

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 13 January 2020

MINUTES

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

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

Public: There was one member of the public in attendance

59. Welcome

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

60. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr David Youngman. Cllr Barnard proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

61. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

62. Accuracy of the Minutes

11 December 2019 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Green; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

63. Public Forum

The member of the public advised that a planning application has been submitted to install solar panels onto the roof of a property on the High Street. It is understood that the application may be refused by the Planning Authority, which the member of the public felt was in contradiction to the purpose of declaring a climate emergency. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group is developing a questionnaire for local groups and organisations, to find out what action they are taking in response to the climate emergency. No information has yet been received from East Suffolk or Suffolk County Councils about action they have taken since declaring a climate emergency.

64. Report from the Lowestoft Climate Action Group

The group met on 6 January. They will be having a stall at the Greenprint Conference at Riverside on 3 February at riverside. The questionnaire - as mentioned during the public forum – was discussed and the group would like to promote the Woodland Trust's tree planting initiative. The Town Council will consider how it can promote the questionnaire and make suggestions regarding its content. The Town Council has been considering what action it can take on its own land and will be seeking advice from other authorities, such as East Suffolk Norse's Countryside Officer. The Town Council appreciates the work of the Lowestoft Climate Action Group in engaging with the community and other organisations, as this would be difficult for the Town Council to achieve alongside looking at its own assets, and any approaches the Town Council made to other organisations about actions they could take on their land could be misconstrued. The Deputy Clerk is attending the group's next meeting to provide more information about the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The group has approached East Suffolk Council to suggest that it is made compulsory for new developments to have solar panels, and adequate storage for recycling bins and bicycles. East Suffolk Council has explained how the Local Plan applies, but also how a blanket approach may not always be the most

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appropriate solution. Lowestoft Town Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan provides an opportunity for a more local response to the climate emergency. The Government is putting together a waste and resource strategy and a food waste strategy to be rolled out in 2023. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group is keeping note of this and will provide updates as they are available. The group has also been researching Terracycle and there is a meeting about this on 20 January at the Unity Centre. It was suggested that the group also speak with the Gunton Baptist Church, who have been running a Terracycle scheme. The group will meet again on 4 February at 14:30.

65. Consideration of 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 Lowestoft Climate Action Group has been researching the cost, but it varies depending on what provision is required and how often the banks would need to be emptied. It was agreed that further information is required as to the current provision in the town. Cllr Barnard proposed obtaining further information from Indigo about the current provision of bottle banks in the town; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. Cllr Green offered to find out more information about the bottle bank at Lowestoft Town Football Club.

66. How to benchmark and achieve carbon neutrality

The Council needs to know how to measure this for it to be achievable. The Clerk will be completing a course and consulting other authorities and will feed back her findings.

67. How to make small areas of land as biodiverse as possible

The Town Council is looking to increase biodiversity at Arnold's Bequest, with advice from East Suffolk Norse's Countryside Officer, and also owns some small green spaces. Councillors were encouraged to consider the small parcels of land within their wards, which the Countryside Officer could assist with. It was suggested that Daffodil Walk could be considered as a pilot site, and it was queried whether green space at Long Road and Aspinall Close belongs to the Town Council. Councillors were advised to check the Town Council's website, which maps the assets belonging to the Town Council in each ward. The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee will be completing a site visit to Clarkes Lane to consider the potential of the Town Council's land there. It was queried whether more ponds could be created on these smaller green spaces. The Town Council does have existing ponds and has been considering how they may be used to increase biodiversity. Once there is a clearer understanding of this, the Council can decide whether it would wish to see more ponds in its parks and open spaces. Work has started at The Ness. The Clerk queried whether the launch event should be on a large scale, such as a fair or similar, or whether it should be an event more suited to the climate emergency declaration, such as the planting of wildflower seeds, etc. A Friends of The Ness Group has been established and the Deputy Clerk has been in contact with them to discuss ideas. The Committee was encouraged to consider how to maximise the potential of this land and safeguard it for the future.

68. How to encourage food waste reduction schemes

The Lowestoft Climate Action Group has been considering this. If they have details of credible organisations promoting this, the Town Council will put their details on its website. The Clerk suggested the Council could also have a section on its website about plastic recycling also, which would be based on information provided by the Lowestoft Climate Action Group. A

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community fridge has opened at St Andrews Church and it was suggested the Town Council could promote this also.

69. An update on the Neighbourhood Plan

This was discussed earlier in the meeting. The East Suffolk Community Partnership have a budget for addressing obesity, mental health wellbeing and social isolation. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group will be looking into how this could benefit the town.

70. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 15:00 on 17 February 2020.

71. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for items to be included on the next agenda.

72. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for discussion.

The Chair closed the meeting 16:31.

Signed:

17 February 2020