

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee
Riverside, Waveney District Council Offices, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft NR33 0EQ
14:00 on 21 August 2018

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Allyson Barron, Neil Coleby, Ian Graham, Alan Green (Chair) and Graham Parker and Alice Taylor (arrived 15:08)

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk), James Cox (Communications Assistant) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: Cllr Houghton was in attendance as an observer.

329. Welcome

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

330. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Alam. Cllr Taylor advised in advance of the meeting that she would be attending another meeting at Riverside, but could join this meeting if required. Cllr Coleby proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Graham; all in favour.

331. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

332. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes:

24 July 2018 – accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Coleby; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

333. Public Forum

Cllr Houghton addressed the Committee. A bonfire event in November at the North Denes was discussed at yesterday's meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee. Councillors voted against the event going ahead this year but Cllr Houghton believes the vote was close enough for this to be reconsidered, and has modified the plans in accordance with feedback given at yesterday's meeting. Cllr Houghton and two members of the public have formed the Lowestoft Town Bonfire Group. The planned location of the event is now towards the Links Road area, which provides better access and is further away from the caravan park. Enquiries have been made regarding public conveniences and the recommended number is 6. The hire cost for the duration of the event would be £640. The revised overall budget would therefore total £2,240. A grant application would be submitted if Lowestoft Town Council does not wish to organise the event. It was however suggested that Lowestoft Town Council should consider taking on this event to demonstrate its commitment to having a positive impact on the town. The Council has however given support to the Lowestoft Summer Festival and is currently organising the biggest event in the area to commemorate the end of World War One; as well as the biggest maritime parade in the area on October 7. The Council also offers its support to assist local groups in organising their own events on a regular basis. A further concern which was raised regarding the bonfire event was the lack of lighting. This is difficult in area where there are no streetlights but an illuminated procession is being considered as part of the event plan and there will be catering vans which would provide their own lighting. Cllr Lang has offered to complete a health and safety assessment. A fire risk assessment would also be required at a cost of approximately £250. Rather than fireworks, a Viking re-enactment and professional fire-eaters are being considered. Lowestoft Town Council staff have already made enquiries with the Council's insurance company and this is deemed as a high risk event

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on land which has not been assessed. The Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer advised that if the Council had been given timely notice the event could be thoroughly planned and appropriately budgeted for. The relevant permissions could also be obtained and all queries and concerns could be addressed. In light of the insurance company's advice, an assessment of the land would have to be completed, which would be time consuming and difficult to achieve now. If Lowestoft Town Council would like to organise high profile events for the town their success is essential. Part of this is ensuring the appropriate budgets are in place and this will need to be considered as part of the budget-setting process for next year. It was suggested that an Events Sub-Committee could be formed to analyse what events are taking place in the area throughout next year, and therefore what the Council feels would be of benefit to the town and when. Councillors could submit suggestions as to what they would like to see in the town and the feasibility of each suggestion explored. For this year, Cllr Houghton will instead consider an illuminated procession through the Scores and a Viking re-enactment group in Sparrows Nest. If he does decide to proceed with the event, the plans will be presented to the Council for consideration for approval.

334. Risk management and compliance

334.1 Compliance - There were no matters for consideration.

334.2 Condition Surveys – including to note any progress and findings in relation to the Marina

Theatre, Town Hall and other assets –The condition survey has listed remedial work and the timescale as to when it should be addressed; from priority work which should be completed shortly, to work to be completed in ten years' time. The Facilities and Contracts Manager is obtaining quotes for the most urgent work, if it has not already been indicatively priced. Expert advice is required for some aspects as there are different options available. A meeting will also be held with the Theatre to discuss their plans, as this may negate the requirement for the completion of some of this work. Other work which the consultant recommends for completion within a year will be considered during the budget-setting process for next year. The AID Committee have recommended approval of the expenditure of £350 (+VAT) for repair work required at the Marina Theatre to two sets of doors on its sub-station building. It is recommended that the larger doors are replaced and the old ones used to make repairs to the smaller ones. The Theatre obtained the quote for this work.

Cllr Graham proposed approval of the expenditure of £350 (+VAT) for the repair work; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

It was queried whether the surveys of the Gainsborough Drive and Uplands Road North ponds are being progressed. Anglian Water have been consulted as to whether they believe these are essential; and have advised that neither area has a history of flooding and they therefore do not consider the surveys to be urgent. The Environment Agency has also been consulted and a response is pending. The surveys will be considered during the budget-setting process for next year. A formal response to the grant application for the Town Hall is pending.

334.3 Insurance – Insurance is in place for the Marina Theatre Box Office building. At present, if repair work is required which is not covered by the Waveney Norse contract, the Finance and Governance Committee consider funding completion of the work by a third party. The Clerk advised that the insurance for the Town Council includes some legal and contracts cover and that staff are reviewing the extent to which claims for damage to property etc can be made.

335. Governance issues:

335.1 Any policies or procedures for review or adoption, including;

3351.a A Recycling Policy – It was queried how the targets will be measured, as Lowestoft Town Council has little control over how waste is collected, where it is collected from and the

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facilities; unless the Council is prepared to finance it. It was suggested that staff review the policy to ensure the provisions are measurable, or commit to influence other bodies where necessary. This will then presented again to the Finance and Governance Committee. The purchase of refuse sacks will be removed as that is not possible in this area.

335.1b The Reserves Policy – This will be reviewed and presented at the next Finance and Governance Committee meeting.

336. Any updates on banking

Funds have been deposited into the Debt Management Office short-term account and will remain there until November. The options for other short-term investment accounts are being explored, along with the banking structure for Arnold's Bequest.

Cllr Graham proposed that a representative from CCLA Investment Management Ltd be invited to speak with the Finance and Governance Committee to discuss the options; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

337. Audit

337.1 The external audit report – This will be circulated to Councillors once it has been received.

337.2 Progress with interim internal audit – This will be taking place in September and work has begun to provide the requested information. A review of finances and transactions will be taking place and a report will be provided upon completion.

338. The budget for 2018-19 and note any bank reconciliations

The bank reconciliation dated until the end of June has been duly signed and Cllr Coleby will be requested to sign July's following this meeting. This was available for Councillors to review. An overview of the budget to date was handed to Councillors at the start of the meeting. The second half of the precept will be received in September. It was queried why negative sums were displayed under the virement column. This represents funds which have been transferred from one budget to another. The invoice for the by-election has not yet been received. The costs relating to CCTV were queried. This forms part of the contract with Waveney Norse. Invoices have been received last week but payment has not yet been arranged.

339. Payments:

339.1 Any payments made (schedule) – The following schedule was presented to Councillors:

Date	Payee	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Details
01/08/2018	Salaries	£645.46	£0	£645.46	Salaries July 2018 additional amount
01/08/2018	Waveney District Council	£226	£0	£226	NNDR Triangle Market Aug 2018
01/08/2018	Lowestoft in Bloom	£500	£0	£500	Lowestoft in Bloom grant
01/08/2018	Suffolk Pension Fund	£1,075.70	£0	£1,075.70	July Pensions Employee
01/08/2018	Suffolk Pension Fund	£3,847.22	£0	£3,847.22	July Pensions Employer
03/08/2018	Marina Theatre Trust	£75,000	£15,000	£90,000	Marina Theatre grant 18/19 (second)
09/08/2018	HMRC	£41,598.67	£0	£41,598.67	HMRC VAT repayment

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All Councillors were happy to note the above payments. Two further payments were also made today. The first was the Land Registry fee of £270 (no VAT) for the purchase of the Marina Theatre Box Office building. This has been paid to Waveney District Council as they originally paid this fee as part of the work towards transfer of ownership of the building. The second payment was the Stamp Duty fee of £6,250 (no VAT) for the purchase of the Marina Theatre Box Office building; which has been paid to HMRC. Both of these payments were authorised by the Finance and Governance Committee at the previous meeting. All matters relating to the Marina Theatre Box Office have now been finalised, other than the Land Registry process. Staff salaries have also been paid today. The overall total for the salaries was £9,118.17 and £4,173.88 for pensions.

- 339.2 The cost of letter-box sized stickers for residents to deter against cold-calling, junk mail and dog fouling – The cost for 100 copies of each sticker would be £175 (+VAT). The Clerk and Cllr Graham met with the police today and there are various anti-crime and anti-social behaviour prevention measures which Lowestoft Town Council can get involved with. The idea of the stickers is to give something useful to members of the public when Lowestoft Town Council attends events; which also provides advertising for the Council. The cost of the stickers was queried and it was also discussed whether other designs should be considered such as deterring against feeding seagulls. This would be dependent on where the stickers are intended to be displayed. The quantities may also need to be increased, to 1,000 rather than 100.

Cllr Taylor arrived 15:08

It was suggested that a budget could be agreed for leaflets and items to display and hand out when Lowestoft Town Council attends events.

Cllr Graham proposed a budget of £5,000 for stickers and leaflets. It was suggested first that an event sub-committee could be considered to look at what is already available and devise a more detailed plan. This could involve arranging community meetings with other organisations, such as heritage groups, Neighbourhood Watch and the Police to discuss what could be made available which would benefit the local community. It was also queried which budget the money would come from, or whether this should be considered for next year.

Cllr Graham withdrew his proposal in favour of a proposal from Cllr Coleby to recommend to Full Council that an Events Sub-Committee is established; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Cllr Graham proposed virement of £10,000 from the grants budget to be used as an initial sum to produce leaflets, stickers and other material for distribution to the public; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

- 339.3 Any payments for authorisation, including:

339.3a Clarification and agreement to costs of £344 (+VAT) for installation of Heras fencing at the Denes Oval perimeter wall and £584 (+VAT) hire fees for a year – The Clerk advised that that the decision regarding this item at the previous meeting was not clear enough as to what expenditure had been authorised.

Cllr Graham proposed approval of the installation cost of £344 (+VAT) and the hire fee for one year of £584 (+VAT); seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

339.3b The cost of £2,208 (no VAT) for Lowestoft Town Council's information page in The Bugle in 2019 – This was discussed at yesterday's AID Committee meeting. Cllr Barron displays the page in a noticeboard in her ward and has seen an increase in its popularity. Copies of The Bugle are distributed from the Gunton Estate Community Meeting Hall. This was praised as a positive communication from the Council to its parishioners in a town where communication is difficult and different people favour different types of media. It was suggested that it would be unwise for the Council to restrict itself to solely an online presence. The Bugle is a free

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publication for members of the public and Lowestoft Town Council has not only the back page for its information page, but also other areas in the magazine to advertise.

Cllr Barron proposed approval of the payment of the sum of £2,208 (no VAT) for Lowestoft Town Council to continue to run its information page in The Bugle; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

It is understood that payment will be required as a lump sum rather than monthly instalments. It was agreed that a request be submitted for copies be made available for distribution from Lowestoft Town Council's new office and the Marina Theatre, if they are not already.

339.3c A quote of £500 (+VAT) for advice from a Planning Barrister regarding Neighbourhood Plan designations – The Planning Consultant has a contact who could write a letter to Waveney District Council detailing Lowestoft Town Council's position regarding the boundary with Oulton Parish Council. It was queried whether the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's consultation will affect this. Lowestoft Town Council had previously been advised that its parish boundaries would not be affected but it was suggested that confirmation of this should be sought first. The Planning and Environment Committee will also be considering this at their meeting this afternoon and the Deputy Clerk would be able to give more advice on the effect of the Local Government Boundary Commission's consultation.

Cllr Taylor proposed approval of this expenditure subject to agreement from the Planning and Environment Committee, for the matter to be referred to Full Council should there be any queries; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

339.3d Payments under the Waveney Norse contract for 2018/19 (schedule) – The invoices have only recently been received.

Cllr Graham left the room 15:32

It has previously been agreed that payments could be made so long as they are no more than one twelfth of the total overall balance for the year.

Cllr Graham returned 15:32

The invoices have now been received but they are not all equal payments. The payments for later in the year are slightly higher. As there has been a delay in presenting the payments, Waveney Norse have allowed sixty days for the payments to be made; which means they can be settled once the second precept payment has been received. The sum due for April, May, June, July, August and September 2018 is the same for each month, which is £58,300. It was suggested that the April – August payments be settled 55 days from the due date on the invoice. The September payment can be settled within the standard 30 days as it is not yet due. Later payments are higher but still fit in with the overall budget. Those will be presented as they come up for payment.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the payments as recommended, with future payments to be made as per the agreed schedule; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

339.3e Establishing direct debits to the ICO for Councillor registrations and to Claranet for the website domain – The expenditure has previously been approved but authorisation is required to set up the direct debits. The ICO registrations will need to be completed annually.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval for direct debits to be set up for the ICO and Claranet; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

339.3f Any other payments (schedule) – This was presented to Councillors as follows:

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross	Details
Sarah Foote	£46.65	£0	£46.65	Reimbursement of Council expenses
Sarah Foote	£14.36	£0	£14.36	Mileage and

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				parking
Lowestoft Vision	£788.92	£0	£788.92	BID Levy second instalment

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of all three of the payments; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

There was a query regarding the original budget agreed for the gazebo and other promotional material. Sail flags have now been produced and there is a concern that the colour and quality of the gazebo will not match if it is ordered from another supplier. To order the gazebo from the same company that produced the sail flags would cost £1,680 (+VAT), which is £292.50 more expensive than the previously agreed supplier. This would take the expenditure £236 over the agreed budget. Councillors had also requested vinyl banners, which will also need to be considered.

Cllr Barron proposed paying the extra amount to ensure that all of the material is of uniform colour and quality. No Councillor seconded this proposal.

Cllr Graham proposed that the gazebo be ordered from the previously agreed supplier, within the previously agreed budget; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

There were two contract variations for Hamilton House to be considered. The first was the induction loop system. This had previously been discussed but no budget had been agreed. The cost to install this would be £2,737 (+VAT). The other variation was essential fire protection works, as stipulated by Building Control. This would be at a cost of £3,241.20 (+VAT). This expenditure would take the overall cost of project over budget from £288,635 to £289,613.50. It was originally anticipated that the induction loop would be installed in the ceiling, if Councillors decided they wanted it, but it has since been considered that putting it in the floor would be the better option.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the contract variation of essential fire protection works, to be signed off by Cllrs Graham and Green; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the purchase of the induction loop system as an additional item, with any additional expenditure to come from Lowestoft Town Council's own funds; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Utilities are still currently being dealt with through Vertas and are charged through Waveney District Council. Enquiries are being made for Lowestoft Town Council to be charged directly, however, it was agreed that Lowestoft Town Council does not necessarily want to take on the same contract terms that Waveney District Council had.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of investigation into other suppliers and a proposal to be presented to this Committee; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Enquiries also need to be made regarding applying a charge for any electrical sub-stations on Lowestoft Town Council land. The current charge is £1 per year. With regard to the Royal Naval Maritime event in October, Suffolk County Council have agreed to meet the cost of the road closures and provide wardens. It has been requested that Lowestoft Town Council be the event organiser, which may require a budget to be set aside to cover insurance. The AID Committee have recommended that Lowestoft Town Council takes on the role of event organiser.

Cllr Coleby proposed that Lowestoft Town Council takes on the role of event organiser, with delegated authority to the Clerk and a budget of £2,000 from the civic budget, and additional funding from the civic and ceremonial reserve if required; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Staff car parking spaces in the Whapload Road car park are being progressed. The original budget was for five spaces, however two members of staff do not currently require car

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parking spaces, therefore an application for three spaces is being progressed, as vehicle registration details have to be submitted.

Cllr Graham proposed that the application for three staff car parking spaces is progressed, with a budget to be set aside for another two when they are required; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

339.4 Any grant applications, including:

339.4a Gunton Residents Association for £750 – It was noted that the address on the grant application form should be changed to Hamilton House. Staff will ensure this is actioned. Cllr Parker declared a Local Non-Pecuniary interest in this item as he is a member of the Gunton Residents Association.

Cllr Barron proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Coleby; five Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

339.4b Further information from Lowestoft Art Group for additional funding of £1,000 – Councillors were in agreement that the additional information which had been provided was still not sufficient to approve the additional sum of £1,000. Further information will be requested.

339.5 An event (or events) to formally open Lowestoft Town Council’s new premises and to consider an associated budget – It was suggested that more than one event would be required, to introduce the press, District and County Councillors, other local Parish Councils, staff at East Coast Community Healthcare and Riverside, the public and family and friends to the new offices. It was suggested that cheese and wine could be served at each event.

Cllr Coleby proposed taking a maximum of £1,000 from the civic budget as an overall budget, for the events to be funded at the most reasonable cost that can be achieved; seconded by Cllr Graham; all in favour.

It was also suggested that Councillors should be involved with the organisation of the events and assist staff where possible.

340. The following items relating to income:

340.1 Receipts – This was presented to Councillors as follows:

Date	Amount Received	Details
13/08/2018	£213.16	Tenant income
17/08/2018	£1,600.50	Leisure fee accrual

Cllr Coleby proposed to note the income; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

As the Planning and Environment Committee meeting was due to start, it was agreed that the remaining items would be deferred to the next meeting, other than item 344, which required a decision urgently.

340.2 CiL and S.106 payments

340.3 To receive any updates on any financial funding streams affecting Council assets

340.4 Capital programme

341. Any update regarding the provision of Christmas lights in Lowestoft

342. Feedback from the community survey

343. Any progress with plans and lease for the first floor of Hamilton House

344. Whether to organise and fund a fireworks display in Lowestoft in November

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Cllr Barron proposed seeking further advice and deferring the event until next year; seconded by Cllr Graham; all in favour.

345. Other financial matters including

- 345.1 Planned maintenance
- 345.2 Sale of land at Uplands
- 345.3 Commemorative plaques
- 345.4 Arnold's Bequest –Charity registration arrangements
- 345.5 Cotman Close Play Area
- 345.6 Normanston Park Allotments
- 345.7 Centenary Installation at Belle Vue Park

346. Date of the next meeting

25 September 2018 14:00

347. Items for the next Agenda

Setting up a Budget Working Group.
Working with Pathways Community Care Farm and consideration of a budget for seeds and plants for 2019.

348. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting at 16:02

Signed:

25 September 2018