

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Sub Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on Friday 7 July 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Neil Coleby (Chair), Keith Patience (Deputy Chair), Andy Pearce and Elise Youngman

In Attendance: Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

Also in Attendance: Betty Jarrod (Chair of Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd - LDAL)

14. Welcome

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

15. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Brooks and Pitts with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

16. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

16.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – None were declared.

16.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted - No written requests for dispensations had been granted.

17. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 8 June 2023

Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of public meeting minutes and to defer approval of the confidential note; seconded by Cllr Patience; all in favour.

18. 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 members of the public were in attendance and no advance comments had been received.

19.2. To note communication from Highways Enforcement regarding the removal of vegetation overhanging the highway at the Sussex Road Allotments and any action being taken by the Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd – This item was brought forward to the beginning of the meeting. A site visit had been arranged with Suffolk Highways to resolve the boundary, which the LDAL Secretary and Sussex Road Allotments Site Representative would also attend. The Chair of LDAL had arranged for an arboriculturist to commence with the work if required.

19. Health and safety:

19.1 To consider matters arising from health and safety inspections of the Water Lane North and South and Normanston allotment sites – Quotes were pending on drainage works at Water Lane and the Chair of LDAL confirmed the litter had been removed from the site.

19.2 To note communication from Highways Enforcement regarding the removal of vegetation overhanging the highway at the Sussex Road Allotments and any action being taken by the Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd – This item was brought forward to the beginning of the meeting.

19.3 To consider water storage at allotment sites, including:

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19.3a. Kirkley Garden – The Chair of LDAL clarified this was for installation of water at the site as its size caused an issue of access to water. Cllr Pearce proposed officers investigate the associated costs and contact Essex and Suffolk Water for further information, with a report and recommendation to be provided at the next meeting if possible; seconded by Cllr Patience; all in favour.

20. To consider the Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd priorities and aspirations, and any support that may be required from Lowestoft Town Council, including the following:

20.1 Drainage at the Water Lane South site – This was addressed with item 19.1.

20.2 The removal of garden waste from the boundary fence at St Margaret’s allotments – The Chair of LDAL confirmed progress was ongoing. Concerns had been raised by Ormiston Denes Academy of young people entering their school grounds via the St Margaret’s allotments, whilst the allotments site had raised an issue of young people entering the allotments from the school grounds. Cllr Pearce proposed to schedule a stand-alone zoom meeting, subject to availability before the school holidays, between this Sub-Committee, the Chair of LDAL and a representative of Ormiston Denes Academy to discuss what actions can be taken, with the relevant decisions to be made by this Sub-Committee; Cllr Youngman seconded the proposal; all in favour. The Chair of LDAL noted the school representative may be available during the holiday to arrange the meeting.

20.3 Watering of Kirkley Gardens – This was addressed with item 19.3a.

21. To consider concerns raised by the Ormiston Denes Academy regarding their boundary with the allotments

This was addressed with item 20.2.

22. To receive an update on the renewal of the lease/management services agreement with Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd (some aspects may be confidential)

The original inherited lease was due to expire 30 June 2023 and it had been agreed for the new lease to increase the fees paid to LDAL by Lowestoft Town Council in 2023-2024, and continue to increase annually, to approximately £1,600 with an additional £1,000 to cover administration fees. An explicit clause was also requested to enable LDAL to donate any surplus produce to food banks for community use.

Whilst the lease was being prepared, officers would clarify if the newly agreed financial terms would be initiated when payments are due this year. The Project and Committee Clerk requested a confidential update for this item.

23. To consider any matters raised by the Chair of Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd (some aspects may be confidential)

The fencing for the Normanston Allotment site would be erected soon and a quote for the removal of embedded litter was pending, with the two works to be progressed separately. The Chair of LDAL had previously reported to East Suffolk Council an issue of the tree branches in the cemetery overhanging in the allotment plots at Kirkley Gardens. Officers would facilitate putting the Chair of LDAL in contact with the Arboricultural and Landscape Officer at East Suffolk Council to assist.

An issue on the Sussex Road Allotment site near the Yarmouth Road, adjacent to the A47, was raised regarding the overgrown hedgerow that was infringing on the adjacent cycle path of Yarmouth Road. It was suggested to query who is responsible for the management with the Arboricultural and Landscape Officer at East Suffolk Council.

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The Project and Committee Clerk notified the Sub-Committee of the receipt of a quote for the clearance of litter at the Normanston Allotments. The breakdown of costs consisted of £1,636 for removal and the provision of four skips at £277.20 each (which would be charged per skip if more were required), totalling £2,744.80. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the quote and for officers to instruct the works; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

24. Date of the next meeting

4 August 2023 – 10:00 AM.

Cllr Youngman provided apologies for the next meeting.

The scheduled meeting for 4 August 2023 was an extraordinary meeting and all Sub-Committee members need to notify the office of their availability for a permanent schedule, which would be reviewed at the August meeting.

25. Items for the next Agenda and Close

It was requested to roll-over the item 22 and for further items to be emailed into the office.

26. 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 to confidential session with the Chair of LDAL invited to the confidential session; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

Cllr Patience temporarily left the chamber at 10:40

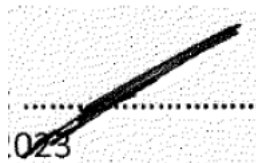
The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 10:41.

22. To receive an update on the renewal of the lease/management services agreement with Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd (some aspects may be confidential)

A confidential update regarding the lease was provided to the Sub-Committee.

Cllr Patience returned to the chamber at 10:42

The Chair closed the meeting at 10:49

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be '023', is written over a dotted grid background.

Signed: 023
4 August 2023