

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 24 June 2019

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard (Chair), Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Peter Collecott, Peter Knight, Andy Pearce, Alice Taylor and Nick Webb

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk), Mark Speller (Facilities and Contracts Manager) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

33. Welcome

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

34. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Steve Ardley and Graham Parker. Cllr Taylor proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

35. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Breakspear declared a Local Non-Pecuniary Interest in matters relating to Kensington Gardens, as a member of the Friends of Kensington Gardens. Cllr Barnard declared a Local Non-Pecuniary Interest in matters relating to Gainsborough Drive, as a member of the Gunton Residents Association.

36. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes:

10 June 2019 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Knight; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

37. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

38. Consideration of matters relating to leases, including the following:

38.1 Any progress with the lease and developments on site for the first floor of Hamilton House (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

39. Consideration of progress with noticeboards, signs and plaques

An update on heritage plaques should be provided at the next meeting. At tomorrow's Full Council meeting a Councillor representative should be formally appointed to work with the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society.

So far two of the Lowestoft Town Council noticeboards have been installed, at Normanston Drive and Gainsborough Drive. The rest should be installed on 26 June, other than the noticeboard due to be installed at the Denes Oval, which will require a gas engineer to be present due to its proximity to the gas main.

At the last Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee meeting, new signage was discussed, providing updated information for stockists of RADAR keys and contact information for reporting any issues with play areas. The Facilities and Contracts Manager (FCM) displayed images of graphics for the signs he has drafted. It was agreed that the graphic for the RADAR key sign be amended to show an image of a standard shaped key. It was agreed that the wording on the signage for play areas should be amended to read 'report problems to'.

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So far quotes have been received from two separate suppliers for production of the signage. The lowest price of £312 +VAT was provided by Seletar.

Cllr Pearce proposed using the quotes received as an indicative cost, with delegated authority to the Finance and Governance Committee to select the supplier; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

40. Consideration of asset transfer and compliance issues, in particular the following matters:

- 40.1 Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 40.2 Report from the Facilities and Contracts Manager regarding asset management, compliance monitoring, maintenance and condition surveys – There were no updates to consider.

41. Consideration of an update and next steps for the following assets:

- 41.1 Allotments – This is on the agenda for consideration at tomorrow's Full Council meeting.
- 41.2 The Ness – A meeting to discuss the Licence to Occupy has been provisionally arranged between East Suffolk and Lowestoft Town Councils' solicitors and representatives from both parties. Cllrs Barnard and Knight recently attended a public meeting about establishing a Friends of The Ness group.
- 41.3 Marina Theatre – The Supplemental Agreement will be discussed at tomorrow's Full Council meeting. Quotes have been obtained for a structural survey of the rear wall, which will be presented to Full Council in due course. The Marina Theatre's management team has been asked to source three quotes for the replacement of the dressing room heaters.
- 41.4 North Denes – Waveney Norse have been asked to reinstate missing post and rail fencing along Links Road, to prevent trespassing and encampments.
- 41.5 Open Spaces and parks, including the following:
- 41.5a Consideration of amendments to the Tree Policy – This was circulated to the Committee ahead of the meeting with tracked changes and was reviewed, and the following further amendments were suggested:
- On page four amend the word 'design' to 'designed'
 - On page five, at the paragraph beginning 'many residents', remove everything after the word 'environment'.

Cllr Knight proposed a recommendation to Full Council to accept the amendments to the Tree Policy, including the two further amendments as detailed above; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

41.5b Consideration of a request to reintroduce a floating island in the Kensington Gardens Boating Lake – The Model Boat Club would need to be consulted as they have a licence for the Boating Lake. It was suggested that a commemorative monument could be considered for a particular event. The request was for a concrete island covered with wildflowers to offer protection to ducklings, newts and other wildlife. Suffolk Wildlife Trust are meeting with the Friends of Kensington Gardens and Cllr Breakspear offered to seek advice and report back to the next AID Committee meeting. The FCM will seek the views of the Model Boat Club.

The Gunton Residents Association would like a bench and bin to be installed near the Gainsborough Drive pond. They will meet the cost and Waveney Norse have confirmed they would empty the bin. The Association have suggested the metal pole at the site which used to display a warning sign to motorists about ducks could be relocated for the bin. There will be a small cost to do this from the Repairs and Maintenance budget within the Waveney Norse contract. A map of the proposed location for the bin and the bench was displayed at the meeting. It was confirmed that the design will be a simple outdoor bench with no back.

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Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve the siting of a bin and bench at the Gainsborough Drive pond, subject to the cost being met by the Gunton Residents Association; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

There was also a request for the FCM to investigate the cost of installing gabions at the pond.

It has been requested that the Council confirm when it would like the Christmas lights on the High Street and Bevan Street East switched on. It was agreed to liaise with Lowestoft Vision to ensure this coincides with the switch on of the London Road North Christmas lights.

Images were displayed to the Committee of the dog litter bag dispensers being installed at Kensington Gardens. It was agreed that publicity should be arranged once they have been installed. Cllr Breakspear will investigate the cost of bio-degradable bags to refill the dispensers. Usage will need to be monitored to determine how many should be purchased and how frequently.

A tree has fallen down near the Northern fringe of Normanston Park. Two others have been tested by an arborist, who has recommended that they be removed. This is scheduled to take place within the next three weeks. The Tree Policy states that replacement trees should be planted for any which are removed. Consideration will need to be given to an appropriate time to plant them. It was reported that a willow tree at the Gainsborough Drive pond will be pollarded to a height of three to four metres.

East Coast Community Healthcare would like to trial free Wi-Fi in parks, with Sparrows Nest as a pilot site. There would be no initial cost to Lowestoft Town Council. East Coast Community Healthcare's current security filters would apply and users would be required to sign in. It was suggested that the landing page could be used for advertising by the Town Council. Free Wi-Fi in Sparrows Nest would also be beneficial once the Sprytar app is launched.

Cllr Knight proposed a recommendation to Full Council to accept East Coast Community Healthcare's offer of a trial of free Wi-Fi in Sparrows Nest (understood to be six months), subject to it being clearly advertised as a trial; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

A sample picnic bench top slat has been received from Realise Futures. It is the same thickness as the current specification being used but is more cost effective. A picnic bench providing two spaces for disability access would cost £578.40 and the Committee agreed this style of bench should be considered for the Nightingale Road play area.

Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to Full Council to approve a picnic bench from Realise Futures, providing two disability spaces, at the Nightingale Road play area, with Cllr Barnard to make enquiries regarding alternative funding options; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

The Ormiston Denes Academy have approached the Council with suggestions for their project to make improvements to the Great Eastern Linear Park. They would like to work with a local artist to produce bird and bat boxes and wire sculptures to attach to lampposts and trees, as well as mural to be placed on the railway bridge.

Cllr Breakspear proposed that the Committee had no objections in principle to the proposals, but would encourage the Academy to seek further guidance from Suffolk County Council and Network Rail regarding the proposed locations; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

At the last AID Committee meeting, a decision was taken to form an Open Spaces Sub-Committee. For clarification, it was noted the Sub-Committee would be responsible for implementing the terms of the Open Spaces Strategy.

The FCM left the room 19:05

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It was queried whether it would be more appropriate to set up a Working Group instead. It was clarified that Working Groups can only deal with single projects, not ongoing matters.

The FCM returned 19:08

It was agreed that Working Groups could be set up if and when necessary. It was agreed that a Parks Working Group should be set up instead of an Open Spaces Sub-Committee and could review the provision of benches in the Council's parks. Cllrs Barnard, Breakspear and Pearce expressed an interest in joining the Parks Working Group and an invitation will be extended to the rest of the Council.

41.6 Heritage Action Zone – There were no updates to consider.

41.7 Triangle Market, including to consider the following:

41.7a A Draft Market Plan from Triangle Market Working Group – Cllr Taylor is drafting a pack for traders, with a process to apply for a stall at the proposed monthly market at the Triangle Marketplace. This will be circulated to the Committee for consideration. The proposed process is for those looking to trade to provide the relevant documentation, such as evidence of insurance, then purchase a pitch online via Eventbrite. A fee of £10 has been suggested and this will be further considered by the Triangle Market Working Group. The plans could be affected by how cars are parked in the area and there may be a requirement for traffic cones, or a reduction in the proposed number of stalls.

41.7b Terms and conditions for markets – This was covered by the discussion of item 41.7a.

41.8 Town Hall – The Mayor and the Clerk will be attending a meeting on 4 July to review the tenders for the Town Hall feasibility study. The FCM is creating a risk assessment for the Town Hall with regard to the Heritage Open Day events. More information about the Heritage Open Days should be available for the next AID Committee meeting as the Deputy Clerk will be attending more meetings about this shortly. The Friends of Kensington Gardens have not yet submitted their application to use Kensington Gardens for their Heritage Open Days events.

41.9 Public Conveniences, including the following:

41.9a Progression of the Toilet Strategy – The FCM has circulated a specification to three architects for the Fen Park public conveniences, to gain an understanding of the renovation costs. Advice has been received that the structure itself is small and may require expansion for sufficient accessibility. This will be discussed in more detail at the next AID Committee meeting and there was a request for it to be added to the next Finance and Governance Committee agenda also.

41.9b A specification for renovation work to the public conveniences at Fen Park and Sparrows Nest – This was covered during the discussion of item 41.9b

41.9c Compostable eco-toilets – Consideration of public conveniences at The Ness is ongoing. It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda as any matters relating to this could be considered under the agenda item for The Ness.

41.10 The Lowestoft Collection – The loan agreement will be discussed at tomorrow's Full Council meeting.

42. Consideration of the installation of Christmas lights on London Road South

The Council has a £25,000 budget in place for Christmas lights for 2019- 20. This may not allow for the installation of lights at other locations and the cost and infrastructure will need to be considered. It may that sponsorship could be considered. There may not be sufficient time to complete the necessary research ready for this year.

Cllr Barnard proposed starting research now into installing Christmas lights on London Road South, ready for Christmas 2020; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

43. Date of the next meeting

8 July 2019 18:00

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44. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Cllr Collecott attended a meeting with Lowestoft Vision recently. They are keen to work more closely with the Town Council, as are Lowestoft in Bloom. There will be further liaison with stakeholders as the Neighbourhood Plan progresses. Cllr Collecott has a further meeting with Lowestoft Vision tomorrow morning and asked whether there were any matters the Committee wished to raise. It was requested that a date be confirmed for the switch on of the London Road North Christmas lights and any other events which have been scheduled to coincide with this. It was requested whether Lowestoft Vision could grant the Town Council permission to have a stall on London Road North on Friday 13 September, to coincide with a Suffolk County Council event to interact with members of the public. It was agreed that a representative from Lowestoft Vision should be invited to present a future meeting of the Council about how they would like to work with the Town Council.

Cllr Knight proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

45. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

45.1 Any legal issues including those at 38.1 and 40.1 above as required:

38.1 – Any progress with the lease and developments on site for the first floor of Hamilton House (confidential) – This will be discussed at tomorrow’s Full Council meeting. An amended lease and appendices are pending. Delegated authority for agreeing the lease is being sought at the Full Council meeting.

40.1 – Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – The latest legal update regarding the North Denes Phase 3 land was given to the Committee. This and any other legal updates will be reported at tomorrow’s Full Council meeting.

The Chair closed the meeting 19:45.

Signed:
8 July 2019