

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 20 May 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Janet Craig, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce and Deborah Ray (Deputy Chair). Non-Councillor members Rachel Bunn (via zoom) and John Sillett.

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

Public: One member of the public (in person).

167. Welcome

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

168. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Page with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

169. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

169.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from members on items on the Agenda – Cllrs Craig and Parker declared they were East Suffolk Council members. Cllrs Barker, Brooks and Ray declared they were members of Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Cllrs Barker and Ray declared they were Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representatives on the First Light Steering Group.

169.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

170. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 15 April 2024

Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce; six votes in favour and one abstention.

171. 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 on the webinar.

172. To monitor expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority

The expenditure for ledges on the Marina Theatre for the kittiwake ledges needed to be reallocated from the Marina Capital Reserve to the Climate Emergency Reserve. It was noted that the advance payment of the ecology report for the Marina Theatre was to be funded from the Climate and Ecological Emergency budget, as decided by Finance and Governance.

173. To consider any matters to raise with Cllr Rachel Smith-Lyte (Cabinet Member for the Environment) or Cllr Caroline Topping (East Suffolk Council Leader with responsibility for Parish Liaison) and to receive feedback on any matter previously raised:

It was noted that Cllr Rachel Smith-Lyte was no longer Cabinet Member for the Environment and the role was now held by Cllr Sally Noble. Cllr Ray proposed the item name be changed to 'appropriate cabinet member' as often matters raised are for the attention of other Cabinet members; seconded by Cllr Pearce; four votes in favour and three abstentions.

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- 173.1. To receive the notes of the meeting with East Suffolk Council on waste and recycling and consider ideas and actions Lowestoft Town Council can bring to the next meeting – Cllr Brooks had been unable to report bins that had been left out on the East Suffolk Council website and had not seen any fly-tipping stickers in areas of the town and asked this be followed-up. Cllr Pearce requested his query on this item be taken in confidential session.
- 173.2. To consider ideas for a meeting with East Suffolk Council on the ‘East Suffolk Is Amazing’ initiative and nominate members to attend – Cllr Pearce proposed to attend the meeting on the suggested date of 4th June, with the time to be agreed by officers, and send Cllrs Paul Page and Deborah Ray, if still members of the Committee after the Annual General Meeting, as the two representatives, with Cllr Sonia Barker appointed as the substitute; seconded by Mr Sillett; four votes in favour and three abstentions.

Initial ideas to bring to the meeting included Lowestoft regaining its blue flag status, improving planters in the town centre, increasing pollinator friendly plants and general greening of barren locations such as the harbour area.

174. To consider the following items:

- 174.1. To consider avenues of community engagement and relevant actions:
- 174.1a. Receive an update on the formation of a Lowestoft Pupils Climate Committee – Ms Bunn confirmed the committee was still in progress and East Coast College would attempt to engage with other schools individually and amalgamate their views and ideas as it was difficult to bring pupils from other schools to attend the committee meetings inside school hours.
- 174.1b. Plans for the ‘Big Green Weekend’ for 2024 – Ms Bunn informed the Committee that the East Coast College event had been moved from Friday 14th June to Thursday 13th June due to better engagement. No schools had been booked in yet, likely due to the event being held late in the academic year and it was suggested to hold the event in September in 2025. Cllr Pearce proposed to discuss next year’s event and timing once the date is announced, particularly with consideration of the involvement of schools, and for this year to follow Ms Bunn’s suggestions of collating the work of Lowestoft schools to display should a physical presence not be feasible; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.
- 174.1c. Receive an update on Plastic Free Communities – The Brownies, the Cadets and the Beavers were suggested to approach to join the Plastic Free Communities steering group. Cllr Ray had collated a list of companies to be approached and would discuss the formation of the steering group with officers.
- 174.1d. Discuss the recent Suffolk Wildlife Trust Eco-Event and LTC’s involvement and consider how LTC’s presence could be improved at different events – The event had been a success and there were discussions on how to engage the public further on what they can do to help the climate emergency, what actions Lowestoft Town Council were taking and encouraging more councillors to attend the events.

The stall could be improved with more visual aids and a display stand with information highlighting the scale of the climate emergency and LTC’s actions.

As there had been a successful presentation on the inhouse grounds maintenance at the Annual Assembly, Cllr Brooks proposed that presentation be converted into a portable format and displayed at an LTC stall during future events, such as the Big Green Weekend if feasible.

Officers were asked to check if the Movie Makers Theatre in Sparrows Nest could be used to display the presentation.

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Cllr Brooks proposed officers clarify the finalised plans of the Big Green Weekend and confirm if the plans have the scope to include the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Manager's presentation in a portable video form and screened in the Movie Makers Theatre, and if a stall can be put together, if there are enough materials and volunteers, which would include information from the Public Transport working group. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

- 174.1e. Discuss the upcoming First Light Festival in relation to the opportunities for community engagement – Officers were asked to request permission from First Light for LTC to have a presence at their event in Kensington Gardens, rather than submit a form for a stall, as the Town Council owned the land and had provided grant funding to the event. This stall would not be in an area that First Light intended to operate in. Cllrs Barker and Ray would be copied into this correspondence as the LTC representatives on the First Light Steering Group.
- 174.2. To consider the following in relation to the Earth Protector Town Status of Lowestoft Town Council and relevant actions:
- 174.2a. Appointment of a Town Council representative to the Earth Protector Town steering group – It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.
- 174.2b. Discuss which groups should be approached to join the steering group – It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting after Cllr Ray has progressed the steering group for the Plastic Free Communities to avoid duplication. The expressions of interest to join the group could be received at the LTC stall at the Big Green Weekend.
- 174.3. To consider the natural environment with regards to Lowestoft's parks and open spaces, and other ecology related matters, and relevant actions:
- 174.3a. To review Suffolk County Council's proposed weed treatments and the impact on the environment – This item was deferred to the next meeting and Cllr Brooks would circulate the article she read announcing Suffolk County Council's intention to use glyphosate.
- 174.4. To consider issues relating to waste and pollution and relevant actions:
- 174.4a. Receive an update on the bulky waste scheme – A meeting of the working group was due to be arranged to discuss recent issues and to review the scheme's achievements, potential improvements and how to maintain or increase the service through the budget should it be made a permanent service.

John Sillett temporarily left the chamber at 16:53

The scheme continues to be fully booked and has a six-week waiting time and officers had provided an announcement to explain the reasons for the delay.

John Sillett returned to the chamber at 16:55

The budget had been set, in anticipation that the trial would be successful, at the current budget plus an 8.5% increase. Full Council would need to decide if the project would be made permanent at its September 2024 meeting, then the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee would review the budget for 2025-2026 and whether the budget would be to accommodate the current capacity or increased to allow for more collections in the service.

A decision would need to be made on contacting the three surrounding councils to gauge their interest in buying into the scheme so collections could be taken on in

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their parishes. This would be discussed within the proposed forum of parish councils over the next six months and officers were asked to check if an approach has been made to set up the forum.

174.5. To consider public transport and alternative methods of travel and relevant actions:

174.5a. Receive an update on the Public Transport working group – This item was deferred as the working group was due to meet on 5th June.

175. To review the decisions on this agenda from the perspective of nature

It was agreed that the perspective of nature had been considered in all decisions.

176. Date of the next meeting

Monday 17th June 2024 15:30 – To be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting.

177. Items for the next agenda and close

An item was requested to receive an update from the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership.

178. 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

John Sillett left the chamber at 17:13

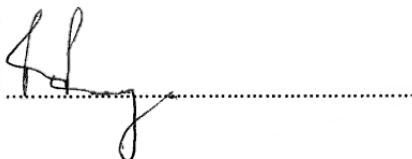
Cllr Barker proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 17:14

Cllr Parker left the chamber at 17:14

173.1 To receive the notes of the meeting with East Suffolk Council on waste and recycling and consider ideas and actions Lowestoft Town Council can bring to the next meeting – The confidential note was clarified and it was queried if East Suffolk Council would be able to provide insight on the sources of the fly tipping data.

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:27

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. J.', written over a horizontal dotted line.

Signed:

17 June 2024