

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 8 November 2018

MINUTES

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

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

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

375. Welcome

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

376. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Alam and Parker. Proposed by Cllr Graham; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

377. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Taylor declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 383.4; specifically a grant application from the Friends of Kensington Gardens.

Cllr Graham declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 383.4a and 383.4b.

378. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes:

11 October 2018 – With regard to item 359.3b, it was queried whether an Equality Policy or an Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy was requested. It was confirmed that staff have received an Equality Policy.

Cllr Coleby proposed acceptance of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

379. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

380. Consideration of risk management and compliance, including the following:

380.1 Compliance – The Facilities and Contracts Manager (FCM) has compiled a spreadsheet with an analysis of what he understands are the compliance concerns for each of Lowestoft Town Council's assets. The spreadsheet details the anticipated ten year spend, for the various testing relevant to each site. This was noted and it was agreed that this information would be incorporated into the budget. It was queried whether a fire risk assessment was required for the Town Hall. It is understood that it may not be a statutory requirement but the Clerk will confirm this with the FCM. It will need to be decided whether three quotes must be obtained for every element, each time testing is required and it was suggested it would be more cost and time effective to agree a five year contract with one company. The figures in the spreadsheet are based on what the costs would be at the present time. It was agreed that the Budget Working Group would analyse the figures and adjust as necessary.

380.2 Condition Surveys – The Clerk has received the paperwork relating to the Town Hall and a meeting was arranged for 11:30 on Friday 9 November for it to be reviewed. Cllrs Coleby and Taylor confirmed their attendance. Cllr Green advised he would not be able to attend due to a prior commitment.

380.3 Insurance – It was agreed for this item to be removed from the agenda as discussion is only required when renewal is due or if any other matters are presented. It was noted that

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Lowestoft Town Council's insurers will be notified immediately upon receipt of the artefacts from Waveney District Council.

With regard to the Lowestoft Collection, Cllr Coleby proposed that temporary arrangements be made with Lowestoft Town Council's insurers if necessary, to ensure that the Collection remains insured; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

381. Any updates on banking

The changes to the bank signatories is being progressed. This will remove Waveney District Council and add Cllr Parker. The Deputy Clerk has been researching options with regard to credit cards. Mastercard have provided the most cost effective option and the Deputy Clerk will therefore be submitting an application to them. The equipment for the petty cash system has arrived and this will be implemented forthwith.

East Coast Community Healthcare's Head of Estates and Facilities has given permission for Christmas lights to decorate Lowestoft Town Council's offices. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is not required for the first year but it has been confirmed that they will be included with East Coast Community Healthcare's routine testing in future years.

382. Budget

382.1 Monitoring the budget for 2018-19 and note any bank reconciliations – Budget monitoring paperwork was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting and was reviewed at the meeting. It was noted that the Town Council's finances are in good order and there were no queries.

All Councillors voted in favour to note the budget monitoring report.

Lowestoft Town Council have been approached by Pear Technology, who provide a professional mapping service at a competitive price. This is something which Councillors have previously expressed an interest in and it would be a beneficial addition to the Council's website. If the Town Council registers with Pear Technology it would gain access to maps for Lowestoft at no cost. If it purchased their software, it could gain access to even more sophisticated data. It is understood the cost would be no more than £700 per year. This could be very useful for the Neighbourhood Plan and mapping of the town's War graves. It was queried whether it would be updated to reflect boundary changes. It is understood that once Pear's software is purchased, the data can be changed as the Council desires, and can be published with the necessary copy rights. It was suggested that other companies could purchase data that the Town Council produces, such as tree mapping. Assuming that the total overall cost does not exceed £1,000, the cost could be met from the grant which Lowestoft Town Council received for the Neighbourhood Plan, as the first tranche of £6,000 has been received.

Cllr Graham proposed expenditure not exceeding £1,000 on mapping and visual data management tools, with delegated authority to the Clerk to progress this; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

382.2 Consideration of progress with developing the 2019-20 budget – The next meeting of the Budget Working Group was agreed as Wednesday 14 November 13:00 – 15:30. Waveney Norse's Finance Manager will be invited also.

It was noted that October's bank reconciliation will be completed before the next regular Full Council meeting to be noted at that meeting.

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383. Payments:

383.1 Any payments made (schedule) – The schedule for October’s payments was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. The schedule for November’s payments thus far was displayed to Councillors at the meeting, as follows:

October Expenditure				
Date	Amount	VAT	Total	Detail
01/10/2018	£113			WDC Triangle Market Business Rates October 2018
01/10/2018	£288			WDC Kensington Gardens Public Conveniences Business Rates October 2018
01/10/2018	£168			WDC Pakefield Street Public Conveniences Business Rates October 2018
02/10/2018	£2,330	£466	£2,796	David Ogilvie Engineering WWI Memorial Bench x2 and Bin
02/10/2018	£475			Heritage Open Day Grant
02/10/2018	£6.62	£1.33	£7.95	Shona Bendix Stationery Reimbursement
02/10/2018	£20			Sarah Foote Poppy Donation Reimbursement
04/10/2018	£4,406.98			Suffolk Pension Fund – September Pensions
05/10/2018	£665			Cllr ICO registration x19
08/10/2018	£69,960			Norse Partnership Charge for May 2018
09/10/2018	£69,960			Norse Partnership Charges for April 2018
10/10/2018	£69,960			Norse Partnership Charges for June 2018
11/10/2018	£69,960			Norse Partnership Charges for July 2018
11/10/2018	£12,045.40			HMRC Q2
12/10/2018	£69,960			Norse Partnership Charges for August 2018
12/10/2018	£22.44			Shona Bendix Council Reimbursement
12/10/2018	£33.85			Mark Speller Council Reimbursement
12/10/2018	£2,219	£443.80	£2,662.80	Nicholsons Solicitors Legal Advice
12/10/2018	£875	£175	£1,050	Waveney District Council Parking Permit x3
12/10/2018	£81.04			Sarah Foote Office Expenses Reimbursement
12/10/2018	£17.99	£3.60	£21.59	Shona Bendix Council Reimbursement
18/10/2018	£69,960			Norse Partnership Charges for September 2018
23/10/2018	£10,691.42			Salaries for October 2018
25/10/2018	£35			Cllr ICO Registration
31/10/2018	£398.33	£79.67	£478	Fatstickman Ltd 7 October Civic Promotion
31/10/2018	£200.83	£40.17	£241	Leiston Press 7 October Civic Promotion
31/10/2018	£158.40			St John Ambulance 7 October Civic Event Support
31/10/2018	£8.41	£1.68	£10.09	Shona Bendix Office Expenses Reimbursement
31/10/2018	£4,909.58	£981.92	£5,891.50	RSF Asbestos Surveys
31/10/2018	£620			Suffolk Norse 7 October Civic Event Support
31/10/2018	£13.47			Sarah Foote Council Reimbursement

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31/10/2018	£1,691.97	£338.40	£2,030.37	Urban Vision Neighbourhood Plan Advice
31/10/2018	£4.95			Mark Speller 7 October Civic Travel Expense
31/10/2018	£66,666.68	£19,333.33	£86,000.01	EPBS Hamilton House Refurbishment
31/10/2018	£0.67	£0.13	£0.80	7 October Civic Promotion
31/10/2018	£0.50			Mark Speller 7 October Civic Travel Expense
November Expenditure				
01/11/2018	£113			WDC Triangle Market Business Rates
01/11/2018	£288			WDC Kensington Gardens Public Conveniences Business Rates
01/11/2018	£168			WDC Pakefield Street Public Conveniences Business Rates
01/11/2018	£50			Cllr Alan Green Travel Reimbursement for NALC Conference
01/11/2018	£369.25			Shona Bendix Reimbursement Car Hire for NALC Conference
01/11/2018	£244.24	£48.85	£293.03	Ricoh UK Ltd Printer Hire 01/10/2018 – 31/12/2019
02/11/2018	£71.52	£14.31	£85.83	Shona Bendix Reimbursement for Office Expenses
05/11/2018	£4,991.55			Suffolk County Council Pension Fund Staff Pensions October 2018
06/11/2018	£16.95	£3.39	£20.34	Shona Bendix Civic Reimbursement
06/11/2018	£56.51	£11.90	£71.40	Sarah Foote Reimbursement for Office Expenses
06/11/2018	£10.26			Mark Speller Reimbursement for Council Expenses
06/11/2018	£196.38			Cllr Alice Taylor Reimbursement for '.uk' Email Hosting
08/11/2018	£3,485	£697	£4,182	Archant Community Survey Costs
08/11/2018	£129			Vertas Hire of Meeting Room for Full Council Meeting 07/08/2018
08/11/2018	£284.03			Shona Bendix Reimbursement for Council Expenses

383.2 Any payments for authorisation – There were no payments for consideration.

383.3 Any other payments (schedule) – There were no payments for consideration.

383.4 Consideration of any grant applications, including:

Cllr Graham elected to leave the room 18:40 for the discussion of items 383.4a and 383.4b

383.4a 8th Lowestoft Girl Guides for £740 – Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the grant application from the 8th Lowestoft Girl Guides in the sum of £740; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

383.4b 8th Lowestoft Girl Guides for £300 – Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the grant application from the 8th Lowestoft Girl Guides in the sum of £300; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Cllr Graham returned 18:42

The Grant Awarding Policy currently states that individual grants awarded by Lowestoft Town Council are unlikely to exceed £500 each. The current wording encompasses the fact that

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grant applications over this amount will still be considered but the Committee will consider alternative phrasing.

A grant application from the London Road Baptist Church was displayed to Councillors at the meeting. Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the grant application from London Road Baptist Church in the sum of £500; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

383.4c DIAL Lowestoft and Waveney for £2,000 – Cllr Barron proposed approval of the grant application from DIAL Lowestoft and Waveney in the sum of £2,000; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

It was agreed that the Grant Awarding Policy and application form should be amended to request a business plan and more data regarding the business reach of the organisation submitting the application before it is considered.

383.4d Lowestoft Shopmobility for £500 – Cllr Graham proposed approval of the grant application from Lowestoft Shopmobility in the sum of £500; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Cllr Taylor elected to leave the room 18:58 for the discussion of the grant application from the Friends of Kensington Gardens

A grant application from the Friends of Kensington Gardens was displayed to the Committee at the meeting. The application was for the sum of £1,360 for specified plants and fertiliser to plant the long border. It was agreed that it would be more cost and time effective for Lowestoft Town Council to source the requested plants and fertiliser and meet the cost from the grants budget.

Cllr Graham proposed that Lowestoft Town Council source the requested plants and fertiliser for the Friends of Kensington Gardens to plant the long border, within an overall budget of £1,360, to be paid from the grants budget; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

Cllr Taylor returned 19:02

All Councillors agreed that Cllr Coleby would liaise with the Friends of Kensington Gardens and source the plants and fertiliser on behalf of the Council.

383.5 The overview of expenditure under the grants budget – This was displayed to Councillors at the meeting. It was noted that the remaining budget should be reduced by £10,000 as this amount was removed from the grants budget using virement to become the budget for the Events and Communications Sub-Committee.

The Clerk left the room 19:06

The Clerk returned 19:07

384. Consideration of the following items relating to income:

384.1 Receipts – The schedule of income for October was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting and the schedule of income for November thus far was displayed to Councillors at the meeting, as follows:

October Income				
Date	Amount	VAT	Total	Detail
08/10/2018	£213.16			Rental income from tenant
12/10/2018	£2,187.50			Rental income from tenant
17/10/2018	£854.79			Rental income from tenant
23/10/2018	£781.85			Rental income from tenant
23/10/2018	£11,760.44			CIL October 2018
30/10/2018	-£,6000			Reimbursement to tenant for overpayment of rent

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November Income				
Date	Amount	VAT	Total	Detail
01/11/2018	£144.75			Shona Bendix Reimbursement For Cancelled Order
05/11/2018	£213.16			Rental Income from Tenant

384.2 CiL and S.106 payments – Data from Waveney District Council states that S.106 funds have been used for the improvements works to the play areas at Stoven Close, Normanston Park and Rosedale Park. The additional expenditure to move the fence surrounding the Normanston Park play area also came from S.106 funding. All Councillors were in agreement with this data. It was noted that there is a total of £63,093 of CiL funds in Lowestoft Town Council’s account. The Clerk and Communications Assistant will review and update this information and present it to the Committee again.

Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to Full Council for renovation work at the public conveniences at Fen Park and Sparrows Nest to be completed using S.106 funding, with any residual amount to be covered using CiL funding; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour. This will be discussed during the meeting on 14 November and a specification will be created to be considered by Full Council.

384.3 Any updates on any financial funding streams affecting Council assets – Details have been obtained of an organisation who provide funding for lighting projects. Grants are available to update lighting from standard to LED, which may be suitable for the museums under the Town Council’s ownership. Under the new budget announced recently by the Government, money will be available to regenerate High Streets, and particularly buildings within Heritage Action Zones. The feasibility study for the Town Hall will be progressed and further consideration could be given to the land surrounding it, such as the car park on Mariners Street and the former biscuit factory, which are currently under Waveney District Council’s ownership.

384.4 Capital programme – A figure has not yet been entered for this for the 2019 – 20 budget. It was suggested that terminology and the budget headings also need to be considered, such as renaming the Parks Repair and Maintenance budget to Parks Development.

384.5 Management of the Historic England grant for the Town Hall – This was already covered during earlier discussions.

385. Consideration of any progress with the lease for the first floor of Hamilton House

The agreed costs are being incorporated into the lease. Dividing doors between the Council Chamber and the Lowestoft Room were agreed as part of the project but no colour was decided upon.

Cllr Graham proposed pale grey as the colour selection for the dividing doors; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Designated parking spaces at Hamilton House for visitors and Councillors will be raised again at a meeting on 9 November between Cllr Coleby, the Clerk, the Facilities and Contracts Manager and representatives from East Coast Community Healthcare.

386. Consideration of the Waveney Norse Supplemental Agreement

The Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee also considered this at their meeting on 5 November, who recommended that legal advice be sought.

387. Progress with legal advice regarding the Deed of Covenant relating to the North Denes

This was discussed during the Full Council meeting on 23 October and there were no further updates to consider.

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388. Consideration of other financial matters including

388.1 Planned maintenance – There were no further matters for consideration.

388.2 Sale of land at Uplands – There was no update to consider

388.3 Commemorative plaques – Cllr Coleby is working on a proposal to submit to Full Council.

388.4 Arnold's Bequest, including to consider setting up a bank account and governance arrangements – It was agreed that the Board of Trustees should be formed first, which will be discussed further at the next Full Council meeting. A meeting is being held prior to the next Waveney District Full Council meeting for Councillors to relinquish their responsibilities as trustees for Waveney District Council. The funds have been requested from Waveney District Council.

388.5 Cotman Close Play Area – There were no updates to consider.

388.6 Normanston Park Allotments – The land transfer is still subject to legal advice.

388.7 A review of all fees and charges – The commercial hire fees charged by Lowestoft Town Council for an event to be held on its land were considered at the meeting. The charge for a Fun Fair is variable and it was queried who is responsible for deciding the fee. This is currently decided by staff under delegated authority.

Cllr Green proposed a recommendation to Full Council to continue the current arrangements for commercial hire fees; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

Terms and conditions have not yet been drawn up for hiring of Lowestoft Town Council's meeting rooms. It was suggested that, once the dividing doors are in place, £100 should be charged to hire the Council Chamber for the day with the dividing doors closed, or £60 for half a day. £150 should be charged to have the entire space with the doors open, or £90 for half a day. It was suggested that hire of the Lowestoft and Plaisir Rooms should be charged at £50 each for the day, or £30 for half a day. Tea and coffee will be charged at £1.50 per person per round. The fees for room hire outside of office hours would need to be considered and will depend on staff availability. The agreed fee would need to incorporate staff wages at time and a half.

Cllr Graham proposed a recommendation to Full Council that the arrangements for the sports and leisure facilities remain the same next year as they have for this year, other than for football and cricket, until the Council has met with those clubs; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

It was agreed that the current arrangement with the market stall traders at the Triangle Market should also continue for now. Enquiries will be made with Waveney Norse as to the rental income.

388.8 A report regarding adult outdoor gym equipment – This will be considered in more detail at the next meeting.

388.9 Petty cash cheques – The amounts had previously been approved and this item was noted.

388.10 To note that the final cost of the Hamilton House window graphics has been reduced by £100 – This item was noted.

388.11 Budget and delegates for the NALC Spring Conference on 11 February 2019 – A recommendation will be made to Full Council that the Mayor, the Chairs of each Committee, the Clerk and two other Councillors attend the NALC Spring Conference. Research has suggested that it would be more cost effective for the attendees to hire a car and travel to London the day before, although enquiries will need to be made with the hotel regarding the availability and cost of car parking.

There were a couple of recommendations from the AID Committee – following their meeting on 5 November - to consider. The Facilities and Contracts Manager has obtained three

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quotes for vinyl stickers to update signage at Lowestoft Town Council's assets. The AID Committee's preferred quote was from UK Graphics and Engraving.
Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the recommendation from the AID Committee to purchase fifty, UV stable, stickers of each relevant size (five sizes in total) from UK Graphics and Engraving, at a total cost of £90 (+VAT), with delegated authority to the Clerk to progress this; seconded by Cllr Barron; all in favour.

The second recommendation from the AID Committee was to consider closing the office on Christmas Eve, so it was agreed that the staff in attendance at the meeting would leave the room for this discussion.

The Clerk, Communications Assistant and Committee Clerk left the room 19:42

Cllr Barron proposed approval of the recommendation from the AID Committee for the office to be closed on Christmas Eve, for which staff will be paid but will not be required to take annual leave; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

The Clerk, Communications Assistant and Committee Clerk returned 19:43

389. Date of the next meeting

13 December 2018 18:00. Cllr Barron gave her apologies for this meeting.

390. Items for the next Agenda

There was a request for the Committee to consider purchasing a stock of soft enamel pin badges, designed with Lowestoft Town Council's logo and the words 'thank you', to hand to students and young people who have contributed to the care of Lowestoft Town Council's assets, or participated in an event organised by the Council.

391. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

391.1 Any employment matters – There were no matters for consideration.

391.2 Any legal matters – There were no matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting at 19:45

Signed:

13 December 2018