

## Lowestoft Town Council

### Terms of Reference for the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee

1. The Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee is established by and solely responsible to Lowestoft Town Council.
2. The Committee's duties, as set out in these terms of reference, are defined and agreed by Full Council, which may vote, at any time, to modify, remove or increase the Committee's terms.
3. Meetings are to be held as and when required. This is likely to be monthly.
4. This Committee has been created by the Council to ensure that its Climate Emergency Declaration becomes integral to all relevant activities of the Council.
5. **Membership** The membership of the Committee will be no fewer than quorum plus one (i.e. five Councillors), and may also include up to three members of the public. Full Council will elect a Chair for the Committee at the Annual Meeting of the Council, or as the need arises, from among the councillor members of the Committee. All members of the Committee are expected to represent the interests of the whole Council area. Any councillor member of the Committee can preside, by agreement, in the Chair's absence. A quorum will be a minimum of four elected members. The Mayor will have automatic membership and full voting rights. Substitutes may be appointed to ensure that meetings are quorate. All other members of the Council have the right to attend the meeting and make representations on the matters being discussed within the Public Forum.
6. **Record of Proceedings** The Committee will meet as required to fulfil the responsibilities below. Written minutes will be taken to record the Committee's decisions and will be received at the next Full Council meeting and tabled as an appendix. The Clerk will be responsible for arranging the recording and distribution of the minutes.
7. **Responsibilities** The Committee has been set up as part of the Council's response to declaring a climate emergency and all responsibilities are focussed on determining achievable changes to the Council's activities as far as is practicable and proportionate. All recommendations to be in line with the powers available to the Council and to be of benefit to the Lowestoft taxpayer and parish area. The Committee is not a campaigning or political group.

The Committee has delegated authority from the Council to work with the Clerk, as appropriate, to fulfil the following responsibilities:-

- Recommending to Full Council the measures it considers necessary to be considered in order to respond to the Council's declaration that a Climate Emergency exists
- Recommending to any relevant Committee, the measures it considers necessary to be considered in order to respond to the Council's declaration that a Climate Emergency exists
- Researching available data and information on relevant climate emergency impacts and response measures
- Exploring options for measures which might ameliorate climate impacts and provide environmental benefits in line with, for example, the Council's existing duty to consider biodiversity in relation to relevant decisions
- Sending a representative to observe/advise other Committees on relevant matters
- Ensuring that a Climate Emergency Policy and any other related essential policies (not covered by other Committees) are developed, created, monitored, maintained and adhered to with appropriate recommendations to Full Council for amendment and/or adoption.

- Make recommendations on responses to any consultations on significant policy matters directly affecting Lowestoft, as appropriate.
- Consider new legislative and national and local policy developments relating to the environment, and incorporate any positive or mandatory aspects where possible.
- Explore ways of providing a biodiversity net gain, where practical and reasonably possible.
- Take account of the high level of carbon emissions from building, demolition and refurbishment work, when such work is undertaken by the Town Council.
- Be mindful of the amount of paper being consumed by the Town Council and consider measures to support the reduction in paper usage, such as the purchase of laptops for Councillors.
- Promote cycling, walking and public transport as more environmentally-friendly means of travel.

In relation to the Town Council's Climate Emergency Declaration, this Committee's actions shall include the following:

- Recommending and, at least annually, reviewing the Council's policy
- Recommending means of assessing measurements of current performance in order to help establish the level of success under the Council's policy
- Recommending and reviewing related actions by the Council and relevant Committees
- Exploring and researching measures to ameliorate climate impacts and optimise beneficial natural environments
- Recommending responses on any significant policy consultations directly affecting Lowestoft
- Considering any climate emergency action by local groups and public service providers which might assist the Council's climate emergency activities
- Liaising with any Climate Action Groups supported by the Council

**8. Financial delegation** Full Council has approved the following financial delegation to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee:

- £25,000 Climate Emergency budget

The per-item expenditure limit is £5,000 and expenditure will not exceed the total amount of each budget delegated to this Committee. A standing item on the Committee's agenda will ensure expenditure is monitored.

## **9. Public representatives**

- All meetings are held in public, except for confidential matters.
- The two members of the public who are members of the Committee are not permitted to remain in meetings where confidential matters are under consideration.
- The positions on the Committee for members of the public will be widely advertised.
- The Committee will take steps to try to ensure the members of the public sitting on the Committee have a broad interest and knowledge of climate-linked matters and can contribute to decisions in the interests of the Council and its taxpayers, specifically as determined by the Council's policies. In order to assist the Committee's consideration of the suitable public representatives to be selected, any interested persons will be asked to submit a written expression of interest outlining their offer. The decision of which representative to select shall be made in public and recommended to Full Council.
- Representatives from other bodies and speakers with specific expertise to offer, will be invited as required to attend meetings.