

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 5 September 2022

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Colin Butler (Chair), Christian Newsome, Paul Page and Andy Pearce

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

Public: There were two members of the public in attendance (in person)

62. Welcome

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

63. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Robert Breakspear, John Pitts and Elise Youngman, and all had provided reasons. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

64. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 72, 74, 77 and 84. Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 72, 74.2, 75, 76 and 79.1. Cllr Butler declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 69.3, 69.4, 69.5, 79.1 and 79.2.

65. The draft minutes of the meeting on 1 August 2022

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

66. Public forum

The members of the public in attendance addressed the Committee regarding item 82. There are ongoing issues with anti-social behaviour in the area. The members of the public had made enquiries with Waveney District Council previously regarding purchase of the land, but this had been resisted by cyclists who used the path through the land. Anti-social behaviour issues have been reported to the Police. The members of the public would be interested in purchasing the land. The playground had been removed several years ago due to concerns with anti-social behaviour and they would be against its reinstatement. Cllr Butler asked for Cllr Parker to be notified as the Ward Councillor. The members of the public would welcome a site visit. Cllr Pearce suggested if this were progressed an invitation could be extended to the Police Community Engagement Officer.

The members of the public left the meeting 18:15

The Deputy Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:15

67. Ways in which the Town Council may support the 'Leading Lives' initiative

A presentation had been delivered to the Committee ahead of the meeting. Leading Lives were given details of the Council's grant application process. Cllrs Butler, Page and Pearce will contact Leading Lives to arrange a site visit.

The Deputy Clerk returned 18:16

Cllr Pearce suggested the Town Council could assist with signposting to Leading Lives. Cllr Brooks suggested they could liaise with the Lowestoft Arts Centre.

68. Monitoring expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

Cllr Pearce advised the grants and community engagement budgets will be reviewed by the Finance and Governance Committee. Cllr Pearce has queried with the Finance and Information Officer why there seems to be an overspend on the events earmarked reserve.

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69. Parks and Open Spaces:

- 69.1. Receipt of any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 16 August 2022 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 69.2. The following recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:
 - 69.2a. Purchasing a new bin for the Fen Park play area, with a recommendation from the Friends of Fen Park regarding the colour – Following some public engagement, the Friends of Fen Park had recommended red as the colour for the new bin. The Committee had previously agreed a maximum budget of £400 to purchase and install a bin of the same specification at St Margaret’s Plain play area. Cllr Pearce proposed approving a maximum budget of £400 to purchase and install a new bin in the Fen Park play area; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
 - 69.2b. Approving a maximum budget of £150 for delivery of the St Margaret’s Plain play area history panel – Cllr Pearce advised two local historians are providing the content for the panel. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of a maximum budget of £150 for delivery of the history panel for the St Margaret’s Plain play area; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
 - 69.2c. Progressing signage at the former Parklands play area to advise visitors it is a ‘re-wilded’ area – Cllr Butler proposed delegating authority to officers to design, purchase and install the sign, within a maximum budget of £100; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Newsome arrived 18:25

- 69.3. Quotations for the refurbishment of the Rosedale Park and Bentley Drive play area, and delegating authority to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to make a recommendation to Full Council – The Project and Committee Clerk advised that one quotation had been received, another was pending, and site visits had been arranged with a third provider. A delegation to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee had been suggested with the aim of a decision being made at the next Full Council meeting. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to make a recommendation to Full Council on appointing a contractor to refurbish the Rosedale Park and Bentley Drive play areas; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
- 69.4. Approving a maximum budget of £900 plus VAT to install a wheelchair-accessible picnic bench in Gunton Community Park, including a path – Cllr Butler requested confirmation of the location within the park. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of a maximum budget of £900 plus VAT to install a wheelchair accessible picnic bench in Gunton Community, including a path, with delegated authority to officers to agree the location; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
- 69.5. Approving a maximum budget of £4,000 for works to fencing at Gunton Community Park – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of a maximum budget of £4,000 for works to fencing at Gunton Community Park; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour. Cllr Brooks noted the idea of a community orchard had been discussed for this piece of land.
- 69.6. Further information regarding the offer of a ‘Reading Chair’ for Kensington Gardens, and the provision of ‘Reading Chairs’ in other parks – Further to discussions at the last Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting, Cllr Breakspear was due to liaise with Get Suffolk Reading regarding the design of the chair for Kensington Gardens. Cllr Brooks had spoken with them and understands changing the design would not be an issue. The Reading Chair for Kensington Gardens is being supplied by a third party. The Town Council could decide to purchase additional chairs for other parks.
- 69.7. A request from the Kensington Gardens Bowls Club to install a wall mounted noticeboard on the pavilion – The Deputy Clerk is seeking to determine whether planning consent would be required. It was agreed to defer this item pending confirmation of this and the Club’s proposals.
- 69.8. An annual budget for each park for tarmac works – The Facilities Maintenance Officer

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has recommended engaging a specialist contractor to advise on this. Some tarmac work has been undertaken at Sparrows Nest and the Denes Oval. Cllr Pearce supported this suggestion, given the significant cost of tarmac works. The Deputy Clerk advised officers would take advice on contractors and seek to obtain best value for the Council.

- 69.9. The cost of works to a retaining wall and gully in Sparrows Nest – The Facilities Maintenance Officer had undertaken a site visit with a specialist contractor and understands the issue to be with a blocked gully rather than the wall itself, and is seeking quotations.
- 69.10. Entrance security at Sparrows Nest – A tenant in the park had witnessed an incident of a child running from the play area and almost reaching the park entrance next to Giardino. The tenant had suggested approaching Suffolk Highways to install a safety barrier between the public footpath and the road. Cllr Pearce had raised a similar issue at Fen Park. The Deputy Clerk suggested the Planning Committee could raise the matter at its next liaison meeting with a representative from Suffolk Highways. Cllr Pearce proposed this, and to seek advice from the Town Council's health and safety consultant; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 69.11. Any methods of water conservation – This item had been added at the request of Cllr Breakspear and it was agreed to defer it to the next meeting.

70. Events and Communications:

- 70.1. Receipt of any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 24 August 2022 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 70.2. How to progress the installation of heritage plaques, particularly budget and permission requirements, and formation/confirmation of a Working Group – Cllr Pearce advised there had been an agreement previously to progress an initial batch of thirty, followed by ten per year. A budget of £100 per plaque had previously been set. A Working Group of representatives from the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society, local historians and the Town Council is working to progress the plaques. The majority of the sites identified for plaques are in private ownership. Cllr Pearce is due to meet with the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society and requested deferral of this item to the next meeting. The Communications Officer has been seeking advice from other areas where plaques have been installed.

71. Allotments:

- 71.1. Receipt of any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Allotments Sub-Committee meeting on 1 September 2022 – The draft minutes had not yet been circulated.
- 71.2. Any recommendations arising from the Allotments Sub-Committee meeting on 1 September 2022 – Cllr Pearce would like the Lowestoft and District Allotments Association to advise on its priorities. Quotations for the proposed toilets are required. The lease is due for renewal next year and will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee, which will provide feedback to this Committee for consideration at its next meeting. Following a request for fencing from the Association at the Normanston site, the Facilities Maintenance Officer undertook a site visit with a site representative. It is understood there is not an immediate health and safety requirement for the fencing and the cost would be half of the allocated budgets for allotments, although it may be possible for the expenditure to be taken from another budget heading or reserve. The responsibility for the fencing is with the Association, but Cllr Pearce considered it would be difficult for the Association to progress capital upgrades with the £1,000 per year management fee it receives from the Town Council. The fee has not been subject to an inflationary increase previously and Cllr Pearce requested this is built in. The Deputy Clerk requested that Cllr Youngman ascertains

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whether the fencing is considered a priority at the next meeting of the Lowestoft and District Allotments Association. If not, the fencing could be considered as a need for the following financial year.

72. The purchase of signage for the Denes Oval

The Community Warden had recommended three signs and suggested installing them at the top of The Ravine, the bottom of The Ravine near the roundabout, and to replace the current signage at the entrance to the Denes Oval. Depending the size, the signs may require advertising consent. Cllr Pearce proposed progressing the signs within a maximum budget of £300, with delegated authority to officers to seek any necessary permissions; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

73. The Town Green:

- 73.1. Maintenance requirements for the town sign – The Facilities Maintenance Officer had identified some maintenance requirements, particularly around the base of the sign. Quotations or estimates will be brought to this Committee for consideration. Cllr Brooks considered the sign to be in the wrong location.
- 73.2. The presence of advertising signage – Cllr Brooks had raised concerns at the amount of advertising at the Yarmouth Road entrance to Sparrows Nest and the visual appeal of the advertising sign at the Town Green. Cllr Pearce advised this had been considered previously and the Town Council had retrospectively approved the advertising signs on its land.

74. The Marina Theatre:

- 74.1. Receipt of the minutes of the Marina Theatre Quarterly Management Meeting on 15 July 2022 and consideration of any outcomes – Cllr Pearce advised that the minutes had been circulated and he had requested some amendments. The Council has requested more advance notice of capital funding projects for budgeting purposes, which these meetings should enable.
- 74.2. The cost of installing kittiwake ledges – Cllr Pearce understood a budget had previously been agreed, but proposed approval of a maximum budget of £3,000 to progress kittiwake ledges at the Marina Theatre, with delegated authority to officers to select and instruct a contractor; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee for expenditure for the kittiwake ledges to come from the Climate Emergency budget; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.
- 74.3. Installation of a stairlift – Cllr Pearce understood this is not a request for works to take place immediately, but the Theatre would like to know if the Council would support this in principle. Cllr Pearce suggested deferring any immediate decision, and to assess these works in line with other capital works.

75. An update from East Suffolk Council on the proposed new traffic management system between the High Street and Artillery Way, and any other plans to address traffic and parking issues in and around the Triangle Market site

Cllr Pearce advised a feasibility study for the Scores and Triangle Market had been undertaken and this was one of the four key aims. The Town Council withdrew the Triangle Market from the study so it could progress more modest work it wanted to undertake at the site. The Project and Committee Clerk had requested an update from East Suffolk Council on this item and item 76 but had not yet received it.

76. An update from East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council on the proposed new bollard/gate to prevent traffic contravening the Traffic Regulation Order and cutting through the Triangle Market

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The Deputy Clerk advised that a public consultation on waiting and movement restrictions had been opened, affecting part of the Triangle Market area.

77. A proposal from the Environment and Waste Working Group regarding bulky waste collection to target fly tipping

Cllr Brooks requested deferral of this item to the next meeting, pending a meeting with the Clerk.

78. Removal of the Sails

Cllr Brooks suggested removal of the Sails could expose the area and suggested they should be cleaned. Cllr Pearce considered cleaning costs and annual maintenance would be expensive, and the Sails currently leak. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to remove the Sails and look at wider public realm measures to improve and beautify the site. The Deputy Clerk will check whether planning consent would be required to remove the Sails. Removal of the green struts does not require planning consent and is due to start this week. Cllr Pearce amended his proposal to include delegated authority to officers to enquire what permissions would be needed to progress removal of the Sails. Cllr Newsome seconded the proposal; four Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

A comfort break was taken 19:31 and the meeting resumed 19:37

79. Community Halls:

79.1. The implementation of the Full Council resolution to make Town Council owned Community Halls available free of charge as venues for the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership 'Warm Places' initiative from October 2022 – March 2023 inclusive – Cllr Pearce advised the Partnership that the Town Council would not have the officer capacity to run this initiative at the Community Halls. Uplands Community Centre is currently leased and it is presumed would not be available for the 'Warm Places' initiative. The Gunton Residents' Meeting Hall is also leased. The current Management Committee members would support the initiative in principle but would not be able to manage delivery of it. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to officers to liaise with East Suffolk Council's Communities Team and the Gunton Residents' Meeting Hall regarding the logistical arrangements, reiterating that the Town Council does not have the capacity to manage delivery of the project; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

79.2. Repairs to double glazing units at the Gunton Residents' Meeting Hall, within a maximum budget of £200 plus VAT – Cllr Butler proposed approval of this; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

80. The purchase of twelve hedgehog houses and twelve insect hotels for allotment sites, within a maximum budget of £200

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this, with a recommendation to the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee for expenditure to be made from the Climate Emergency budget, in line with the previous decision to purchase hedgehog houses and insect hotels; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

81. An update on repairs to The Ravine wall

The Deputy Clerk advised the contractor is manufacturing the bricks and will carry out the work whilst The Ravine is closed for the Jubilee Bridge repair works.

82. A request for transfer or fencing of land at Turnberry Close (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

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83. Making recommendations to Full Council regarding the leaseback provisions in the Waveney District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2017 (confidential)

Cllr Pearce advised this item had been discussed at June's Full Council meeting before being referred to relevant Committees, but further information regarding legal advice, the specific assets and risks were needed in advance to enable consideration of this item. Cllr Pearce proposed deferring this item for the requested information to be circulated ahead of the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

84. An update on transfer arrangements relating to the registration of ownership for the North Denes and Tingdene, and enforcement action relating to 'Phase 3' (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

85. Feedback from a trial of a biomass collection device in Plymouth (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

86. Date of the next meeting

3 October 2022 18:00

87. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for items to be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Pearce proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

88. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

88.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required:

82. A request for transfer or fencing of land at Turnberry Close (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Brooks suggested a site visit should be undertaken before a decision is made. Cllr Butler requested Cllr Parker be invited to the site visit as Ward Councillor. Cllr Pearce suggested the Police Community Engagement Officer should also be invited, given the concerns regarding anti-social behaviour.

84. An update on transfer arrangements relating to the registration of ownership for the North Denes and Tingdene, and enforcement action relating to 'Phase 3' (confidential) – The Deputy Clerk advised there was no update. Cllr Brooks proposed asking officers to send a letter to East Suffolk Council, requesting an immediate and open answer as to implementation of the enforcement action; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

85. Feedback from a trial of a biomass collection device in Plymouth (confidential) – The Project and Committee Clerk relayed the feedback received. Cllr Pearce proposed not to explore this device further; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
Cllr Pearce requested inclusion of an item on the next agenda to receive an update regarding non-payment of rent from a tenant.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:02.

Signed:

3 October 2022