

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 2 March 2020

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard (Chair), Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Neil Coleby, Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Alice Taylor

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

219. Welcome

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

220. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Peter Knight. Cllr Taylor proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour. It was noted that Cllrs Graham Parker and Keith Patience had resigned from this Committee.

221. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Butler declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 226.5. Cllrs Breakspear and Taylor declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 226.2 and 230.

222. Accuracy of the Minutes

3 February 2020 – It was queried whether item 201.3 of the previous minutes should make reference to the Tree Policy rather than the Open Spaces Strategy, but it was confirmed that the Tree Policy forms part of the Open Spaces Strategy. Cllr Taylor proposed acceptance of the minutes of 3 February 2020; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

223. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

224. Noticeboards, signs and plaques

Cllrs Coleby and Pearce have met with the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society (JROLS) to discuss progress with the heritage plaques. A list of priorities have been drawn up and they will be approaching the Council for assistance with the relevant landowner permissions. JROLS has made some recommendations on the plaques to commemorate the 75th anniversaries of the Battle of Britain and Dunkirk, and Cllr Pearce will liaise with the Clerk to progress these.

The Deputy Clerk left the room 18:07 and returned 18:08

Cllr Barnard advised there would shortly be a spare key available for the noticeboards. Cllr Pearce advised he was happy to have it, to update the Town Council's noticeboards in Gunton and on the High Street. The Committee agreed it would be happy for Cllr Pearce to have the noticeboard key. The Market Working Group recently met with a local group who would like to work with the Town Council in organising the monthly markets at the Triangle Marketplace. The Working Group would like the Council to consider the purchase of some 'A' boards for advertising the market. The cost would need to be explored for the Finance and Governance Committee to consider, and it was queried whether the boards should have a permanent printed graphic, or provision for the display to be changed periodically. Cllr Pearce will ask the local group who previously met with the Market Working Group for their preference. Cllr Breakspear knows of local organisations who may be able to supply the 'A' boards.

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225. Asset transfer and compliance issues, in particular the following matters:

- 225.1. Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – Enquiries are being made with East Suffolk Council as to whether the Town Council can transfer its ownership of a section of the Jubilee Bridge back to East Suffolk Council. It is understood that East Suffolk Council has set a specification and are seeking quotes for a survey of the bridge.
- 225.2. Report regarding asset management, compliance monitoring, maintenance and condition surveys – It was reported that repairs have been made to the Belle Vue Park wall and asbestos has been removed from the Yarmouth Road entrance to Belle Vue Park. East Suffolk Norse has been instructed to progress the making good works. The Town Council's officers now have access to East Suffolk Norse's online reporting system, which provides a much clearer system of logging issues and tracking the progress of them. Asbestos samples have been taken from the Normanston Allotments and the results are pending. It was queried whether a programme of condition surveys for all of the Town Council's assets has been set up. Information for this is being gathered, but major projects would need to be considered on a priority basis. Minor issues should be picked up by East Suffolk Norse. It was reported that minor repair work is required at the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall. It was agreed for Cllr Butler to take photographs and report the issues to officers to raise with Norse. Cllr Breakspear and the Deputy Clerk made a site visit to the Kensington Gardens Bowls Pavilion, with representatives from the Bowls Club and East Suffolk Norse, to assess some issues the Bowls Club had raised. Repairs have since been made to the windows but a budget for replacement windows will need to be considered in future.

226. Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:

- 226.1. Minutes of the meeting on 18 February 2020 – Cllr Taylor proposed acceptance of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 226.2. A recommendation to approve the purchase of mulch for use in Belle Vue Park, Sparrows Nest and Kensington Gardens, within a maximum budget of £500 – East Suffolk Norse has advised that £500 should be a maximum budget sufficient for these three sites. The Friends of Kensington Gardens are seeking assistance from East Suffolk Norse for producing their own mulch. Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve the purchase of mulch for Belle Vue Park, Sparrows Nest and Kensington Gardens, within a maximum budget of £500; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
- 226.3. A recommendation to seek advice from an architect as to the optimum internal layout of the Normanston Park changing rooms to support the playing of sports – The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee has started to consider what changes could be made to improve the changing rooms, such as making the changing areas larger and adding lockers, but advice from an architect would be required. External funding may be available and an organisation has already approached the Council about some funding it would like to use in this area. Cllr Barnard proposed that the Parks and Open Spaces Committee provide some more detail about what changes it would like to see, for the Finance and Governance Committee to make enquiries with architects; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour. Cllrs Barnard and Coleby have already started considering ideas for the changing rooms and will present these to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee.
- 226.4. A recommendation to approve the use of the Normanston Park car park as a coach drop off and collection point for students in June, July and August – The Council granted permission for this arrangement last year, on the basis that the coach and the cars dropping off and collecting students would be mindful of other visitors to the park, and would not park in such a way as to cause an obstruction or hazard to other motorists or

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pedestrians. Cllr Taylor proposed approval for the use of the Normanston Park car park as a coach collection and drop off point, subject to those conditions as stated by the Council last year when permission was granted; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

226.5. A recommendation to install a permanent bollard at the Maritime Museum entrance to Sparrows Nest, and a lockable bollard at the gated entrance further along Whapload Road – East Suffolk Norse was supportive of this proposal at the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting. Unauthorised vehicular access could present health and safety issues. It was queried whether the gates at one of the entrances could be shut instead, but Norse has recommended against this, as there is an increased risk of damage to the gates through anti-social behaviour, and it makes the park look less inviting to visitors. There was a concern that the Maritime Museum volunteers had previously been given permission by the former Waveney District Council to park in Sparrows Nest, and they also welcome several disabled visitors. It was suggested that a lockable bollard, rather than a permanent bollard, should be considered at the Maritime Museum entrance instead. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve the installation of lockable bollards at the Maritime Museum and gated entrances to Sparrows Nest; seconded by Cllr Taylor; six Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against. Lockable bollards have previously been approved for Kensington Gardens also, to address the issue of fly-tipping. It was clarified that those who have previously been given permission to park in Sparrows Nest will still be authorised to do so, and can be given a key for the bollards.

226.6. A recommendation to appoint Cllr Coleby as Lowestoft Town Council's representative to ParksEast – Cllr Coleby confirmed he was still happy to be considered as the Town Council's representative. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to appoint Cllr Coleby as the Town Council's representative to ParksEast; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

227. To consider any measures the Town Council can take on its land to address social isolation, including the following:

227.1. A request from East Suffolk Council to install a 'Talking Bench' in Kensington Gardens – East Suffolk Council would like to work with the Town Council to install a bench in Kensington Gardens in time for the First Light Festival. East Suffolk Council will be meeting the cost of the bench. The Committee agreed it would like to see an image of the proposed bench. It was queried why this request had been brought before this Committee, as it had previously been agreed that this Committee would rather adhere to the Council's Open Spaces Strategy and group benches together to encourage natural social interaction, rather than install a single 'Talking Bench'. It was clarified that a decision is required as this is a specific request to site a bench on land belonging to the Town Council. Six Councillors voted in favour of requesting a specification for the bench from East Suffolk Council, to enable an informed decision as to whether Kensington Gardens is the most appropriate location. One Councillor abstained from the vote. A grant had previously been awarded to Realise Futures, to fund a similar bench in the town. The Committee Clerk will make enquiries to see how this is progressing.

228. A recommendation from the Normanston Allotments Working Group for Lowestoft Town Council to grant permission as landowner for vehicular access to the Normanston Allotments to be established from Fieldview Drive

The Normanston Allotments Working Group recently met with representatives from Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd (LDA). Having spoken with the allotment holders, LDA would like to establish vehicular access to the allotments via Fieldview Drive, and provided their plans to the Working Group. A section of the land remains under the ownership of East Suffolk Council and

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Lowestoft Town Council did previously discuss requesting transfer of ownership of the land, however, it was agreed not to progress this until LDA's intentions were clear. Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to Full Council to grant landowner permission for vehicular access to the Normanston Allotments to be established from Fieldview Drive, subject to all relevant permissions being sought by LDA first; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour. Cllr Patience had sent an email prior to the meeting, expressing his support for the plans, and this was noted.

229. Developing a policy for the installation of defibrillators on land owned by the Town Council

It was noted that defibrillators had previously been installed in Sparrows Nest and Normanston Park. At the last Full Council meeting, District Councillor Linda Coulam offered £1,500 of her locality funding to install a defibrillator at the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall. The Council does not yet have a policy on the installation of defibrillators on its land, and it was suggested that consideration should be given as to whether they should only be installed at locations with an active electricity supply, and whether the Council should fund the purchase and installation of them, or only agree to them being installed if external funding can be secured. Consideration also needs to be given to whether a schedule and record is required for periodic checking of the defibrillators. Cllr Barnard has found a policy online and sent it to the Town Council officers. As the request from Cllr Coulam is time urgent, due to the locality funding, it was agreed to consider the request independently of a policy. It was queried whether the £1,500 funding would cover the defibrillator, protective casing and installation, and this will need to be checked. Cllr Coleby proposed supporting Cllr Coulam's proposal in principle, subject to the Town Council officers seeking formal confirmation from Cllr Coulam about how much funding she is committing to the project, and what specifically this will cover. Cllr Coleby further proposed that the Town Council officers develop a draft defibrillator policy, to be considered by this Committee; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

230. An enquiry about the lease of a building in Kensington Gardens (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

231. Lease arrangements for the Community Halls (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

232. Date of the next meeting

30 March 2020 18:00

233. Items for the next agenda and close

Cllr Butler will provide a written report for Full Council of today's Ness Steering Group meeting. It was requested that provision be included on the next agenda for consideration to be given to the installation of a Changing Places toilet.

Cllr Coleby proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

234. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

234.1. Any legal issues including those at 230 and 231:

230. An enquiry about the lease of a building in Kensington Gardens (confidential) – It was agreed that the leases for several stakeholders in Kensington Gardens required review, and this should be progressed before individual requests are considered.

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231. Lease arrangements for the Community Halls (confidential) – Legal advice is pending. A representative from Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall recently met with some representatives from this Committee and the Clerk, and a date has been set for a public meeting to encourage membership of the management committee for the Hall. This will need to be followed by an Annual General Meeting. The lease arrangements for Whitton Residents Hall are subject to legal advice.

The Chair closed the meeting 19:06.

Signed:
30 March 2020

DRAFT