

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
14:30 on 5 November 2019

MINUTES

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

In attendance: Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Also in attendance: Richard Hackney (Operational Manager – Grounds – East Suffolk Norse) and Mark Ross (Assistant Manager – Grounds – East Suffolk Norse)

Public: Cllr Pitts was in attendance as an observer

11. Welcome

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

12. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

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

13. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Coleby declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to Lowestoft in Bloom. Cllrs Barnard and Parker declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to the Gainsborough Drive Pond. Cllr Breakspear declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to Kensington Gardens.

14. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance. It was agreed that Cllr Pitts could participate in discussions but would not be able to vote.

15. Accuracy of the minutes

25 September 2019 – An amendment was requested at item 7.2, as the decision of the Council was to not work with a Landscape Architect to design the Sparrows Nest Winter Garden. An amendment was requested at item 7.3, to clarify that the inventory of trees at Kensington Gardens had been created by former Cllr Dick Houghton. The minutes will be amended accordingly. Cllr Parker proposed acceptance of the minutes, with the two amendments as detailed; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

16. Terms of Reference

The draft Terms of Reference were circulated to the Sub-Committee in advance of the meeting. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to adopt the Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

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

- 17.1. How to progress the Sparrows Nest Winter Garden – Cllr Coleby circulated a list of available plants to the Sub-Committee ahead of the meeting. A planting scheme will need to be considered and it was agreed that ideas could be shared at future meetings. Mr Hackney and Mr Ross, representing East Suffolk Norse at the meeting, spoke positively about the planned Winter Garden, speaking of the potential benefits for local wildlife and how it could be a popular visitor attraction for the park.

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- 17.2. How to progress the Belle Vue Park pink and white beds – The cost of watering and maintenance would need to be considered. Planting can either be done in the Spring or Autumn, depending on what is being planted. Snowdrops and other ‘in the green’ plants would ideally need to be planted in February or March. East Suffolk Norse will look into whether the Town Council can be made aware once ‘in the green’ plants become available through their supplier. East Suffolk Norse were praised for work they have completed at the entrance to Belle Vue Park.
- 17.3. Making recommendations to Council on the planting of cherry trees to commemorate Victory over Japan Day – It was agreed that the consideration of item 17.7 would be included with this item. Potentially five replacement trees are required for the Gainsborough Drive pond, to replace at least three which have had to be removed. Cllr Barnard proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve a maximum budget of £500 for planting and replacement trees for the Gainsborough Drive pond area; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. Locations for cherry trees were discussed and consideration was given to whether it would be preferable to have individual trees at several locations or a concentration of trees at a couple of locations, due to watering costs and the vulnerability of individual trees. Belle Vue Park already has a high concentration of trees but a cherry tree could be planted at the centre of the pink bed. Other areas were also considered, such as The Ness, the Denes Oval, the North end of Sparrows Nest to replace a tree which was previously removed, Fen Park and Kensington Gardens. The Yarmouth Road entrance to the Great Eastern Linear Park was suggested, but this would be an isolated position and it may be a difficult location for a tree to become established. It was suggested that cherry trees could be planted in concentration at Normanston Park for more impact. Gunton Community Park was also considered, but it was agreed that a single tree at this location could be vulnerable. Cllr Coleby proposed that he would put together a plan, based on today’s discussions, to be considered further at the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.
- 17.4. Making recommendations to Council on the planting of peace roses to commemorate Victory in Europe Day, including preferred suppliers and the type of rose to suit the location – It was agreed that it would be preferable to plant the roses at locations which East Suffolk Norse already tend to, due to the care which they would need. Initially, the intention was for the roses to be planted around the town for members of the public to enjoy, but it may be more feasible to plant several in one location. Kensington Gardens and the Denes Oval were considered as potential locations. A climbing rose was suggested for Fen Park and a cherry tree and rose display was suggested for Walmer Road.
- 17.5. Options for renovation of the Kensington Gardens Japanese Garden – Cllr Breakspear and the Friends of Kensington Gardens have been making enquiries with the college about the construction of a Japanese tea hut. This is in a conservation area so the group will need to check what permissions are required and there has not yet been any agreement by the Town Council for the construction. The inventory of trees at Kensington Gardens produced by former Cllr Dick Houghton contains one tree which could not be identified. This will be passed to East Suffolk Norse’s Arborist. It is hoped that similar inventories can be produced for more of the Town Council’s parks.
- 17.6. Options for the Kensington Gardens Holocaust Memorial Garden – Cllr Coleby has created a planting plan for the area surrounding the tree, and this was circulated ahead of the meeting. Cllr Barnard proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve a maximum budget of £300 for planting in the Holocaust Memorial Garden; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. The Sub-Committee would like the planting to happen in January, in time for Holocaust Memorial Day. Cllr

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Breakspear offered to work with East Suffolk Norse to arrange digging over of the soil in preparation. The Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee approved the recommendation to use mulch on the Town Council's flowerbeds and herbaceous borders. East Suffolk Norse do not regularly use it but they do produce it, and in line with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, it could help soil to retain water, though further consideration will need to be given to where it is used. Cllr Coleby had found details of a company which can produce a lectern designed to commemorate the Second World War. An image of the lectern was circulated to the Sub-Committee ahead of the meeting. It was suggested that the lectern could be installed at the Holocaust Memorial Garden to provide more information about the area. There are also benches available with a similar design which could be considered at a later date. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to approve the purchase of a commemorative lectern for the Holocaust Memorial Garden, within a maximum budget of £500; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. Funding options will be explored.

- 17.7. Recommendations regarding the purchase of replacement trees for the Gainsborough Drive pond area and an associated budget – This was discussed during the consideration of item 17.3.
- 17.8. Options for the re-planting of the Queens Commonwealth Canopy in Rosedale Park – East Suffolk Norse has the five replacement trees ready to plant and recommend that they are planted nearer the play area fence this time. Rosedale Park does not have a Friends Of Group so Cllr Lang offered to make a site visit with a representative from East Suffolk Norse to look at the area and speak with nearby businesses to see if they would be happy to water the trees. If not, Cllr Lang advised he should be able to do this, if there was access to water.
- 17.9. Recommendations regarding the purchase of 'in the green' plants, perennials and trees, and an associated budget – This item was covered during earlier discussions in the meeting.
- 17.10. A Wild Flower Meadows Policy and a recommendation to Full Council on its adoption – This was circulated in advance of the meeting. East Suffolk Norse would like to see a copy also. Cllr Lang proposed a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Wild Flower Meadows Policy; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

18. Identification of Lowestoft Town Council's parks and open spaces and consider standardised naming of them

Lowestoft Town Council has several assets which it identifies with different names than those used by the community, such as the Great Eastern Linear Park being more commonly referred to as The Trams and Rosedale Park being more commonly referred to as Elmtree Park. It was agreed that giving a piece of land a name and identity makes it more likely that the community will engage with it. Cllr Coleby had made some suggestions and these were circulated ahead of the meeting. One of the suggestions was to rename the land at Thirlmere Close to Millennium Park or Millennium Green, however there are pieces of land with similar names in the area already, which were specifically developed for the new millennium. It was agreed that the names did not have to be finalised at this meeting and further consideration will be given to this.

19. The appointment of a representative to ParksEast, at a cost of £100 per annum

East Suffolk Norse are still a registered members but do not regularly attend the meetings and have advised ParksEast that it may be more appropriate for a representative from Lowestoft Town Council to attend instead. Cllr Coleby advised that he would be interested in

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attending to share knowledge and ideas with other areas.

Cllr Breakspear left the meeting 15:51

Cllr Lang proposed a recommendation to Full Council to appoint Cllr Coleby as Lowestoft Town Council's representative to ParksEast, at a cost of £100 per annum; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. It was suggested that Goose Green Nurseries could be considered as a preferred supplier for the Town Council, as their prices are competitive and it can otherwise be difficult to source plants. It was agreed that if this were the case, periodic checks would need to be made to ensure their prices remained competitive. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to Full Council to appoint Goose Green Nurseries as Lowestoft Town Council's preferred plant supplier; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. Harrod Horticultural have extended an invitation to the Town Council to see the services and products they offer. The Sub-Committee agreed it would like to accept the invitation and the Committee Clerk will arrange this.

20. Date of the next meeting

A regular meeting schedule was agreed as the first Tuesday of every month at 14:30. Mr Hackney and Mr Ross advised they would be happy to continue to attend the meetings as required.

21. Items for the next Agenda and Close

The Sub-Committee would like to start considering five or ten year plans for the Council's parks. Cllr Parker has been exploring funding options, such as the Tesco Community Fund or the National Lottery Community Fund, however a clear plan and an idea of costs would need to be created before any applications are submitted. It is understood that Persimmon Homes and Adnams also offer community funding. The Sub-Committee agreed it would like to discuss Clarkes Lane, Belle Vue Park, Normanston Park and Kensington Gardens at the next meeting. It was requested that consideration also be given to low-level lighting at Normanston Park. East Suffolk Norse reported that overgrown shrubs at Bentley Drive have been trimmed, following complaints from members of the public, but in future permission will be sought from the Town Council first. The Fen Park Friends would like to trim back some of the hedges at Fen Park, and will be seeking the advice of Lowestoft in Bloom to do this. The Sub-Committee would like to ensure they are mindful of any nesting birds.

22. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting 16:14.

Signed:

2 December 2019