

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Implementation Committee

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

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard (arrived 18:27), Allyson Barron, Neil Coleby, Ian Graham, Peter Knight (Chair), Keith Patience and Alice Taylor

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Town Clerk), Mark Speller (Facilities and Contracts Manager), Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: None present

217. Welcome

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

218. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Ford and Houghton.

219. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

None.

220. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes:

19 February 2018 – accepted as accurate.

221. Public Forum

None present.

222. Open Spaces Strategy

This will be on the next agenda for Councillors to provide feedback and decide whether to adopt the strategy or make amendments to it.

223. Ownership of Blackheath Woods land

The Facilities and Contracts Manager has confirmed that Lowestoft Town Council does not have ownership of this land. It is understood that this is Waveney District Council's land and was not included in the Reorganisation Order.

It was queried whether Lowestoft Town Council should pursue a claim to this land or whether it has been offered to the Council, but no formal approach has been made by Waveney District Council. It was agreed to possibly revisit this matter again in the future as the Council's existing assets require more immediate attention.

224. Progress with draft lease for community halls

The Facilities and Contracts Manager has attended a meeting with Tony Rudd and the occupier of the Gunton Meeting Hall. The Heads of Terms Schedule has been circulated to the Committee and Section 20.4 (General), which states that 'no alcohol shall be sold or served without the agreement of the Landlord' needs to be considered. If the Council consents to alcohol being served, it was noted that the onus should then be on the hirer to obtain a licence; whilst ensuring that the owner is reminded that a licence is required.

It was understood that an alcohol ban has been requested. However, the licensee has a responsibility not to serve alcohol to anyone already intoxicated. Furthermore, it was understood that the occupier of the Gunton Meeting Hall stipulates a midnight curfew to

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hirers, recommending that any events are finished by eleven o'clock for the lights to be switched off at midnight.

It was agreed that not allowing alcohol would be of detriment to the community halls and it was suggested that a section could be added to the contract for the hirer to specify the requirement for a licence, or a form could be added as an appendix for a licence to be requested.

It was agreed to remind tenants of their obligations under the Licencing Act in the lease, and to grant permission for alcohol to be sold and served, pending future review, with the right to revoke if issues arise.

The tenant has concerns about the statutory obligations, as these have historically been carried out by the Housing Department, so is concerned about the financial impact now that Lowestoft Town Council has taken over that responsibility. It was noted that the Council has these obligations relating to its other assets, such as legionella inspections, so it could be more cost effective to arrange such inspections to be carried out at all the sites simultaneously, including the community halls. It was also noted that any structural or external matters would be the Council's responsibility. Agreement to the leases will be added to the next Full Council agenda as this would need to be approved at Full Council. It was also noted that the tenant could be advised to contact Community Action Suffolk. Membership is free of charge and they can offer advice and support with understanding the leases and statutory obligations.

225. Progress with community engagement

- 225.1 Survey (including Survey Monkey) - The questions for the survey are being developed and are being checked. It was noted that Community Action Suffolk may also be able to assist with this.
- 225.2 Promotion leaflets and advertising – An article for The Bugle will be submitted tomorrow. It was noted that the inclusion of a factual piece outlining what happened at the CCTV meeting would be a good idea.
- 225.3 Noticeboards and signs – Lowestoft Town Council staff are formulating a full audit of sites, prioritising those affected by the leisure fee charge waiver for this year. A full proposal on the type of noticeboards is required. It was noted that Waveney Norse can provide vinyl stickers free of charge.
- It has been confirmed that the noticeboard at the Triangle marketplace does not belong to Lowestoft Town Council, and the land it is situated on is an adopted highway.
- The Facilities and Contracts Manager has been speaking with the Friends of Fen Park regarding the signs in the park, including those from the Environment Agency regarding the policies around fishing and intends to speak with the Environment Agency.
- 225.4 Events material: gazebo, microphones etc – Councillor Knight has been making enquiries with regard to the microphone and has a quote of £750 for the complete package of a portable, battery powered system with a speaker. It was queried what range of area coverage this could offer, to ensure it is suitable for larger outdoor events, and it was noted that this was a smaller option, which could be carried by one person in a shoulder bag, although external speakers could be added on. Larger options could be explored but this would be at a higher cost. Information is to be sent to the Deputy Clerk and a recommendation can then be submitted to the Finance and Governance Committee. A discussion was held around the colour of the gazebo.

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It was decided to suggest the options of black, white and grey to Full and the Deputy Clerk would obtain mock-ups for comparison. The chosen colour scheme could then be applied to the other signs and banners, etc.

226. Draft protocols

- 226.1 'Friends of' groups – Facilities and Contracts Manager, Cllr Coleby and Cllr Taylor will be Producing a final draft and will report back to the Committee.
- 226.2 Reporting concerns to Norse – The final draft of this will be available for the next meeting.

227. Introduction of plaques commemorating significant events

Cllr Graham has been exploring this and will obtain quotes. It was noted that Hunny Bee Vintage are commemorating the start of the Suffragette movement and a plaque could be introduced to coincide with this.

It was agreed to recommend use of the historical Lowestoft logo on all heritage plaques and contact all the historical societies in Lowestoft for suggestions; and even contacting the local press to invite suggestions from the wider public, for a shortlist to then be created.

Lowestoft Town Council could provide the funding and it was suggested to introduce five plaques per year. As many of the existing plaques now need replacing it was suggested that for the first few years this could consist of two new plaques and three replacements.

It was noted that a record of progress and the funding involved should be kept for the Heritage Action Zone.

It was noted that this would be a positive way to promote the Council and important in celebrating the town's history.

228. Progress with plans and lease for the first floor of Hamilton House

Updated plans have been received and will need to be considered by Full Council. Checks are being made as to whether a door needs to be added, to allow access from the Clerk's office to reception, for Fire Regulation purposes.

Furniture requirements have been identified and quotes have been received, which are being reviewed and compared. Lighting preferences have been chosen, pending quotations. It was queried whether the planned new building on the dockside at the back of Hamilton House would affect the amount of natural light in the office and whether this should be considered in the preferences for lighting, but this has not yet been finalised and the lighting would need to be sufficient to allow for evening meetings anyway. It is likely that this would be flat panel, anti-glare, LED lighting, in the same style as is already in place at Hamilton House, with extra lighting in the reception area.

The 'gov.uk' email addresses are being progressed, although there may be an issue with mailbox sizes.

It is anticipated that work at Hamilton House should begin in April, subject to the costings being received. There were no objections from the Committee to the current plans, with the

only change likely to be the door in the Clerk's office. The Committee agreed to recommend to Full Council that the plans are approved once the query with the door has been resolved, subject to the costings being received.

229. Update and next steps for the following assets:

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- 229.1 Allotments – A meeting of the allotments sub-committee has been held and they have asked if formal contact with Lowestoft and District Allotments Association (L&DAA) can be arranged. Productive and positive relations were desired and the L&DAA would be contacted to confirm that Lowestoft Town Council looks forward to working with them and visiting sites and attending the AGM to learn more about them. The Clerk will arrange for this to be sent out.
- 229.2 CCTV – The Clerk attended a meeting with Norse regarding social media communications and concerns that Waveney Norse were being inappropriately criticised for matters not of their making. Norse will advise on the costs of CCTV to assist the Council to explore commercial options. Waveney District Council have also said they are happy to work with Lowestoft Town Council, and may be able to contribute financially.
It was suggested that a small working group could be set up to look at the options regarding CCTV and, once figures have been received from Norse, an assessment can be made of what system would be preferable and what is affordable.
Norse have also advised that they will provide clearer invoices to replace those that Lowestoft Town Council would not pay due to insufficient information and breakdown of costs.
- 229.3 Community halls – No further matters were raised in addition to the discussion already held around item 224.
- 229.4 East of England Park – Waveney District Council have provided assurances that Lowestoft Town Council will be involved and a meeting is being held tomorrow between WDC, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to discuss what has been proposed and agreed, and the governance arrangements.
A copy of the grant proposal for this area is still required by the Town Council and it was noted that it may be possible to obtain a copy from the Coastal Communities Fund. This can be reviewed following the meeting tomorrow.

Cllr Barnard arrived 18:27

- A planning application has been submitted for a restaurant in the area and it was queried whether Lowestoft Town Council had been approached regarding a lease of the land. It was noted that a notification of interest had been received but no formal requests for discussions with the Town Council about specific plans.
- 229.5 The Lowestoft Collection – a proposal was made at the last Implementation Committee to recommend a one-year extension to the local agreement to Full Council. Enquiries are being made with the museum regarding appropriate storage of items not on display.
- 229.6 Marina Theatre - A meeting is being held on 21 March to discuss the Zenith building. The Facilities and Contracts Manager has received a breakdown and quote of £12,000 for the Condition survey of the Marina Theatre. This does include potential development options, but this does come within the approved a budget of £15,000 for the condition survey alone. It was agreed to grant delegated authority to the Facilities and Contracts Manager to proceed with the condition survey, should the quote and the content meet his approval.

Proposed by Cllr Graham; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

- 229.7 North Denes including asset records – An application for planning permission has been received for a restaurant in the area. It was noted that gas mains pass underneath the site but it is not known how deep these are, and if necessary surveys can be obtained for sewage

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pipes, gas and electric. It was noted that as landowners, Lowestoft Town Council have not been approached for permission to build on the land under the submitted plans, but if the application is successful the developer would then need to approach the Town Council for grant of planning permission for the site; the Council can then decide what happens there. It was suggested that if any development were to take place at the site, it would be important for the plans to reflect the heritage of the town.

A suggestion was raised at a previous Implementation Committee meeting to introduce picnic benches at the North Denes area. This still needs further consideration, but it was noted that if seating were introduced then bins would also need to be considered as well as the related emptying of them.

- 229.8 Open Spaces and parks – Options are being considered for an online system to accommodate booking of leisure facilities ready for April when the fee waiver begins. However, it was noted that there will be no time to trial the system beforehand and careful planning is needed on when to introduce the system, as it would be difficult to retract the system once it has been introduced. Until an online service has been trialled, bookings will continue to be made by the usual method, just with the charges eliminated. It was agreed to continue considering options and discuss again at the next Implementation Committee meeting.
- The design for the Poppy Memorial Rose Garden is complete, but the budget has not yet been finalised. The anticipated cost currently stands at £13,000, but this does not include the pergola or landscaping of the pathways. The roses need to be ordered this month and the preferred option is the David Austin Benjamin Britten rose. It was suggested that this could be included on the agenda for the next Finance and Governance Committee meeting on 20 March, but they are only able to authorise budgets of up to £10,000. It was proposed to recommend to Finance and Governance that a budget of £10,000 is approved initially, with the final figure to be considered at the next Full Council meeting. Proposed by Cllr Graham; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour with one abstention. The Facilities and Contracts Manager will prepare the necessary papers for the Finance and Governance Committee meeting, which can then be discussed at Full Council. It was noted that Finance and Governance can authorise isolated expenditure in the interim, for example the flowers which need to be planted soon.

- 229.9 Town Hall and Heritage Action Zone – The Memorandum of Understanding has not yet been received.

A discussion was held around the next steps for the site of the former Coopers Biscuit Factory and Mariners Street car park. It was suggested that a case could be put together for Waveney District Council to consider it as an Asset of Community Value. Additionally, as WDC would like to see the Town Hall considered as the home of the Lowestoft Records Office, and Lowestoft Town Council are striving to reintroduce the Town Hall as a functioning building, it was suggested that Waveney District Council may consider contributing the land to the scheme.

It was queried whether an application could be submitted to register the land as a town or village green, however the regulations state that the land must have been used by local people for lawful sports and pastimes as of right for at least twenty years.

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It was queried whether a statement is required regarding Lowestoft Town Council's view on the Record's Office being relocated to the Town Hall, but it was noted that a statement has already been issued advising that the Council is not committing to anything at present, and the survey which will be undertaken is to assess the condition of the Town Hall only, not to look at development options for the site. That would also be a matter which would need to be referred to Full Council.

- 229.10 Triangle Market – Arrangements are being made for NABMA to perform a 'Health Check' of the Triangle marketplace and possibly attend an Implementation Committee meeting. It was noted that if the scheduling did not fit in with the dates of the Implementation Committee, a separate meeting could be organised for Committee members to attend.
- 229.11 Other assets and asset plans – It was noted the septic tank situated on the land of the Uplands Community Centre is almost full and requires immediate attention. A service of the tank was completed in February 2017 by Binder, who recommend that it is serviced annually. Authorisation could not be secured to pay for Binder to make a visit and rectify the issue, but Norse have said they can pump out the tank on Wednesday at a cost of £105. It was noted that there is no authorisation or approved budget in place for routine expenditure such as this but that this would need to be agreed as emergency expenditure. It was recommended that an account is set up with Binder as Norse can empty the tank but do not have the expertise of septic tanks. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee that they retrospectively approve an account with Binder being set up and the Clerk progress the account arrangements immediately; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.
- 230. Summary table of concerns regarding asset transfers**
This is on tomorrow's Full Council agenda.
- 231. Progress with events on Town Council land**
No new events have been booked, but the existing events are all progressing well. There are discussions with the people involved with the Solstice Sunride about the need for an application for event approval/licence. The Clerk will check the stage of arrangements with the organisers of the Sparrows Nest Walk in the Park
- 232. Progress with a framework for requests for the Freedom of the Town**
This has not yet been developed but will be added to the agenda for Full Council in due course.
- 233. Developments in relation to the threatened closure of Lowestoft Records Office**
Suffolk County Council are organising a public consultation.
A Freedom of Information request has found that the space the Records Office currently occupies in Lowestoft Library is not subject to rental charges.
It was noted that the Clerk and some of the Councillors were invited to visit the Records Office by representatives of Beccles Town Council and all who attended found it most informative.

Cllr Patience left the meeting at 19:31

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It was noted that the Records Office currently occupies 350 square metres in the Library. It was noted that some parties are suggesting the records office could be located within the Town Hall. There is a room in the Town Hall which may be a suitable size, but there are specialist requirements are specific to records to ensure that items remain suitably preserved. It was noted that an archiving expert could be invited to give advice at a future Implementation Committee meeting. Cllr Taylor has received an invite to join the Pre-Consultation Committee - which will be considered at the Full Council meeting tomorrow – but whoever represents Lowestoft Town Council on the Committee could explore these options.

234. Lowestoft Vision Service Level Agreement

This is also on the agenda for tomorrow's Full Council meeting. There is a concern regarding section 1.5 and it was considered that Lowestoft Town Council cannot make the proposed commitments to give over control of its assets to a third party, particularly as the agreement would be in place until 2023 and the Triangle marketplace may be undergoing significant change by then. It was queried whether the agreement is necessary, as Lowestoft Vision can book events via the normal procedures with the Council, or possibly reserve dates at the beginning of the year.

Facilities and Contracts Manager left the meeting at 19:41

Cllr Graham proposed a recommendation to Full Council that the agreement is not signed; whilst Lowestoft Town Council supports Lowestoft Vision this is not a suitable agreement; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

235. Date of the next meeting

19 March 2018 16:00(TBC) Riverside

236. Items for the next Agenda and Close

No matters were raised.

The Chair closed the meeting at 19:42

Signed:.....

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