

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee**  
**Whitton Residents' Hall, Hawthorn Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 9BB**  
**16:00 on 16 June 2021**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Sonia Barker (Chair), Alan Green and Andy Pearce

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

**Public:** There were no members of the public in attendance (either in person or via Zoom webinar)

**1. Appointing the Chair of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee**

Cllr Green presided over the meeting for this item. Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Barker as Chair of this Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Green. There were no further nominations. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour.

**2. Welcome**

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

**3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Paul Page and David Youngman. Cllr Jacqueline Hardie had not provided apologies and was absent. It was noted that Cllr Peter Lang had resigned from this Sub-Committee. Cllr Green proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. The Sub-Committee would like to ask Cllr Lang if he would be willing to become a substitute member of this Sub-Committee. If so, this will be ratified by the Finance and Governance Committee.

**4. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

There were none.

**5. The draft minutes of the meeting on 28 April 2021**

Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 28 April 2021; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

**6. Public forum**

No comments had been received in advance. There were no members of the public in attendance either in person or via Zoom webinar.

**7. Sub-Committee arrangements:**

7.1 Membership of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee – Membership of this Sub-Committee was confirmed as Cllrs Sonia Barker, Jacqueline Hardie, Paul Page, Andy Pearce and David Youngman. Cllr Green was in attendance in his capacity as Mayor.

7.2 Appointing the Deputy Chair of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Page as Deputy Chair of this Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Green. There were no further nominations and all Councillors voted in favour.

7.3 Terms of Reference of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee – The Terms of Reference had been reviewed shortly before the Annual Meeting and there had been no amendments. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

**8. Town Council policies:**

8.1 Public Participation Protocol (Video Meetings) – Both this item and 8.2 are still relevant as they govern public participation by video, which does still happen. Webinars are not

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governed by a separate policy. Both protocols need updating to reflect direct participation in meetings and the current way of working. There are some references to outdated legislation and the protocols will need to also be applicable to Working Groups, which can still meet via video meeting. In extreme circumstances, where an in-person meeting is not possible, the Council may wish to meet via video meeting and ratify decisions at a later date. This will also be incorporated within the two protocols. It should be made clear when a video meeting is being recorded, and this will also be incorporated within the protocols, as well as covering arrangements for third party attendance at meetings, and avoiding background noise by muting microphones when not speaking, etc. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Public Participation Protocol (Video Meetings) and the Video Meeting Protocol with the amendments as discussed; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

- 8.2 Video Meeting Protocol – This was covered with the consideration of item 8.2.
- 8.3 Sustainability Strategy – An update is required under section 8 to reflect that the Council has now had ecological surveys of its ponds completed. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Sustainability Strategy with the amendment identified; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. It was agreed to add items to the agendas of the next meetings of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee and the Community Safety Committee to consider how to progress implementation of the Strategy, particularly those actions relevant to each Committee, such as progression of the carbon footprint survey.
- 8.4 Infrastructure Investment Plan – An amendment was requested to specify that the Council is within its first year of a five year investment plan for its parks and open spaces, and that the Council has agreed a capital refurbishment programme for its public conveniences and play areas. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Infrastructure Investment Plan, with the amendments as identified; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 8.5 Defibrillator Policy – The Council has made a commitment to install at least two defibrillators per year and match fund an additional five per year. It was requested that this is stated in the policy, and promoted via the Town Council's website and Facebook page. The Council will be considering transferring the responsibility of the management of defibrillators and the associated budget to the Community Safety Committee. An item will be added to the agenda for the next meeting of that Committee to assess the current provision and 2021 – 2022 targets for provision. Section 4.1c of the policy refers to training. It was requested that suitable training is arranged for the Council's Community Wardens are appointed. A session can be organised which all officers and Councillors would be invited to attend. The policy will be amended to state that training will be made available to all officers and Councillors. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Defibrillator Policy with the amendments as identified; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 8.6 Community Engagement Policy – It was requested that the Events and Communications Officer promotes this policy, and the Council's current and ongoing commitment to community engagement. It was requested that an item be added to the next Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee agenda regarding the inclusion and management of assets, and the next Events and Communications Sub-Committee agenda regarding interactions on the Town Council's Facebook page. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Community Engagement Policy; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 8.7 Co-option Policy – It was commented that the co-option process could be quite stressful for candidates, particularly where they are required to make a speech not only in front of Councillors and members of the public, but other candidates as well. This may not

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provide a fair process to all candidates, but there is no lawful reason to exclude other candidates, unless there is a legitimate reason. It was suggested that the policy could be amended to state that the Council reserves the right to give the opportunity for candidates to give their presentations to Council without other candidates present, to offer fairness to all candidates. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Co-option Policy with the amendment as identified; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

8.8 Mulch Policy – Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Mulch Policy, and to add an item to the agenda of the next meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to progress its implementation; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

8.9 Social Media Protocol – This protocol has recently been reviewed and will be considered for adoption by Full Council at its next meeting. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Social Media Protocol; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

8.10 Training and Development Policy – This policy has recently been reviewed and will be considered for adoption by Full Council at its next meeting. This Sub-Committee would like the Personnel Committee to consider development opportunities for staff. Training so far has mostly been for the current roles staff fulfil. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Training and Development Policy; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

### 9. The Town Council's Standing Orders

The Standing Orders were adopted at the Annual Meeting on the understanding that a comprehensive review would follow this year. It was commented that the style of the Town Council's agendas does not seem to correlate with the Standing Orders, as it states that recommendations arising from other Committees should be proposed and seconded before discussion takes place. It was suggested that formatting of the agendas should not become too rigid, as sometimes proposals arise from the discussions. It was suggested that the Standing Orders could be amended to align with current practice and the way meetings operate. This will be considered further at the next meeting of this Sub-Committee.

Measures have been taken to reduce the length of meetings, such as appropriate delegations, and assigning one Committee to take ownership of an item which requires the input of several Committees. Cllr Pearce proposed deferring the review of Standing Orders to July's meeting of this Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

### 10. The development of work practice procedures

The Clerk has started putting together some work practice procedures as a simple guide for staff, contractors and project managers etc, to implement the Town Council's policies. The procedures being considered by several Committees is likely to slow down the progressing of them. It is however important for the Council to be aware of them and to know that officers are implementing policies, including with contractors from a project management aspect. The procedures are about implementing the Council's policy position and the Clerk's role of implementing health and safety aspects. The Selection of Materials for Site Development Procedure was specifically considered by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee as it is relevant to the activities of that Sub-Committee, but it was not intended for the procedures to be reviewed in full. Cllr Pearce proposed that where a Committee or Sub-Committee has a particular area of expertise, or there are any ambiguities about policies, or if there is something which is not covered in the Council's existing policies, it is essential they are brought to this Sub-Committee and the other relevant Committees and Sub-Committees for review, under a separate heading if necessary; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. A

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typographical error had been identified in the Selection of Materials for Site Development Procedure and will be amended.

**11. Date of the next meeting**

14 July 2021 16:00

**12. Items for the next agenda and close**

The Standing Orders will be reviewed at the next meeting. The Town Council's policies and procedures have previously been reviewed by this Sub-Committee alphabetically. Cllr Pearce proposed repeating this process for this civic year; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. If new legislation is brought in at any point during the which affects certain policies they may need to be reviewed more urgently.

There were no confidential matters for consideration and the Chair closed the meeting at 16:52.

**13. Resolution to close the meeting to the public**

Signed: .....

14 July 2021