

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:00 on 17 February 2020

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Alan Green, Peter Lang (Chair) and David Youngman, plus non-Councillor members Emma Bateman and Ashley Ford-McAllister

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

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

73. Welcome

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

74. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Jacqueline Hardie and Graham Parker. Cllr Barnard proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

75. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

76. Accuracy of the Minutes

13 January 2020 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Youngman; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

77. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

78. Noting Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils' new food waste reduction initiative 'Food Savvy' and considering how the Town Council may wish to support or promote this initiative

It was agreed to request that the Events and Communications Sub-Committee consider any events coming up where it may be appropriate for the Waste Services team to have a presence. A link to their website will be added to the Town Council's website.

79. A report from the Lowestoft Climate Action Group

The Group met on 4 February and received a presentation on the Neighbourhood Development Plan from the Deputy Clerk, which was praised as very informative. East Suffolk Council has published its plan to address the climate emergency and Suffolk County Council should be publishing its plans later this year. East Suffolk Council's plan to achieve carbon neutrality is expected later this year. The Group has identified that some of the data published by the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership seems to be inaccurate, and has requested that this be reviewed. The Group recently attended the Greenprint Forum and felt this was a positive event. The Group has been looking into local initiatives to dispose of recyclable materials which cannot be recycled via domestic blue bins. There are several organisations in the area which are operating schemes, but the Group would like to see more cohesion between them. The list of bottle banks on Suffolk Waste Partnership's website appears to be out of date. Indigo Waste Services has advised that the map of bottle banks on its website is current. The Group recently attended a meeting of the Kirkley Peoples Forum and the issue of car parking provision for the area was discussed. The Greenprint Forum is looking to discourage increasing car parking provision in the town but needs to consider what alternative options there are

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first. The Government is looking to introduce a deposit return scheme, plastic tax, extended producer responsibility and a new waste strategy, including curb side recycling. The Group has more details about these initiatives and will arrange for them to be circulated to this Committee. The Town Council can put links to local initiatives on its website, subject to advice from the Lowestoft Climate Action Group. The Group has commented on the North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide and is disappointed that applications to install solar panels on certain buildings within this area have been refused. It was clarified that solar panels cannot be funded through the Heritage Action Zone, but the granting of planning permission is a separate matter. The Group would like to see more of a balance between preservation of heritage and measures to address the climate emergency within the Design Guide.

80. The launch of Keep Britain Tidy's 'Great British Spring Clean' campaign and considering the Town Council's involvement

It was queried whether Lowestoft Town Council should formally commit to this campaign. It was agreed there is more action the Town Council can take, although it has not formally committed to this campaign previously, as the size of the parish makes it difficult to form a cohesive strategy. Two local schools are making arrangements for a litter pick of some parts of the Great Eastern Linear Park and permission is being sought for Councillors to participate also. Local residents' groups are completing a litter pick of Dip Farm. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group will liaise with Cllr Barnard about assisting some of the local residents' associations with their plans. The Town Council will put more information on its website to raise public awareness of such issues as preventing litter from blocking drainage systems and how to safely and responsibly dispose of certain items, such as oil and paint. The Town Council can also report on the efforts made by groups to clear litter, particularly on land owned by the Town Council, where it has permission to publish photos of such.

81. An initiative by local schools to litter pick and make environmental improvements to the Great Eastern Linear Park

There has been suggestions that the Council should consider renaming this stretch of land, which is known locally as 'The Trams'. It has been reported that there are broken wooden planks along the board walk and missing protective wire netting makes it slippery. East Suffolk Norse will be asked to provide a quote to remedy this. The schools will be contacted to give approval for Councillors to participate with the litter picks.

82. The current provision and costs of bottle banks for glass recycling in Lowestoft and whether this should be increased to appropriate Lowestoft Town Council sites

The map from Indigo Waste Services' website of the current provision in Lowestoft was displayed at the meeting, for the Committee to consider whether this should be increased and whether the Town Council has any suitable areas of land to site a bottle bank. Tesco is opening a store on Hollingsworth Road and Cllr Barnard to make enquiries as to whether they intend to provide bottle banks. It was identified that there are areas of the town which do not currently appear to be well served with bottle banks, but it is difficult to assess the demand, and the environmental impact of the creation of the bottle banks themselves may outweigh the benefit gained from them. The cost to the Council of the installation and emptying of a bottle bank is not yet known and would depend on what provision the Council would like and the location.

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83. Any advice received on how to benchmark and achieve carbon neutrality

Information will be added to the Town Council's website about how individuals can assess their own carbon footprint and take action. The World Wildlife Fund has created a carbon footprint calculator and the Lowestoft Climate Action Group may incorporate this into their presentation for the Annual Assembly. The Clerk and Committee Clerk have completed a webinar on reducing energy usage. Resources are available online which could be beneficial as the Council considers future plans for the Town Hall.

84. How to progress Daffodil Walk as the pilot site for increasing biodiversity at the Town Council's smaller areas of land

Site visits are being arranged with East Suffolk Norse's Countryside Officer and it was agreed to visit this site also. Cllr Lang was going to write to residents for suggestions but await the advice of the Countryside Officer and contact the residents following this, with the ideas and suggestions of how they may wish to be involved. Other areas have developed community orchards and tree and butterfly identification tours. Community engagement was suggested for any plans the Council may wish to progress. The other sites included in the visits will be the Fen Park and Gainsborough Drive ponds and Arnolds Bequest.

85. An update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan, including the following:

85.1. The Deputy Town Clerk has delivered a presentation on the Neighbourhood Development Plan to the Lowestoft Climate Action Group – It was noted that this was a well received presentation. There were no further updates on the Neighbourhood Development Plan for consideration at this meeting.

86. Date of the next meeting

Monday 16 March at 15:00

87. Items for the next agenda and close

It was requested that the condition of ponds in Lowestoft be considered at the next meeting, and the managed retreat of Gunton Beach. The Committee agreed it would like to consider the implications for the Town Council on the ruling that all vehicles will be electric by 2035. Funding is available for e-cargo bicycles and the Clerk will circulate the details. Electric charging points are being installed at the North Quay Retail Park, and this is something the Town Council is considering. This will however require careful research as different vehicles require different types of charging points. It was noted that EDF Energy will be submitting an application for a Development Consent Order shortly. Lowestoft Town Council may not formally be consulted but Councillors would be welcome to submit their comments individually.

88. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

Signed:
16 March 2020