

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10.00am on Wednesday 25 September 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Bernie Rappensberger, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman.

In attendance: Christopher Meek (Events and Office Manager) and Michael Winter (Communications and IT Officer).

Public: No members of the public were present.

24. Welcome

The meeting was welcomed and the fire safety and reporting procedures were read out.

25. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies absence

Apologies with reasons were supplied were received by Cllr Jones. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Rappensberger, all in favour.

26. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

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

None were reported. It was agreed that any interested would be declared if necessary during the meeting.

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

None received.

27 To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 28 August 2024

Cllr Pearce clarified that, at item 18.1 in the draft minutes, Full Council had resolved for the Heritage Open Days budget to be reallocated and for the need for this decision to be clearer in the budget spreadsheet. Cllr Pearce proposed, subject to this amendment being made, for the minutes to be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Rappensberger. Six voted in favour with one abstention.

28 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.

It was reported that Norfolk and Waveney MIND had submitted a feedback report on their recent event. This would be considered at item 30.4 under the relevant event to review.

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29 Finance

- 29.1 To monitor expenditure by the sub-committee from its delegated budget.
The budget spreadsheet was reviewed and the budget position noted.

30 Events

- 30.1 To consider any applications for events on Town Council owned land.

The Events and Office Manager reported that an application from Suffolk County Council to use the Triangle Market had been received.

Cllr Pearce commented that he had first heard about this event as part of the publicity for Suffolk County Council's "We Are Listening" campaign and wanted to raise a concern about this event being given permission. Cllr Pearce commented that the Town Council has a policy that it is not political and that events of a political nature are usually rejected. This event had been given permission as it was seen as an engagement event. Cllr Pearce commented that he had asked for this event to be discussed at Full Council as a policy issue however, this was not possible to do at short notice. The Acting Town Clerk had emailed all members of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee for comment on the event. Cllr Pearce proposed that a polite notice to rescind the permission for the event should be sent to the organisers and that Full Council should review its policy on its definition of a political event.

The Events and Office Manager commented that this event application had passed all the usual due diligence checks, including risks assessments and public liability.

Cllr Brooks commented that, although the Town Council is not a political organisation, it has made decisions which are political in nature, such as the declaring of a Climate Emergency. Cllr Brooks commented that she believed a review of the policy on what organisations can and cannot do on Town Council-owned land and that SCC has a right to come to Lowestoft and hold engagement events so that residents can raise their concerns.

Cllr Webb commented that, as SCC would normally hold these events in the Britten Centre, it seemed that this scenario had come about by accident. Cllr Webb agreed to seconded Cllr Pearce's proposal as he saw no reason why this event should be granted permission as similar events had been rescinded in the past.

The Events and Office Manager clarified that the Town Council had never rescinded an event application before, but some events have been declined.

Cllr Barker commented that she did not support the proposal by Cllr Pearce as the events that had previously been declined were definitely political in nature. Cllr Barker commented that this was an engagement event for the public and that no complaints had been received from members of the public. Cllr Barker agreed that there was a blurred line between what could be seen as a political or non-political event so a review of the policy should take place however, rescinding the permission could reflect negatively on the Town Council.

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Cllr Brooks asked if officers could circulate the relevant policy for review.

Cllr Barker asked Cllrs Pearce and Webb if they were happy for the different parts of the proposal to be taken separately. Cllrs Pearce and Webb agreed.

For the proposal by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Webb to rescind the permissions for the event, five voted in favour, two against.

For the proposal by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Webb for Full Council to review the relevant policy, all voted in favour.

- 30.2 To receive a report of permissions granted for events on Town Council owned land.

The Events and Office Manager reported that permissions had been granted for the use of Whitton Hall for the Northern Parishes Community Meeting and the Triangle Market for a National Highways engagement event.

- 30.3 To consider equipment purchases for Sports Development Officer activities.

Cllr Brooks commented that this looked like a good use of Whitton Hall and of the Sports Development Officer's time. Cllr Barker agreed that this would be something positive for the area. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the recommendation from the officer's report and set a maximum budget of £750 from the main events budget for the purchase of the sports equipment. This was seconded by Cllr Webb. All in favour.

The Communications and IT Officer commented that these events would be taking place from mid-October.

- 30.4 To review and consider the following timetable of events:

Table 1 - Schedule of events

| Date | Item |
|----------------|---|
| 26 August 2024 | <p>Norfolk and Waveney Mind Kindness Festival</p> <p>Norfolk and Waveney MIND had submitted a report on the event from this year. Cllr Brooks commented that she thought the report was positive and was very fair in how MIND would like to take the event forward.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce commented that he was glad that MIND wanted to turn the event into an annual event and asked if the Budget and Loan Working Group could take this into consideration for the 2025/26 budget.</p> |

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| September 2024 | <p data-bbox="619 329 799 358">Tour of Britain</p> <p data-bbox="619 403 1437 504">Cllr Brooks commented that the window competition was a good idea and had some feedback on how it could be improved, including the ability to see the images of the windows when voting.</p> <p data-bbox="619 548 1433 712">The Events and Office Manager reported that all the events for the Tour of Britain had a quick turnaround. The Events and Office Manager also gave a report on the Bike Service and Cycle Challenge events that were also funded through the Tour of Britain grant and the positive response these had.</p> |
| September 2024 | <p data-bbox="619 725 863 754">Heritage Open Days</p> <p data-bbox="619 799 1430 1039">Cllr Brooks commented that this was one of the best markets the Town Council had organised. The Events and Office Manager commented that feedback from traders had been positive, noting that there was a desire for organising road closures, as had been organised for this event, for future themed markets. It was also reported that many traders would like the HODs market to become an annual event.</p> <p data-bbox="619 1084 1430 1283">Cllr Brooks asked when the new kiosks at the Triangle would be in use. The Events and Office Manager commented that the kiosks were used during the HODs market which helped to generate interest and publicity photos for the kiosks. The imminent opening of the Triangle Market toilets would also help with publicity and increasing the interest for traders to use the new kiosks.</p> |
| October 2024 | <p data-bbox="619 1296 938 1326">Black History Month 2024</p> <p data-bbox="619 1370 1445 1570">The Communications and IT Officer reported that the publicity has started to be rolled out and that various organisations had also been contacted who have provided local stories and inspiration for the competition. This would be used as part of the ongoing promotion. It was confirmed that the closing date for the competition was 25th October.</p> <p data-bbox="619 1615 1433 1680">The Events and Office Manager reported that officers were looking at a hospitality venue in the coming week for the awards ceremony.</p> <p data-bbox="619 1724 1442 1856">Cllr Pitts asked if the guests from previous years had been contacted and that he was happy to liaise with them. It was discussed about engraving the shields and that Cllr Pitts would pass on the details of who had carried out this work in the past.</p> |

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| 10 November 2024 | <p>Remembrance Service and Parade</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that he had spoken to relevant stakeholders. It was agreed that schools would be contacted to take part in Armistice Day rather than the Remembrance Sunday event in order to help streamline the Sunday service.</p> |
| 11 November 2024 | <p>Armistice Day</p> |
| 22 November 2024 | <p>Benjamin Britten Day</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager confirmed that he had contacted the Benjamin Britten school but had not had any response.</p> <p>Cllr Brooks commented that Benjamin Britten had a good connection with the sea so an event using this theme could reach a wider community. The Events and Office Manager said that, as this was a late addition to the Events Calendar with little lead-in time, this could be something to look at in the future with this year's event being smaller.</p> |
| 27 January 2025 | <p>Holocaust Memorial Day 2025 to include Stockholm Convention and Auschwitz Anniversary</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that arrangements were ongoing with contact being made with Norwich Synagogue and the HMD Trust sending resources once these had been finalised.</p> |

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| 2025 | <p data-bbox="619 329 794 360">Climate Event</p> <p data-bbox="619 405 1430 719">The Events and Office Manager reported that he was aware of discussions that had taken place at a recent Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee meeting on the arrangements for a Climate Event with a recommendation for the event to take place on the same day as First Light Festival. The Events and Office Manager wanted to have clarification on what was expected for the event as space in Kensington Gardens may be limited and any publicity or messaging around the Climate Event would be lost amongst the identity of the First Light Festival.</p> <p data-bbox="619 763 1437 931">Cllr Brooks commented that the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee had discussed the advantages of the event being linked to the First Light Festival. Cllr Pearce commented that the advantage would be the footfall of First Light Festival but wanted to know what Officers recommended.</p> <p data-bbox="619 976 1437 1144">The Events and Office Manager commented that the Officer recommendation was for the event to take place on another poignant environmental date earlier in the year so that the focus of the event was not competing with another major event in the town. It was commented that World Earth Day was in April.</p> <p data-bbox="619 1189 1437 1290">Cllr Brooks commented that she didn't want to lose the Climate Event from the event calendar but that the Town Council could have an environmental stand at First Light.</p> <p data-bbox="619 1335 1437 1570">Cllr Pearce proposed for the event to go back to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee for the members to review the Officer meeting paper and for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee to factor in what arrangements First Light Festival may be making for using Kensington Gardens, and to think about the potential of holding a separate event. This was seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.</p> |
| 6 February 2025 | <p data-bbox="619 1581 863 1612">Boston Pionair Loss</p> <p data-bbox="619 1657 1437 1892">Cllr Pearce reported that permission had been granted by ABP for the plaque to be installed at the South Pier, and an accompanying unveiling event, providing that the plaque was in keeping with the existing memorial plaques. An image of the Boston Pionair had been sourced to use on the plaque with Cllr Pearce noting an action to send the text for the plaque to Officers so that the plaque could be commissioned.</p> |

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| 8 March 2025 | <p>International Women's Day</p> <p>Cllr Brooks commented that she was conscious of the rising levels of domestic violence and wondered if it was possible to work with the local domestic violence groups to raise awareness.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce commented that he would like to see a mix of in-person activities across multiple sites and online coverage.</p> <p>Cllr Brooks asked if it would be possible to commission or locate a theatre group who might put on a poignant drama performance which could be used as a fundraiser for the domestic violence groups. It was asked if local theatre groups could be contacted who might also have details of touring independents who may be able to visit Lowestoft.</p> |
| 8 May 2025 | <p>VE 2025</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager commented that national guidance had been received with the beacon lighting taking place at 9:30pm. It was reported that Lord Kitchener's and the RBL were still in discussions around holding a local Armed Forces Day event in 2025 following the announcement that the national event would not be taking place.</p> |
| August 2025 | <p>Lowestoft Pride</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that, given the recent announcement of a consultation by an external body on holding a Lowestoft Carnival, it would be wise to wait to see what the outcome of that was before committing to a date. Other local Pride organisers were also being contacted to ensure that there were no date clashes.</p> |
| 15 August 2025 | <p>VJ 2025</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that the RBL had communicated that this would be their main event. It was commented that the 75th anniversary of VJ Day included the planting of a memorial tree in Kensington Gardens so a similar, symbolic action could be organised.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce commented that a theme around the outbreak of peace would be suitable.</p> |
| 2026 | <p>Civic Event</p> <p>It was noted that this was an ongoing event to tie in with the opening of the Town Hall.</p> |

31 Communications

31.1 To consider Lowestoft Town Council advertising for future events.

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The Communications and IT Officer reported that he was having initial discussions and meetings with local advertisers to find out pricings before compiling a budget.

Cllr Brooks commented that she would like to see large advertising for the Town Council. The Communications and IT Officer commented that this was something that was being looked into.

31.2 To receive the Mayor's report on the town twinning linked visit to Geesthact and consider any recommendations.

Cllr Pearce commented that the proposal on the town twinning was not something that the sub-committee could agree to and asked if the report could be acknowledged and that the recommendation would be taken to the relevant authority. It was asked if officers could look into the protocols and process for agreeing to a town twinning and that this be brought back to the sub-committee.

32 Date of next meeting – Wednesday 23 October 2024 10:00am

33 Items for the next Agenda and Close.

34 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 11:59

Signed 

23 October 2024