

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
12:30 on 11 September 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Alan Green (Chair), Andy Pearce, Graham Parker and Elise Youngman (Deputy Chair)

11. Welcome

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

12. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllr Begum with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

13. Declarations and dispensations

13.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda – Cllr E Youngman declared she works for the cleaning company who clean the Town Council's toilets and confirmed she does not clean the toilets owned by the Town Council.

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

14. 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 advanced comments had been received.

15. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 4 September 2023

The minutes were in progress and approval was deferred to the next meeting.

16. To review the 2023 – 2024 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential)

The Sub-Committee noted the standing request to officers to alert them of any budgets that may be challenged during the year.

17. To review the 2024 – 25 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed in confidential session.

18. Date of next meeting

18 September 2023 at 12:30

19. Items for the next agenda and close

Items should be sent to the office.

20. 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 and employment issues relating to the matters on this agenda.

Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

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The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 12:36

Waterways and Ponds - The Sub-Committee requested expenditure for the new pump at Sparrows Nest be reassigned from the general Repairs and Maintenance budget to the Waterways and Ponds Repairs and Maintenance budget line.

An item was requested for the next Parks and Open Spaces agenda to consider works for the Uplands Pond.

The current budget line of £25,750 for Fen Park may not be required in 2024-2025 and would be reviewed at a later meeting.

Once priorities on pond maintenance have been agreed then the £46,350 Repairs and Maintenance budget line can be split amongst the individual pond budget lines.

Play Areas - The next two refurbishment projects were Wellington Road and Britten Road, which the Sub-Committee would require quotes for to establish the budget requirements. Decisions from other Committees were also pending on the procurement of outdoor fitness equipment.

There was a discussion on applying for grants for different projects. Cllr Brooks proposed this Sub-Committee recommend the relevant committee pursue grant funding due to possible challenge to the budget; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. This would be raised at the next meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee.

It was agreed to provisionally increase Refurbishment budget line from £90,000 to £110,000.

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the chamber at 13:08

Play Areas - Repairs and Maintenance - The current budget of £106,914 would be reviewed at a later meeting.

Cllr Brooks returned to the chamber at 13:09

Some budget lines had no budget allocation as their purpose was to inform future budgets. It was agreed to mark these lines as inactive budgets whilst the Sub-Committee review them for removal this year.

Triangle Market - The Finance and Information Officer would review the utilities costs for all sites and provide feedback to the Sub-Committee.

Cllr E Youngman temporarily left the chamber at 13:22

The £20,600 Triangle Market Capital budget line would be reviewed at a later meeting once indicative costs for works at the site have been received.

Cllr E Youngman returned to the chamber at 13:23

Allotments - The Management Fee budget line was due to increase with new lease and would be inflation linked, alongside a budget line of £1,000 for an Administration Fee.

Cllr Barker temporarily left the chamber at 13:25

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A discussion would be required on what allowance should be made for RPI.

Cllr Barker returned to the chamber at 13:29

Cllr Parker left the chamber at 13:29

Due to the pending works, it was agreed to provisionally increase the Maintenance budget line from £27,293 to £30,000. The Finance and Information Officer would review updating the Management Fee budget line based on the RPI index being June 2023.

Normanston Park - Capital works on the toilets were expected in 2024, therefore it was suggested to net the income against that cost to reduce the precept. An item was requested for the next meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to receive an update on when the Lawn Tennis Association works are due to commence to inform the budget.

GELP - Once the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee have agreed the Five-Year Plans priorities for 2024-2025, then the costs and programme of works can be reflected in this budget.

Links Road Car Park – The budget was reviewed.

Denes Oval - The replacement nets were due to be discussed by the Finance and Governance Committee and would be budgeted on the basis of fully funding the replacement nets. It was agreed to review this budget again at the next meeting.

An item was requested for the next Assets, Inclusion and Development meeting to consider Denes Oval clubhouse works for 2025-2026 and for officers to discuss this with the Cricket Club, and this Sub-Committee to then discuss funding and timescales.

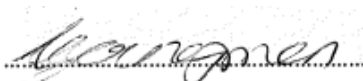
Belle Vue Park – The Thatching budget line figure needed to be in the budget and be precepted as the work would be due next year.

An item was requested for the next Parks and Open Spaces meeting to consider any miscellaneous works in preparation for the 150th anniversary of the park in 2024 and the required budget. Once agreed this can be revisited and the figures entered in the budget.

Sparrows Nest – The budget would need to consider the Five-Year Preventative Repairs Programme on Martello's for 2023-2024 and the amount required for Year 2 of the preventative repair works. An item was requested for the next Assets, Inclusion and Development meeting to receive an update on when the works are due to begin. Clarification was requested on whether the preventative repairs report will be kept, with inflation allowances to be adjusted, or if an updated preventative repairs report should be commissioned.

The Chair closed the meeting at 13:58

Signed:



2 October 2023