

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
14:00 on 25 September 2019

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Bob Breakspear, Neil Coleby (Chair) and Graham Parker

In attendance: Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

1. Welcome

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

2. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lang. Cllr Coleby proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour. Cllr Breakspear advised in advance of the meeting that he would be late. It was agreed that all members of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee should be asked to submit their preference for the days and times of the meetings, to ensure they are scheduled to suit the majority.

3. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Coleby declared that he is a member of the Lowestoft in Bloom committee. Cllrs Barnard and Parker are members of the Gunton Residents Association and, although he was not present at this point in the meeting, it was noted that Cllr Breakspear is a member of the Friends of Kensington Gardens.

4. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

5. Consideration of the accuracy of the minutes

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

6. Review and approval of the Terms of Reference

This will be considered at the next meeting.

7. Consideration of the following with regard to planting in the Town Council's parks and open spaces:

- 7.1 Agreeing dates for site visits to the Town Council's parks and open spaces – It was agreed to defer this item until after the annual Lowestoft Town Council asset tour has taken place, to avoid duplication of site visits. The Sub-Committee agreed it would like to visit Clarkes Lane, Rosedale Park and Whitton Green. Councillors were advised to email the Committee Clerk with any further suggestions.
- 7.2 Additional planting for 2020 – Full Council approved the order for bulbs. It is understood that a budget was previously set to work with a Landscape Architect to design a winter garden in Sparrows Nest and this should be progressed.
- 7.3 A plan for planting and agreeing target dates for the ordering of plants and bulbs – It was agreed that a calendar should be set up as a record of what action is required at each site

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at a particular time of year. Any new planting schemes should be agreed in March in preparation for autumn planting, and bulbs should be ordered by July. In November, 'in the green' planting for February and March should be considered. In February and March, an assessment of the parks and open spaces should take place to identify whether additional planting is required.

Cllr Breakspear arrived 14:19

Cllr Barnard left the room 14:19

It was reported that several trees in Sparrows Nest require crown reduction. It was agreed that an inventory of trees in Sparrows Nest, including their age and condition, would be useful, and Waveney Norse may be able to assist with this. Cllr Breakspear has a similar document for Kensington Gardens and will circulate this.

- 7.4 Making a recommendation to the Council on the use of mulch – In line with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, the use of mulch would mean that plants would not require watering as regularly. Research would need to be completed into the type, cost and quantities. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee to approve the use of mulch for flowerbeds and herbaceous borders in Lowestoft Town Council's parks and open spaces; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. Cllr Coleby will complete further research on the cost and most appropriate type of mulch, to allow for a full proposal to be made.
- 7.5 Making recommendations to Council on the planting of cherry trees to commemorate Victory over Japan Day and peace roses to commemorate Victory in Europe Day, and appropriate locations – This is also being discussed by the Events and Communications Sub-Committee. Cllr Coleby has started to look at potential appropriate sites and encouraged the rest of the sub-committee to do the same within their wards. It was suggested that Lowestoft Town Council representatives attending The Ness meetings could be asked to request that one of the trees planted at the site is a native flowering cherry tree. Cllr Coleby will keep a record of potential locations and recommendations on the type of cherry tree that can be planted at each one.

Cllr Barnard returned 14:37

Suitable locations again need to be identified for the planting of peace roses. Preferred suppliers will be considered at the next meeting. Different varieties of peace rose are available for different areas and the prices and options will be considered at the next meeting.

- 7.6 Options for renovation of the Kensington Gardens Japanese Garden – Cllr Breakspear and the Friends of Kensington Gardens have been considering the options. This sub-committee or the AID Committee would need to consider and approve any plans before work commenced, however, and any structures may be subject to planning approval. Cllr Parker offered to research what funding is available for parks. It was agreed that Waveney Norse would also be able to advise on the options available for this area. It was previously discussed and agreed that a visit should be arranged to Harrod Horticulture. The Committee Clerk will make arrangements for this.

Cllr Barnard left the room 14:55

Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Budget and Loan Working Group to include a figure of £2,500 in the 2020 – 21 budget for the development of the Kensington Gardens peace garden, with a suggestion that this could be funded from the commemorative events budget; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. The gardening regime for Kensington

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Gardens was discussed and will be included in wider discussions about the Waveney Norse contract.

Cllr Barnard returned 14:57

Cllr Coleby has started to compile a spreadsheet of the parks, open spaces and play areas, a list of what is in them and some proposals for improvements, to give each space a clearer identity. Cllr Parker provided a list of further suggestions, as follows:

- More seating within parks – It was suggested that a theme could be explored for each park and benches and bike racks commissioned to tie in with this. The Open Spaces Strategy covers this and Waveney Norse should be able to offer assistance with how to implement this.
- Drinking fountains – This was previously explored for Kensington Gardens but presented some issues. This would fit in with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency but would require further research and the agreement of a standard design.
- More lighting with parks – There may be loans available to support this and Cllr Parker will complete further research into this, although some of the current lighting may belong to Suffolk County Council. Other factors, such as light pollution and encouraging the use of parks after dark, need to be considered.
- Park signage – Additional safety signage needs to be considered carefully, as this could increase the Council's insurance liabilities. It was agreed that signage identifying each park should be present at each of the park's entrances.

Cllr Barnard left the room 15:31 and returned 15:31

- More events in the parks – The Events and Communications Sub-Committee is considering this.
- Making the parks more inviting for young people – This would need to be done in a way so as not to encourage anti-social behaviour. Waveney Norse and Sentinel Leisure Trust may be able to advise on ways to achieve this. It was also agreed that Lowestoft Town Council should have a representative on the Waveney Youth Council.
- Repairs to the Belle Vue Park wall – The Facilities and Contracts Manager is obtaining quotes. This has not been identified as an immediate risk and the expenditure will need to be considered against more urgent work. Cllr Barnard proposed a recommendation to the Budget and Loan Working Group to consider repair work to the Belle Vue Park wall as part of any capital repair work; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. The bridge at Belle Vue Park is jointly owned by Lowestoft Town and East Suffolk Councils. It was agreed that a joint management plan should be considered. Cllr Barnard proposed that discussions with East Suffolk Council regarding the joint management of the Belle Vue Park bridge be progressed; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- Table tennis tables – An approach was previously made to the Town Council about introducing more of these to its parks and open spaces, but this was declined. These are available in Normanston Park. It was suggested that alternative activities could be considered instead and a survey could be completed to gain feedback and suggestions from the electorate.

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Cllr Parker left the room 16:06

It was agreed that the name of each park, open space and the allotments should be considered and standardised.

Cllr Parker returned 16:08

8. Date of the next meeting

This was agreed as 9 October at 14:00 but the Committee Clerk will email all the sub-committee members, requesting their preferences for future meeting times and dates.

Cllr Parker left the meeting 16:11

9. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Cllr Coleby has been researching options for benches, etc, in the Holocaust Memorial Garden. Options for commemorating the Kindertransport will also be considered and options for funding explored. Funding has previously been agreed for the planting of the pink and white flowerbeds in Belle Vue Park. Cllr Coleby has produced a map of the park, identifying potential areas for azalea and snowdrop walks. At a future meeting the sub-committee would like to consider which play area should be renovated next and representatives from Waveney Norse and Sentinel Leisure Trust can be invited to the meeting to assist with this.

10. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting 16:20.

Signed:
9 October 2019