

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council Meeting

Held as a video meeting

19:30 on 24 March 2020

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Tara Carlton, Neil Coleby, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, Alice Taylor (Chair) and David Youngman

Also participating: Shona Bendix (Clerk), Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk), Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk) and James Cox (Communications Assistant)

188. Welcome

The right to report and the application of the video meeting protocol were explained and noted, and the meeting was welcomed.

189. Apologies for absence

Due to the extraordinary circumstances, it was agreed that apologies would automatically be accepted for any Councillor not present for this video meeting. Cllrs Peter Collecott, Peter Knight and Peter Lang were not present. It appeared that Cllrs Tracey Eastwood and John Pitts were separately attempting to join the meeting, but they were unable to communicate with the rest of the meeting.

190. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Depending on the confidential discussion of item 194.2, Cllr Pearce may have a local non-pecuniary interest to declare, but will do so at the time if necessary.

191. Noting that the minutes of the meeting of 25 February 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

The minutes had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted, to be considered for approval at the next appropriate meeting.

192. Any advance comments from the public on any matters on this agenda

No advance comments had been received from members of the public.

193. Finance:

193.1. Noting that the following have been circulated in advance:

193.1a. The 2019-20 budget position

Cllr Breakspear joined the meeting 19:40

The budget monitoring reports had been circulated ahead of the meeting. There were no queries and the reports were noted.

193.1b. A payments, income and expenditure report for the month ending 29 February 2020 and March 2020 to date, including the petty cash log – The following reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted:

February Income

Date	Payment from	Description	Amount
11 February 2020	HMRC	VAT reclaim Q3 19-20	£149,913.11
11 February 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£456
24 February 2020	Tenant	Rental income from	£213.16

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		tenant	
26 February 2020	Brome and Oakley	Deputy Clerk SLCC membership	£101
26 February 2020	Market income	Weekly market income	£202

February Expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
3 February 2020	Fatstickman Ltd	Banners for The Ness	£380 + £76 VAT = £456
3 February 2020	Broadland Security	Callout to TH alarm 23/8/19	£112 + £22.40 VAT = £134.40
3 February 2020	Broadland Security Alarms	Callout to TH alarm 24/7/19	£123.75 + £24.75 VAT = £148.50
3 February 2020	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions January 2020	£4,210.42
7 February 2020	NPower	Triangle Market elec Jan 2020	£102.07 + £5.10 VAT = £107.17
7 February 2020	NPower	CCTV electric Jan 2020	£170.36 + £34.07 VAT = £204.43
7 February 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas Jan 2020	£44.21 + £2.21 VAT = £46.42
7 February 2020	Lauren Elliott	Mileage reimbursement	£41.49
13 February 2020	First Light Festival	First Light Festival 2020	£5,000
13 February 2020	SLCC	Reducing Energy webinar	£60 + £12 VAT = £72
13 February 2020	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit January 2020	£250
17 February 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership charge February	£60,400 + £12,080 VAT = £72,480
17 February 2020	Lloyds Bank Account	Credit card payments	£310.24
21 February 2020	ECCH	CRT, PSLW and E&D training	£600 + £120 VAT = £720
21 February 2020	Salaries	Salaries February 2020	£8,319.39
24 February 2020	ETS	Audio equipment Marina Theatre	£7,129 + £1,425.80 VAT = £8,554.80
24 February 2020	Need2Store	Civic artefact storage Jan	£200 + £40 VAT =

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		2020	£240
24 February 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership charge March 2020	£61,500 + £12,300 VAT = £73,800
24 February 2020	NPower	Town Hall electric Jan 2020	£282.38 + £14.12 VAT = £296.50
24 February 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest elec Nov 19 – Jan 20	£569.90 + £28.50 VAT = £598.40
24 February 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest elec Nov 19 – Jan 20	£94.52 + £4.73 VAT = £99.25
24 February 2020	SLCC	Deputy Clerk membership	£309
24 February 2020	Broadland Security Alarms	Annual TH alarm charge	£612.50 + £122.50 VAT = £735
24 February 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest elec Nov 19 – Jan 20	£696.28 + £34.81 VAT = £731.09
28 February 2020	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	MTD Annual Support Fee	£59 + £11.80 VAT = £70.80
28 February 2020	ID Asbestos	Belle Vue Park asbestos remove	£550 + £110 VAT = £660
28 February 2020	SLCC	Website Accessibility Webinar	£30 + £6 VAT = £36
28 February 2020	Lowestoft Museum	Storage boxes x20	£100

March Income

Received from	Description	Amount
SLCC	Refund for Practitioners Conference	£299.00 + £36.00 VAT = £335.00
SLCC	Refund for Practitioners Conference	£350.00 + £50.20 VAT = £400.20
Historic England	Final part of grant for emergency repairs	£21,000

March Expenditure

Payment to	Description	Amount	Notes
Breckland Council	Council Tax Leaflets	£1,192.32 + £238.46	

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		VAT = £1,430.78	
Great Yarmouth Heating	Whitton Hall Boiler Service	£100.00 + £20.00 VAT = £120.00	
Great Yarmouth Heating	Gunton Residents Meeting Hall Boiler Service	£62.50 + £12.50 VAT = £75.00	
NPower	Triangle Market Electricity	£96.47 + £4.82 VAT = £101.29	
NPower	CCTV Electricity	£158.22 + £31.64 VAT = £189.86	
Gazprom Energy	Town Hall Gas	£42.06	
Sarah Foote	Reimbursement for office and meeting expenses and mileage	£32.29	
Need2Store	Storage of Civic Artefacts	£200.00 + £40.00 VAT = £240.00	
SLCC	Community Based Energy Projects Webinar	£60.00 + £12.00 VAT = £72.00	
SLCC	Creating Accessible Word and PDF Documents Webinar	£35.00 + £7.00 VAT = £42.00	
SLCC	Zero Carbon Neighbourhood Planning Webinar	£60.00 + £12.00 VAT	
Marina Theatre Trust	Marina Theatre Trust Quarterly Management Fee Q1 2020-21	£37,500.00 + £7,500.00 VAT = £45,000.00	
East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Capital Repayment Q1 2020-21	£3,357.40 + £671.48 = £4,028.88	
East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Service Charge Q1 2020-21	£6,841.75 + £1,368.35 VAT = £8,210.10	
East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Rent Q1 2020-21	£3,675.00 + £735.00 VAT = £4,410.00	
East Suffolk Council	Triangle Market PC Business Rates 20-21	Scheduled - £1,172.65	Payments scheduled and split into 10 parts
East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowling	Scheduled - £1,097.80	Payments

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	Green Business Rates 20-21		scheduled and split into 10 parts
East Suffolk Council	Kensington Gardens Public Conveniences Business Rates 20-21	Scheduled - £2,095.80	Payments scheduled and split into 10 parts
East Suffolk Council	Links Road Car Park Business Rates 20-21	Scheduled - £1,871.25	Payments scheduled and split into 10 parts
East Suffolk Council	Pakefield Street Public Conveniences Business Rates 20-21	Scheduled - £1,222.55	Payments scheduled and split into 10 parts

Petty Cash

Description	Amount	Amount remaining
Postage	£0.70	£4.58

193.2. Consideration of payments (see schedule) for approval and giving the Clerk delegation to make any further appropriate and necessary payments until the Council is able to meet formally – The following schedule of payments for approval was circulated ahead of the meeting:

Payment to	Description	Amount
ESC	Harbour and Normanston Bye-Election Costs	£11,567.95
LTC budget commitment following recommendation from Finance and Governance Committee	Whitton Green	£25,294

Cllr Taylor proposed delegating authority to the Clerk to make appropriate and necessary payments until the Council is able to meet again formally; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. It was confirmed that payments would be made in the usual way, through being set up by the Clerk and authorised by one of the bank signatories.

193.3. Noting that certain policies, documents and arrangements have been reviewed (see schedule) and will be considered for adoption at a future meeting – The following schedule was circulated ahead of the meeting and noted:

Item reviewed	Comments
Financial Regulations	Recommended for adoption, subject to Full Council's consideration of the related Petty Cash Policy, as reviewed by the RFO
General Reserves Policy	Recommended for adoption
Grant Awarding Policy	Recommended for adoption
Freedom of Information Publication Scheme	Recommended for adoption
Data Protection Policy	Recommended for adoption, subject to review

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	based on current legislation
Data Retention Policy	Recommended for adoption
Risk Assessment and Management Policy	Recommended for adoption
Financial Risk Assessment and Management	Was reviewed by the Finance and Governance Committee but amendments required ahead of further review
Banking arrangements and bank signatories	Current arrangements to continue
Register of land and assets, including building and office equipment	CCTV to be removed from April, so will be reviewed again
Insurance cover	A review meeting will be arranged with the Town Council's insurers
Market and event fees	Current arrangements to continue
Complaints procedure	The Finance and Governance Committee would like this carried forward to its next meeting for further review

It was noted that the Financial Risk Assessment and Management and the Complaints Procedure will be reviewed again by the Finance and Governance Committee.

193.4. Agreeing that the Clerk can progress a recommendation from the AID Committee for a defibrillator to be installed on the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall, accepting funding committed by a District Councillor – This is time urgent due to the deadline for the funding offered by the District Councillor to be committed. Should the Council give approval for the defibrillator, it will not be installed at this stage due to advice issued by the Government and the current restrictions in place. Cllr Green proposed approval for the Clerk to progress the recommendation from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee for a defibrillator to be installed on the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall; seconded by Cllr Carlton; twelve Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against. Cllr Breakspear did not appear to have a live connection to the meeting at this time and any vote he may have made was therefore not registered. Officers will make the District Councillor and the tenants aware of the Council's decision.

194. Governance

- 194.1 External Audit - Delegating authority to the Clerk and Responsible Officer to take any action needed to execute the Council's statutory responsibilities in respect of audit, and also permit the Mayor and Chair of Finance Committee to sign any related undertakings where necessary – Cllr Taylor proposed delegating authority to the Clerk and Responsible Officer to take any action needed to execute the Council's statutory responsibilities in respect of audit, and also permit the Mayor and Chair of Finance Committee to sign any related undertakings where necessary; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.
- 194.2 Tenants - The impact of COVID-19 on the Town Council's tenants (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 194.3 Urgent and necessary business - Delegating authority to the Clerk to deal with any urgent and necessary Council business until the Council is able to meet – A Pandemic Policy, Video Meeting Protocol and report to the Council had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The purpose of the delegated authority to the Clerk was queried, when currently other local Councils in the area are not doing the same. It was explained that Lowestoft Town Council currently has several difficult and urgent issues outstanding. It was queried whether the delegation is as referred to in the Pandemic Policy. It was noted that the delegation requested is, as per the agenda item, broader than the Pandemic Policy and report to Full Council, but included both. It was suggested that, should delegated authority be granted, this should be reviewed at September's Full Council meeting and ended if meetings resume as normal, or

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extended if necessary. Cllr Taylor proposed delegating authority to the Clerk to deal with any urgent and necessary Council business until the Council is able to meet - including those delegations as detailed in the Pandemic Policy and the report to Council – with the delegation to be reviewed at September’s Full Council meeting; seconded by Cllr Pearce; eleven Councillors voted in favour; two Councillors voted against; Cllr Breakspear did not appear to have a live connection to the meeting at this time and any vote he may have made was therefore not registered.

194.4 Agreement for Cllr John Pitts can join the Personnel Committee – Cllr Taylor proposed approval for Cllr John Pitts to join the Personnel Committee; seconded by Cllr Coleby; twelve Councillors voted in favour; two Councillors abstained from the vote.

195. Date of next meeting

The next scheduled meeting date for Full Council is 21 April, and it is due to be preceded by a meeting of the Arnolds Bequest Charity Board. Consideration will need to be given as to whether the Charity Board convenes via video meeting. It was requested that the Full Council meeting schedule remains unchanged where possible, as it presents a good opportunity for updates to be communicated and for Councillors to ask questions and pass on queries or concerns from members of the public. It was queried whether Sub-Committees and Working Groups can convene via video meeting if necessary. Officers can make arrangements for this if required.

Cllr Coleby proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

196. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

196.1. Tenants (item 194.2) – A confidential report was circulated ahead of the meeting, which explained the situation for the Town Council’s tenants. Cllr Taylor proposed adopting the report and approving all the recommendations therein; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting 20:04.

Signed:

21 April 2020