

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 8 March 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Peter Lang, Andy Pearce and Paul Page (Chair)

In attendance: Lauren Elliott (Committee and Project Clerk) and Chris Meek

Public: There was one member of the public in attendance (in person) Person entered the Chamber at 15:42.

162. Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained and the meeting was welcomed. The Chair of the Committee Cllr Paul Page wanted to take this opportunity to thank former Chair David Youngman for his endeavour and work whilst he was Chair of this Committee.

163. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

No apologies were recorded.

164. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

164.1 Cllrs Brooks and Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters related to Gunton. Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest as Lowestoft Town Council representative at Friends of Fen Park. Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 176 as member of the Kittiwake Partnership. Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 181. Cllr Barker confirmed non local-pecuniary interest in items in 171 and 172. Cllr Lang declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 176.

165. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 1 February 2022

Cllr Brooks proposed acceptance of minutes. Cllr Baker seconded all in favour. Cllr Pearce abstained from this vote.

166. Public forum

No advance comments had been received. There were no members of the public in attendance at this time, either in person or remotely via Zoom.

167. To monitor expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority

The Committee discussed the expenditure that was allocated to the Bug Hotels and Bird Houses. It was agreed that this had been approved in a previous meeting. Cllr Pearce then discussed the Clarkes Lane Survey costs in conjunction with a Survey Supplier. Office Assistant Chris Meek gave an update on the new pricing plans that this Survey Supplier has introduced since Lowestoft Town Council last used – Chris Meek advised it may be several tens of pounds but no more than £100 - this was due to the use of pictures and also capturing unlimited responses. The committee were all accepting of this response given.

A Member of Public entered the Chamber at 15:42

168. To appoint the Deputy Chair of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee

Cllr Page proposed Cllr Brooks as Deputy Chair; Cllr Pearce seconded; all in favour

169. To consider any matters to raise with Cllr James Mallinder (East Suffolk Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment) and/or the Environment and Waste Working Group, and to receive feedback on any matters previously raised

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Cllr Brooks began the conversation and said that they have had positive feedback with Cllr James Reeder in regards to arrangements at Haddenham Road. Cllr Brooks advised that East Suffolk Council do not have enough monies to cover this Project in current Budget. Cllr Pearce gave an outline of the Environmental Waste Group and what are they are trying to achieve working as Multi- party group. Cllr Pearce was keen to stress that this group has no statutory obligations and any decisions made would have to go the relevant Councils to consider. Cllr Pearce confirmed one of the main goals of this group was to reduce fly tipping.

170. To give early consideration to priorities for 2023 – 2024, to inform recommendations to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee in preparation of budget considerations later in the year

Cllr Pearce discussed the Budget round that is due in September and October 2022. Cllr Pearce expected that any monies that were removed from the Climate and Emergency Budget reserves should be replenished. Cllr Pearce then gave outline of what Lowestoft Town Council should need to consider in regards to equipment, if Norse services were to end. Cllr Page asked if they could have Officer Input the purchase of Electric Vehicles and be brought back for further discussion. Cllr Pearce and Brooks agreed that regarding the Carbon Survey that Lowestoft Town Council has commissioned would be needed to guide the Town Council in its decisions going forward.

171. To receive an update on progressing planned projects at Clarkes Lane, including community engagement and seeking professional advice.

Officer Lauren Elliott gave an update to the committee that is still open for feedback and that this is due to close on Friday 16 March. At the time of the meeting, there had been sixteen responses. Cllr Barker gave an outline of what the survey encompasses. The survey was discussed between Cllr Barker, Cllr Elise Youngman and Cllr Lang prior to its launch date. Cllr Barker confirmed that this had been published in the Lowestoft Journal for feedback from the community. Cllr Pearce raised the question about the survey being circulated to Schools in the area surrounding Clarkes Lane. Cllr Barker asked Officers if this could be actioned. The committee discussed possibilities of locating a notice board in the Clarkes Lane Open Space, and where it could be placed. They discussed a possible location at the entrance by Chaukers Crescent, as this entrance was popular with dog walkers. Officer Lauren Elliott advised the committee that Notice boards are being considered on the next AID agenda. The committee discussed the possibility of involving the Allotment Association to see about the viability of turning land into allotment space.

172. To receive feedback from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee regarding the scheduling of the Climate Action Day 2022 event and to consider details of the event

The Committee discussed its event, confirmed as the Big Green Week. It was discussed that it should be held over two weekends so would be 24 and 25 September and 1 October and 2 October. Cllr Page as chair confirmed he would not be able to participate in the weekend of the 24 and 25 September due to prior commitments. Cllr Page was keen to involve communities, possibly involving Local MP for Question and Answer session about Climate. Cllr Pearce said that this would be the weekend after Heritage Open Days (HODS). Cllr Pearce would like to use the Heritage Open Days as a signpost to Lowestoft Town Council's Big Green event. The committee agreed that Officers should make contact to the Lowestoft HODS steering group of the Lowestoft Town Council Big Green event. Cllr Brooks has spoken to a representative from Bird's Eye and they may be keen in collaborating in this event. Cllr Lang would like to see renewable firms involved, including organisations that supply these firms. Cllr Barker suggested possible promotion of a community Bicycle Event. Cllr Pearce suggested

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involving the Kittiwake Partnership. Cllr Pearce confirmed this a major event. Cllr Pearce is mindful of timing and that Lowestoft Town Council should approach schools in timely manner. It was agreed that Officers would liaise with the Committee when contact with schools began. The Chair, Cllr Page asked the member of public if they had any suggestions and confirmed maybe liaising with East Coast College. The Chair was happy with suggestions that were being put forward by the committee and agreed that would be best for the Officers to work in conjunction with this committee, liaise with each other and give an update of progress at the next meeting. Cllr Barker asked for the update on this event to be added on the Events and Communications Agenda.

173. To receive an update on the Town Council's carbon footprint survey

Officer Lauren Elliott gave an update to Councillors in regards to the report and confirmed the provisional results are positive but Officers have asked for more detail to be added in regards to it tenanted properties that Lowestoft Town Council have to be included in this report. Cllr Pearce was in agreeance to this and raised the issue of the Historic Town Hall would be an issue. Cllr Pearce also spoke of the need of maybe including this date in the Town Hall project and encompassing an action plan.

Cllr Pearce then mentioned the Marina Theatre due it its Edwardian age may have issues. Cllr Pearce was aware of the Theatre Green Book. Cllr Barker gave a brief outline of what this is and how the Marina are implementing these recommendations of the Theatre Green Book in regards to external contractors within the industry.

Cllr Brooks gave an update of potential Play equipment supplier they had met and was impressed by how detailed their carbon plan was and how sophisticated the detail was. Cllr Pearce stressed this why a consultant is involved in putting this survey together. Cllr Pearce advised that this is difficult to implement, when multi agencies are involved in projects as their procurement rules may be different.

174. To consider a Climate Action Plan

Officer Lauren Elliott gave an update to the committee and confirmed it is not completed as of yet. Officer advised that the Town Clerk did not want to present this in its incomplete state as it is still awaiting results from other organisations. Officer Lauren Elliott confirmed this should be completed in due course. Cllr Pearce raised the issue that the Council raised a Climate Emergency in 2018 and it is still yet to see a completed action plan. Cllr Pearce asked if Officers need extra help in regards to sourcing external contractors to complete this, then please make the committee aware, so they are able to consider this in their Budget going forward.

175. To consider the purchase of tree mapping software

Officer Lauren Elliott gave an update to Cllrs that the current imagery/maps are from former Cllr Dick Houghton which are detailed and very good. The issue Officers have is that these cannot be amended or updated. Officer Lauren Elliott confirmed that the software that was used in Lowestoft Town Council Neighbourhood Plans are not of use as software was last updated in April 2020. It was also confirmed that this does not identify tree species. Cllr Barker suggested that the software should also be used for projection in regards to how big a canopy is in five years and so forth. Member of public suggested involving the Lowestoft Field Club for their input on this matter. Cllr Brooks suggested maybe approaching Gunton Woodland association.

Cllr Lang proposed this item goes to 'Parks and Open Spaces' to consider; Cllr Pearce seconded all in favour.

176. To consider making a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee regarding

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a request for funding of £10,000 from Lowestoft Vision

Cllr Pearce gave an update to the committee in regards to the funding request from Lowestoft Vision. Cllr Pearce confirmed that these monies would be used for the Kittiwake Partnership. This partnership is a multi-agency group working with RSPB, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Associated British ports. MP Peter Aldous is Chair of the Kittiwake partnership. Cllr Pearce expressed the goal of this Partnership is to protect Kittiwakes and two other Gull species in the Lowestoft area. It is to ensure Kittiwakes co-exist peacefully with humans. This is a two-year project with the scope of maybe extending this to a third year. The £10,000 would be for 50% of costs in year one. Cllr Pearce expressed this was small fee to pay as the Marina theatre had paid a figure of £12,000 for deterrent measures and this was just on one building. Cllr Lang confirmed MP Peter Aldous and Suffolk Wildlife Trust had approached him for a letter of support of this project. Cllr Lang had spoken of the measures that Marina Theatre Trust had taken last time against Kittiwakes. Cllr Lang wanted to make sure that the proper information was being used and humane measures in the management of Kittiwakes. Cllr Brooks sceptical at first and confirmed that she had further investigated and was supportive. Cllr Brooks wanted to make sure the Officer role would raise awareness and wanted to make sure this was about collaboration with other organisations. Cllr Barker then recalled the issue around Clapham Road South and the installation of Kittiwake shelves. Cllr Pearce confirmed that there had been more installed since. Cllr Barker confirmed that members of the public had issues with cleanliness in the town and the Kittiwake problem was an additional issue. Cllr Barker wants to make sure the Town is welcoming to everybody. Cllr Pearce said the partnership would look at this and it is about Gull species as well and about changing animals behaviour as it seems that there were a handful of Gulls in the Town Centre that are scavenging and this is a behaviour that has evolved. Cllr Brooks endorsed Cllr Barker comments on state of the town centre and the town's cleanliness needs to be look at as. Cllr Brooks said she is aware of the strength of feeling on the state of the high street. Cllr Pearce recalled a vote in 2020 on the management of Kittiwakes and Gulls and non-lethal measures to manage their numbers. However, no scientific research had been done and the birds had return to their original nesting spots. Cllr Pearce said it was imperative that everybody learnt from this error. Cllr Pearce proposed that £10,000 be taken from the Climate Emergency reserve budget for this funding request; Cllr Page seconded; all in favour.

177. To consider support of the production of a leaflet regarding public transport for visitors to Lowestoft

Cllr Lang had circulated a document prior to this meeting similar to the one that is being considered in this agenda item. Cllr Lang was concerned that this document would be quickly out of date but it did have QR codes attached so could possibly counteract this problem. Cllr Lang advised that walking routes and cycling routes do not change that often. Cllr Pearce in principle supports the idea but it would be for the Finance and Governance committee to make sure the leaflet was climate efficient when accepting this proposal. Cllr Barker was also supportive of this leaflet. Cllr Brooks disagreed with these comments and that this does not serve the town well.

178. To receive an update on the disconnection of the gas supply to the Town Hall

Officer Lauren Elliott gave an update that Lowestoft Town Council has given notice on disconnection but are awaiting further contact from Gazprom. Officer Lauren Elliott confirmed that there would be a fee of £546.20 to disconnect. Cllr Pearce proposed that this fee is acceptable; Cllr Brooks seconded; all in favour.

179. To receive an update on reviewing the Town Council's electricity supplier

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Cllr Pearce spoke about Npower and the issues that they have had in regards to fines they have received for poor customer service. Officer Lauren Elliott confirmed that officers have made contact with alternatives to one of the 'Big Six' suppliers and their advice was not to transfer in the current climate because you would find it difficult to get a better deal. Cllr Brooks asked have Officers if they have approached Octopus and Officer confirmed this was the organisation that gave this response. The committee asked Officers to continue to explore alternative suppliers and update accordingly. They asked for this to be kept on the next agenda.

180. To receive an update on East Suffolk Council's Cycling Strategy

Officer Lauren Elliott had received no update as of yet but confirmed that this survey recently closed. Officer will update the committee when information received.

181. To receive feedback from the Sizewell C Town and Parish Councillors meeting

Cllr Brooks updated the committee on the event that she had attended at Snape Maltings with around seventy other representatives from different organisations. Cllr Brooks was aware of issues but surprised by the amount of negative feeling towards Sizewell. Cllr Brooks highlighted in the meeting transport problems seemed to be major issue with poor infrastructure in place. It was confirmed that there would be allocated parking areas outside Ipswich that would be a base to transport materials via Railway and Road. Cllr Brooks confirmed there would be an increase of 600 lorries on the road per day. Cllr Brooks highlighted the issue that EDF has had no land survey done at present and concerns had been raised over coastal erosion in the area. Cllr Brooks feels that it is time now for Lowestoft Town Council to have a position on this important matter. Cllr Pearce was in agreement with Cllr Brooks' comments but not surprised by this negative feeling towards Sizewell. Cllr Pearce is concerned of the geopolitical involvement of Chinese funders with EDF and the security risks involved in this collaboration. Cllr Lang is concerned that other alternative methods were not being looked at such as Tidal, Bio Mass, with Solar and Wind turbines being dismissed as an alternative to Nuclear. Cllr Barker was concerned by other infrastructure such as school and healthcare settings and the workers that come to live in the area that put a strain on these underserved services. Cllr Page has local knowledge of the surrounding area and it is demonstrated by the notice boards in the area it does not support this project. It was also the ecological impact that this massive project would have in such an important area. Cllr Page proposed a recommendation to full council to oppose the Sizewell C Project taking in consideration Climate Emergency committee views; Cllr Brooks seconded all in favour

182. Date of the next meeting

12 April 2022 15:30

183. Items for the next agenda and close

Committee would like an update from Cllr James Mallinder on regards to the loss of Blue Flag status in Lowestoft.

Cllr Lang has asked for Lowestoft Town Council rental assets to be looked at to see how environmentally friendly the organisations with the view of possibly incorporating a requirement in future tenant agreements.

184. 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

Cllr Brooks proposed suspending standing orders by ten minutes; Cllr Page seconded all in favour. Meeting commenced at 17:25

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Meeting closed at 17:49

Signed:
12 April 2022