

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 18 December 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Paul Page (Chair), Graham Parker and Deborah Ray (Deputy Chair)

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

103. Welcome

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

104. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr Sillett and Cllrs Craig and Pearce with reasons provided. Cllr Page proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Ms Bunn was absent with no apologies received.

105. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

105.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Parker declared he was an East Suffolk Councillor. Cllr Barker declared she was a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

105.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

106. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 20 November 2023

Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

107. 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 – No advanced comments had been received and no members of the public were in attendance.

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

Two items of expenditure for van fuel and the bulky waste service were noted.

109. To consider any matters to raise with Cllr Rachel Smith-Lyte (Cabinet Member for the Environment) or Cllr Caroline Topping (East Suffolk Council Leader with responsibility for Parish Liaison) and to receive feedback on any matter previously raised, including the following:

109.1. Receive feedback from the East Suffolk Council Quarterly Liaison meeting and consider any relevant actions – As the Quarterly Liaison had been postponed, Cllr Brooks proposed this item be deferred to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

The Committee queried if the agenda for the next Quarterly Liaison could be reviewed and include more focussed items regarding the climate, including the lack of bin regulation, a discussion on trees, the installation of water refill stations on the sea front, the Pupil Climate Committee, Sizewell C and the National Grid offshore proposals previously presented to this Committee. Officers would contact the East Suffolk Council

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officer preparing the agenda and request the inclusion of these items.

110. To consider the following items on the agenda:

110.1. To consider avenues of community engagement and relevant actions:

110.1a. Receive an update on the formation of a Lowestoft Pupils Climate Committee – Ms Bunn had provided the Chair an update prior to the meeting on recent events at the College including an event in November with 300 primary and secondary school students in attendance and the college hosting another student workshop. The Committee agreed that they needed to query how they can support the college in these various endeavours.

110.2. To consider the following in relation to the Earth Protector Town Status of Lowestoft Town Council and relevant actions:

110.2a. Setting up a Steering Group for Plastic Free Communities and appointment of a Town Council representative, further to the signing of the pledge by Full Council – Cllr Ray proposed she be the representative; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

110.3. To consider Lowestoft Town Council's draft Climate Action Plan and relevant actions:

110.3a. Support for Zero Hour and their Climate and Ecology Bill – It was noted that this item had been deferred from the previous meeting and the deadline to support the bill for its second reading had passed. Cllr Page proposed a representative be invited to a Committee meeting to discuss Zero Hour's Climate and Ecology Bill; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

110.4. To consider issues relating to waste and pollution:

110.4a. Submitting a response to East Suffolk Council's Refuse & Dog Waste Bin Policy Consultation – Cllr Parker declared an interest as an East Suffolk Councillor. The Committee agreed to review the draft policy and defer this item for the next meeting. This policy would also be reviewed by the Planning Committee.

110.4b. Feedback from a review of the bulky waste collection service, including to consider the budget – The contractors had advised they would consider restricting the number of items collected per house and the number of visits made to properties.

To measure the success of the project in relations to the reduction of fly-tipping the Committee needed to obtain data from East Suffolk Council on fly-tipping in Lowestoft on a quarterly basis. It was suggested this be discussed further at a future Quarterly Liaison meeting.

Cllr Brooks proposed a Working Group be formed with members of this Committee to measure and understand the effectiveness of the Bulky Waste Service and meet with the contractors every two months; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

Officers noted the Committee needed to consider a recommendation for the Climate and Ecological Emergency budget be used to cover the overspend of £3,211 for the first month of the trial, with a further review to take place three months into the service. Cllr Page proposed this recommendation be approved; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

110.5. To consider the natural environment with regards to Lowestoft's parks and open spaces and relevant actions:

110.5a. The Town Council Tree Policy in relation to the pledge to replace felled trees – As the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee had agreed to form a Tree Working Group to review tree survey and related policies, it was agreed that this item had been resolved.

110.6. To consider issues relating to the energy and water supply of the built environment of Lowestoft and relevant actions:

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- 110.6a. Further options for a new energy supplier (confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.
- 110.7. To consider public transport and alternative methods of travel and relevant actions:
- 110.7a. Support for a local cycling group – Cllr Barker advised this item was to consider support for a local cycling group. The Committee noted the poor state of cycling paths and acknowledged a cycling strategy had been adopted by East Suffolk Council, but no actions had been seen to date.
- Cllr Parker proposed Suffolk Highways be contacted to query their plan for the cycling paths and when the work was due to commence, with a request that a representative from Suffolk Highways attend this meeting to discuss the plans. Cllr Brooks requested an amendment that an officer involved in the compilation of the Cycling and Walking Strategy also be invited to attend. Cllr Parker accepted the amendment and Cllr Brooks seconded the amended proposal. A vote was held with all in favour. The Committee agreed this would be a standalone meeting.
- 110.7b. To consider making a recommendation to Full Council to appoint a representative to the Suffolk Enhanced Passenger Interest Group – Cllr Page proposed a recommendation be made for a representative; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

111. To review the decisions on this agenda from the perspective of nature

The Committee agreed all decisions on the agenda had considered the perspective of nature.

112. Date of the next meeting

Monday 15 January 2024 15:30

113. Items for the next agenda and close

It was noted that the Big Green Weekend would remain a standing item on the agenda. Cllr Barker requested an item to consider engagement with Suffolk Wildlife Trust for their Eco Event on 28 April 2024, with liaison with the Communications Officer on posters to have at the event.

114. 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 Page proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting and moved to confidential session at 16:51

110.6a. Further options for a new energy supplier (confidential) – Cllr Page made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:00

Signed:

15 January 2024