender package to mitigate any delays.

The Project Manager was due to attend the Meet the Buyer event hosted by ESC and with open days due to be hosted at the Town Hall this would prepare the market for the bidding process and maximise the responses.

53. To receive a list of planned actions from the Project Manager to be authorised for progression

The Project Manager reported that the key areas of focus for the next month included obtaining PTS from National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), continuation of support for the Public Works Loan process (which the Chair thanked those involved for their work on the application), resolving land ownership on the Town Hall site, finalising a full and comprehensive project plan the UK Power Networks (UKPN) substation.

Regarding the substation, ESC had decided to locate the substation west of the Town Hall and a meeting was scheduled for 26th February for ESC to progress this and confirm how the substation fits within their development plans. The next stage would be for the Design Team and ESC to create a planning application, submitted with designs demonstrating how the substation would be enclosed, alongside legal work which includes easements to be granted by ESC to UKPN to allow for 24/7 access to the substation.

First, LTC would need to place the order with UKPN, which requires a payment of £162,000 cost for the substation. The Project Manager clarified that if LTC decided to not progress with the substation, that money would be refunded save for £3,200, which covered the cost of design and legal.

The Committee noted that £162,000 was available and whilst the substation was part of the pre-approved works, Full Council would need to sanction the expenditure. Cllr Brooks proposed to recommend approval of the expenditure to Full Council; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

54. To receive an update on the boundary agreement and the process of registering with the Land Registry

NLHF were aware of the timescale for completion of legal work and would be satisfied with ESC and LTC agreeing the transfer and submitting the relevant signed documents, providing a letter from the Chief Executive of ESC is received stating that they agree to transfer the remainder of the titled deed and are aware that elements will be built on that land as part of the project.

Cllr Rappensberger entered the chamber at 10:54

55. To receive an update on the Heads of Terms for the Registrars

The Acting Clerk had appointed a surveyor for advice on the rental value, which needed to be added to the draft Heads of Terms in order to progress further.

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56. To consider future governance arrangements for this Committee

It was noted that the formation of a Sub-Committee had been approved by Full Council and a short notice agenda would be issued today for the Town Hall Project Tender Evaluation Sub-Committee to convene and decide on the appointment.

57. To consider any recommendations to Full Council

A recommendation to approve the expenditure for the UKPN substation.

58. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 14 March 2024 – 10:00

59. Items for the next agenda and close

60. 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:

60.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required – There were no resolutions.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:05

Signed:
14 March 2024