

# Lowestoft Town Council

## Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee

Via Video Meeting  
16:30 on 13 August 2020

### MINUTES

**Video meeting participants:** Cllrs Sue Barnard, Neil Coleby, Alan Green, Andy Pearce (Chair) and Alice Taylor

**Also participating:** Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

**47. Welcome**

The right to report and the application of the video meeting protocol were explained and noted, and the meeting was welcomed.

**48. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, John Pitts and David Youngman. Cllr Coleby proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

**49. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

Cllrs Barnard and Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 56.4, in that some of the trees are due to be planted at the Gainsborough Drive pond..

**50. Noting that the minutes of the meeting of 9 July 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting**

There were no comments.

**51. Any advance comments from the public on any matters on this agenda**

There were no comments.

**52. Budget:**

52.1. Monitoring the budget for 2020 – 2021 – The budget monitoring documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee is meeting on 24 August and 10:00 and will look in detail at the budget.

52.2. Noting any bank reconciliations – It was noted that the bank reconciliations are up to date. As the bank reconciliation signatories, Cllr Page has signed off the bank reconciliations for April, May and June and Cllr Youngman has signed off July's.

52.3. Budget implications relating to the implementation of the Defibrillator Policy – The implementation of the Defibrillator Policy does not impact this year's budget. A District Councillor has purchased a defibrillator to install in the telephone kiosk on Gunton Drive, which will require some small ongoing costs. A local charity has provided the following details of costs associated with defibrillators:

- £1,550 for the defibrillator, cabinet and signage.
- £100 running costs for the cabinet over ten years.
- £200 for a replacement battery, which lasts four years.
- £35 for replacement pads, which last two years.
- Planning permission may be required if installing a defibrillator in a conservation area or on a listed building, but sometimes the fee is waived.
- Local electricians often waive their fee for installing the defibrillator.
- Training sessions are offered for up to twenty five people at a time. Information regarding cost of a training session is pending.

A map of the locations of publicly accessible defibrillators in Lowestoft has been put together. The defibrillator which was going to be installed on the Gunton Residents Meeting Hall will now be installed at Aldi. The District Councillor has purchased a second defibrillator to install in the telephone kiosk on Gunton Drive. BT may need to give permission for this. Cllr Coleby

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proposed approval for the defibrillator being supplied by the District Council to be installed in the Gunton Drive telephone kiosk, with delegated authority to the Clerk to progress this, including any expenditure; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. Any expenditure made under delegated authority is duly reported back to this Committee and Full Council.

### 53. Payments:

53.1. The income and expenditure reports for July 2020 and August 2020 to date – These were circulated to the Committee as follows and noted:

#### July income

Date	Received from	Description	Amount
6 July 2020	Market Income	Market Income	£54.50
10 July 2020	East Coast Community Healthcare	Meeting Room Hire	£900
13 July 2020	Tenant	Rental Income from Tenant	£6,300
13 July 2020	Market Income	Market Income	£54.50
13 July 2020	Tenant	Rental Income from Tenant	£213.16
20 July 2020	Land Hire Income	Land Hire Income	£120 + £24 VAT = £144
20 July 2020	Market Income	Market Income	£18.50
27 July 2020	Market Income	Market Income	£54.50
27 July 2020	Land Hire Income	Land Hire Income	£140.00 + £28.00 VAT = £168.00

#### July expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 July 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC NNDR July 2020	£117
1 July 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road Car Park NNDR July 2020	£187
1 July 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowling Pavilion NNDR July 2020	£110
1 July 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC NNDR July 2020	£210
1 July 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC NNDR July 2020	£122
3 July 2020	SCC Pensions	Pensions June 2020	£3,860.90
4 July 2020	Archant	Lowestoft Journal adverts for vacancies and COVID-19	£1,501 + £300.22 VAT = £1,801.22
14 July 2020	Lowestoft Arts Ltd	COVID-19 grant	£250
14 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Archant	Lowestoft Journal Advert	£85 + £17 VAT = £102
14 July 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership Charges July 2020	£36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830
15 July 2020	Northumbrian Water	Water Survey for the Ness	£115 + £23 VAT = £138
15 July 2020	SLCC	Committee Clerk and Customer Services Assistant	£217

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		Membership	
15 July 2020	Guy McGregor	Payslips	£64.50 + £12.90 VAT = £77.40
15 July 2020	Ricoh UK Ltd	Printer Hire Q2 and Printing Costs Q1 2020-21	£245.64 + £49.13 VAT £294.77
16 July 2020	Lloyds	Credit Card Payments	£20.39
20 July 2020	Public Works Loan Board	Loan repayment for Marina Theatre Box Office	£7,210.75
20 July 2020	NPower	Triangle Market Electricity	£89.46 + £4.47 VAT = £93.93
21 July 2020	HMRC	HMRC June 2020	£2,734.79
23 July 2020	Salaries	Salaries July 2020	£8,725.27
29 July 2020	Lowestoft Players	COVID-19 Grant	£1,500
29 July 2020	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit 19-20	£2,400 + £480 VAT = £2,880
29 July 2020	Archant Community Media Ltd	Low Journal Tender Advert	£110.67 + £22.14 VAT = £132.81
29 July 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest electric	£133.02 + £6.65 VAT = £139.67
29 July 2020	NPower	Low Cemetery PC electric	£222.76 + £11.14 VAT = £233.90
29 July 2020	NPower	Denes Oval electric	£767.43 + £38.37 VAT = £805.80
29 July 2020	NPower	Normanston Park electric	£955.66 + £47.78 VAT = £1,003.44
29 July 2020	NPower	Kensington Gardens electric	£209.25 + £10.46 VAT = £219.71
29 July 2020	NPower	Electricity direct debit	£150.98 + £7.55 VAT = £158.53
30 July 2020	SLCC	Community Governance course	£1,376
31 July 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas Mar- Jun 20	£84.94 + £4.25 VAT = £89.19
31 July 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership charge Aug 2020	£36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830

### August income

Date	Received from	Description	Amount
3 August 2020	Lamarti	Hire of Links Road Car Park for sale of ice cream	£120 + £24 VAT = £144
3 August 2020	Market Income	Market Income 3 August 2020	£54.50
10 August 2020	Market Income	Market Income 10 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	£18.50
10 August 2020	Tenant	Rental Income from Tenant	£213.16
Pending	HMRC	VAT Return Q1 2020- 2021	£49,832.09

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**August expenditure**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Payment to</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
3 August 2020	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC NNDR August 2020	£117
3 August 2020	East Suffolk Council	Links Road Car Park NNDR August 2020	£187
3 August 2020	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls NNDR August 2020	£110
3 August 2020	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens PC NNDR August 2020	£210
3 August 2020	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street PC NNDR August 2020	£122
6 August 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£290.48 + £14.52 VAT = £305
6 August 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	North Denes Legal Advice	£1260 + £237.60 VAT = £1497.60
6 August 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	Hamilton House Legal Advice	£215.50 + £43.10 VAT = £258.60
6 August 2020	SCC Pension Fund	Pensions	£3860.90
6 August 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	General Legal Advice	£495 + £99 VAT = £594
6 August 2020	Archant	Lowestoft Journal Adverts	£145 + £29 VAT = £174
6 August 2020	Urban Vision	Draft non-planning section of the Neighbourhood Plan	£525 + £105 VAT = £630
6 August 2020	Need2Store	Civic Artefact Storage August 2020	£200 + £40 VAT = £240
6 August 2020	Sandy Lane Nursery	2x Cherry Trees	£39 + £7.80 VAT = £46.80
6 August 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors	North Dennes Legal Advice	£930.60 + £186.12 VAT = £1,116.72
7 August 2020	NPower	Electricity Charges	£95.23 + £4.76 VAT = £99.99

53.2. Payments made under delegated authority (see schedule) – All payments in the schedules were made under delegated authority.

53.3. Receipt of any applications made under the COVID-19 Grant Awarding Policy and any payments made – No payments had been made so far in August, but there had been some activity recently. An application from the Hygiene Bank Waveney has been approved but not yet paid. An application from Lowestoft Arts Ltd had been approved and paid in July. Three new applications had been received in the last week. Cllrs Green and Pearce have reviewed these under delegated authority and would like advice on two of them from this Committee. One of the applications is from the Marina Theatre. Similar applications from the Lowestoft Players and the Seagull Theatre have previously been approved, to enable them to purchase equipment to reopen in adherence with social distancing guidelines. The application from the Marina Theatre is for a higher amount, due to it being a larger Theatre. At just over £1,880, it exceeds the usual limit of £1,500 for a single application. Cllrs Green and Pearce are minded to approve the application as it meets the rest of the eligibility criteria, and there were no objections from the Committee. The other application had been received from a local organisation which has single gender membership. This is lawful, so long as the reasons for doing so are legitimate, and the organisation is not negatively discriminating. The organisation

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has not adopted an equality policy so it was agreed that a suitable equality statement would need to be provided before the application could be formally approved, and the organisation will be asked if it would consider adopting an equality policy in the future. As the application meets the rest of the eligibility criteria, the Committee had no objections to its approval.

- 53.4. The purchase of two new storage units in Normanston Park, within a maximum budget of £8,000 (+VAT) – This was discussed by the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee, who were keen to see this progressed. From a health and safety point of view this would segregate East Suffolk Norse's area from Jesters Diner. Norse's existing storage sheds are in a poor condition. The Town Council will own the new containers but Norse will remove the existing units and complete the preparatory work. Cllr Taylor proposed approval purchase of two new storage units in Normanston Park, within a maximum budget of £8,000 (+VAT); seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. Other improvement work has already taken place at the site, including levelling out of the area outside Jesters, to improve their outdoor seating area and accommodate more benches.
- 53.5. Completion of the VAT return for quarter one – It was noted that the quarter one VAT return has been submitted.

### **54. Events and Communications**

- 54.1. Confirming Cllr Taylor's membership to the Events and Communications Sub-Committee – Cllr Coleby proposed approval for Cllr Taylor to join the Events and Communications Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 54.2. Receipt of the draft minutes from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee on 30 July 2020 – The draft minutes were received and noted but have not been reviewed by the Sub-Committee yet.

### **55. Standing Orders and Policies**

- 55.1. Receipt of the draft minutes from the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee on 8 July 2020 – The minutes of item 7.1a need to be amended to more accurately reflect the decision of the Sub-Committee, as per item 55.2b on this agenda.
- 55.2. Consideration of the following matters from the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee:
- 55.2a. A recommendation to amend the Terms of Reference to include provision for the Town Council's Standing Orders and policies to be reviewed at least quarterly, or as required, and for the Sub-Committee to review its own remit quarterly, or as required – It was clarified that the Standing Orders will not be reviewed quarterly. The aim is for the review of the Town Council's policies and Standing Orders to be spread out over the course of the year. The Clerk suggested appropriate wording to reflect this in the Terms of Reference and Cllr Coleby proposed that an amendment be to the Terms of Reference to reflect that meetings of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee will be held as and when required, usually quarterly, so that policies and Standing Orders can be considered over the course of the year; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 55.2b. To refer to the Full Council meeting prior to the 2021 Annual General Meeting the question of whether the Chairs of Committees should be able to hold the position of Chair or Deputy Chair of that Committee's Sub-Committees. Should Full Council resolve to amend the current position, this amendment would take effect from the date of the 2021 Annual General Meeting – No Councillor currently holds the positions of Chair of a Committee and Chair of one or more of that Committee's Sub-Committees, but there are those who have roles as Chair of a Committee and Deputy-Chair of one or more of that Committee's Sub-Committees, and vice versa. These appointments were legitimately made as there is currently no provision in the Standing Orders to prevent this. This was not a formal recommendation from the Sub-Committee, but the Sub-Committee wanted to refer the matter to Full Council to consider. There was a discussion as to whether this needed to be considered at the Full Council meeting immediately prior to the Annual General Meeting specifically, or whether it could be

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considered beforehand, so long as it is in line with the six month rule. It was queried whether the Deputy Chair position should be included in the consideration and it was agreed that it should, as a Deputy Chair may be required to step in for a Chair for an extended period. Cllr Coleby proposed to refer to the Full Council meeting prior to the 2021 Annual General Meeting the question of whether the Chairs of Committees should be able to hold the position of Chair or Deputy Chair of that Committee's Sub-Committees. Should Full Council resolve to amend the current position, this amendment would take effect from the date of the 2021 Annual General Meeting; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

- 55.2c. A request for the Finance and Governance Committee to review the Town Council's Financial Regulations, including procurement, contracts and preferred supplier arrangements – This will affect the Town Council's assets and management of utilities and delegations set within the Financial Regulations. The Financial Regulations need to be reviewed to ensure they are up to date with the latest contract specifications and that delegations are at the appropriate level. Climate emergency issues also need to be incorporated. The Clerk will prepare a draft to be considered at the next meeting. It was agreed that preferred supplier arrangements would create a more streamlined process. Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the request for the Finance and Governance Committee to review the Town Council's Financial Regulations, including procurement, contracts and preferred supplier arrangements; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 55.2d. A procurement specification for the Town Council's energy supplier – Delegated authority has been granted to the Mayor and Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee, working with the Clerk, to agree the Town Council's electricity supplier. A procurement specification is required first, which will be incorporated with the previous item.
- 55.2e. A recommendation to amend the Complaints Procedure for the three references to timescales to be standardised to ten working days, and the list represented by bullet points be amended to be represented by numbers or letters – Point 3.1g still refers to five days and will be amended to reflect the recommendation, before it is considered by Full Council. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the amended Complaints Procedure, with the three references to timescales standardised to ten working days, and the list represented by bullet points be amended to be represented by numbers or letters; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 55.3. Amendments to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations – This was covered by the consideration of item 55.2c.

**56. Other financial matters, including:**

- 56.1. Further information regarding East Suffolk Council's Government funding for unexpected expenditure incurred due to COVID-19, following this Committee's decision in principle to submit an application – A claim cannot be submitted for lost income. More detail is required on what can be claimed for and this will be carried forward to the next meeting.
- 56.2. Whether there has been any changes to the advice previously given regarding offering thanks to keyworkers and appropriate ways to commemorate the impact of COVID-19, including Suffolk County Council plans for a memorial woodland – This item was referred to the Committee by Full Council. A tree planting day is being planned nationally and Suffolk County Council has now announced plans for a memorial woodland, which fits well with the Town Council's climate emergency declaration. Specific details regarding location(s) have not yet been released. The proposal to offer thanks to keyworkers with sharing hampers needs to be revisited in line with the latest guidance. The advice from the National Association of Civic Officers has not changed since the last meeting. Cllr Green proposed that this matter be added to the agenda for September's Full Council meeting, to review the situation again; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 56.3. Consideration the following recommendations from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee:

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- 56.3a. To explore the cost and progress appropriate signage regarding security arrangements to prevent unauthorised vehicular access to Normanston Park – The cost of permanent signage is pending. It was suggested that a maximum budget could be set and delegated to the Clerk so that this can be progressed. Cllr Pearce proposed a maximum budget of £2,000, including installation, delegated to the Clerk, to progress appropriate signage regarding security arrangements to prevent unauthorised vehicular access to Normanston Park; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 56.3b. A request from a member of the public for a memorial bench near the skate park in Normanston Park, and to consider the ongoing maintenance costs – East Suffolk Norse recommend a standard bench, which would require very little in the way of ongoing maintenance. They would need to see the specification of any custom designs to provide a quotation for ongoing maintenance. The AID Committee suggested a skateboard design custom bench, due to its location. Cllr Coleby will send a link to the website for the skateboard themed bench, for staff to liaise with the member of the public.
- 56.4. Approval of the Tree Council funding application and consider the cost of plans for implementation – The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee will consider implementation. It has not yet been determined where there will be volunteer support and where there will be contractor support. It was queried whether a maximum budget could be set, to allow the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee and other relevant Committees to implement the plans. The quotation East Suffolk Norse gave for Rosedale Park was approximately £5,000, so a maximum budget of £6,000 was suggested. Alongside this is the next item on the agenda. Should Full Council decide to adopt this, it includes provision to plant an orchard tree for every other tree planted. A sufficient budget could allow some of these aspects to be progressed at the same time. The Council has supported the idea of community orchards, and may wish to acquire more land to progress this. Implementation of the Tree Council funding is an immediate concern, and it was agreed that should the health emergency declaration be adopted, this Committee could further consider the costs associated with that. Cllr Coleby proposed a maximum budget of £6,000 from the parks development budget to implement the Tree Council funding, including the cost of planting and watering the trees; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee is meeting on 24 August and can further consider these items if required.
- 56.5. The financial implications associated with the declaration of a health emergency – If adopted, this will be referred to the relevant Committees and Sub-Committees to progress.

### **57. Date of the next meeting**

10 September 2020 16:30

### **58. Items for the next agenda and close**

Some items were identified during the meeting and there were no requests for additional items.

There were no confidential items for consideration. The Chair thanked those who had been viewing the meeting via live stream and closed the meeting at 17:53.

### **59. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:**

- 59.1. Any legal matters, including those above as required – There were no confidential matters for consideration.

Signed: .....  
10 September 2020