

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 5 August 2019

MINUTES

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

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were two members of the public in attendance

75. Welcome

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

76. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Coleby, Collecott, Parker and Patience. Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

77. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Taylor arrived 18:02

There were none.

78. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes

22 July 2019 – It was noted that Cllr Butler had been recorded as being in attendance at the meeting and providing apologies (he was present at the meeting), and Cllr Webb had been recorded as being in attendance at the meeting and providing apologies (he was not present at the meeting and had provided his apologies). Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the minutes, with the amendments regarding Cllrs Butler and Webb; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

There was a discussion at the previous meeting regarding required repairs to the wall at Belle Vue Park. It was clarified that the Facilities and Contracts Manager (FCM) had previously completed a site visit with Cllrs Coleby and Parker. Waveney Norse advised the work would be expensive and it was not pursued as it was understood the Council had already identified more urgent priorities. No formal decision was taken by the Council not to progress this work. It was agreed the FCM should obtain quotes, for consideration at the next Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) and Finance and Governance Committee meetings.

79. Public Forum

A member of the public expressed concern about the number of empty properties in the town, some of which are privately owned by companies outside of the local area. It was queried whether the Council could contact them. It was advised that the Planning and Environment Committee could take this forward. The announced closure of the Tesco Metro store was discussed and it was suggested that consideration of empty premises in the town could be included with the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. Some suggestions were made as to the types of businesses which could occupy empty premises on London Road North. It was explained the Council could not influence which businesses opened in Lowestoft, but is working to revive a regular market.

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80. To consider matters relating to leases, including the following:

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

81. Consideration of progress with noticeboards, signs and plaques

Most of the noticeboards have now been erected. One has had to be removed from the Denes Oval as it was on leased land and not positioned as intended. The Council will need to consider an alternative location. A map was displayed to the Committee of the current locations of the other noticeboards, which demonstrated a higher concentration of noticeboards in the Northern half of the town than the South. Three potential locations were identified, and of these, it was agreed that Rosedale Park was the busiest and most central location. This will be included on the agenda for consideration at the next Full Council. It was suggested that, as part of the budget-setting process, the Council could consider whether it would wish to consider the purchase of any further noticeboards, and the most cost-efficient way of doing so.

The FCM will be progressing updated signage for play areas, providing a telephone number for the reporting of any issues.

The Clerk left the room 18:23

82. Consideration of any update with the investigation into the provision of Christmas lights on London Road South in 2020

A site visit is being arranged.

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

- 83.1. Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

The Clerk returned 18:24

- 83.2. Report from the Facilities and Contracts Manager regarding asset management, compliance monitoring, maintenance and condition surveys – There were no matters for consideration.

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

- 84.1. Allotments – The next meeting of the Normanston Allotments Working Group is being progressed. It was reported that hedges from the Sussex Road allotments are overhanging the pathway and cycle lane. The FCM has been made aware.
- 84.2. The Ness – An Extraordinary Meeting has been scheduled for 13 August, due to time sensitive matters relating to The Ness. It was requested that plans and information be made available at the earliest opportunity.
- 84.3. Marina Theatre – The Theatre recently experienced issues with its projector, which it is hoped can be rectified under the warranty. The Council previously requested details of the specification which informed the quotes obtained by the Theatre to replace the heaters in its dressing rooms, and this will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee.
- 84.4. North Denes – There were no matters for consideration.
- 84.5. Open spaces and parks, including the following:
- 84.5a. A report from the Parks Working Group – Cllrs Barnard, Breakspear and Coleby met recently and discussed matters including the provision of benches and planting within the parks. Cllr Coleby was elected as Chair. The Working Group would like Full Council to consider the Parks Working Group becoming the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee, which would be a sub-committee of the AID Committee.

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Cllr Webb proposed a recommendation to Full Council for the Parks Working Group to become the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

- 84.5b. Any update regarding the proposed installation of a dog litter bag dispenser in or near the Nightingale Road play area – The FCM has been looking into the viability of this. Lowestoft Town Council does not own the footpath, therefore the dispenser would need to be located in the play area, which raises the issue as to whether the Council would consider this appropriate.

A member of the public left the meeting 18:31

Cllr Breakspear offered to visit the site to investigate whether there would be any alternative locations and will report his findings at the next AID Committee meeting.

- 84.5c. Any update regarding quotations for repairs to the Belle Vue Park wall – There were no further matters raised, following the clarification of the discussion as recorded in the previous minutes (see item 78).

- 84.5d. The extension of free wi-fi provision to Kensington Gardens – The Council previously agreed for East Coast Community Healthcare (ECCH) to run a trial of this in Sparrows Nest. There have been some technical issues with setting this up but ECCH have asked whether the Council would like to extend this provision to Kensington Gardens anyway. The only cost to the Council would be electricity and there should be no issues with erecting transmitters on the buildings in the park.

Cllr Breakspear proposed a recommendation to Full Council to extend the trial of free wi-fi provision to Kensington Gardens; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

- 84.6. Heritage Action Zone – A Town Hall Feasibility Study Workshop has been organised, to which all Councillors have been invited. There has been a proposal to create a new Heritage Action Zone in South Lowestoft, along London Road South.

- 84.7. Triangle Market – Lowestoft Vision has recommended a Suffolk-based company who can arrange a professional market over three to four months. The company has been invited to speak with the Finance and Governance Committee and will be attending September's meeting. It was clarified that this will be considered alongside the Working Group's plans, rather than instead of. If the Town Council decides to proceed, it will liaise directly with the company rather than through Lowestoft Vision. It is understood the Lowestoft Christmas lights are being switched on on 30 November, and it was suggested the Town Council could organise an event at the Triangle Market to coincide with this.

Cllr Knight reported that people have been climbing on the Sails again. It was requested that the FCM investigate possible preventative provisions.

- 84.8. Town Hall – There were no matters for discussion in addition to the Feasibility Study Workshop, which had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

- 84.9. Public conveniences, including the following:

84.9a. A report from the Toilet Strategy Working Group – The Working Group is due to meet on 8 August.

- 84.10. The Lowestoft Collection – There were no matters for consideration.

85. Date of the next meeting

19 August 2019

86. Items for the next agenda and close

It was requested that park security be included, along with provision for a discussion about the issues with the Kensington Gardens Boating Lake and potential solutions.

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There is feedback from the First Light Festival to report, and it was agreed this should be raised at the Events and Communications Sub-Committee.

The remaining member of the public left the meeting 18:46

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

87. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

87.1. Any legal issues including those at 80.1 and 83.1:

80.1 Any progress with the lease and developments on site for the first floor of Hamilton House (confidential) – There were no matters for consideration.

83.1 Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – The Clerk reported on an incident which occurred at Gunton Community Park earlier this year.

The Finance and Governance Committee will be considering the effects of the algal bloom in the Kensington Gardens Boating Lake

The Chair closed the meeting 18:54.

Signed:

19 August 2019