

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 5 December 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Colin Butler, Jen Jones, Christian Newsome, John Pitts and Elise Youngman

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

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

134. Welcome

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

135. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Paul Page and Andy Pearce, with reasons provided. Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

136. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Regarding item 145.2, Cllr Newsome advised he had been contacted by members of the public regarding the Fen Park toilets. Cllr Breakspear declared a non-registerable interest in items relating to Kensington Gardens.

137. The draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 7 November 2022

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

138. Public forum

The Project and Committee Clerk advised that two comments relating to item 144 had been received and circulated in advance. None of the members of the public in attendance wished to speak at this stage.

139. Monitoring expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

The budget monitoring spreadsheet had been circulated in advance and was noted.

140. Working with the Community Payback Scheme and identify potential projects in the Town Council's parks and open spaces

Representatives of the Community Payback Scheme were in attendance and delivered a presentation to the Committee. An explanation of the Scheme was given. This would provide an opportunity for the Council to identify projects with which it may be able to work with the Community Payback Scheme. This could include anything from ground clearance to construction work. The Council would be expected to provide welfare facilities, materials and specialist equipment where required. Examples were given of some of the projects already underway, including development of a tree nursery. Cllr Brooks was supportive of the initiative and suggested the development of community gardens as a collaborative project. Cllr Breakspear considered there could be an opportunity for the Scheme to work with Friends and Community Groups. Cllr Brooks proposed to support working with the Community Payback Scheme, to be progressed through officers; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

Three members of the public left the meeting 18:30

The Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:30

141. Parks and Open Spaces:

141.1. The draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 15 November 2022 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

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141.2. The following recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:

141.2a. Considering and progressing the proposals from the Most Easterly Community Gardening Group regarding the Town Green – Photographs supplied by the Most Easterly Community Gardening Group (MECGG) had been circulated to the Committee. Cllr Brooks noted that a more formal plan had not been provided and had concerns over the level of maintenance some aspects of the proposals may require. The Project and Committee Clerk advised that scale plans would be beneficial for the decision making process and to determine which aspects may require planning consent.

The Clerk returned 18:33

Cllr Breakspear advised the MECGG members in attendance that the Committee was not looking negatively upon the plans, but needed to ensure feasibility of them. Cllr Breakspear proposed asking officers to arrange a site visit. Cllr Pitts requested that the Group provide more specific plans to accompany this. Cllr Newsome seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

141.2b. Proposals to progress the installation of games tables – Cllr Youngman had made this suggestion with the intention of the games and activity tables being something which all generations could enjoy. The Project and Committee Clerk had prepared and circulated a meeting paper suggesting options for sites she had identified which would benefit from additional seating.

Three members of the public left the meeting 18:48

The Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:48 and returned 18:48

Cllr Brooks proposed asking the Project and Committee Clerk to continue exploring options; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

141.3. Feedback from the zoom meeting on 28 November 2022 regarding five year plans regarding the following: The remaining members of the public advised they were in attendance regarding a specific matter relating to the Gainsborough Drive Pond, and were informed by Cllr Breakspear this would be added to the next Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee agenda.

The remaining members of the public left the meeting 18:57

The Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:58

141.3a. Normanston Park – Cllr Pitts had undertaken a site visit with Cllr Brooks and had submitted written comments. Cllr Pitts considered that the changing facilities and toilets required improvement, but the Council should first consider the demand for changing facilities. Cllr Pitts will provide contact details to the Project and Committee Clerk of the football teams who currently play at Normanston Park, to seek their views.

The Clerk returned 18:59

Cllr Youngman suggested a further Zoom meeting to discuss the other sites. The Project and Committee Clerk is collating all comments and decisions on a spreadsheet, which will be circulated. Cllr Breakspear proposed adding an item to the next Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee agenda to continue the consideration of the five year plans; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

141.3b. Rosedale Park

141.3c. Kensington Gardens

141.3d. Gunton Community Park

141.3e. Great Eastern Linear Park

141.3f. Sparrows Nest

141.3g. Fen Park

141.3h. Belle Vue Park

141.3i. Denes Oval

141.3j. Cotman Close

141.3k. Britten Road Play Area

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- 141.3l. Clarkes Lane
- 141.3m. Pakefield Green Play Area – Cllr Butler advised the name of this site is causing confusion, as there is another site with the same name in a different location. The Project and Committee Clerk clarified that the land owned by the Town Council is the play area on the corner of Wellington Road and London Road South. Cllr Breakspear proposed referring to this land in future as Wellington Road, where possible; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Cllr Pitts advised he would review the five year plan for this site.
- 141.3n. The Ness
- 141.3o. Ness Point
- 141.3p. St Margaret’s Plain Play Area
- 141.3q. Bentley Drive Play Area
- 141.3r. Gainsborough Drive Pond
- 141.3s. North Denes
- 141.3t. Links Road Car Park
- 141.3u. Triangle Market
- 141.4. An approach from Get Suffolk Reading to install a permanent story trail in Sparrows Nest – The Project and Committee Clerk gave an overview of a similar project which had been completed in Peterborough. Cllr Brooks would not wish to see access to the content limited to mobile phones only. Cllr Jones explained that a story trail had been created for the town and was accessible via social media. Cllr Jones will send the details to officers to make contact with the developers for further information.
- 141.5. Agreeing the specifications for the Cotman Close and Normanston Park play area refurbishments – The Project and Committee Clerk advised the Committee of the Full Council decision to progress refurbishment of both the play areas within the current financial year, budget depending. Officers recommended the removal of all the equipment at the Cotman Close play area and some of the older equipment at the Normanston Park play area. The Clerk reminded the Committee of the confidential discussion at the last Full Council meeting regarding a transfer of land at Cotman Close back to East Suffolk Council. The Town Council will retain ownership of the play area itself. Cllr Brooks had spoken with users of the Cotman Close play area and suggested a natural theme, with goalposts if possible. Cllr Brooks proposed delegating authority to the Clerk to seek quotations for the refurbishment of both play areas; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
- 141.6. The scheduling of the Fen Park, Britten Road, Pakefield Green and Clarkes Lane play area refurbishments – The Project and Committee Clerk advised these will be scheduled for 2023 – 2024, subject to costs. Cllr Youngman proposed treating Britten Road and Pakefield Green (Wellington Road) as the priorities for 2023 – 2024, with Clarkes Lane and Fen Park to be deferred if necessary; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 141.7. The application of a Public Space Protection Order prohibiting dogs in play areas gated (or fitted with a grid) and fenced – Cllr Brooks advised this had been considered by the Planning Committee, which was supportive of the renewal of this Order. Cllr Butler proposed to support the views of the Planning Committee; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 141.8. The purchase of eight additional bins for parks – The Facilities Maintenance Officer and Parks and Community Officer had identified a requirement for additional bins at Rosedale Park, Gunton Community Park, Normanston Park and the Cotman Close and Thirlmere Walk play areas. Depending on the style of bin, the cost would range between £425 - £515, plus the installation costs. Cllr Brooks proposed delegating authority to the Clerk to purchase eight bins; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
- 141.9. Installing a composting area in Belle Vue Park within a maximum budget of £7,000 + VAT – The Facilities Maintenance Officer and Parks and Community Officer had made this suggestion. This Committee had previously identified the need for a composting

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area in the north of the town, with composting areas having been installed in Kensington Gardens and Fen Park. Cllr Breakspear proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to progress the installation of a composting area in Belle Vue Park, within a maximum budget of £7,000; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

- 141.10. Drainage work, repair and underpinning of the Sparrows Nest wall at the Yarmouth Road entrance within a maximum budget of £7,000 + VAT – Cllr Butler proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to progress this work, within a maximum budget of £7,000 plus VAT; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 141.11. Requests from the Kensington Gardens Bowls Club and the Friends of Kensington Gardens to install noticeboards in Kensington Gardens, including noting whether planning consent is required – Cllr Breakspear advised that the Friends of Kensington Gardens had applied for grant funding for a noticeboard from Adnams. The Friends of Kensington Gardens have not yet liaised with the Bowls Club. Officers have been advised of the criteria the noticeboard(s) would need to meet in order to not require planning consent. It was agreed to defer this item to February's meeting, pending consideration by Adnams of the grant funding application.
- 141.12. The need for repairs to the Kensington Gardens Boating Lake, prior to it being re-filled – The Parks and Community Officer will be seeking quotations for the repair work, but it may not be possible to undertake the repair work until the spring. Cllr Breakspear noted that it is expensive to refill the boating lake and the Friends of Kensington Gardens consider that the space could be better used.
- 141.13. Any methods of water conservation, including to receive health and safety advice – The Project and Committee Clerk had circulated advice from the Town Council's Health and Safety Consultant. Cllr Breakspear would like to see water butts progressed if the risks can be managed. The Project and Committee Clerk considered it may be difficult to secure and protect them. Cllr Brooks queried whether it would be possible to use water from natural springs in the Sparrows Nest area for irrigation. The Clerk advised that the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee had also been considering this, and the possibility of water bottle refill stations. The Clerk is drafting a Water Management Policy which will cover these topics. It was agreed that this should be further explored and brought back to the relevant Committees.

142. Events and Communications:

- 142.1. How to progress the installation of heritage plaques, particularly budget and permission requirements – The Communications Officer is progressing this with the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society. Securing landowner permission may be difficult where a building is in private ownership. Cllr Breakspear queried whether East Suffolk Council should be asked to be involved to share the cost or assist with seeking landowner permissions. The Clerk advised that partnership working could be explored where this may save time and costs long term. Cllr Brooks proposed asking the Communications Officer to approach the Heritage Action Zone with regard to partnership working, as it is likely that several plaques would be installed in the Heritage Action Zone areas; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
- 142.2. Arrangements for an opening event for the Sparrows Nest play area – The Communications Officer was making arrangements for the event, which would be taking place on a Saturday. In addition to item 141.4, Get Suffolk Reading had offered to provide a temporary reading trail for the opening event. Cllr Brooks would like to ensure the event remains under the control of the Town Council and asked officers to instead approach local theatres to give readings and/or short performances relevant to the Alice in Wonderland theme.

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143. Allotments

143.1. The draft minutes of the Allotments Sub-Committee meeting on 1 December 2022 – It was noted that the meeting had been cancelled. Cllr Breakspear proposed deferring all items under this heading to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

143.2. Any recommendations from the Allotments Sub-Committee on the following:

143.2a. Fencing at the Normanston site

143.2b. Fly tipping of tyres at various sites

143.2c. Proposed works at the Sussex Road site

143.2d. Planning/budgeting for capital investment in and maintenance of allotments, including potential expansion of the provision of allotments, community gardens and community orchards

143.2e. The renewal of the lease/management services agreement with the Lowestoft and District Allotment Association in 2023 (some aspects may be confidential)

143.3. An area of land by Fen Park allotments being used for parking (some aspects may be confidential)

144. The future development and use of the area beneath the Sails

A comfort break was taken 19:58 and the meeting resumed 20:04

At 20:04 Cllr Butler proposed to suspend Standing Order 3y for twenty minutes to enable the meeting to continue; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. With regard to public comments received about the future development of the area beneath the Sails, Cllr Brooks would not support the suggestion of turning it into an area for car parking. Cllr Youngman suggested flower beds and a seating area. The Clerk advised that work will continue to pursue what Full Council has decided.

145. Public Conveniences

145.1. The notes of the Toilet Strategy Working Group Meeting on 9 November 2022 – The notes will be circulated once they are available. A Councillor site visit had recently taken place to recently refurbished toilets in Gorleston and to the Triangle Market. Cllr Brooks understands that a specification will be put out to tender to turn the existing footprint of the Triangle Market toilets building into unisex toilets with baby changing facilities and one with disability access.

145.2. An update on the refurbishment of the Fen Park, Sparrows Nest and Triangle Market public toilets – This was covered with the previous item. The Facilities Maintenance Officer has undertaken site visits with potential contractors and estimates and quotations are pending. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next agenda.

146. An update from East Suffolk Council on the proposed new traffic management system between the High Street and Artillery Way, and any other plans to address traffic and parking issues in and around the Triangle Market site

There was no update.

147. An update from East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council on the proposed new bollard/gate to prevent traffic contravening the Traffic Regulation Order and cutting through the Triangle Market

There was no update.

148. Date of the next meeting

9 January 2023 18:00

149. Items for the next agenda and close

Committee members were requested to send any agenda item requests to officers by 20 December. There were no confidential items for consideration and the meeting was closed at

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
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20:12.

150. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

150.1. Any legal issues, including those above as required

Signed: 

9 January 2023