

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
14:30 on 12 November 2019

MINUTES

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

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk), Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were three members of the public in attendance

27. Welcome

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

28. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Pearce and Youngman. Cllr Barnard proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

29. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

30. To consider the accuracy of the Minutes

7 October 2019 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Barnard; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

31. Public Forum

None of the members of the public in attendance wished to speak.

32. A report from the Lowestoft Climate Action Group and any recommendations

Emma Bateman gave a verbal report and it was agreed that the report would be forwarded to the Climate Emergency Committee once available. Discussions included the Woodland Trust's initiative to plant one million trees, although there may be insufficient time remaining to sign up for this. The Group would like to see more provision for glass recycling in the town and are making enquiries to see who is responsible and what the cost would be. It was agreed that this matter would also be added to the next Climate Emergency Committee agenda. Proposed amendments to the Waveney Local Plan were suggested, but the Deputy Clerk advised that the Waveney Local Plan had already been adopted, and it is therefore unlikely it would be amended. Lowestoft Town Council is however developing a Neighbourhood Plan and suggestions for this could be submitted to the Town Council, to be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group will also be suggesting improvements to public transport, including better provision for storing bicycles on trains, and would like to see more bicycle racks in the town. The Group will be meeting again on 10 December and will be supported by Cllr Lang.

33. The impact of flooding in the town and any measures the Town Council can take

Cllr Hardie attended a meeting this morning about new flood defences for the harbour, due to be implemented in 2022 - 23. There has been an issue with flooding on Aldwyck Way again and Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency are working together to implement measures to prevent a reoccurrence. There are several points along Yarmouth Road which have ongoing issues with flooding. Cllr Parker proposed

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that officers contact the appropriate authority to request reports on how frequently the drains are cleaned along Yarmouth Road; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour. It was reported that the gullies along the sea wall have become blocked with sand and marram grass, making it difficult for water to drain away. It was requested that officers request East Suffolk Council's maintenance programme for this.

34. The impact of air pollution in the town and any measures the Town Council can take

The British Lung Foundation has produced a national report on air pollution outside NHS properties and the reading taken on Alexandra Road, Lowestoft, was one of the highest in the country. The reading was below the level which would require the District Council to complete further monitoring but there was still concerns raised by the Committee about the results of the report.

Two members of the public left the meeting 14:57

Cllr Hardie proposed that officers contact East Suffolk Council what air pollution monitoring devices they have in place, where they are situated, how regularly they are monitored and reports produced, and what action is taken as a result; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

35. The Woodland Trust's initiative to plant one million trees and consideration of making a recommendation as to the Town Council's involvement

The Clerk arrived 14:55

The Kirkley Residents Association has applied for ten trees to plant along London Road South in the Spring. East Suffolk Norse has offered to plant these free of charge. The Town Council could consider applying, once it has identified where they should be planted. The cost of watering would need to be considered. It was suggested that a scheme could be trialled to plant trees in residential areas, to be adopted by individuals who will be responsible for nurturing them. Trees planted in these areas would need to be deep rooted rather than shallow to prevent damage to pathways, and advice would need to be sought from Suffolk County Council. The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee will consider this further.

The Deputy Clerk left the meeting 15:02

The Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee has been identifying green spaces and the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee has been identifying areas to plant new trees. Both Sub-Committees will liaise to explore the Woodland Trust's initiative. A member of the public advised that he has been collecting leaves and taking them to the college for composting. The Council has been considering the use of mulch and it was suggested that a leaf depositing area could be considered, or an area of earth surrounding trees which are planted directly into concrete. Any action taken by the Council would need to be in line with its Open Spaces Strategy and the climate emergency declaration. The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee will explore this further and a representative from East Suffolk Norse will be invited to the next Climate Emergency Committee meeting to offer advice. Ashley Mcallister proposed that the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee explore the possibility of collection points for mulch and review the Open Spaces Strategy; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

36. The development of wildflower areas in Lowestoft Town Council's parks and open spaces

A draft Wild Flower Meadows Policy has been considered by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee, who have recommended its adoption to Full Council. The policy is that wild flower meadows will be developed by the Town Council in appropriate locations across its assets. Representatives from East Suffolk Norse are attending meetings of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to offer practical advice. Cllr Hardie proposed that the Parks and Open Spaces

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Sub-Committee consider implementation of the Wild Flower Meadows Policy, following its adoption by Full Council.

37. Progress with the development of a policy

This is ongoing.

38. The development of a litter strategy, in line with the Town Council's existing policies

The only policy the Town Council currently has on litter disposal is within the Open Spaces Strategy. It was agreed there is not an adequate provision of litter bins at sites owned by the Town Council and sites owned by East Suffolk Council. It was suggested this could be raised through the Neighbourhood Plan. It was suggested that the Committee may wish to consider how it can encourage a culture of less litter in the town, through methods other than installing more litter bins, for which the cost of emptying would need to be considered. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group will consider this at their next meeting also. It was suggested that the Town Council could consider signage at its parks referring to its climate emergency declaration and encouraging visitors to take their litter home. Cllr Lang proposed that the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee consider a litter strategy for the Town Council, including exploring the provision of litter bins and signage for its parks; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

39. An update on the Neighbourhood Plan

There were no significant updates for consideration at this meeting.

40. Date of the next meeting

The Lowestoft Climate Action Group will be meeting on 10 December. The date for the next Climate Emergency Committee meeting was agreed as 11 December at 15:30, at which a verbal update from the Lowestoft Climate Action Group will be provided.

41. Items for the next agenda and close

Options for glass recycling will be considered, as per discussions earlier in the meeting. It was requested that the Town Council considers encouraging residents to identify potential cycle routes, to improve the provision of these in the town. Suffolk Highways would ultimately be responsible for implementing this but the Town Council could actively promoting cycling and advertise the routes. This will be added to the next agenda and considered in more detail using any information obtained by Lowestoft Climate Action Group members. There was a request for light and noise pollution to be discussed at the next meeting. The Lowestoft Climate Action Group will be considering a scheme to collect fruit from trees for people who cannot pick the fruit themselves, for it to be passed on and shared where it is not required. The Town Council would need to carefully consider its involvement, with regard to safeguarding matters.

42. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting 15:34.

Signed:

11 December 2019