

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 7 January 2020

MINUTES

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

In attendance: Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Also in attendance: Cllr Alice Taylor was present for part of the meeting

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

37. Welcome

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

38. Apologies for absence

Cllr John Pitts provided apologies. Cllr Barnard proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

39. 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.

40. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

41. Accuracy of the minutes

3 December 2019 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Parker; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

42. Making a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee about planting plans for Victory over Japan Day and Victory in Europe Day

Based on the figures from Cllr Coleby's previous research, Cllr Parker proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee for a maximum budget of £2,500 for cherry trees, a maximum budget of £200 for peace roses and a maximum budget of £800 for planting of the cherry trees and peace roses; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

43. Arrangements for assets visits with representatives from East Suffolk Norse

The date for the site visits was agreed as Wednesday 22 January. The Sub-Committee agreed that they would take notes and the presence of a Town Council officer and an East Suffolk Norse officer was not required. It was previously agreed that visits would be made to Clarkes Lane, Belle Vue Park, Kensington Gardens and Normanston Park this time, however the Sub-Committee agreed that it is already familiar with Belle Vue Park and Kensington Gardens. During the site visits, Councillors will consider what existing facilities each site has and the condition of them, and what facilities are required at each site. The provision of adult gym equipment will be considered at Normanston Park. At the next meeting, long term plans for the Clarkes Lane, Belle Vue Park, Kensington Gardens and Normanston Park will be discussed.

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44. Public engagement to promote tree planting in Lowestoft

Previously, there were discussions about a public event and setting up a steering committee to begin making arrangements for it. The aim of the event is to promote the benefits of planting trees and encourage schools to get involved. It was suggested that Lowestoft in Bloom and Suffolk Woodland Trust could be invited to participate. It was agreed that the Town Council's Friends Groups should be invited to participate, and arrangements will be made with assistance from the Climate Emergency Committee through Cllr Lang.

The Friends of Gainsborough Drive Pond have agreed on replacement trees for those previously removed, with the advice of East Suffolk Norse's Arborist. It has been decided that a cherry tree, a willow and two rowans should be planted. Cllr Barnard proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee for a maximum budget of £500 for the purchase of three rowan trees and a willow; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour. The cherry tree was not included with this proposal as this was included in the proposal made at item 42.

45. A recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee on the appointment of a representative to ParksEast

Cllr Parker proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to appoint Cllr Coleby as Lowestoft Town Council's representative to ParksEast; Seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

46. Recommendations on appropriate areas of Lowestoft Town Council land to increase biodiversity

The Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee have recommended the adoption of the Wildflower Meadows Policy to Full Council with some minor amendments, as a statement of intent. Appropriate areas would need to be considered on a site by site basis. East Suffolk Norse has previously advised that wildflower meadows tend to be more successful on larger areas.

47. Creating a policy on the use of pesticides for the maintenance of Lowestoft Town Council's parks and open spaces

A pesticide policy has previously been adopted as part of the Open Spaces Strategy. This was displayed and reviewed at the meeting. The policy covers the appropriate use of pesticides in detail.

Cllr Parker left the room 15:18

The policy has been provided to East Suffolk Norse. Contract review meetings with East Suffolk Norse will be taking place shortly and the policy can be discussed as part of these.

Cllr Parker returned 15:20

The provision of benches is also included in the Open Spaces Strategy and this was discussed. The Town Council previously awarded a grant to Realise Futures to install a bench and it was requested that an update be sought from them.

Cllr Breakspear left the room 15:24

A ten year planting plan for snowdrops was displayed and discussed.

Cllr Breakspear returned 15:25

Protection of any bulbs planted would need to be considered. The Sub-Committee would like the approval of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to develop an area of snowdrops in Sparrows Nest. A budget has previously been set aside for 'in the green' planting.

Cllr Taylor joined the meeting 15:28

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It was suggested that the Council could also consider donating some bulbs to the Arnold's Bequest Charity Board to be planted at Arnold's Bequest. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee for the maximum expenditure of £500 for the purchase of snowdrops for Sparrows Nest and Arnold's Bequest; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour.

Cllr Taylor spoke to the Sub-Committee about plans which have been submitted and approved by East Suffolk Council to develop part of the North Denes. Lowestoft Town Council has not yet granted permission as the landowner and will need to consider this. The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee is starting to look at long term plans for areas of the Town Council's land and it was agreed the North Denes could be included as part of this.

48. Date of the next meeting

4 February 2020 at 14:30 – The current meeting schedule of the first Tuesday of every month means that meetings of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee are the day after meetings of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee. It was agreed to amend the meeting schedule of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to the last Tuesday of every month going forward. The scheduling of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee clashes with Lowestoft in Bloom meetings. The scheduling of that Committee has previously been discussed and would be difficult to rearrange, as the current scheduling allows for recommendations to the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council to be considered within the same month.

49. Items for the next Agenda and Close

It was reported that several areas of the country are looking to boost the national population of red squirrels. At its next meeting the Sub-Committee will consider how to encourage native flora and fauna in the Town Council's parks and open spaces, in line with the Town Council's declaration of a climate emergency.

50. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential matters for consideration.

The Chair closed the meeting 15:53.

Signed:

28 January 2020