

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Implementation Committee

Riverside, Waveney District Council Offices, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft NR33 0EQ
17:00 on 5 February 2018

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Allyson Barron, Neil Coleby, Peter Collecott (left 17:34), Peter Knight (Chair), Keith Patience (left 17:59), Ian Graham and Sue Barnard (arrived 17:06)

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Town Clerk), Mark Speller (Facilities and Contracts Manager) Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk), Tony Rudd (Waveney District Council Estates Team)

Public: None present.

176. Welcome

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

177. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ford, Taylor and Houghton.

178. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

None.

179. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes:

22 January 2018 – accepted as accurate with one abstention.

180. Public Forum

None present.

181. Draft lease for community halls

Tony Rudd from Waveney District Council led a discussion and welcomed comments and queries regarding the Heads of Terms Agreement before this is presented to the occupants for consideration.

Cllr Barnard arrived 17:06

It was agreed that Mark Speller would accompany Mr Rudd to the meeting with the occupants. A query was raised regarding whether noticeboards would be mentioned in the Agreement. Mr Rudd believed this had already been covered but will include this if not. It was agreed to accept the Heads of Terms Agreement in its current form and begin negotiations with the tenant. Next agenda.

A discussion was held regarding an area of land on Hamilton Road with the potential to be used as a car park. It has been confirmed that this land belongs to Waveney District Council with a tenant in place. Lowestoft Town Council might have an interest in this land due to its proximity to Hamilton House. The Council would need to decide whether it would like to pursue this and approach the tenant. It was said that it would be beneficial to have a car park near the office and it could potentially provide income. The tenant would need to obtain permission from Waveney District Council to sub-let.

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Next agenda.

Mr Rudd left the meeting at 17:13

182. Progress with community engagement

182.1 Survey (including Survey Monkey) – A conversation has been held with the Lowestoft Journal today, regarding an insert for the Waveney Advertiser.

Approval has now been gained for the Survey Monkey payment and the Council Tax leaflet has been completed and will be submitted by tomorrow. A year's advertising is also in place with the Lowestoft Bugle. The Clerk is progressing the insert with Cllrs Graham, Begum and Lang and another meeting of the Community Survey Group will be held shortly.

182.2 Promotion leaflets and advertising – It was noted that the budget for materials for Lowestoft Town Council public events (including gazebo, banners and flags) had been increased, and Sarah Foote would be looking into this.

183. Draft volunteer and 'friends of' protocol

This was praised as a very comprehensive document.

A query was raised over what would happen if a 'friends of' group informed Lowestoft Town Council that they did not wish to adhere to this protocol. It was recommended that the advice given is that 'friends of' groups can be set up independently, but they would not have support from the Council or the permission to use the Council's branding if they do not adopt this policy. Also, for any work to be completed on land owned by Lowestoft Town Council, or which required the Council's active involvement (such as a grant, insurance or assistance from Norse), this protocol would have to be implemented.

It was noted that Norse have advised they would like to be involved and assist groups.

It was agreed to adopt the protocol, and to request that Mr Speller review the document.

Proposed by Cllr Barron; seconded by Cllr Patience, all in favour. Next agenda.

184. Town Council noticeboards and signs

Mr Speller will be working with Ms Foote regarding the wording on the signs, the design manufacturer and pricing. Mr Speller is currently reviewing what has already been proposed. It was confirmed that fees and charges for leisure facilities would be incorporated into relevant signs. A meeting is being held with Norse on Thursday (8th February).

A query was raised over whether the noticeboard situated at the Triangle Market is on the highway, as this could present issues regarding siting and ownership. It was also queried as to whether Lowestoft Town Council requires new signs, or whether stickers could be used instead. It was noted that some signs just require a change of logo, so this option could be considered to save costs, whilst some are in a state of disrepair and require replacement.

Cllr Collecott left the meeting at 17:34 and gave his apologies for tomorrow's Full Council meeting

185. Town Council office

185.1 Current licence to occupy – The temporary Licence to Occupy has been signed. For occupation of the first floor an extraordinary meeting might have to be called.

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- 185.2 Progress with plans and lease - The plans are mostly finalised. The costings are now required. Mr Speller showed the Committee the proposed layout of the office. It was noted that the cost of the design would be incorporated into the lease arrangement. A query was raised regarding the number of smaller offices which were included in the plan, and whether these were necessary. It was noted that these could allow for a change of use in the future, they could be sub-let to provide income, and they could be used for Councillor surgery sessions. Mr Speller is obtaining and comparing quotes for office furniture.
- 185.3 Office equipment list – This was already covered in the discussion around item 185.2.

186. Current position on condition surveys:

- 186.1 Town Hall – Mr Speller advised that the current condition survey was completed by a Chartered Surveyor and an assessment of additional survey needs will be conducted. Mr Speller will be putting together plans for all of the assets with regard to future maintenance. Mr Speller will be making a visit to the Town Hall, and Cllrs Knight and Coleby have offered to accompany him. Some concerns had been raised regarding water ingress, particularly via the stained glass window, and blocked guttering. Gutter clearance would be included in the future maintenance plan for the Town Hall. A query was also raised regarding the possible presence of asbestos. Mr Speller advised that inspections have been carried out at six monthly intervals and another survey was therefore not required at this stage, and there has been no change of use. With regard to the boiler, this has been gas-safe certified but is now out of use. This would need to be looked at should a boiler be required in the future.

Cllr Patience left the meeting at 17:59

A discussion was held regarding the Heritage Lottery bid. A tailored document would now need to be submitted by the Clerk. It was suggested that a heritage survey could be arranged to coincide with the recommendations, but a discussion was held as to whether this would be required in addition to the condition survey which has already been completed, and what further information would be gained from it. Mr Speller will investigate and will query how the current condition survey was compiled, including whether it was based on the previous survey and updated. He will also ensure final surveys are located for each of the assets and will circulate to the Committee.

- 186.2 Marina Theatre – No further update at present but a meeting regarding the survey is being held shortly.
- 186.3 WDC surveys – No further points were raised in addition to the discussion of item 186.1.

187. Update and next steps for the following assets:

- 187.1 Allotments - A meeting of the Allotments Sub-Committee had been held and a report of action points had been compiled, which should be available for the next meeting of the Implementation Committee. A policy was also being developed in line with national guidelines to address any conflict between allotment groups and associations. The Sub-Committee will be meeting again before the next Implementation Committee. Next agenda.

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- It was noted that the Council would need to consider purchasing more land if there is a considerable unmet demand for allotments.
- 187.2 CCTV – A meeting is being held shortly for the purpose of obtaining the views of the public. A proposal can then be drawn up and presented at the next Implementation Committee meeting.
- It was also noted that Norse have questioned the budget provided to Lowestoft Town Council by Waveney District Council, claiming that the lower figure was incorrect. If this is the case this would leave a shortfall which would need to be considered.
- With regard to publicising the event, advertisements have been forwarded to the local press and radio station, and it was suggested that the Kirkley Business Association should be informed, as they would have contact details for many of the businesses which could wish to have involvement with the meeting. Cllr Knight also advised that he could contact the High Street market traders.
- 187.3 Community halls – No further comments were raised in addition to discussions already held.
- 187.4 East of England Park – A sea wall has been included in the Order but Lowestoft Town Council cannot lawfully maintain sea defences.
- It was noted that Norse are treating Japanese Knotweed discovered at the Great Eastern Linear Park.
- 187.5 The Lowestoft Collection – The valuation has been received today, and will be compared to the previous valuation; this should provide a definitive list of what is known to be in Lowestoft Town Council's possession. Some of the items have been marked as unseen. These can be checked against the Reorganisation Order but the collection was not seen when it was handed across to Lowestoft Town Council.
- A meeting is being held on 14th February with representatives from the Lowestoft Museum to discuss the collection and Lowestoft Town Council's agreement with them regarding storage of the collection. Cllrs Graham and Coleby have agreed to accompany the Clerk to the meeting.
- 187.6 Marina Theatre – A meeting is being held between Mr Speller, Cllrs Graham and Coleby and Waveney District Council on 22 February regarding progress with the management agreement.
- 187.7 North Denes including asset records – A suggestion was raised about the possibility of situating picnic benches in the area, and a discussion was held around possible play equipment, and what would offer the best value for money. It was noted that if they were memorial benches they would not have to be funded. Mr Speller has agreed to research what options would be available.
- It was also noted that Sentinel needed to be contacted regarding work at Normanston, Stoven and Rosedale parks.
- 187.8 Open Spaces and parks – Cllr Coleby has circulated an Open Spaces Needs Assessment to the committee and this will be on the next agenda. The asset plan for Gainsborough Drive has also been circulated. Mr Speller advised that the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board can complete a survey of the pond, which will highlight what action needs to be taken now, as well as providing a maintenance regime for the future. This could also be applied to all ponds in Lowestoft Town Council's ownership; Mr Speller will make enquiries regarding cost and the services available.
- 187.9 Town Hall and Heritage Action Zone – The Clerk and Mr Speller are exploring funding from Waveney District Council with regard to the Denes Oval perimeter walls.

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187.10 Triangle Market – NABMA will be providing a presentation to the Implementation Committee and are able to provide a survey and proposals as part of a membership service. Cllr Coleby proposed granting authorisation for the Clerk to progress this with NABMA; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour. Mr Speller will discuss ownership of the Triangle Market noticeboard with the Waveney District Council Asset Management Team.

187.11 Other assets and asset plans – Cllr Coleby proposed that the asset plan for Gainsborough Drive be adopted in its current form, which can then be amended following the survey from the Drainage Board. Seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour. Mr Speller has requested CAD plans of all Lowestoft Town Council's assets for future reference. It was noted that paper and electronic copies of all would be beneficial.

188. Progress with grounds management contract arrangements

No further comments were made in addition to the discussions already held.

189. Budget and income for assets

Mr Speller is currently completing an analysis of all the assets.

190. Events on Town Council land

Preparations are ongoing for the Lowestoft Half Marathon, GRITFEST and the marking of the World War I centenary. It was suggested that a sub-committee could be set up to plan the centenary event, with assistance from Ms Foote, who is attending a meeting on the subject tonight with Waveney District Council.

191. Progress with policy for considering request for Freedom of the Town

It was recommended that a sub-committee be formed to analyse the draft protocol, once it has been created. This will detail how nominations can be submitted and the procedure for bestowing Freedom of the Town. It was suggested that this be an occasional event, and could be awarded at the Annual Meeting of the Town.

192. Threatened closure of Lowestoft Records Office and any action by Lowestoft Town Council

It was suggested that representatives from Lowestoft Town Council visit the Records Office to see if there are any items of significance to the Council. It was also recommended that Tony Goldson and Peter Aldous MP be invited. Cllr Barnard proposes Lowestoft Town Council Visit to the Records Office, accompanied by Mr Goldson and Mr Aldous; seconded by Cllr Graham; all in favour.

A recommendation has been made by the Implementation Committee that a statement on behalf of Lowestoft Town Council be issued to state the Council was disappointed to have not been consulted on a historical decision involving Lowestoft, but pleased the decision has been placed on hold and was looking forward to be involved in the future.

A discussion was held regarding office furniture. Mr Speller spoke to the Committee about a microphone system he is proposing for the members' room, the details of which will be circulated. Images were also viewed of potential sofas and seating, which could incorporate the colour scheme of the Council's logo. It was noted that bistro-style chairs should not have protruding legs which could present a possible trip hazard. It was also noted the fabric of the seating would be bleach cleanable.

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Discussions had been held with staff regarding preferences for desks, including a potential height-adjustable option for health and safety reasons.

Images were shown for an option for office storage, which was a multi-functional unit incorporating document filing options as well.

Images of all the proposed options for furniture would be circulated.

The Chair expressed thanks to Mr Speller for the thorough and detailed plans.

A draft protocol has been created which details how the public, staff and Councillors should be reporting issues. It was noted that a generic email address could be used or created, rather than contacting an individual, which would cover staff holidays or absences. This would be noted and Mr Speller will circulate a draft protocol in time for the next meeting of the Implementation Committee.

It was noted that the bin storage area at Arnolds Bequest had been improved, but not yet painted or stained.

A Notice of Common Trespass has been issued with regard to a caravan on Lowestoft Town Council land and staff have been liaising with the Suffolk Travellers Service and the police.

The Committee agreed that proceedings should be commenced if necessary.

A presentation has been requested for this Committee on radioactive waste disposal.

Correspondence has been received from the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society Project regarding the proposal for two plaques at the upper High Street. A query was raised over the placement of the plaques, particularly in front of the town sign, and it was suggested that it could be beneficial to arrange a site visit with representatives from the society to discuss further. Cllrs Graham, Coleby and Knight have all expressed an interest in accompanying Mr Speller, time and date depending.

193. Date of the next meeting

19 February 2018 17:00 Riverside

194. Items for the next Agenda and Close

It was noted that other towns commemorate significant events by way of metal plaques and this is something that Lowestoft Town Council may be able to consider.

It has been queried whether the meeting dates of the Implementation Committee could be moved to the second and fourth Mondays of the month, or if the time could be changed.

Next agenda.

A discussion is to be held regarding a septic tank at the Uplands Community Centre which is in Lowestoft Town Council's ownership, specifically who maintains it, how it is maintained, and the budget for doing so. Mr Speller also noted that any obligations regarding the Fen Park Pumping Station should be considered.

The Chair closed the meeting at 19:36.

Signed:
19th February 2018