

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council Meeting

First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE

19:30 on 25 February 2020

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Peter Collecott, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Peter Knight, Peter Lang, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Alice Taylor (Chair) and David Youngman

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

Public: There were two members of the public in attendance

172. Welcome

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

173. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby, Tracey Eastwood and Amanda Frost. Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

174. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Patience advised he would leave the meeting at the discussion of item 180.1a. Cllr Lang declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 179.1c.

175. Accuracy of the Minutes

21 January 2020 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Knight; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

176. Public Forum

A member of the public enquired as to whether the Town Council had received a reply to a letter it had sent to the Great Yarmouth and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in December, regarding the CCG's previous commitment to open a new medical facility in Lowestoft, following the closure of the Lowestoft Hospital. The Town Council has now received a response to its letter, in which the CCG welcomes a meeting with the Council and this will be arranged. The letter will be circulated to Councillors and will be considered by the Planning and Environment Committee. The member of the public enquired as to whether the Town Council has met with the owner of the former Lowestoft Hospital. It was confirmed that a meeting had taken place but it was felt that it was not appropriate for the Council to discuss the owner's plans for the site. There were concerns about the preservation of a heritage plaque at the site. The Waveney Local Plan includes provision for this and the owner is respectful of the history of the site. It was clarified that the Neighbourhood Development Plan has no influence over the site and there is no group within Lowestoft Town Council managing the site.

District Councillor Linda Coulam advised that she would like to contribute £1,500 of her locality funding to purchase a defibrillator to be installed on an exterior wall of the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall. Cllr Coulam has spoken with Heart2Heart Norfolk and if the defibrillator is installed, they would like to hold a public event in the Hall to demonstrate how it is used. Cllr Coulam advised that the expenditure must be committed by 31 March or the funding will be lost. This will be considered at the next meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee.

Cllr Coulam left the meeting 19:46

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177. Finance:

177.1. Receipt and acceptance of the minutes of the previous Finance and Governance Committee Meetings (20 February 2020) and consideration of the following matters: It was commented that some of the minutes being presented had not yet been approved by the Committees. It was confirmed that the minutes could still be amended by the Committees before being formally approved, but future Full Council agendas will identify which minutes are still draft. The draft minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting of 20 February were noted and will be considered for approval at the next meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee.

177.1a. Monitoring the 2019-20 budget and noting any bank reconciliations – Cllr Green has reviewed and signed the bank reconciliation to the end of January 2020. The Finance and Governance Committee has monitored the 2019 – 2020 budget and no issues were raised.

177.1b. Any payments previously approved and the expenditure and income reports for the month ending 31 January 2020 and February 2020 to date, including the petty cash log (see schedule) – There was no petty cash log presented at this meeting as there are now very few transactions through petty cash. An updated log will be presented at the next Finance and Governance Committee meeting. The following expenditure and income reports were presented and noted:

January expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
6 January 2020	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions December 2019	£4,615.29
7 January 2020	Liquid DJ	Remembrance Day sound system	£550
7 January 2020	Gazprom Energy	Denes Oval gas September 19	£31.41
7 January 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	General legal advice	£494
7 January 2020	NPower Ltd	Town Hall electric November 19	£287.08
7 January 2020	NPower Ltd	Kensington Garden elec Sep-Nov	£135.41
7 January 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	Hamilton House legal advice	£2,774
7 January 2020	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	Marina Theatre legal advice	£349.60
7 January 2020	M.S. Oakes Ltd	Town Hall repairs	£4,474.79
7 January 2020	Gazprom Energy	Denes Oval gas Sep 19 extra	£0.02
7 January 2020	Pearce and Kemp	Triangle Market elec repairs	£110.64 + £22.13 VAT = £132.77
7 January 2020	Lowestoft Armed Forces Day	Armed Forces Day grant	£5,000
7 January 2020	Sarah Foote	Stamps, meeting refreshments, Sellotape and Tippex	£15.75
9 January 2020	NPower	Triangle Market electric Dec19	£305.47 + £15.27 = £320.74
13 January 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall gas Dec 19	£41.45 + £2.07 VAT = £43.52
13 January 2020	NPower	CCTV electric Dec 19	£170.73 + £34.15 VAT = £204.88
13 January 2020	Stems Florists	Wreaths for Holocaust Memorial	£120
13 January 2020	Blachere Illuminations	Festive light display 2019	£4,936.70 + £987.34 VAT = £5,924.04
13 January 2020	HMRC	HMRC additional payments	£3,983.97
15 January 2020	Waveney Norse Ltd	Partnership charge Jan 2020	£72,480

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16 January 2020	Lloyds Bank Account	Credit card transactions	£61.31
16 January 2020	Shona Bendix	Postage reimbursement	£6.50
20 January 2020	Public Works Loans Board	Box Office loan repayment	£7,270.50
20 January 2020	Salaries	Dec 19 salaries correction	£676.60
21 January 2020	NPower	Low Cemetery PC electric Q3 19	£246.11 + £12.31 VAT = £258.42
21 January 2020	Wave Ltd	K.Gardens water May – Nov 19	£241.48
21 January 2020	East Point Business Services	HH shower screen & Radar lock	£515 + £103 VAT = £618
21 January 2020	NPower	Town Hall electric Dec 19	£282.38 + £14.12 VAT = £296.50
21 January 2020	HMRC	HMRC December 2019	£4,674.15
21 January 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest elec Q2 19-20	£175.13 + £8.76 VAT = £183.89
21 January 2020	NPower	S.Nest elec Q3 & Q2 Credit 19	£29.95 + £1.50 VAT = £31.45
21 January 2020	NPower	Pakefield St PC elec Oct-Dec 19	£371.63 + £18.58 VAT = £390.21
23 January 2020	Salaries	Salaries January 2020	£9,371.40
24 January 2020	RRC International	IEMA course and membership	£1,044.50 + £170.10 VAT = £1,214.60
24 January 2020	RICOH UK Ltd	Printer hire Q4 and ink Q3	£301.46 + £60.29 VAT = £361.75
24 January 2020	NPower	Kensington Gardens electric Q3	£223.77 + £11.19 VAT = £234.96
24 January 2020	NPower	Denes Oval electric Oct-Dec 19	£1,008.57 + £50.43 VAT = £1,059
24 January 2020	NPower	Normanston Park elec Oct-Dec 19	£2,642.28 + £528.46 VAT = £3,170.74
24 January 2020	Guy McGregor	Payslips Q3	£100.50 + £20.10 VAT = £120.60
24 January 2020	Working Law Solicitors	Legal advice	£350
24 January 2020	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage Jan 20	£200 + £40 VAT = £240
24 January 2020	Shona Bendix	Mixed reimbursement	£10.80
24 January 2020	Parkinson Partnership	Retainer VAT advice 2019-2021	£200
24 January 2020	Salaries	Salaries January 2020	£2,000

January income

Date	Payment from	Description	Amount
7 January 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£9.75
13 January 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£6,300
22 January 2020	Market income	Market income 20/12/19 and 3/1/20	£90.50

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27 January 2020	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£213.16
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February expenditure

Date	Payment To	Description	Amount
3 February 2020	Fatstickman Ltd	Banners for the Ness, to be recharged to ESC	£380.00 + £76.00 VAT = £456.00
3 February 2020	Broadland Security Alarms	Call out to Town Hall Alarm 23/8/19	£112.00 + £22.40 VAT = £134.40
3 February 2020	Broadland Security Alarms	Call out to Town Hall Alarm 24/7/19	£123.75 + £24.75 = £148.50
6 February 2020	SCC Pension Fund	Pensions January 2020	£4,210.42
7 February 2020	NPower Ltd	Triangle Market Electric January 2020	£102.07 + £5.10 VAT = 107.17
7 February 2020	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall Gas January 2020	£44.21 + £2.21 VAT = £46.42
7 February 2020	NPower Ltd	CCTV Electric January 2020	£170.36 + £34.07 VAT = £204.43
7 February 2020	Lauren Elliott	Mileage Reimbursement	£41.49
13 February 2020	First Light Festival	First Light Festival 2020 Support	£5,000.00
13 February 2020	SLCC	Reducing Energy Use in Buildings Training Webinar	£60.00 + £12.00 VAT = £72.00
13 February 2020	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit January 2020	£250.00
17 February 2020	Lloyds Bank	Bank Payments	£310.24
17 February 2020	Waveney Norse	Partnership Charge February 2020	£60,400 + £12,080 VAT = £72,480
21 February 2020	East Coast Community Healthcare	CRT, PSLW and E&D Training 20/2/2020	£600.00 + £120.00 VAT = £720.00
21 February 2020	Salaries	Salaries January 2020	£8,319.39
24 February 2020	ETS	Audio equipment for the Marina Theatre	£7,129.00 + £1,425.80 VAT = £8,554.80
24 February 2020	Need2Store	Storage of Civic Artefacts January 2020	£200.00 + £40.00 VAT = £240.00
24 February 2020	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership Charge March 2020	£61,500.00 + £12,300.00 VAT = £73,800.00
24 February 2020	NPower	Town Hall Electric January 2020	£282.38 + £14.12 VAT = £296.50
24 February 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest Electric Nov 2019 – Jan 2020	£569.90 + £28.50 VAT = £598.40
24 February 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest Electric Nov 2019 – Jan 2020	£94.52 + £4.73 VAT = £99.25
24 February 2020	SLCC	Deputy Clerk Principal Membership (Part paid for by Brome and Oakley Parish Council)	£309.00, of which £101.00 has been paid for by Brome and Oakley
24 February 2020	BSA Security	Annual Maintenance	£612.50 + £122.50

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		Charge for Town Hall Fire Detection and Alarm System	VAT = £735.00
24 February 2020	NPower	Sparrows Nest Electric Nov 2019 – Jan 2020	£696.28 + £34.81 VAT = £731.09

February income

Date	Received From	Description	Amount
11 February 2020	East Suffolk Council	Banners for the Ness	£380.00 + £76.00 VAT = £456.00
11 February 2020	HMRC	VAT Repayment Q3 19-20	£149,913.11

Savings Account

Date	Interest Received	Total
30 September 2019	£98.63	£450,098.63
31 December 2019	£453.80	£455,552.43

177.1c. Any payments for approval, including the following:

177.1ci See schedule – There were no payments to consider for approval.

177.2. The scope of additional Christmas lights – The Council previously decided to extend its Christmas lights provision to London Road South. A group of Councillors completed a site visit with a representative from Blachere, who recommended braided lights to wrap around lamp posts, as is the case with the High Street and Bevan Street East. A quote has been provided for coverage between the bridge and Lorne Park Road or between Mill Road and Lorne Park Road, plus installation and removal costs. The current arrangement for the High Street and Bevan Street East is two braids of different colours per lamp post. It was queried whether the quote provided for London Road South is for the same arrangement, and this will be checked with Blachere. It was queried whether business owners on London Road South would be contributing to the cost of the lights. The Council has not requested this of business owners on the High Street and Bevan Street East and the aim of installing lights onto London Road South is to boost visitor numbers to that area. It was queried whether there would be a price difference if the Council were to enter a three year agreement with Blachere for London Road South. Cllr Pearce proposed extending the Town Council's provision of Christmas lights to London Road South, between the bridge and Lorne Park Road, subject to a comparative quote being provided by Blachere of the cost over three years. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Lang. Cllr Knight proposed an amendment for a quote to be provided of costs over a four year term, as elections will be held in three years and an extra year would allow the new Council a chance to familiarise themselves with the arrangement before having to consider the Christmas lights provision again. Cllr Knight's amendment was seconded by Cllr Hardie. There was a concern raised as to the environmental impact of the Town Council increasing its Christmas lights provision. It was explained that the braids are the lowest energy option and are recyclable and biodegradable, with LED bulbs. The vote was taken on the amendment first. Twelve Councillors voted in favour and three Councillors voted against. The vote was taken on the initial proposal, as amended. Thirteen Councillors voted in favour and two Councillors voted against.

178. Audit

178.1. The internal audit report and any recommendations

The remaining member of the public left the meeting 20:08

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The report was circulated ahead of the meeting and noted. Some recommendations had been raised and the Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), went through these and explained the actions which would be taken as a result. Firstly, it was noted that the debtors system requires review. Advice on software use is being sought, including for debt prompts, and action is being taken to follow up the 2019 – 2020 debtors. Secondly, the report has identified concerns about the payroll provider, and whether adequate data control measures are being exercised. Issues with the payroll provider had already been identified and the Clerk as RFO will present an options report to the Finance and Governance Committee. Additionally, the report recommends that the requirement for fidelity insurance is monitored. This however is only an issue if the Council's funds exceed £2million and needs review when any grant funding is received. It was noted that year end and the external audit are approaching. More papers will be presented at March and April's Full Council meeting.

178.2. The audit report/action plan from the Responsible Financial Officer – This was covered during the discussion of item 178.1.

179. Assets, Inclusion and Development

179.1. Receipt and acceptance of the minutes of the previous Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee meeting (3 February 2020) and consideration of the following matters: - The draft minutes of the meeting of 3 February 2020 were received and noted.

179.1a. A recommendation to make a proposal to East Suffolk Council that it establishes full ownership of the Jubilee Bridge, via a transfer back from Lowestoft Town Council – The Town Council sees the current ownership arrangements as unsatisfactory. Investigations have not been able to establish ownership of the middle section of the bridge. Any structural issues with the bridge could present significant liabilities for the Town Council, which does not have the same resources and expertise as the District Council. It is understood that the Town Council may not have been made fully aware of the issues with the bridge upon transfer of ownership of part of the bridge, and since. It was queried how East Suffolk Council had authorisation to transfer ownership of part of the bridge under the Reorganisation Order without being able to verify the owner of the middle section of the bridge. The Clerk will enquire about this. Cllr Green proposed making a proposal to East Suffolk Council for Lowestoft Town Council to transfer back ownership of the section of the bridge which transferred under the Reorganisation Order, subject to legal advice; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

179.1b. Noting consent to adopt the red telephone kiosk on Gunton Drive, agreeing its purchase, at the cost of £1, and appointing signatories to sign the contract of acceptance – It has been confirmed that the telephone kiosk has an active electricity supply. Cllr Barnard put the suggestion of installing a defibrillator to the local residents, which they are in favour of. Other former telephone kiosks have been converted into book lending libraries and parish noticeboards and it was queried whether this could be considered in the interim. The agenda item is only noting consent to adopt the kiosk and appoint the signatories. The function of the kiosk will be considered at a later date. It was noted that signatories did not need to be appointed, as the Council has previously decided that the Mayor and Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee will act as signatories for all legal documents.

Cllr Parker left the room 20:21

Cllr Green proposed that the Town Council adopts the red telephone kiosk on Gunton Drive for £1; seconded by Cllr Barnard; thirteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

179.1c. A confidential recommendation regarding the loan agreement for the Lowestoft Collection to the Lowestoft Museum (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

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180. Planning and Environment

180.1. Receipt and acceptance of the minutes of the previous Planning and Environment Committee meetings (21 January 2020 and 4 February 2020) and consideration of the following matters: - It was confirmed that 21 January 2020 minutes had been approved at the 4 February meeting, and the minutes from 4 February 2020 had been approved at the meeting immediately prior to this Full Council meeting. Cllr Green proposed acceptance of the minutes of 21 January 2020 and 4 February 2020; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

180.1a. A proposal relating to the purchase and development of an area of the North Denes (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

181. Climate Emergency

181.1. Receipt and acceptance of the minutes of the previous Climate Emergency Committee meeting (17 February 2020)

Cllr Parker returned 20:23

The draft minutes of the meeting of 17 February 2020 were received and noted.

182. Personnel

182.1. Receipt and acceptance of the minutes of the previous Personnel Committee meeting (18 February 2020), and consideration of the following matters: - Cllr Lang proposed acceptance of the draft minutes of 18 February 2020; seconded by Cllr Hardie; fourteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against, as the minutes had not yet been ratified by the Personnel Committee.

182.1a. To consider the recruitment process for new staff

Cllr Youngman left the room 20:25

The timetable for the recruitment process was circulated at the meeting. The Council were asked to consider whether to accept this process and to consider delegating authority to the Personnel Committee for the following functions:

- To oversee the recruitment process
- To agree appointments within salary range specified and report to Council
- To agree that the above applies to the Community Warden posts but that the recruitment process will be delayed until all the information is obtained to enable their proper appointment

Cllr Youngman returned 20:26

It was requested that the process be as inclusive as possible to any Councillors who would like to be involved. The timetable presented to the Council does include provision for this. Cllr Taylor provided an overview of the discussion of this item so far to allow Cllr Youngman to participate. It was clarified that if the delegated authority is approved, the Personnel Committee will decide which two Councillors will sit on the interview panel with the Clerk. It was suggested that this should be defined as one Councillor from the Personnel Committee and one other Councillor. However, if that condition is imposed, the interviews cannot go ahead if that mix of Councillors is not available to sit on the panel. The timetable will be circulated to those Councillors not present at this meeting, giving them an opportunity to express their interest in the process before the next Personnel Committee meeting on 4 March. Cllr Hardie proposed delegating authority to the Personnel Committee as detailed in the three bullet points, and for the recruitment process to proceed as set out in the timetable; seconded by Cllr Lang; fourteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote. It was confirmed that the Personnel Committee will decide which Councillors will sit on the interview panel.

183. External bodies

183.1. Any written reports from Councillors (to be circulated in advance) – The written reports

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circulated ahead of the meeting were noted.

- 183.2. Appointing a representative from Lowestoft Town Council to the Lowestoft Place Board – Although not present at the meeting, Cllr Eastwood had advised ahead of the meeting that she would like to be considered as the Town Council’s representative. It was queried what time of day these meetings will take place, as a concern was raised that Councillors had previously been appointed to outside bodies who could not then commit to attending the meetings. The Lowestoft Place Board has only recently been formed and it is understood it does not yet have a regular schedule in place. Cllrs Patience and Taylor advised they would like to be considered as the Town Council’s representative also. It is not yet known whether the Place Board’s constitution allows the appointment of substitute representatives, but it was agreed that a substitute should be appointed at this meeting, and clarification will be sought on the Place Board’s policy for this. As three Councillors had put their names forward for consideration, it was agreed that an absolute majority vote would take place. The vote for Cllr Eastwood to be the Town Council’s representative on the Lowestoft Place Board took place first and five Councillors voted in favour. The vote for Cllr Patience was taken next and nine Councillors voted in favour, which was the majority and Cllr Patience was therefore appointed as the Town Council’s representative. It was agreed for an absolute majority vote on the appointment of a substitute representative to take place and Cllr Eastwood was considered first. Nine Councillors voted in favour, which was the majority and Cllr Eastwood was therefore appointed as the Town Council’s substitute representative.

184. Legal:

- 184.1. Any legal matters affecting the Council – There were no matters for consideration at this meeting.

185. Date of the next meeting

24 March 2020 19:30

186. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for the inclusion of items on the next agenda.

Cllr Green proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

187. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

- 187.1. Any legal issues including those at 180.1a and 184.1 above as required:

179.1c A confidential recommendation regarding the loan agreement for the Lowestoft Collection to the Lowestoft Museum (confidential) – Cllr Taylor made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

180.1a A proposal relating to the purchase and development of an area of the North Denes (confidential)

Cllr Patience left the meeting 20:56

A proposal had been received, which was displayed at the meeting and discussed. It was agreed that any proposed development of the site would be subject to a full and transparent procurement process.

- 187.2. Any employment matters – There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting 21:23.

Signed:

24 March 2020