

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Implementation Committee

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

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard (arrived 17:08), Allyson Barron (arrived 17:04), Neil Coleby, Peter Collecott, Amanda Frost, Ian Graham, Dick Houghton (departed 18:15), Peter Knight (Chair), Keith Patience and Alice Taylor

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Town Clerk)

Public: One member of the public (arrived 17:08)

137. Welcome

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

138. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs June Ford and Tara Carlton. Cllrs Barnard and Barron were not present at the beginning of the meeting.

139. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

None.

140. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes:

4 December 2017 - accepted as accurate.

141. Public Forum

None present at this point in the meeting.

142. Community engagement

142.1 Survey (including Survey Monkey)

Cllr Barron arrived at 17:04 with one member of the public.

It was agreed that Deputy Town Clerk would be tasked with putting together proposals for a Council gazebo, stall (folding table), sail banners and pull-up banners to help promote the Council and support its public engagement.

Sue Barnard arrived at 17:08,

It was agreed that a recommendation should be made to the Full Council for the purchase of a Survey Monkey subscription to provide an online survey vehicle at a cost of £32 per month which is chargeable as £384 annually.

142.2 Promotion leaflets and advertising

This was underway in line with the agreement at Full Council. The template for the Bugle has been developed and the deadline is 5th of the month for submission for a 15th of the month publication. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Taylor for her work on this communication.

143. Draft volunteer and 'friends of' protocol

A meeting will take place on 16 January with the Friends of Kensington Gardens and, once further progressed and adopted, this protocol will provide a useful framework. It was noted that Gainsborough Drive have embryonic moves towards a friends group.

144. Town Council noticeboards and signs

Posters on the Town Hall will be progressed if there is Flipside funding for this activity. It was agreed that the work so far on noticeboards and signs would be taken forward with the support of new staff to ensure proposals were presented to the Committee.

145. Town Council office

145.1 Current position and any progress with lease

Lease – The pros and cons of office options were discussed. Councillors had been invited to consider an office option at a site visit on 9 January 2018. This comes with the option to take up occupancy under a temporary lease at £600 per month in advance of the development of a longer-term lease. There was a particular positivity around the partnership working and the commitment to embracing the Town Council being there. There was a discussion about long-term lease option requiring a break clauses at 3 (and 6 years if relevant) and the option of a sub-lease in order to provide the flexibility of a move into the Town Hall in the event of its suitable development.

145.2 Office furniture

Cllr Coleby is drafting a list of needed equipment and furniture, such as a hearing loop for meeting rooms. Options including seeing whether a lease package might incorporate furniture.

146. To consider next steps for the following assets:

It was noted that efforts continued to try and rebalance the asset portfolio transferred by WDC by obtaining needed funds to ensure they were in a good and sustainable condition e.g. the Clerk had identified some new money for maintenance for the Marina that day. However, there was a fundamental problem with the law enabling such transfers before new councils came into existence and without related funds. There had been requests to WDC to take back some elements but this had been refused.

At the Triangle, the locked electrical power connection points need to be compliance-checked. The future of the sails area also has to be considered in due course. The new Facilities Manager needs to look at that and Norse needs to be contacted. The state of the toilets needs to be looked at and toilets are on the agenda. Under the Capital Programme there is some money for improvements including tarmac of paths at Sparrow's Nest. At the end of November the sails were cleaned up and painted. There was clarification that the asset plans are supposed to identify the asset and assess what is needed as a starting point; they are not forward plans but are initial records about the assets. The Finance and Governance Committee has looked at the needs for each asset and budgets have been allocated as far as is possible on the information available.

146.1 The Triangle Market

i) Asset plan

A meeting is due to progress this. It was noted that the area under the sails is not part of the market and requires a licence from WDC if there is trading activity.

ii) Christmas Market review

There were 17 stalls of which 10 were under the sails. Some shops reported complementary foot-fall. Fly-parking was controllable through cones. The sails leaked which is an issue to be considered for the future. It was an amateurish set-up but it was still well-received. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Houghton, Peter Lang and to the Committee for their work. There

was concern about any future markets being developed in the context of a strong framework and strategy to ensure quality control and also control over the type of stall (e.g. not knives or other unsuitable or controversial goods).

The Clerk had contacted NABMA about membership and about speaking to the Council about developing a market but had not yet responded. She would chase.

iii) Requests for stalls

It was noted that these should be dealt with only as short-term requests pending a proper market strategy.

iv) Future of the sails

A clean-up has taken place which has been positively received and appears to have reduced the complaints about them being there. They do leak though and there are some uprights which used to be used for shutters and the location of the shutters is being looked into. A strategy is needed for the whole area.

v) Concrete around trees

The concrete is being taken back so it does not immediately restrict the trees but does not create a tripping hazard. This is being carried out at no cost by Norse.

vi) Change to access road order

There is a restriction on parking on the Triangle which is supposed to be loading only Monday to Saturday. There was a discussion about the pros and cons in relation to restricting access by a locked bollard. The potential for a bollard just for market days was also discussed but there was some concern about the cost balanced against the demonstrable need and practical difficulties. It was agreed to try and control through cones and monitor progress before moving to look at options, such as parking enforcement and bollards.

Cllr Houghton departed at 18:15.

146.2 The Marina Theatre

The Trust had been informed that a specialist heritage condition survey will be paid for

146.3 Town Hall and Heritage Action Zone

i) Posters on the boarded-up windows in the Town Hall

This was dealt with at 144 above.

ii) Coastal Communities and Heritage Lottery funds

The Coastal Communities fund - a potential area for funding and staff would work with Cllrs Taylor, Coleby, Knight and Patience to progress a bid.

Heritage Lottery Fund - response is awaited.

iii) Condition survey for the Town Hall

Once the Facilities Manager is in place this will be progressed and the Finance and Governance Committee will receive a presentation from the relevant company when appropriate.

iv) Heritage Action Zone

The HAZ Committee meets shortly. Danny Steel is there to represent business, the Town Council to represent community interests and the District Council is also represented.

Next meeting of the High Street Traders is on 10th January at 6pm at the Flint House.

146.4 North Denes

i) Fencing

Comments were made that the fenced area on Phase 3 is designated open space and it was not understood why the fencing had been required for this long for the purpose that had been specified. The Clerk to write to Tingdene to request removal by the end of the financial year.

ii) Land use

The member of the public left the meeting.

There was a debate about land use and the need for a strategy over this area.

The member of the public returned to the meeting.

ii) Nearby soil dumping

There is soil at the Denes Oval wall. This has been taken up with Norse who have provided background information. Norse to be asked to remove the soil and provide a condition survey; the former for safety concerns and the latter to support the Council's discussions with WDC about the future of the wall, which was considered to be in a poor condition.

146.5 East of England Park

i) Progress with funding governance and allocation

Clerk to email Samantha Jones for an update on when governance arrangements will be put in place and with an offer to administer arrangements.

ii) Proposed additional transfer of sea wall

WDC has indicated that they have failed to include the sea wall in the transfer and would wish to now transfer.

It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that no transfer will be considered unless an undertaking is received that all sea wall's owned by the Town Council will be repaired and maintained by WDC.

David Butcher has asked that the Town Council continues to have regard to the existence of the liver reduction area and the Goings Rope Walk.

146.6 Gunton Warren

i) Proposed additional transfer

Cllr Patience departed at 18:26.

It was agreed that a recommendation should be made to Council that condition surveys, site visits and dowries must be provided before any additional transfers of assets would be considered, including those where the transfer has failed owing to an omission in the process. This would also apply to the sea wall at 146.4ii.

Cllr Patience returned at 18:28.

146.7 The community halls

i) Progress with leases

It was agreed that the Facilities Manager should have a look at the leases and that WDC should be invited to attend a Committee to talk about the draft and its further application to other halls. It was noted that at 20.4 General, line 1, the wording was unclear.

146.8 Open Spaces

i) Sparrows Nest

There will be a report to the next meeting.

ii) Update on Arnold's Bequest

There has been a historic report which Cllr Patience had provided to the Council as background to this area - Report on the limited excavations on the site of the No.1 High Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk. It was noted that there had been some movement in providing hard-standing for bins and the Clerk would seek an update.

iii) Tree strategy

It was noted that some emergency work on trees in Hubbard's Loke had been effectively cleared by Norse for which thanks were extended to them. There had been complications and a tree fall at Gainsborough Drive ahead of planned works. A draft tree strategy was being progressed and would come to the next meeting. It was noted that mapping all of the trees is a significant undertaking. WDC has not progressed full-tree mapping but to date only mapped and dealt with dead, dying and diseased trees. However the Town Council was exploring ways of achieving full mapping.

iv) Pond strategy

Next agenda.

v) Toilets strategy

Next agenda.

vi) Belle Vue

There is an asset plan underway. There will be work with the College and Norse to try and progress plans for the Committee to consider in relation to the benches and planting and other plans to enhance the area.

146.9 CCTV

A planned public meeting for 8 February would consider CCTV.

The public survey would consider the question of where people want CCTV.

146.10 Allotment next to Fairfield Drive.

It was noted that the last application on that site was refused by the planning authority. A footprint plan was to be provided by WDC.

146.11 Other assets and asset plans

CLlr Barnard had drafted four plans. Next agenda.

146.12 WDC condition surveys

It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that a memory stick is purchased in order to provide condition surveys and other information to all members; hard copies to be provided where necessary.

147. To consider progress with grounds management contract arrangements

It was noted that the Facilities Manager would be helping the Council to progress Key Performance Indicators for the contract further.

The Clerk had requested a contract price for next year and an indication of what reductions in cost can be made.

The problem with the way that the contract arrangement is put together with limited information on the detailed service specification, was discussed. It was noted that there is no profit-share information at this stage.

It was agreed that a recommendation should be made to Full Council that there should be a full scoping study on the future of the grounds maintenance contract started in June.

148. 2018 Fees and Charges for market stalls, events etc

Leisure – It was noted that no charges will be applied from 1 April 2018 for a trial period of one year. An online booking system would be developed.

Markets – It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that there should be no increase in fees pending the development of a market strategy; where possible suitable restrictions/caveats should be incorporated into the market agreements.

Events – It was agreed to recommend no increase in charge with the annual review for 2019/20 to take account of actual income and usage.

1 abstention.

149. To consider requesting a bus shelter opposite the railway station

There are technical issues with putting a bus shelter there given the width of the pavement.

This is a matter which has been looked at by principal authorities for some time. It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the Council should support the principle of erection of a bus shelter if it is technically feasible but SCC should be informed that the Town Council has no budget for this matter.

150. Licensing consultation:

i) Rickshaws

Concerns were raised that there should be a requirement for a conspicuous and prominent display of tariff at the point of use. This matter would be progressed to the next Planning and Environment Committee agenda.

ii) Market stalls

It was noted that currently stalls under the sails need a licence whereas they do not under the Triangle. It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that the Town Council opts into being a consultee for street trader licencing (with a request for maximum information e.g. dates of intended trading) and that the Planning and Environment Committee set up a sub-committee which might comprise the Chair and Deputy Chair of that committee and two other councillors.

151. Events on Town Council land

There were a number of events which were likely to come to the Council shortly and it was noted that the way in which events are dealt with by the Committee might be reviewed when the new support officer is in place.

152. Proclamation planning

There is a protocol and planning is underway. The Mayor would have a significant role and would need support.

153. Dip Farm

The land is WDC's, leased to Sentinel and it was agreed to recommend to the Planning and Environment Committee that they monitor developments at this site. There was also a discussion of the importance of this site in the event that a neighbourhood plan is progressed. Next Planning agenda.

154. Date of the next meeting 22 January 2018 17:00 Riverside

155. Items for the next Agenda and Close

- i) Committee including stakeholders for Christmas lights.
- ii) Approaching Lowestoft photography Club re. a competition for a Christmas card.

Signed:
22nd January 2018