

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10.00am on Wednesday 24 January 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Jen Jones, Bernie Rappensberger, Andy Pearce and Elise Youngman

In attendance: Christopher Meek (Events and Administration Officer) and Michael Winter (Communications Officer)

Public: No members of public were present.

88. Welcome

The fire evacuation and reporting at meetings protocols were read out and the meeting was welcomed.

89. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies absence.

Apologies with reasons were provided by Cllrs Brooks and Pitts. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance, Cllr Elise Youngman seconded, all in favour

90. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

90.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda.

Cllr Brooks and Barker confirmed they were volunteers at Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

90.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted.

There were none received.

91. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 22 December 2023

Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of minutes, Cllr Youngman seconded. Four members voted in favour with one abstention.

92. 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.

There were none.

93. Finance

a. To monitor expenditure by the sub-committee from its delegated budget.

Cllr Pearce has looked at latest budget and everything is as expected. With upcoming events, Cllr Pearce asked if Officers could update the sheet promptly to keep the budget up-to-date.

b. To consider maximum budget for Get Suffolk Reading event materials in Kensington Gardens.

Cllr Pearce asked if this was a regular event. Events and Administration Officer confirmed this was to re-stock resources at a story trail supported for Love Parks Week. Cllr Pearce proposed approval with a maximum budget of £100 budget seconded by Cllr Rappensberger, all in favour.

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94. Events

- a. To note any applications for events on Town Council owned land.
There were none.
- b. To receive a report of permissions granted for events on Town Council owned land.
There were none. Cllr Pearce asked if a formal event application and grant had been received by First Light Festival to date. Officers reported that this had not been received.
- c. To review and consider the following timetable of events:

Table 1 - Schedule of events

Date	Item
27 January 2024	<p>Holocaust Memorial Day</p> <p>The Events and Administration Officer gave update on main event on Saturday from 9:45am.</p> <p>The Events and Administration Officer mentioned that there will be a small ceremony at Kensington Gardens on Friday been organised by Red Oak Primary School, including speeches and artwork which will be displayed in the café. The committee gave thanks to the Friends Group and Grounds Team for maintaining gardens</p>
8 March 2024	<p>International Women’s Day</p> <p>Officers said communications about the event and its organisation is progressing well. The event will take place at Gunton Community Estate Hall on Friday 9am-4pm. Lots of organisations have expressed interest.</p>
28 April 2024	<p>Suffolk Wildlife Trust Eco Event</p> <p>Officers are still working on what will be involved and would like to know of any councillor support for the day. Cllr Pearce, Barker and Brooks would be happy to be in attendance.</p> <p>The Communications Officer gave the committee some ideas to consider as resources from Plastic Free Communities were already available. The Communications Officer suggested adapting Earth Protector Town information, and looking at ways to engage and create conversation. Cllr Pearce comment that he felt the event is there to create ongoing conversations and engagement. The Communications Officer comment that he would look to promote Green Weekender and use that to continue the conversation.</p>

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Date	Item
28 May 2024	<p>Belle Vue 150 Year Anniversary</p> <p>Cllr Pearce suggested looking at linking different events, including the unveiling of the witches' memorial and the presentation of freedom of town to the RNPSA.</p> <p>Cllr Barker suggested a photo exhibition. The Communications Officer confirmed we have received a lot of photos already for the information board so could include a call out for photos and memories to be collated. Cllr Pearce suggested that an invitation to the RNPSA was extended and that they were asked to submit photos/info on past parades and the unveiling of the memorial.</p>
6 June 2024	<p>80 D-Day Anniversary</p> <p>Events and Administration Officer updated the committee following Officers meeting with Lord Kitchener's. The timing of the event was decided to work with schools, with the event including 1940s-style music, a parade, and lighting of beacon to close the event at 9:15pm.</p> <p>The Events and Administration Officer confirmed there is no scope for a mini-Armed Forces Day on the Saturday due to lack of resources in the county. Cllr Pearce asked to clarify if this was financial. It was confirmed that this was to do with physical resources/equipment to make it an Armed Forces Day not being available.</p>
14-16 June 2024	<p>Big Green Weekender "Climate Event"</p> <p>The Events and Office Administrator confirmed that officers are due to meet with East Coast College to find out scope of Friday schools event. Planning for the event on the Saturday is going well with good support being engaged. The Kensington Gardens Café owners were also planning to put together a Marine Science activity for the Sunday</p>
22 June 2024	<p>First Light Festival</p> <p>Cllr Barker reported that the next steering group committee is on 8th February, Cllr Ray has also been voted on as a rep. Feedback will be given following this meeting</p>
3 August 2024	<p>Lowestoft Pride</p> <p>The Communications Officer reported that a callout poster had gone out. The Events and Office Administrator commented that collaborations with all organisations and local stakeholders was been sought alongside possible funding support. Cllr Pearce updated the committee that it was agreed at Full Council that officers have delegation to seek funding for one-off events, and can accept funding from outside organisations in collaboration with the relevant sub-committees</p>

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24 August 2024	<p>Rock N Roll Festival</p> <p>The Events and Office Administrator confirmed acts have been booked, sound tender will be going out shortly for this event and all events throughout the year. Some stallholders have already committed to the event, more will be added.</p>
September 2024	<p>Heritage Open Day</p> <p>Communications Officer confirmed they have had no update yet from the steering group. Cllr Pearce proposed for Communications Officer to be renewed as representative for 12-months, Cllr Elise Youngman seconded, all in favour.</p>
October 2024	<p>BHM 2024</p> <p>The Communications Officer commented that some thought may be needed for the age categories to help with judging the competition and how to better engage with the High Schools and College who have traditionally not engaged in the competition despite being invited to.</p> <p><i>JJ left meeting at 10:44</i></p> <p>Cllr Pearce proposed for communications to go out to the local High Schools and College to see what the barrier for competition entry is ahead of any further communications, alongside a delegation to staff to agree the age categories for the competition and to progress communications; seconded by Cllr Barker, all in favour.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce also proposed for the same prize money to be made available for 2024, seconded by Cllr Barker, all in favour.</p> <p><i>JJ returned 10:46</i></p> <p>The Events and Office Administrator asked if this could be used to cover hire of venue as a bigger venue was being looked at. Cllr Pearce asked if an initial budget could be given. The Events and Office Administrator suggested £1500 as an initial idea to cover costs. Cllr Pearce proposed to delegate the budget to staff, seconded by Cllr Barker, all in favour.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce comment that BHM may need to be considered as a major even and proposed recommendation to Budget and Loan to consider this; seconded by Cllr Barker, all in favour.</p>
10 November 2024	<p>Remembrance Service and Parade</p> <p>The Events and Office Administrator reported that he will liaise with East Suffolk Council to find out about works on Royal Plain as possible new location might be needed.</p>

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11 November 2024	Armistice Day This was discussed above.

95. Events for consideration and timetabling

- a. To receive an update on the memorial to Lowestoft boats and seafarers lost at sea.
EY left meeting at 10:52

The Events and Office Administrator gave an update on a meeting with the Port of Lowestoft Research Society (PLRS). It was reported that this meeting was helpful and productive for both parties and that the members were happy that this was progressing. It was suggested at the meeting that a working group involving other interested stakeholders should be set up with a maximum of two members from the Town Council involved.

Cllr Pearce proposed to agree with the suggestion to create a working group and the offer of membership with a “light-touch” on voting. It was also proposed for Cllr Pearce to be one of the members alongside the Events and Office Administrator. This was seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

- b. To receive an update on the Amy Denny and Rose Cullender memorial.
The Events and Officer Administrator suggested that this could be included in the Belle Vue 150th Anniversary celebrations with officers working with a contractor on lead times. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to staff to commission the memorial, using the agreed design and budget and working with suppliers on lead times to aim for unveiling the memorial as part of the Belle Vue anniversary. This was seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

- c. To consider the 60 years anniversary of Boston Pionair loss (6 February 2025)

Cllr Pearce commented that he had suggested this item following the popularity of the Guava memorial. It was reported that the Boston Pionair loss anniversary is popular on social media and that a similar plaque to the Guava memorial on the south pier might be well received. Cllr Pearce suggested that he would raise this with the South Pier Management Committee and bring it to the next meeting.

- d. To consider a civic event.

Cllr Barker commented that she attends lots of mayoral events outside of Lowestoft which have a civic input and celebrate a wide range of people in service. Cllr Pearce commented that there was always a question on when the event should be and that the event should be secular in nature. It was suggested that the inaugural event should be the opening of the Town Hall with an annual event falling on its anniversary.

JJ temporarily left meeting and returned at 11:04

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Cllr Rappensberger suggested that the event should be for Lowestoft and should involve a wide range of people. Cllr Pearce suggested that this should be put on the events agenda in March 2024 after the Town Hall's permission to start is agreed and that it should be factored in as a major event at September's Budget and Loan Sub-Committee.

- e. To note future Market events in 2024 and budget allocation.

Cllr Pearce suggested that it would make sense for a separate budget for markets and that an item had gone to the February Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee meeting for consideration with an annual budget of £6000. Cllr Pearce proposed to recommend to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee that, if they are happy to have Triangle Market events under the Triangle Market budget rather than the Events budget, that an initial annual budget of £6000 is set with a delegation to staff to enable future planning, and ask the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to consider transferring an agreed sum from the 2024/25 Events budget to the initial 2024/25 Triangle Market budget, seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

The Events and Office Administrator confirmed that there was currently no budget for the February Market and that a maximum of £750 was required. Cllr Pearce proposed to agree to a maximum budget of £750 for the February market with a delegation to staff; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

- f. To receive an update on National Armed Forces Day 2025 bid.

Cllr Barker reported that this was raised at the recent quarterly liaison with East Suffolk Council. The Events and Office Administrator reported that that he had had a conversation since then with East Suffolk Council who were discussing this with their Community and Leisure Team. It was noted that 2025 has two major military anniversaries in the year (VE and VJ day) but it wasn't know whether the Ministry of Defence will be continuing with supporting Armed Forces Day in 2025 due to this. Cllr Pearce asked to clarify if the National Event may not be going ahead. The Events and Office Administrator confirmed this was the case and noted that in one year no National Armed Forces event happened due to the quality of the applicants. Cllr Pearce suggested that to provisionally continue with the plans whilst awaiting further clarification. The Events and Office Administrator confirmed that he would keep the communications open as the bid cannot be completed on our own. Cllr Pearce confirmed that support for staff to write the bid can be accessed.

Cllr Pearce proposed for VE and VJ day events to be scheduled in the 2025/26 events calendar as it would be good to have a local commemoration, and for this to be added on the quarterly liaison agenda; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

96. Communications

- a. To receive an update on IT provision.

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The Communications Officer reported on a recent meeting with the new website providers. Notes on the meeting had been received and will be circulated to all councillors to comment on with the website designers looking to have a design together by the end of February/early March. This would be presented to all councillors.

Cllr Pearce agreed that other councillors should be invited to comment on the meeting notes but stressing that the time to make any comments is sooner rather than later, noting that design and content can be tweaked post-launch but that we are looking for comments on the functionality. Cllr Pearce also asked if the Communications Officer could give some thought to the web designers hosting the website in order to help with support.

- b. To note social media arrangements, including messaging and interactions.

The Communications Officer commented that this would now be a rolling item on the agenda to help separate comments from the wider IT provision for the Town Council. The Communications Officer commented that he was looking into a way of using Facebook messaging to help with members of the public reporting issues to the Council but highlighting the correct methods for reporting issues outside of office hours, making sure the correct safeguards are in place. Cllr Pearce commented that the social media messaging should not include the requirement for 24hr response cover.

Cllr Barker commented that thought needs to be given to communicating with people who have difficulty accessing digital communications. Cllr Pearce suggested that a liaison with neighbouring parishes to discuss mutual issues and cooperation which might create a joined up solution that might be more cost effective. Cllr Pearce also commented that a quarterly or six-monthly newsletter would be good to look at however thought is needed on how to distribute it.

The Communications Officer commented that a formal communications strategy might be worth thinking about to create the framework for communications.


97. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 28 February 2024 10:00am

98. Items for the next Agenda and Close.

Cllr Barker commented that items already mentioned in the meeting would be carried over, and include a corporate strategy for communications, a hard-copy newsletter and an inter-parish liaison.

99. 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.

Meeting closed at 11:50

Signed: 

28th February 2024