

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 30 September 2019

MINUTES

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

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

Public: There was one member of the public in attendance

120. Welcome

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

121. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby, Peter Collecott, Graham Parker and Andy Pearce. Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

122. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

123. Consideration of the accuracy of the Minutes

9 September 2019 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Knight; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour with one abstention.

124. Public Forum

The member of the public was in attendance to discuss item 125.1, so it was agreed to move on to that agenda item.

125. Consideration of the following regarding Friends Groups

125.1. Discussion with representatives from the Friends of The Ness regarding their constitution – The Friends of The Ness have prepared their constitution, using the Town Council's model document. The protocol for appointing new members to the group was discussed, and this will be for the Group as a whole to consider how such decisions are made. It was suggested that they could adopt safeguarding and equality policies. It was confirmed that the Group would need its own public liability insurance. Councillors and officers offered further assistance as required.

125.2. Liaison with Friends Groups and East Suffolk Norse – The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee has also been considering this and representatives from East Suffolk Norse have been invited to their next meeting.

126. Progress with noticeboards, signs and plaques

East Suffolk Norse is changing its telephone number and will be reimbursing the Town Council for replacement signs it had already purchased for play areas. In his report, the Facilities and Contracts Manager (FCM) provided the cost to replace the signage in the rest of the Town Council's play areas, at a total cost of £832 (+VAT), excluding the installation cost.

Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve the purchase of replacement signs for the Town Council's play areas, at a cost of £832 (+VAT), plus the cost of installation, once this is known; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

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In the FCM's report, clarity was sought for the positioning of the noticeboard to be installed at Rosedale Park. Cllr Webb proposed approval of the location of the noticeboard, as indicated by the FCM on a map of the park, with the noticeboard facing Broadwaters Road; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

There were no updates to report on plaques.

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

- 127.1. Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – There were no updates to consider following the Full Council meeting.
- 127.2. Report from the Facilities and Contracts Manager regarding asset management, compliance monitoring, maintenance and condition surveys – It was agreed that this Committee would like expert advice on the options for the Fen Park pond and related costs, before a decision is made about whether or not to aerate it. Six Councillors voted in favour of requesting that Suffolk Wildlife Trust produce a report on the pond and requesting that Cllr Hardie visit a wind aeration device in operation in Essex or provide more information about it; one Councillor voted against.

The FCM has received four quotes to remove asbestos from the ceiling of the Belle Vue Park Yarmouth Road entrance, and the lowest was £550 (+VAT). East Suffolk Norse has provided a reinstatement cost of £1918 (+VAT). Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to proceed with the removal of asbestos from the ceiling of the Belle Vue Park Yarmouth Road entrance, and reinstatement of the ceiling, within a maximum budget of £2,500(+VAT); seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

There were no issues to report regarding Legionella and the FCM is due to complete asbestos inspections shortly.

East Suffolk Norse has been approached by a member of the public requesting a commemorative bench in Normanston Park. East Suffolk Norse has identified an existing bench which is in need of repair and could be replaced. In line with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, it was considered whether replacement of the bench would be the best option, or whether it could be refurbished instead. It was suggested that the FCM should survey the bench and advise this Committee on whether it can be refurbished and the cost of doing so. It was suggested that the member of the public who requested the commemorative bench may wish to adopt the existing bench and meet the refurbishment cost, rather than pay for a new bench. Cllr Breakspear proposed that the FCM survey the bench at Normanston Park to see if it can be refurbished, and check with the interested party if they would be prepared to meet the cost of refurbishment and plaque for the existing bench; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

At the request of Councillors, lockable bollards have been explored for Kensington Gardens and Sparrows Nest, to prevent unauthorised vehicular access. East Suffolk Norse has suggested a model which is £191.96 (+VAT) per bollard, including installation. Those working at the museums in Sparrows Nest have historically been given permission to park their cars in Sparrows Nest and it was agreed that keys for the bollards could be given to those who have previously been granted vehicular access. Six Councillors voted in favour of a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee or Full Council to approve the purchase of three lockable bollards; one Councillor voted against.

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The Council previously approved expenditure of up to £15,000 to purchase an extra piece of play equipment for Stoven Close. Three different options were presented to the Committee, with a recommendation from East Suffolk Norse favouring the option from Kompan, at cost of £15,102.25 (+VAT). Cllr Knight proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee or Full Council to approve the purchase of the Kompan three tower and slide unit for Stoven Close, at a cost of £15,102.25 (+VAT); seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

128. An update regarding the proposed installation of a dog litter bag dispenser in or near the Nightingale Road play area

There were no updates to consider.

129. Whether to work with East Suffolk Norse on an EcoBricks project

The concept of EcoBricks was explained and the Committee agreed the Council should be looking at ways to deal with single use plastics, in line with its declaration of a climate emergency. Cllr Patience proposed support of East Suffolk Norse's EcoBricks project; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour. It was agreed that East Suffolk Norse should be offered a stall at the next Saturday market to demonstrate and promote EcoBricks.

130. Whether to make a recommendation to install a Changing Places toilet and if so to consider recommendation of an appropriate location

It was agreed that a publicly accessible Changing Places toilet should be available in the town, in a central location. It was agreed this should be considered in more detail by the Toilet Strategy Working Group, who could explore funding options.

131. A request to hire the Kensington Gardens Ammunition Bunker (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

132. A report from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee met recently and had wide ranging discussion, exploring options for the individual parks and open spaces and looking at a planting schedule for the year. Consideration is being given to the planting of peace roses around the town to commemorate Victory in Europe (VE) Day and cherry trees for Victory over Japan (VJ) Day. To tie in with the VJ Day commemorations, the Sub-Committee would like to develop a peace garden at Kensington Gardens. Councillors were asked to consider where they may wish to see a peace rose and cherry tree planted within their wards. It was requested that the corner of Toning Street and Bevan Street be considered. It was suggested this area could support the planting of wildflower seeds and this could be discussed with East Suffolk Norse. Congratulations were offered to the Friends of Kensington Gardens and all those involved with the upkeep of the park, following their gold award at the recent Lowestoft in Bloom awards.

133. Consideration of the following relating to markets:

- 133.1. Feedback from the first scheduled market – There were issues with vehicles continuing to travel through the pedestrianised area, and this will need to be addressed. There were six stalls and a performance by the Lowestoft Signing Choir. It is hoped that food stalls can be attracted to future markets. Feedback from the stallholders was largely positive. It was requested that East Suffolk Norse sweep the area the day before the next scheduled market. Other towns have produced cloth bags to advertise their markets. Cllr Taylor proposed that, should the market continue on a longer term basis, the Council uses the income it receives

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from the market to enhance the market and promote it; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

133.2. A report from the Markets Working Group – Thanks were offered to the Market Working Group for their work in making the market happen. It is hoped that the market will continue to grow and traders will return.

134. Progress with the feasibility study for the Town Hall

Emergency repairs have started and Full Council has approved a contingency fund for unforeseen emergency expenditure, with delegated authority to the Clerk. The feasibility study should be received shortly.

135. Date of the next meeting

4 November 2019 18:00

136. Items for the next agenda and close

The member of the public left the meeting 19:27

Cllr Patience left the room 19:27

The Deputy Clerk left the room 19:27

No matters were raised for inclusion on the next agenda.

Cllr Patience returned 19:29

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

137. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

137.1. Any legal issues including those at 127.1 and 131

The Deputy Clerk returned 19:33

The lease arrangements for the community meeting halls were discussed. Cllr Knight made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

131. A request to hire the Kensington Gardens Ammunition Bunker (some aspects may be confidential)

It has been cleared out and new locks installed. There has been interest but no hire policy is in place at the moment. It was agreed that the hire fee should be nominal and the income used to recoup the cost of the planning application and replacement locks. The Council also needs to ensure that the purpose of the hiring is in line with the planning permission granted, and the party hiring will need to have their own insurance. Staff will draft a hire policy to be considered.

The Chair closed the meeting 19:49.

Signed:

4 November 2019