

**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 9 May 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Colin Butler, Alan Green, Paul Page, Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Elise Youngman

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

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

**221. Welcome**

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

**222. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Christian Newsome, who had provided a reason. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

**223. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to Fen Park, the Denes Oval, assets in the Gunton Ward and the Gainsborough Drive pond. Cllr Pearce declared he is Chair of the Gunton Residents' Association and a member of the Gainsborough Drive Pond Group. Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to the St Margaret's Plain play area, the Denes Oval and assets in the Gunton Ward. Cllr Brooks declared that she is Vice Chair of the Gunton Residents' Association and a member of the Gainsborough Drive Pond Group. Cllr Breakspear declared a local non-pecuniary interest in matters relating to Kensington Gardens.

**224. The draft minutes of the meeting on 4 April 2022**

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

**225. Public forum**

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

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

The budget monitoring spreadsheet was displayed at the meeting and noted.

**227. Amended Terms of Reference to incorporate additional delegated budgets**

The Project and Committee Clerk explained that, following the decision of Full Council to delegate the remaining assets-related budgets to this Committee, which are not already delegated, the Finance and Information Officer had identified the relevant budgets and the details were displayed. The Committee was in agreement with the Finance and Information Officer and officers will update the Terms of Reference accordingly.

**228. Parks and Open Spaces:**

228.1. The draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 19 April 2022 – Cllr Brooks proposed acceptance of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

228.2. The following recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:

228.2a. Scheduling the refurbishment of the play areas at Thirlmere Walk, Gunton Community Park and Turnberry Close in year four – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

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228.2b. Scheduling the refurbishment of the play area at Stoven Close in year five – Cllr Butler proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

228.3. Play area signage – The Clerk advised that officers had been asked to design a sign which would work across all the Town Council’s play areas. The Community Wardens had audited the sites and identified that thirty eight signs would be required, some of which would also need posts.

*The Clerk temporarily left the meeting 18:14 and returned 18:14*

The Clerk showed the Committee the design, which the Committee approved of. The Community Wardens will arrange installation and the Chair requested that Councillors be kept informed of this process. The Communications Officer is ensuring the weekly Councillor updates contain more information on assets-related work. The Clerk advised that a maximum budget of £3,800 should be sufficient to purchase and install the signs. Cllr Green proposed approval of this maximum budget; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

228.4. Feedback from a site meeting of a tenant and the Save Our Suffolk Swifts Group regarding the installation of swift boxes onto a building in Normanston Park – The tenant felt that the premises in question would not be appropriate for nesting boxes, but had suggested another site, which is not within the Town Council’s ownership. The Save Our Suffolk Swifts Group will continue to explore sites in Lowestoft and will liaise with officers.

228.5. Progress with items relating to the Kensington Gardens centenary – Cllr Breakspear advised that plans are progressing well and will be able to provide a further update at the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting. Cllr Breakspear is liaising with the Communications Officer regarding promotion of centenary events. A follow-up meeting will be arranged regarding the installation of a Kindertransport memorial on a site outside of the Town Council’s ownership.

228.6. The Kensington Gardens Holocaust Memorial bench:

228.6a. A quotation to install, including relocation of an existing bench – The Project and Committee Clerk advised that quotations were pending. The Committee approved in principle of the location identified, including the relocation of an existing bench.

228.6b. Wording for a plaque on the bench – Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to staff, in consultation with members of this Committee and the Friends of Kensington Gardens to agree the wording for the plaque and the location of the bench; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

228.7. Feedback from a site meeting regarding First Light Festival occupancy of Kensington Gardens – Cllr Breakspear had attended a site visit and was happy with the plans. No issues regarding the bowling greens were reported when they were last used as part of the festival, but Norse had advised that wet weather before and after the event had aided the recovery of the greens. First Light Festival is looking into how drinking water can be supplied but the costs to do so would not fall to the Town Council. Cllr Pearce advised that landowner permission had been granted by the Town Council on the basis that the events planned for Kensington Gardens would be free to access.

228.8. Increased costs for replacing the Kensington Gardens bowls pavilion windows, to meet design requirements for the conservation area – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of a maximum budget of £2,000 to cover the increased costs, subject to planning consent being granted; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

228.9. Whether to progress an order for additional noticeboards and to identify locations – The Community Wardens had been asked to liaise with the Village Rise landowner to site a wall mounted noticeboard there, and to identify an appropriate location at Gunton Cliff. Cllr Pearce proposed proceeding with the purchase of noticeboards at locations which have already been identified or are being assessed, including Shelton Road; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Cllr Youngman suggested the Town Green

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and Cllr Butler suggested a wall mounted noticeboard for the Sparrows Nest entrance from Yarmouth Road. Cllr Butler suggested the Town Green could be an alternative site to Gunton Cliff. The Project and Committee Clerk advised that St Margaret's Plain play area, Fen Park, Normanston Park and Clarkes Lane had been discussed as potential locations previously. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to delegate authority to officers, in conjunction with members of this Committee, to progress the purchase of six full sized noticeboards, plus wall mounted noticeboards, within a maximum budget of £13,000; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

- 228.10. An update on the repair/replacement of damaged matting at Fen Park – The Project and Committee Clerk advised that quotations are pending.
- 228.11. An update on the installation of gates in the gaps in the fencing surrounding the Fen Park play area – The Project and Committee Clerk advised that quotations are pending and other suppliers have now been approached.
- 228.12. The cost of replacing the Fen Park footbridge – Community Warden Paul Connew has been seeking quotations for total replacement of the bridge, as it is now approaching end of life. Any urgent repairs are being addressed in the interim. The cost will be approximately £35,000. Cllr Pearce noted that budget provision had been made for reserve recovery which may now not be required and the funds could therefore be reassigned. Officers will check regarding urgency of the work. Cllr Pearce proposed asking the Finance and Governance Committee to consider the budget allocation, without committing the expenditure; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 228.13. Making improvements to Sparrows Nest entrance from Yarmouth Road – The Clerk has liaised with the Marina Theatre regarding the extent of advertising, and it is understood there is not a contractual element to this. Community Warden Paul Connew has been looking into repairs and improvements needed and will put together a detailed proposal for consideration.
- 228.14. The future of the Sparrows Nest pond – Cllr Brooks requested better communication with Councillors and members of the public as to the reason why the pond has been emptied. The Clerk advised that the pond had been leaking and the fish had been relocated to the Kensington Gardens pond. A structural assessment as identified cracking and rotting. Officers are exploring temporary repair measures for the Platinum Jubilee event, but more permanent solutions are likely to be expensive. Officers can circulate details of the structural assessment and the Clerk suggested Councillors may wish to undertake a site visit and consider whether this is the best location for the pond and the extent of public funds the Council would be prepared to invest in the pond. Cllr Pearce would like officers to seek advice on whether spring water is affecting any of the surrounding buildings, if this has not been sufficiently covered by the condition survey.
- 228.15. Relocating the Lowestoft Players sign in Sparrows Nest – Cllr Green reported this may have already happened. Officers will check.
- 228.16. A request to install a temporary mini golf course in Sparrows Nest – The Committee was generally in favour of the request, particularly as other mini golf courses in the town had closed, but would like more information from the applicant. Cllr Green proposed granting landowner permission in principle and seeking further information from the applicant; seconded by Cllr Pearce; seven Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.
- 228.17. Seeking independent advice regarding maintenance and management of the Great Eastern Linear Park, particularly the stream and vegetation – The current grounds maintenance contract primarily covers the paths. Other areas attract littering which has to be cleared independently of the contract. Cllr Pearce reported that the Norse Contract Working Group is reviewing the current schedule of maintenance for each asset. It has been suggested to Cllr Pearce that vegetation in areas which are not currently maintained should be cut back every three years to promote new growth.

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Cllr Brooks suggested this area and the North Denes area should be assessed for a decision to be made as to whether they will be maintained in any way. Cllr Pearce would like the areas of Great Eastern Linear Park not currently covered by the contract to be subject to more regular litter clearance. Cllr Youngman suggested caution in management of the vegetation, which currently provides wildlife habitat. Cllr Brooks proposed seeking expert advice in the management of the Great Eastern Linear Park; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

228.18. Drainage issues and the surfacing of the outdoor dining area in Normanston Park – The Clerk reported that a larger soakaway is being considered and the tenant is interested in pursuing different surfacing for the outdoor dining area, but will come back with further information.

### **229. Events and Communications:**

229.1. The draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 27 April 2022 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

### **230. Progress with the refurbishment of the Fen Park, Sparrows Nest and Triangle Market public conveniences, including the cost of modular builds**

Cllr Butler had contacted a company in Germany for an estimate for a modular build for Fen Park, and suggested this could be considered for the Triangle Market. The company does not undertake refurbishments in this country. Cllr Pitts asked officers to find out who carried out the work on the public conveniences on the A47 outside Kensington Gardens, to seek a quotation.

*The Clerk temporarily left the meeting 19:51 and returned 19:52*

Cllr Butler will liaise with officers to seek formal quotations from the company he has been liaising with in Germany.

### **231. Progress with the installation of kiosks at the Triangle Market**

The Clerk advised slight changes to the design were necessary, due to concerns from the Planning Authority, and officers are still dealing with implications of land ownership and the Charter Market.

### **232. Progressing the delegation from Full Council to consider a suitable recipient of the Councillor tablets which will be surplus to requirements**

Officers will liaise with those Councillors who have not yet returned their tablets. The Clerk advised that some officers have found the tablets beneficial as part of their roles. Cllr Pearce suggested officers should be given first refusal of the tablets before they are repurposed.

### **233. Reviewing the Reporting Procedure for Assets and Maintenance**

Cllr Butler proposed a recommendation to the Annual Meeting to adopt the Reporting Procedure for Assets and Maintenance; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

### **234. Management arrangements for the Gunton Estate Residents' Meeting Hall**

At 20:00 Cllr Brooks proposed suspending Standing Order 3y for a maximum of thirty minutes, to enable the meeting to continue; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

A public meeting to elect a new management committee had been planned but was cancelled due to the pandemic. The Clerk advised that officers have been supporting the individuals who currently manage the Hall to address immediate concerns regarding the building and ensure compliance checks are taking place. The public meeting can now be progressed and the Communications Officer will deal with the communications regarding this. The level of responsibility given to the new management committee can be dealt with through that process.

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**235. An update on improvements to tennis courts and the installation of the electronic gates**

The Clerk advised that the planning application had been submitted and should be successful.

**236. Progressing a licence for the Lowestoft Town Tennis Club (some aspects may be confidential)**

To be discussed during the confidential session.

**237. Progressing a licence for the Lowestoft Cricket Club (some aspects may be confidential)**

To be discussed during the confidential session.

**238. The decision of Full Council to display adverse weather signage and to further consider gritting (some aspects may be confidential)**

To be discussed during the confidential session.

**239. A progress update on capital works to a building in Normanston Park (confidential)**

To be discussed during the confidential session.

**240. Management of bookings and terms and conditions of hire for Whitton Hall (confidential)**

To be discussed during the confidential session.

**241. Date of the next meeting**

6 June 2022 18:00

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

The Chair advised any requests should be emailed to officers.

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

**243. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:**

243.1. Any legal issues, including those above as required:

236. Progressing a licence for the Lowestoft Town Tennis Club (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce made a proposal based on advice the Clerk had received from the lawyer; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

237. Progressing a licence for the Lowestoft Cricket Club (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce made a proposal based on advice the Clerk had received from the lawyer; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

238. The decision of Full Council to display adverse weather signage and to further consider gritting (some aspects may be confidential) – Officers are exploring what options would be best for the Council to protect its interests. Other measures, such as signage, can be taken in the interim, on the advice of the Town Council's insurers.

239. A progress update on capital works to a building in Normanston Park (confidential) – The Clerk advised that the deposit for the works has been paid and officers have been liaising with the Council's health and safety advisor. A start date for the works has not yet been given.

240. Management of bookings and terms and conditions of hire for Whitton Hall (confidential) – The Clerk will review the wording of the terms and conditions, ahead of consideration by the Community Safety Committee and the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:30.

Signed: ..... 6 June 2022