

Lowestoft Town Council
Budget and Loan Council Meeting
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
12:30 on 9 October 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Alan Green (Chair), Graham Parker, Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger and Elise Youngman (Deputy Chair)

In Attendance: James Cox (Finance and Information Officer) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

41. Welcome

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

42. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllr Begum with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of apologies; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; six in favour and one against.

43. Declarations and dispensations

43.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda – Cllr E Youngman declared she works for the company who cleaned Lowestoft Town Council owned toilets.

43.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

44. Public forum

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public – No advanced comments had been received and there were no members of the public in attendance.

45. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 2 October 2023

The draft minutes were in progress and would be signed off at the next meeting.

46. To review the 2023 – 2024 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential)

47. To review the 2024 – 2025 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential)

Cllr Pearce clarified the reason for confidential sessions for the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee was due to the review of the budget including contracts, lease and other commercial arrangements. This Sub-Committee had no decision-making delegation, only recommendations are made to the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council who make the decisions in public session.

Cllr Brooks stated deliberations on the budget in these meetings should be in public session.

It was confirmed that the remainder of the meeting would need to be held in confidential session.

48. Date of next meeting

16 October 2023 at 12:30

49. Items for the next agenda and close

Any items should be sent to the office.

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50. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any legal and employment issues relating to the matters on this agenda.

Cllr E Youngman proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Pearce; six votes in favour and one against.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 12:38

There were no Earmarked Reserves (EMR) offsets at the time of the meeting.

Town Hall - The budget would need to consider the Public Works Loan and allow for the pro-rata salary costs for the directly funded Town Hall Manager position. Any further discussions on the Town Hall would require the further information from the Town Hall Project Manager.

The Committee agreed a working document was required for grounds maintenance to compare the current fees to the amount paid last year in order to evidence the anticipate annual savings. This document would cover all components such as staffing numbers, supplies and additional fuel use to ascertain what savings have been made what was required in the budget.

Cllr E Young temporarily left the chamber at 13:04

Cllr Pearce suggested the Sub-Committee adjourn for today and the next meeting be held to review the grounds maintenance budget and prepare a working document for all components of grounds maintenance.

Separate meetings were also required to discuss the Town Hall and Marina Theatre budgets.

A query was raised on whether the Town Council would consider spare capacity in staffing to hire the grounds maintenance out to another company or authority. The Finance and Information Officer noted it would be at least a year before that could be considered and the Town Council would need to ensure its own assets are handled first.

It was agreed to schedule the next meeting for Thursday 19 October 2023 at 10:30, with the Facilities Maintenance Officer and the Parks and Community Officer in attendance. Cllr E Youngman provided apologies for the next meeting.

The following meeting would examine the budgets for EMR offsets this year and assess the position of the Town Council with regards to overspend and underspend.

The Chair closed the meeting at 13:21

Signed:

30 October 2023