

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
17:00 on 19 November 2019

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Amanda Frost, Alan Green (Chair), Andy Pearce, Graham Parker, Alice Taylor and David Youngman

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

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

101. Welcome

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

102. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Coleby and Hardie. Cllr Taylor proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

103. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

104. Accuracy of the Minutes

Cllr Pearce arrived 17:04

8 October 2019 - Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Taylor; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

105. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

106. Any updates on banking

There were no updates to report.

107. Budget:

107.1. Monitoring the budget for 2019-20 – The Budget and Loan Working previously discussed conducting quarterly in depth reviews of the budget, but no formal proposal was made to the Finance and Governance Committee. The budget is currently being scrutinised as part of the budget setting process for 2020 – 21. The Committee noted that the Budget and Loan Working Group will continue in depth monitoring of the budget on at least a quarterly basis.

107.2. Any bank reconciliations – There were none to note at this meeting.

107.3. Consideration of the 2020 – 21 budget, including any recommendations from the Budget and Loan Working Group – The Budget and Loan Working Group met today and progress is being made, but there were no recommendations for consideration at this stage.

107.4. Consideration of the 2020 – 21 precept – Progress is being made by the Budget and Loan Working Group, but there were no recommendations to consider at this stage.

107.5. Any update following a request to East Suffolk Council regarding arrangements for the Triangle public car park on market days – A request from the Town Council about arrangements for the Britten Centre car park and the Triangle car park on market days is being considered by East Suffolk Council.

107.6. An event management budget for transition from the current work under The Ness Steering Group – A report was circulated ahead of the meeting and displayed at the meeting. A more detailed report is expected in December and the figures will be analysed by the Budget and Loan Working Group.

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108. Payments:

108.1. Payments for authorisation (schedule) – These were presented at the meeting as follows:

Payment To	Description	Amount
Great Yarmouth Heating	Central heating work at Whitton Hall including installation of a Magnaclean. *1	£1,886.97 + VAT
Broadland Security Alarms	Callout to Town Hall alarm activation 24/07/2019	£123.75 + £24.75 VAT = £148.50
East Suffolk Norse	Grounds Maintenance Contract April – Sept 2019 *2	6x £60,400 + 6x £12,080 VAT = 6x £72,480

*1 This has already been authorised up to £1,500 however additional work was needed that was identified when the work was being done.

*2 The total for the Norse invoices is £362,400 Net or £434,880 Gross, which is above the delegated limit of the Finance and Governance Committee. This means this payment will need to be authorised at Full Council.

It is understood that the Clerk has delegated authority to pay the East Suffolk Norse invoices. Six have been received as there was a delay in them being issued from East Suffolk Norse. The total of the invoices exceeds the Finance and Governance Committee's financial delegation, so either the Clerk will arrange payment of the invoices and report this to Full Council if delegated authority is in place, or they will be presented to Full Council to authorise payment. Cllr Taylor proposed approval of the payments to Great Yarmouth Heating and Broadland Security Alarms; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

108.2. Expenditure reports for the month ending 31 October 2019 and November to date (schedule) – These were circulated ahead of the meeting and displayed at the meeting as follows:

October Expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
2 October 2019	Npower Ltd	Triangle Market electric Aug19	£318.47
4 October 2019	Suffolk Pension Fund	September 2019 pensions	£4,577.05
16 October 2019	Lloyds Bank	Travel for training (£95.65), table place name holders x5 (£6.80), Historic England lunch (£90.50), parking for training (£3.10), Historic England lunch (£17.11), meeting expenses (£35.69), clothes rail and accessories (£55.79), white paper (£35.42), credit card transactions (£6)	£346.06 + £19.60 VAT = £365.66

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17 October 2019	Purcell	Town Hall works	£504.08
17 October 2019	Npower	Triangle Market electric Sep19	£300.21 + £15.01 VAT = £315.22
17 October 2019	Npower	CCTV electric Sept 19	£165.23 + £33.05 VAT = £198.28
17 October 2019	Npower	Pakefield St PC elec Jul-Sep 19	£190.52 + £9.53 VAT = £200.05
17 October 2019	Npower	Town Hall electric Sept 19	£273.41 + £13.67 VAT = £287.08
17 October 2019	Pearce and Kemp Ltd	Triangle Market electric works	£1,973.05 + £394.61 VAT = £2,367.66
17 October 2019	Roche Chartered Surveyors	Various PPM surveys	£6,630.50 + £1,326.10 VAT = £7,956.60
17 October 2019	SLCC	SLCC National Conference 2019	£375 + £61 VAT = £436
17 October 2019	RICOH UK Ltd	Printer hire Q3 & ink Q2	£363.91 + £72.78 VAT = £436.69
17 October 2019	Royal British Legion	Poppy crosses x305	£305
17 October 2019	Mark Speller	Council travel reimbursement Sept 19	£8.77
17 October 2019	Boggis Electrical Ltd	Marina Theatre heater replace	£1,551.40 + £310.28 VAT = £1,861.68
17 October 2019	SLCC	SLCC Conference 19 Town Clerk	£375 + £61 VAT = £436
17 October 2019	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas Sept 19	£91.76 + £4.59 VAT = £96.35
18 October 2019	HMRC	HMRC Sept 19	£4,053.39
23 October 2019	Salaries	Salaries Oct 19	£10,211.49
31 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	Links Road NNDR Nov 19	£184
31 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	Pakefield St PC NNDR Nov 19	£120
31 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC NNDR Nov 19	£115
31 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest PC NNDR Nov 19	£108
31 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gar PC NNDR Nov 19	£206
31 October 2019	Unity Trust Bank	Credit handling charge	£7.10

November expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 November 2019	Need2Store	Civic Artefact Storage Oct 19 – Nov 19	£200.00 + £40.00 VAT = £240.00
1 November 2019	Purcell Architecture Ltd	Lowestoft Town Hall Repairs	£448.41 + £89.68 VAT = £538.09
1 November 2019	Alan Green	Travel Reimbursement for Conference	£129.15

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1 November 2019	MS Oakes	Lowestoft Town Hall Repairs	£12,210.33 + £2,442.07 VAT = £14652.40
1 November 2019	Sarah Foote	Reimbursement for Remembrance and Meeting Expenses	£17.10
1 November 2019	Zoe Sprake	Lowestoft Collection Spoon Tray	£2070.00
1 November 2019	St John Ambulance	Mental Health First Aid Training (1 day) and 2x Emergency First Aid at Work Training (1 day)	£470.00 + £94.00 VAT = £564.00
1 November 2019	St John Ambulance	Mental Health First Aid Training (2 days)	£300.00 + £60.00 VAT = £360.00
1 November 2019	Broadland Security Alarms	Supply and Installation of Town Hall Fire Extinguishers	£405.00 + £81.00 VAT = £486.00
6 November 2019	SCC Pension Fund	Pensions October 2019	£4,615.29
8 November 2019	Guy McGregor & Associates Ltd	Payslips and Pension Uploads Jul 19 – Sep 19	£104.00 + £20.80 VAT = £124.80
8 November 2019	East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Capital Repayments Oct 18 – Dec 19	£16,787.00 + £3,357.40 VAT = £20,144.40
8 November 2019	East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Rent Aug 18 – Dec 19	£19,905.41 + £3,981.08 VAT = £23,886.49
8 November 2019	NPower	Triangle Market Electric Oct 19	£249.03 + £12.45 VAT = £261.48
8 November 2019	NPower	CCTV Electric Oct 19	£170.73 + £34.15 VAT = £204.88
8 November 2019	NPower	Kensington Gardens Electric Jul 19 – Sep 19	£221.35 + £11.07 VAT = £232.42
8 November 2019	NPower	Sparrows Nest Electric Jul 19 – Sep 19	£239.03 + £11.95 VAT = £250.98
8 November 2019	NPower	Normanston Park Electric Jul 19 – Sep 19	£456.41 + £22.82 VAT = £479.23
8 November 2019	NPower	Denes Oval Electric Jul 19 – Sep 19	£862.92 + £43.15 VAT = £906.07
8 November 2019	NPower	Lowestoft Cemetery PC Electric Jul 19 – Sep 19	£234.19 + £11.71 VAT = £245.90
12 November 2019	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit Sep 19	£250.00
15 November 2019	Cllr Knight	Reimbursement for Civic Pen	£15.00
15 November 2019	Essex and Suffolk Water	Normanston Park Water 9/4/19 to 10/10/19	£533.83
18 November 2019	Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Charges	£1,099.72
18 November 2019	HMRC	HMRC October 2019	£4,105.49

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It was clarified that ‘credit card charges’ are items which have been purchased using the credit card, which are recorded and receipted. There are no charges for using the credit cards. It was agreed that the preferred method of payment for utility bills would be direct debit. There would still be time to query payments if necessary, between the invoices being received and the payments being debited from the bank account. It is understood that current bills are based on actual meter readings rather than estimates. If direct debits were set up, invoices would be scrutinised and payments reported back to Council in the same way they are currently. Cllr Frost proposed a recommendation to Full Council for payment of utility bills to be made via direct debit; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

108.3. The petty cash log (schedule) – There was no schedule of petty cash transactions presented at this meeting as there are very little funds remaining in petty cash at the moment and therefore there have been no transactions. The credit cards are the preferred method of payment over cash handling. The Financial Regulations state that £250 should be maintained in petty cash, but the Financial Regulations and Petty Cash Policy require review as they were adopted before the Town Council began using credit cards. This will be included on the next agenda.

109. Consideration of the following items relating to income:

109.1. Income reports for the month ending 31 October 2019 and November to date (schedule) – These were circulated ahead of the meeting and displayed at the meeting as follows:

October income

Date	Payment from	Description	Amount
1 October 2019	Suffolk County Council	Rosedale Park bench donation	£528.50
7 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	Rental income from tenant	£213.16
8 October 2019	Eventbrite	Monthly market Sept 19	£51.78
14 October 2019	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£6,300
18 October 2019	Market income	Market income 13/09/19 – 11/10/19	£358
29 October 2019	East Suffolk Council	CIL 1 st instalment 2019	£19,119.42

November income

Date	Received From	Description	Amount
4 November 2019	Tenant	Rental Income from Tenant	£213.16
5 November 2019	Eventbrite	Monthly Market Income Oct 19	£34.52
12 November 2019	HMRC	Vat Repayment Q2	£21,675.21
18 November 2019	Market Income	Market Income 18/10/19 – 8/11/19	£276.00

109.2. Any grant-funding streams affecting Council assets – The Budget and Loan Working Group

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discussed events for which the Town Council may be approached for funding next year. The Clerk has explored whether there may be funding available to cover the cost of the Town Hall repairs. It does not appear that funding is available for this but it appears that the cost may be less than previously anticipated.

110. Legal and compliance

- 110.1. Any compliance issues and asset management (some aspects might be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 110.2. Any relevant legal issues (confidential) including:
- 110.2a Progress with the lease for the first floor of Hamilton House, including the following:
 - 110.2ai The IT service charges and cost implications (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
 - 110.2b Progress with the Supplemental Agreement between East Suffolk Council, the Marina Theatre Trust and Lowestoft Town Council (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
 - 110.2c The future of the CCTV service (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
 - 110.2d Lease arrangements for the Community Halls (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 110.3. What policy should apply to the retention of email accounts for ex-Councillors – Legal advice is pending. It was clarified that the closing of a Councillor’s email account should they leave office for any reason is not in dispute, it is whether those emails can and should be retrieved if they return to office. Advice from East Coast Community Healthcare’s IT department seems to suggest that once an email account has been closed, the emails within it are irretrievable. Legal advice is being sought on the principle of retaining an individual’s emails when they are no longer in office, and the legitimacy under the General Data Protection Regulations. East Suffolk Council issues a fob to all its Councillors, without which they cannot access their emails. If a Councillor leaves office their fob is immediately disabled.
- 110.4. Draft amended Data Retention and Data Protection policies – The Data Protection and Retention Policies have been reviewed by the Deputy Clerk, as the officer responsible for the day-to-day execution of data protection procedures and policies. Some amendments have been suggested for the Data Protection Policy and these were reviewed by the Committee. Some minor amendments were suggested to the phrasing of some points for clarity, which the Clerk actioned during the meeting. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to adopt the amended Data Retention Policy and the amended Data Protection Policy; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.
- 110.5. A review of Lowestoft Town Council’s Financial Regulations – Amendments were suggested at points 5.11 and 5.12 to reflect that security arrangements are applied by East Coast Community Healthcare and to clarify the specific reference to banking or financial software. The Clerk actioned the amendments during the meeting.
- 110.6. The review of the following policies by the Personnel Committee and their recommendation for adoption:
These were all circulated ahead of the meeting for review and no issues were raised. Cllr Taylor proposed a recommendation to Full Council to adopt all the policies and procedures listed between items 110.6a – 110.6n inclusive; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
- 110.6a. Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
 - 110.6b. Data Protection Policy
 - 110.6c. Data Retention Policy
 - 110.6d. Disciplinary Procedure
 - 110.6e. Disciplinary Rules
 - 110.6f. Equality and Diversity Policy
 - 110.6g. Health and Safety Policy

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- 110.6h. Media Policy
- 110.6i. Lone Worker Policy
- 110.6j. Member Officer Protocol
- 110.6k. Safeguarding Policy
- 110.6l. Social Media Protocol
- 110.6m. Training and Development Policy
- 110.6n. Whistleblowing Policy

111. Other financial matters, including:

- 111.1. Planned and urgent works on assets – Consideration of repairs to the Belle Vue Park wall is being progressed and will be included on the agenda for the next appropriate Committee meeting. A group of Councillors visited the Denes Oval today. There is a gap in the wall which will need to be addressed. The cricket club would like to upgrade the changing room facilities and are seeking the Town Council’s permission as landowner. This will be progressed in the new year.
- 111.2. Progress with the removal of items from CEFAS – The items have been removed and are being appropriately packaged so that the Town Council may keep them in storage.
- 111.3. Purchase of a business property (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 111.4. Consideration of the following relating to the Town Hall:
 - 111.4a. The feasibility study – There were no updates to consider at this meeting. A meeting has been arranged to review the report.
 - 111.4b. The cost of repair work (some aspects may be confidential) – The cost of repair work to the roof may be up to £10,000. Some funding towards emergency repairs to the Town Hall has already been committed. The appropriate sources of expenditure from within the Town Council’s budget for the work to the roof will be relayed at the Full Council meeting.
- 111.5. A recommendation from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to consider a request for two new litter bins in Rosedale Park – These would be supplied by East Suffolk Norse. There may be an additional cost to empty them, but there is an existing bin at the site. The Committee agreed it could not consider this item without knowing the related costs. Enquiries will be made with East Suffolk Norse and this will be carried forward to the next agenda.
- 111.6. The following recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:
 - 111.6a. A maximum budget of £500 for replacement trees and planting at Gainsborough Drive – This would be around the pond area. Cllr Green proposed approval of a maximum budget of £500 for replacement trees and planting around the Gainsborough Drive pond; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.
 - 111.6b. A maximum budget of £300 for planting of the Holocaust Memorial Garden in Kensington Gardens – Cllr Green proposed approval of a maximum budget of £300 for planting of the Holocaust Memorial Garden in Kensington Gardens; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
 - 111.6c. The installation of a lectern at the Holocaust Memorial Garden to provide further information about the garden, and to consider funding options – The cost of the lectern is £500. Funding options were discussed and the Committee were in agreement in principle for the lectern to be installed. This matter will come back to the Finance and Governance Committee to consider if there will be a cost to the Town Council, and will be referred to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee if not.
- 111.7. To consider whether Lowestoft Town Council needs to make any preparation for Britain’s exit from the European Union – The Clerk is contacting East Suffolk Norse to find out the impact on them. The Town Council does not have any projects currently receiving funding from the European Union. There may be historical signage at its assets for projects that

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received funding previously, but these would not be subject to amendment on that basis.
Cllr Youngman left the room 18:17

112. Events and Communications Sub-Committee

112.1. Minutes of the meeting of 10 October 2019 and consider any recommendations – With regard to item 111.6c, it was agreed that there should be consultation between the Events and Communications Sub-Committee and the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee regarding events and arrangements for Holocaust Memorial Day.

Cllr Youngman returned 18:18

Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting minutes of 10 October 2019; seconded by Cllr Parker; five Councillors voted in favour; one Councillors abstained from the vote.

112.2. Terms of Reference and consideration of delegations – Cllr Taylor proposed an amendment to 6d of the Terms of Reference, to include that the Events and Communications Sub-Committee should review its own remit and make recommendations to the Finance and Governance Committee on its Terms of Reference at least annually, or as required; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Taylor left the room 18:20

It was agreed to amend the Terms of Reference to state that the Sub-Committee has delegated authority from the Finance and Governance Committee to fulfil its responsibilities. The Terms of Reference also include provision for an allocated budget, should the Finance and Governance Committee wish to consider this at a later date.

Cllr Taylor returned 18:23

113. Date of the next meeting

12 December 2019 17:00

114. Items for the next agenda and close

It was requested that staff working hours be considered at the next meeting. It was however agreed this would be a matter for the Personnel Committee to consider first. The next Full Council agenda also includes an item for staffing matters so it was agreed that it would be raised there, then included on the next Personnel Committee agenda.

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

115. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

115.1. Any employment matters – There were no matters for consideration.

115.2. Any legal matters, including those listed with items 110.1, 110.2, 111.3 and 111.4b above as required:

110.1 Any compliance issues and asset management (some aspects might be confidential) – This was covered by discussions earlier in the meeting, which were not of a confidential nature. There were no confidential matters for discussion.

110.2 Any relevant legal issues (confidential) including:

110.2a Progress with the lease for the first floor of Hamilton House, including the following:

110.2ai The IT service charges and cost implications (confidential) – The rent is being paid, but there are still queries about service charges.

110.2b Progress with the Supplemental Agreement between East Suffolk Council, the Marina Theatre Trust and Lowestoft Town Council (confidential) – Proposals made by Lowestoft Town Council are with East Suffolk Council for consideration. A meeting is being arranged between the Town Council and the Marina Theatre Trust to discuss the Supplemental Agreement and

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its review.

110.2c The future of the CCTV service (confidential) – The latest update was provided.

Cllr Parker left the room 18:34

110.2d Lease arrangements for the Community Halls (confidential) – Lease and governance arrangements are subject to review. There are currently efforts to boost membership of the Trustee Board of the Gunton Residents Community Meeting Hall.

Cllr Parker returned 18:36

111.3 Purchase of a business property (confidential) – The latest update was provided.

The Chair closed the meeting 18:47.

Signed:

12 December 2019