

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
19:00 on 17 January 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks (Chair), Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Elise Youngman (Deputy Chair)

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

Public: One member of the public was in attendance (in person)

148. Welcome

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

149. Approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Page with reasons provided.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of apologies; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

Cllr Craig was absent with no apologies provided.

150. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

150.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda.

Cllr Pearce declared a non-registerable interest on matters relating to Gunton Ward.

Cllr Breakspear declared a non-registerable interest on matters relating to Kensington Gardens.

150.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted

None were received.

151. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 13 December 2022

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the draft minutes; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

152. 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.

Item 154.23 was brought forward as the second item of the meeting and it was agreed to allow contributions from the member of the public.

153. To monitor expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget

It was noted the memorial benches were due to be reimbursed. It was noted the underspend in the Parks and Open Spaces and Horticulture budgets were allowed for in the 2023-2024 budget and so were not available to spend in 2022-2023.

154.23 Land at Upland's Road North (including pond) – The member of the public asked for an update regarding the area of land where trees were overhanging on the path and highway and the Chair allowed for this discussion to be included under the item. It was noted the land was not under the ownership of Lowestoft Town Council or East Suffolk Council and might be unregistered. The Project and Committee Clerk (PCC) had contacted Suffolk Highways to ask, if the land was unregistered, if Suffolk Highways would carry out

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works due to the public safety concern. Suffolk Highways had confirmed trees could overhang the highway as long as it conformed to the highways operational plan, they requested Highways Record to confirm the land ownership and in the interim the Highways Assessment Officers would continue to monitor the situation.

Cllr Pearce proposed, subject to quotes received, if the land is unregistered then the Town Council approach Suffolk Highways, copying in East Suffolk Planning if necessary, and ask if they would provide a quote and cut back the trees if Lowestoft Town Council paid for the work. Cllr Breakspear requested an amendment to the proposal that the correspondence acknowledges the health and safety issue presented by the overhanging trees which Cllr Pearce accepted. Cllr Breakspear seconded the proposal. All Councillors voted in favour. It was suggested the East Suffolk and Suffolk County Ward Councillors also be copied into the communication for information only.

154. To consider review and implementation of the five year plans, including planting plans, in line with budgeting, noting Councillors' comments and feedback from a recent zoom meeting, regarding the following:

- 154.1 Normanston Park
- 154.2 Rosedale Park
- 154.3 Kensington Gardens
- 154.4 Gunton Community Park
- 154.5 Great Eastern Linear Park
- 154.6 Sparrows Nest
- 154.7 Fen Park
- 154.8 Belle Vue Park
- 154.9 Denes Oval
- 154.10 Cotman Close
- 154.11 Britten Road Play Area
- 154.12 Clarkes Lane
- 154.13 Pakefield Green Play Area (Wellington Road)
- 154.14 The Ness
- 154.15 Ness Point
- 154.16 St Margaret's Plain Play Area
- 154.17 Bentley Drive Play Area
- 154.18 Gainsborough Drive Pond
- 154.19 North Denes (and to consider the management of the open space)
- 154.20 Links Road Car Park
- 154.21 Triangle Market
- 154.22 Town Green
- 154.23 Land at Upland's Road North (including pond) – This item was brought forward as the second item of the meeting and the member of the public was invited to make comment.

It was requested an item be on the agenda for the Personnel Committee meeting in February regarding the office reception desk after working hours.

The member of the public left the chamber at 19:39

Cllr Pitts temporarily left the chamber at 19:39

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It was requested the PCC check with the Facilities Maintenance Officer and the Parks and Community Officer what clearance work had been completed on the Upland's Road North pond, with the possibility of seeking advice on whether the pond is in need of dredging. It was agreed for all Councillors to attend an informal visit to Upland's Road North.

Cllr Pitts returned to the chamber at 19:41

Cllr Brooks proposed to continue discussions of the five year plans on standalone zoom meetings and once finalised the plans would be brought back to the Sub-Committee for approval; seconded by Cllr Newsome; all in favour.

The PCC was engaging the football clubs with a survey to determine how often the changing room facilities at Normanston Park were used and would request an update.

155. To consider the following regarding Sparrows Nest:

155.1 Development of a Winter Garden – It was suggested Pathways Care Farm be engaged for both the winter and sensory gardens for complementary development. It was noted Pathways Care Farm and the current grounds maintenance team could assist with soil testing and knowledge of appropriate plants for winter. Cllr Pearce proposed the development of the winter and sensory garden, and any possible complementary developments in Belle Vue Park, be progressed under delegation to officers, in conjunction with this Sub-Committee, to obtain quotes and compile information and to schedule standalone zoom calls between Sub-Committee meetings for updates. Seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

155.2 To receive an update on the sensory garden – This item was discussed with 155.1. The PCC provided an update and noted Pathways Care Farm had ordered plants for the clock face, therefore the PCC had requested orders be sent to the officers first in order to track the expenditure. Pathways Care Farm were reviewing plants for the stone wall and have liaised with a tree surgeon regarding three non-indigenous trees that might be diseased, with the prospect of the timber being re-used for archways (which would require planning permission). Pathways Care Farm have asked the tree surgeon to contact officers with suggestions and quotes for replacement trees.

It was noted the steps leading to the raised banks that presented an access issue could be resolved with a concrete ramp built into the steps. It was suggested the Facilities Maintenance Officer and Parks and Community Officer examine the viability of this and provide feedback to the next meeting in February.

156. To consider the following regarding The Ness:

156.1 Planting, including a coastal garden – A map of the contaminated areas was received, which identified the boundaries of the contaminated areas, and a risk assessment had identified where planting is viable or restricted. It was noted areas where planting is limited could be beautified. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to officers to develop concepts in conjunction with this Sub-Committee and schedule a standalone zoom meeting to discuss specific details and what to progress; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

156.2 Advice from an Arborist regarding the trees, and to consider next steps – The Arborist noted some of the trees were not salvageable and to revisit in spring. The Sub-Committee would need to consider whether to replace the dead trees or focus on caring for the trees that are still viable. Cllr Pearce proposed to ask Suffolk wildlife

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Trust for an expert opinion on the viability of the trees, what can be done for the salvageable trees, what do to with any that are un-salvageable and whether they should be replaced, and if the habitat is not conducive to healthy growth then what would they suggested for alternative planting. Seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

157. To consider options for compiling a Tree Inventory

It was noted the officers were progressing this. The 2023-2024 budget allowed £10,000 for tree planting, £12,000 for a tree audit to identify and document the tree portfolio and £6,000 a year for one routine inspection; two routine works; and three reactive works. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to officers to progress and determine what work could be done within the 2023-2024 budget; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

158. Date of the next meeting

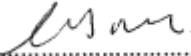
21 February 2023 19:00

159. Items for the next Agenda and Close

160. 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

No resolutions.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:24

Signed:
21 February 2023