

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
19:00 on 5 February 2024

MINUTES

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

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

181. Welcome

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

182. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Coleby, Jones, Newsome, Rappensberger and Webb with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

183. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

183.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda – Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of the Gunton Residents Association. Cllr Breakspear declared he was Chair of the Friends of Kensington Gardens.

183.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

184. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 8 January 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Youngman; four votes in favour and one abstention. It was requested that any items from the January meeting to obtain quotes be on the March agenda to receive an update.

185. 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.

186. To monitor expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

There were no comments.

187. Quotations:

187.1. To consider the following quotations:

187.1a. Extension of the Normanston Park footpath to the entrance of the tennis courts, within a maximum budget of £5,000 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce who requested an amendment that it be allocated to the 2023-2024 Parks Development budget, which was accepted by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

187.1b. Block paving of a path in Kensington Gardens adjacent to the ammo bunker, within a maximum budget of £6,090 – The works were recommended by the grounds maintenance officers due to the potential health and safety risk of tree roots disturbing the path. Block paving was preferable to tarmac as it was easier to replace and more sustainable.

Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce who requested an amendment for grounds maintenance officers to advise why only a specific area had been selected for the works and the cost to extend the block paving to the

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remaining area, which could be considered by Full Council if the costs are received by 20th February 2024. Cllr Brooks accepted the amendment and a vote was held with all in favour.

187.2. To consider a recommendation to Finance and Governance regarding the following quotations:

187.2a. Refurbishment of the Kensington Gardens bridge, within a maximum budget £7,970 – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the cost up to £7,500 and request the Finance and Governance Committee to approve the remaining £470, with the funds to be allocated from the 2023-2024 Parks Development budget; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

188. Marina Theatre

188.1. To note receipt of correspondence under the Party Wall Act 1996 regarding works at The Marina Centre and the intention to carry out works that have the potential to affect The Marina Theatre – It was noted that the Marina Theatre Project Committee had agreed to withhold consent due to concerns of nesting kittiwakes and loss of fire escape.

189. Parks and Open Spaces:

189.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 16 January 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting.

189.2. To note estimated costs for block paving the entrance to Belle Vue Park and the requirement for the works contract to be advertised on Contracts Finder – It was noted that block paving work has been budgeted for all sites in 2024-2025. Cllr Pearce proposed it be recommended to Full Council to approve the works on the basis Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) had made contingent funding provision in 2024-2025. It was noted that £24,200 was earmarked in the existing Tarmac budget, therefore if Full Council approved this then the works would be funded from the 2023-2024 Tarmac budget, rather than delay works to the new financial year, furthermore Full Council would be asked to specify the budget allocation for any excess. Cllrs Brooks seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

189.3. To approve or delegate approval of a design for the Belle Vue Park entrance paving slab for the 150th anniversary – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce who requested an amendment that the progress of the design be delegated to officers, which was accepted by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

189.4. To consider proposals from the Lowestoft Town Cricket Club relating to the Denes Oval Pavilion and receive feedback from the related site visit – The Cricket Club were proposing for the front of the building to be refurbished, though full detailed plans had yet to be received. It was noted that with the intended full refurbishment works of the clubhouse any works may need to be removed, therefore the Committee needed to ascertain if the club would prefer to wait for the full refurbishment or if they feel the front works were required now. It was suggested to defer this item to the next meeting to discuss the refurbishment once more information has been received on the club's proposals and consider the timescales, with further discussions at Finance and Governance and Full Council in the interim.

189.5. To consider measures relating to tree roots on Kensington Gardens tennis courts and potential impact on refurbished courts – As part of the Lawn Tennis Association grant agreement, LTC have a responsibility to maintain the tennis courts, this included any damage caused by the tree roots, which contractors had recently identified had damaged the tennis courts. Cllr Pearce proposed to defer any decisions until after the site visit scheduled for 7th February, with a delegation to officers to act in accordance with advice received during the site visit in conjunction with members of this

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Committee, who would receive the information via email or a zoom call; seconded by Cllr Youngman, all in favour.

190. Events and Communications:

190.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 24 January 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting.

190.2. To consider the following recommendations from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee:

190.2a. Reallocation of budgetary responsibility for the Triangle Market events calendar from the Events budget/reserve to the Triangle Market budget/reserve, to support integrated and joined up planning, with an initial annual budget of £6,000 from 2024-2025 and officer delegation to expend from the Triangle Market Events budget in order to support forward planning of the Triangle Market events calendar – Cllr Pearce proposed to set up a Triangle Market Events budget line, under the Triangle Market budget, for the next financial year with £3,000 reallocated from the Events budget and another £3,000 from the Triangle Market Reserve, with a delegation to officers to plan the markets (both themed and regular) for the year; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. This budget would take effect from 1 April 2024 and the current arrangements would continue for the remainder of the 2023-2024 financial year.

191. Community Safety

191.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Community Safety Sub-Committee meeting on 24 January 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting. An item was requested for the next agenda to receive an update on the requested ‘go slow’ sign for Gainsborough Drive.

192. The Ness Working Group

192.1. To consider an Expression of Interest for a proposed mural for the sea wall – A proposal had been received from an individual artist for a mural on the sea wall to read ‘shallow end’ with the funding sourced by the applicant.

The discussions on who makes the funding application, and the subsequent VAT implications, could be considered later in the process.

Regarding the concern that the wording ‘shallow end’ could be viewed as designating the area for swimming, it was suggested to install signs to mitigate this risk.

Cllr Pearce proposed to provide the artist an Expression of Interest; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour. It would be made clear to the applicant that the Expression of Interest did not include permission to approach the Arts Council for funding. If the project develops further then officers would advise the applicant that the mural work would be subject to open procurement under the financial regulations. Once the idea has been further developed then Full Council would be provided with the artist’s proposal and the proposal for a public competition to decide on the direction for the sea wall mural.

193. To consider the feasibility of a Public Works Loan in 2024 for the refurbishment of the Denes Oval wall and essential clubhouse repairs as discussed by the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee

Direct funding would require an excess of £80,000 per year over three years at a time when LTC has a contingency risk with the Town Hall and Marina Theatre projects, and the clubhouse

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may reach end of life, whereas a Public Works Loan would allow the repayment cost to be spread over a longer period where the annual cost would be known and budgeted for at manageable level.

Cllr Pearce proposed to explore the possibility of a Public Works Loan and upon receipt of the condition survey of the Denes Oval clubhouse a costed a prioritised schedule of works for the clubhouse would be acquired, for which officers were asked to advise what stage the condition survey was at; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

194. To receive an update on the vandalised Euroscope at Ness Point

Cllr Pearce proposed to progress obtaining three quotes or make best effort to; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

195. To consider the establishment of a committee at the Whitton Community Hall

Cllr Pearce proposed a public meeting be arranged to gauge how the local people want their hall to be managed, if there is a desire to establish a community committee, and make residents aware that there is an opportunity to be more involved whilst it remains under LTC management; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

It was agreed for officers to contact regular users of the hall to receive their thoughts for improvements and notify them of the public meeting.

196. To note Council's corporate responsibilities relating to Legionella Management

As part of LTC's corporate responsibilities and the compliance checks by a third party, information was requested regarding the appointed Duty Holder, Responsible Person and Deputy Responsible Person.

Officers advised for LTC to be named the Duty Holder as the corporate body, the Town Clerk or Acting Town Clerk be the Responsible Person and the Deputy Town Clerk, until the Facilities Manager role is appointed, be the Deputy Responsible Person. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the recommendations from officers for post holders; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

197. To consider an approach from a member of the public for the Town Council to acquire a Punch and Judy Booth and the Laughing Sailor

The Committee reviewed the specification provided of the booth and noted that the woodworm would need to be treated before relocating it to LTC storage.

It was suggested to site the booth at Sparrows Nest for events and consider an approach to Movie Makers for storage.

Cllr Pearce proposed to consider acquiring the booth and Laughing Sailor and seek more information on the costs of woodworm treatment and the feasibility of finding operators for the booth before LTC commit to acquiring the assets; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour. This information would be brought to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee for further consideration.

198. To consider partnership working with East Suffolk Building Preservation Trust (confidential)

To be discussed in confidential session.

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199. Date of the next meeting

Monday 4 March 2024 – 19:00

200. Items for the next agenda and close

Any items should be sent to the office.

201. 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:

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

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 20:31

198. To consider partnership working with East Suffolk Building Preservation Trust (confidential)

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

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:45

Signed: 

4 March 2024