

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 8 July 2019

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Steve Ardley, Sue Barnard (Chair), Bob Breakspear, Neil Coleby, Peter Collecott, Peter Knight, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce, Alice Taylor and Nick Webb

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

Public: There were three members of the public in attendance

44. Welcome

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

45. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Butler. All Councillors voted in favour of accepting the apologies.

46. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Ardley declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 55.5b and 55.5c.

47. Consideration of the accuracy of the Minutes:

24 June 2019 – An amendment is required to include Cllr Taylor on the list of Councillors present. Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the minutes with this amendment; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

48. Public Forum

A member of the public was in attendance for item 55.1 (allotments), so it was agreed to bring forward the consideration of this item to this point in the meeting.

55.1 Allotments – The Working Group will be visiting the Normanston Allotments on Friday. Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd have been asked to provide access, but it has been requested that the Working Group completes the visit unaccompanied. Councillors have received a letter regarding the Normanston Allotments which contains an unsubstantiated complaint. No formal complaint has been made to Lowestoft Town Council, so Councillors were requested to disregard these comments in terms of the consideration of the application by Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd. The meeting was opened to the public and the member of the public was invited to speak but did not wish to make any comments.

Two members of the public were in attendance regarding item 55.5e (a request from Waveney Valley Athletics Club for a key to the Referee's Room in Normanston Park), so it was agreed to bring forward the consideration of this item to this point in the meeting.

55.5e Consideration of a request from the Waveney Valley Athletics Club for a key to the Referee's Room at Normanston Park – The members of the public were invited to speak and they explained that this is to provide separate male and female changing areas and access to the light switches.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the request from Waveney Valley Athletics Club for a key to the Referee's Room in Normanston Park; seconded by Cllr Ardley; all in favour.

It was confirmed that this request did not require the consideration of Full Council.

All members of the public left the meeting 18:12

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49. Noting amendments to the Committee membership

It was noted that, following the approval of Full Council, Cllrs Coleby and Patience are now members of the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee.

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

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

51. Consideration of progress with noticeboards, signs and plaques

The noticeboard at the bottom of Links Road has now been installed. The other noticeboard in that area will require a gas engineer to be present. The noticeboard at Normanston Park has been installed. Those due to be installed at the Triangle marketplace and Whitton Green have been delayed due to the hardstanding installation. A request has been sent to the Facilities and Contracts Manager (FCM) from an interested party for two further noticeboards in the High Street area.

Signage in Kensington Gardens does not provide a telephone number for members of the public to report any issues. This will be raised with Waveney Norse and it was suggested that stickers could be produced to amend the signs.

Plaques are required for the Sparrows Nest Charter Tree, the Belle Vue Park Poppy Garden and the Kensington Gardens Holocaust Memorial Tree. This will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee.

Work towards the heritage plaques is continuing, with a view to the production of a walking guide of the plaques. The Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society is meeting this week. Cllrs Coleby and Pearce will be attending.

52. Consideration of making a recommendation to Full Council regarding future editorial submissions to The Bugle magazine

The Bugle have approached Lowestoft Town Council with an offer of editorial space in the magazine each month, at no cost to the Council. A background of the Town Council's history with The Bugle was given. The Deputy Clerk currently submits a weekly article to the Lowestoft Journal and it was suggested that these could be merged to create a monthly submission to The Bugle. Cllr Barnard proposed that the Deputy Clerk merges her weekly submissions to the Lowestoft Journal to create a monthly editorial piece for The Bugle; seconded by Cllr Taylor; nine Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

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

Budgetary constraints and a lack of time to investigate this sufficiently have prevented this being pursued for 2019. There are two hundred lampposts on London Road South, so it was suggested that a group of Councillors should complete a site visit to determine the precise area for the Christmas lights. Cllrs Coleby, Pearce and Taylor expressed an interest in conducting the site visit. Cllr Collecott advised that Lowestoft Vision have not yet decided when the London Road North Christmas lights will be switched on.

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

54.1 Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – The latest legal update regarding the North Denes leased land was provided.

54.2 Report from the Facilities and Contracts Manager regarding asset management, compliance monitoring, maintenance and condition surveys – The Facilities and Contracts Manager (FCM)

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was not present, but the Clerk reported that plumbing issues and other compliance matters have been identified at the community halls. The responsibilities under the leases need to be clarified and a policy position established as to where responsibilities lie. A review of the plumbing arrangements and other compliance issues is required. The Clerk will continue to make enquiries with East Suffolk Council regarding progress with the draft lease, and has approached Community Action Suffolk for a model standard lease.

Cllr Ardley left the room 18:40

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

55.1 Allotments – This was covered earlier in the meeting but there was also a request for a discussion during the confidential session.

55.2 The Ness – The Secret Cinema event is being held this week. With regard to the plans for The Ness, the budget includes provision for an educational area, such as a pavilion. Exactly what will be included remains undecided and the contractor will be advised of this. The overall decision will remain with the Town Council.

Cllr Ardley returned 18:42

Work has not yet started at the site as the Licence to Occupy has not been finalised, but assessments have been completed. Delegated authority has been granted to Lowestoft Town Council's representatives on The Ness Steering Group to progress this.

55.3 Marina Theatre – The Supplemental Agreement is progressing. The Marina Theatre has made a proposal to the Council regarding its representation on the Board. This will be considered in more detail at the next Full Council meeting and a representative from the Theatre will be invited to attend. There was a discussion regarding the management fee and it was clarified that no decision has been taken by the Town Council to reduce it, nor is the Council bound by any past decisions taken by other Councils. It was queried how the Theatre is using the management fee and to what extent it engages with the community. It was requested that a briefing paper be prepared ahead of the next Full Council meeting. Cllr Ardley also requested a briefing if he remains as the Town Council's representative on the Board, so that he understands his role and the relevant background information.

55.4 North Denes – There were no updates to consider, other than that at 54.1 earlier.

55.5 Open Spaces and parks, including the following:

55.5a A report from the Parks Working Group – The membership was confirmed as Cllrs Barnard, Breakspear, Coleby and Lang. Cllr Pearce offered to attend if required for numbers, but it was noted that four is sufficient for a working group of this nature. The first meeting is being arranged and the Group will be looking at the provision of benches and planting, among other things. Cllr Parker also expressed an interest in joining the Working Group. Cllr Barnard has been making enquiries into bench sponsorship and is awaiting a response from East Suffolk Council. Judging for Anglia in Bloom will be taking place this week.

55.5b Consideration of working with Sentinel Leisure Trust to deliver the 'Ping!' Project in Lowestoft – There is a table tennis table at Normanston Park and details have been sent to the FCM of suppliers of equipment for it, to potentially be stored at the café. It was suggested that further table tennis tables could be introduced at other parks, but it was queried whether there would be sufficient space and whether there would be a demand for them. It was suggested that the Council should instead focus on the provision of adult outdoor gym equipment, as previously discussed.

Cllr Knight proposed to decline the offer of working with Sentinel Leisure Trust to deliver the 'Ping!' Project in Lowestoft; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

55.5c Consideration of a Proposal Report from Sentinel Leisure Trust (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

55.5d Consideration of any updates following a request to reintroduce a floating island in the Kensington Gardens Boating Lake – The Model Boat Club lease the Boating Lake and have been

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approached for their views. The Council has not yet received a formal response from them. The proposal was made to offer protection to ducklings and newts, but it was noted that there were practical problems with the site. It was agreed that the Friends of Kensington Gardens could explore alternative options whilst a response is pending from the Model Boat Club.

55.5e Consideration of a request from the Waveney Valley Athletics Club for a key to the Referee's Room at Normanston Park – This item was considered earlier in the meeting.

55.5f Consideration of a further amendment to the Tree Policy – The original policy stated that two replacement trees would be planted for every tree which had to be removed. In the most recently reviewed policy it states that one replacement tree will be planted.

Cllr Ardley proposed an amendment to the Tree Policy to state that two replacement trees will be planted for every one which needs to be removed; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

Cllr Coleby will email the Clerk details of a further potential amendment, which will not alter the meaning or purpose of the policy, therefore Councillors were happy for this to be dealt with outside the AID Committee.

55.6 Heritage Action Zone – A grant application is being progressed to assist businesses on the High Street to make improvements to their facades in a heritage style. The Most Easterly Community Group have adopted a constitution and committee and wish to be regarded as a consultative body by the Heritage Action Zone. It was reported that there has been damage to a privately owned wall on the High Street. It was understood that the AID Committee had previously proposed that the Council should express an interest in the land. This will be looked into.

55.7 Triangle Market, including to consider the following:

55.7a A Draft Market Plan and any updates from Triangle Market Working Group – Suffolk County Council have provided useful information to legitimise holding a market at that site. This will be provided to the Working Group to be considered. A draft market plan and traders' pack was circulated to the Committee ahead of the meeting and the Committee was content with their contents.

Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the draft market plan and traders' pack, on the basis that small practical changes can still be made to them; seconded by Cllr Ardley; all in favour.

55.8 Town Hall, including the following:

55.8a To consider an update with preparations for the Heritage Open Days – Risk assessments have been completed and there will be a further update at the next AID Committee meeting.

55.9 Public Conveniences, including the following:

55.9a Progression of the Toilet Strategy – It was suggested that a Working Group should be established to progress this. Cllrs Barnard, Coleby and Taylor would like to be involved. East Suffolk Council previously produced a report of the public conveniences in the town and it is understood the Town Council received this via Waveney Norse. A member of the public had contacted the Town Council regarding the Pakefield Street public conveniences. Some of the issues raised would be dealt with by Waveney Norse and others will be considered by the Working Group.

55.9b A specification for renovation work to the public conveniences at Fen Park and Sparrows Nest – Progress has been made with this and information is pending regarding flooring and walls. The Working Group will consider this in more detail.

55.10 The Lowestoft Collection – The loan agreement has been extended by another year and a meeting is being arranged with representatives from the Museum.

56. Consideration of matters relating to events, including:

56.1 A report from the Events and Communications Sub-Committee – The Sub-Committee has not yet met but dates have been suggested. Cllrs Barnard, Coleby, Parker and Pearce confirmed they would like to be involved.

56.2 An update with preparations for the Heritage Open Days – This is a duplicate item.

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57. Date of the next meeting

22 July 2019 18:00

58. Items for the next Agenda and Close

No matters were raised.

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

59. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

59.1 Any legal issues including those at 50.1, 54.1 and 55.5c above as required:

50.1 – Any progress with the lease and developments on site for the first floor of Hamilton House (confidential) – Confidential papers were provided at the meeting for consideration.

All Councillors and the Clerk left the room 19:26 to look at the storage room

Cllrs Ardley, Breakspear, Coleby, Collecott, Knight, Parker, Pearce, Taylor, Webb and the Clerk returned 19:28

Cllr Barnard returned 19:28

The Committee discussed options for storage space at Hamilton House and will await further information.

54.1 – Report from the Clerk regarding legal and policy issues affecting assets (some aspects may be confidential) – There were no further updates to consider. Any new updates will be presented at the next Full Council meeting.

55.1 – Allotments – It had been confirmed during the public forum that the allegation made by a member of the public in their letter should be disregarded in the context of consideration of the application from Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd. It was agreed that the Clerk should formally respond to the complainant. It was suggested that the complainant's letter may not be representative of the views of all of the local residents as it has only been written and signed by one person. It was noted that the invitation made in the letter would be declined. It was agreed that a meeting of the Working Party should take place before a meeting is arranged with Lowestoft and District Allotments Ltd and the local residents.

55.5c - Consideration of a Proposal Report from Sentinel Leisure Trust (confidential) – Confidential papers were provided to Councillors at the meeting for consideration.

Cllr Ardley made a proposal to explore the legal and procurement issues relating to the Proposal Report; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting 19:47.

Signed:

22 July 2019