

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:30 on 13 February 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce (Chair) and Bernadette Rappensberger

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

Public: One member of the public was in attendance (in person)

136. Welcome

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

137. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Cllrs Begum, Coleby and Page were absent with no apologies received.

138. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

138.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Parker declared he was an East Suffolk Councillor and Vice-Chair of Gunton Residents Association. Cllr Pearce declared he was the Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative on the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership and the Chair of Gunton Residents Association.

138.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

139. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 16 January 2024

Cllr Brooks proposed approval subject to addition of the finance table as approved at the previous meeting; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

140. 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 – The member of the public spoke on item 144.2 and provided an update to the Committee on the SKYLINE project that had been funded by a previous grant application.

The member of the public also spoke on item 144.3 and thanked the Committee for their encouragement of the projects. The project had gained the attention of the National Archives who encouraged them to partner with an organisation to submit a grant application to expand on the project.

144.2 To receive an update from Ventura Cottage on the SKYLINE project

144.3 To receive a partnership request from Ventura Cottage

The Committee agreed to bring items 144.2 and 144.3 forward in the meeting. Cllr Pearce proposed to in principle express support for the partnership and hold a standalone meeting with the member of the public to discuss further; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. Officers would schedule the meeting and extend an invite to the Town Hall Project Committee.

Cllr Parker temporarily left the chamber at 10:58

Cllr Parker returned to the chamber at 11:00

A decision would be made in March as the bids open in April 2024.

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141. To appoint an additional Bank Reconciliation Signatory

Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Rappensberger; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

142. Budget and Loan:

142.1. To monitor the budget for 2023 – An update had been received at the previous Full Council and the Finance Officers would provide the next update.

142.2. To note any bank reconciliations – November 2023 has been completed and December 2023 and January 2024 are in progress.

142.3. To consider the draft minutes and the appended confidential notes of the meetings on 20 November 2023 and 8 January 2024

142.4. To note minutes still to be considered pending completion:

142.4a. 4 December 2023, 11 December 2023 and 15 January 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed items 142.3 and 142.4a be deferred to March; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

143. Payments and Receipts:

143.1. To note the income and expenditure reports for January 2024 and February 2024 to date, including payments made under delegated authority (see schedules) – Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the payment record up to 10th February 2024 and review the payment expenditure report on the return of the Finance Officer; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

143.2. To consider any payments for approval (see schedule) – There were no payments to approve.

Table 1 January and February Payments

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
17 January 2024	Norfolk and Suffolk Woodcarver	Woodcarver grant	£750
17 January 2024	Britain as a Boy	Britain as a Boy donation	£1,000
17 January 2024	Xcite Sports Ltd	Inflatable boat	£1,258.54 + £251.71 VAT = £1,510.25
17 January 2024	Kompan Ltd	Play inspections Q4	£2,091.14
17 January 2024	Screwfix	PPE	£542.75
17 January 2024	Wave Ltd	KG water Sep-Dec	£1,501.05
17 January 2024	AJ Builders	Gainsborough Drive pond repair	£1,460.40
17 January 2024	Garden Discount Centre Ltd	Iseki repair	£779.71
17 January 2024	Stems Florist	Wreaths x2	£120
17 January 2024	P.J. Spillings (Builders) Ltd	TH opening up works	£30,846.96
17 January 2024	Treecare Consultants Ltd	Normanston Park decay testing	£840
17 January 2024	Smith Bros Timber (East Anglia)	6'x6' rustic lap panels	£54
17 January 2024	Munnings Supplies Ltd	PC supplies	£78.12
17 January 2024	Michaels Civic Robes	Civic consort badges	£1,413.96
17 January 2024	P.J. Spillings (Builders) Ltd	TH surveying	£420
17 January 2024	HAT Projects Ltd	TH development project	£51,537.20
17 January 2024	Henry's Beard Crew Catering Ltd	TH catering consultancy	£408
17 January 2024	PLB Projects Ltd	Town Hall project work	£2,232
17 January 2024	Ice Watch Ltd	The Ness gritting November	£579.60
17 January 2024	The Society of Local Council Clerks	Community engagement training	£78

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17 January 2024	Smith Bros Timber (East Anglia)	R&M supplies	£3.12
17 January 2024	MossKing Associates Ltd	TH delivery stage Dec 23	£4,227
17 January 2024	Ace Clearance East Anglia Ltd	Bulky waste 1/1 – 15/1	£880.50
17 January 2024	Cahill Design Consultants Ltd	TH fire engineering support	£1,680
17 January 2024	Andrew Morton Associates Ltd	TH stage 4 works	£579.60
17 January 2024	Wave Ltd	Kensington Gardens water Q3	£2.12
17 January 2024	MossKing Associates Ltd	TH delivery stage Sep-Dec	£2,055
18 January 2024	Need2Store Ltd	Civic artefact storage Jan	£240
19 January 2024	PWLB	MTT loan repayment	£6,792.50
19 January 2024	HMRC	HMRC December 2023	£13,209.20
19 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Triangle Market electric Dec	£505.67
22 January 2024	C&C Consulting Services Ltd	H&S support	£49.50 + £9.90 VAT = £59.40
22 January 2024	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Vehicle fuel	£142.29 + £28.46 VAT = £170.75
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Kensington Gardens electric December	£97.46
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Kensington Gardens electric December	£99.60
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Denes Oval electric Dec	£630.92
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Normanston electric Dec	£2,123.15
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Pakefield St PC electric Dec	£97.91
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Sparrows Nest electric Dec	£566.16
22 January 2024	Npower Ltd	TH electric Dec	£921.26
23 January 2024	College of Arms	Lowestoft Coat of Arms	£5,100
23 January 2024	Salaries	Salaries Jan	£32,784.43
23 January 2024	OB Water Sports Centre	OB Water Sports Centre grant	£2,000
23 January 2024	Lowestoft Men's Shed	HMD copper daffodils	£200
23 January 2024	Lauren Elliott	Parking and eye test reimbursement	£29.99 + £2.01 VAT = £32
23 January 2024	Npower Ltd	Low Cemetery PC electric Dec	£54.10
23 January 2024	British Gas	Whitton Hall gas Q2	£97.99
23 January 2024	Tecserv UK Ltd	Marina alarm repair	£683.57
23 January 2024	Clark & Kent Contractors	Pump track consultation	£900
23 January 2024	Seletar Signs	3x Unit 2 signs	£144
23 January 2024	Zurich Municipal	Insurance CN	£99.59
23 January 2024	Peter Colby Commercials Ltd	Shutter door repair	£768
23 January 2024	Mary Moppins Ltd	PC cleaning Jan	£1,523.28
23 January 2024	Binder Ltd	Uplands tank service	£197.40
23 January 2024	Blachere Illumination UK Ltd	Xmas lights credit note TH	£2,333.16
23 January 2024	Travis Perkins Trading Company	R&M supplies	£82.54
23 January 2024	Mary Moppins Ltd	Gunton Hall cleaning Jan	£239.52
23 January 2024	Mary Moppins Ltd	Whitton Hall cleaning Jan	£299.40
23 January 2024	Suffolk Assn. of Local Councils	Planning introduction training	£20.40
23 January 2024	Munnings Supplies Ltd	Graffiti remover	£23.04
24 January 2024	Peter Colby Commercials Ltd	Unit2 electric Nov & Dec	£1,300.39
26 January 2024	EE Limited	Mobile phones Jan	£672.36
29 January 2024	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Vehicle fuel	£47.57 + £9.51 VAT = £57.08

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29 January 2024	Eon Energy	Whitton Hall electric Dec-Jan	£30.80
29 January 2024	Munnings Supplies Ltd	Nitrile gloves	£46.80
29 January 2024	Seletar Signs	Denes Oval signage	£192
29 January 2024	Ben Burgess GroundsCare Equipment	Seed drilling machine	£1,680
29 January 2024	Munnings Supplies Ltd	PPE	£41.70
29 January 2024	Smith Bros Timber (East Anglia)	Wooden posts	£56.68
29 January 2024	AJ Builders	Silverwood Close fencing	£870
29 January 2024	Seletar Signs	Play area signage x48	£6,624
29 January 2024	Seletar Signs	Uplands tree signage	£48
29 January 2024	Towmate Trailers	Trailer	£6,600
29 January 2024	East Suffolk Council	Unit 2 business rates	£3,845.88
1 February 2024	Peter Colby Commercials Ltd	Unit 2 rent Feb	£2,050
2 February 2024	Travis Perkins Trading Company	Cement edging trowel	£27.37
2 February 2024	Nicholsons Solicitors LLP	Legal advice SN and Uplands	£2,507.76
2 February 2024	Langton Brook Consultants Ltd	Neighbourhood Plan support	£1,560
2 February 2024	Smith Bros Timber (East Anglia)	Washers	£7.80
2 February 2024	Seletar Signs	4x signs	£100.80
2 February 2024	East Point Business Services	HH service charge Q4	£8,697.30
2 February 2024	OPR Consulting Ltd	Project delivery support	£1,530
2 February 2024	Durrants	Crown Score valuation	£540
2 February 2024	East Point Business Services	HH rent and capital Q4	£8,659.38
2 February 2024	Chris Meek	PC key, travel, postage and meeting reimbursements	£30.93 + £1.67 VAT = £32.60
2 February 2024	Alan Nunn	BVP drone photo	£40
2 February 2024	Northumbrian Water Group Ltd	Legionella monitoring Jan	£769.79
2 February 2024	IEMA	Practitioner renewal fee	£197
2 February 2024	East Coast Waste	Waste clearance	£1,485.12
2 February 2024	The Knightingales	D-Day Event 2024	£50
2 February 2024	Northumbrian Water Group Ltd	Fen Park water testing	£641.10
2 February 2024	Taylor Williams	January reimbursement	£26.64 + £5.36 VAT = £32
2 February 2024	Sarah Foote	Travel, meeting and HMD reimbursements	£42.22 + £5.33 VAT = £47.55
2 February 2024	Ace Clearance East Anglia Ltd	Bulky waste 16 – 31 Jan	£1,196
2 February 2024	Easy-Gate Ltd	Easy-Gate x8	£10,878
5 February 2024	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Vehicle fuel	£66.56 + £13.31 VAT = £79.87
5 February 2024	C&C Consulting Services Ltd	Health and safety support	£934.92
6 February 2024	Essex and Suffolk Water	Normanston water Apr-Dec	£1,061.68
8 February 2024	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions January	£12,824.50
8 February 2024	HMRC	HMRC January	£12,778.59
8 February 2024	Lauren Elliott	Travel and parking reimbursements	£17.88 + £2.51 VAT = £20.39
8 February 2024	Fuel Card Services Ltd	Vehicle fuel	£133.49 + £26.70 VAT = £160.19
8 February 2024	Ronan Williams	Valentines Market	£40

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8 February 2024	Cloudy Group Ltd	IT service charge Feb	£1,084.50
8 February 2024	Screwfix	R&M Supplies	£170.22
8 February 2024	City College Norwich	Chainsaw course x2	£2,200
8 February 2024	MossKing Associates Ltd	TH delivery stage Jan	£3,534
8 February 2024	National Literacy Trust	Storytelling Week grant	£930
8 February 2024	V.C. Cooke	Waste collection Jan	£102
8 February 2024	Smith of Derby	TH clock repair	£780
8 February 2024	Broadland Group Ltd	TH refurbishment survey	£1,320
8 February 2024	Garden Discount Centre Ltd	Chainsaw PPE	£1,119.93
8 February 2024	The Metal Store	Play area signs steel	£672
8 February 2024	Garden Discount Centre Ltd	Kombi engine	£596.26
8 February 2024	Mary Moppins Ltd	KG PC cleaning Dec-Jan	£351
8 February 2024	Seletar Signs	BVP plaques	£192
8 February 2024	HAT Projects Ltd	TH development project	£52,895
8 February 2024	The Marina Theatre Trust	Valentines market activities	£50
8 February 2024	Suffolk Wildlife Trust	Carlton Marshes Eco Fair	£25
8 February 2024	Broadland Security Alarms	TH emergency lights 24/25	£858
8 February 2024	V.C. Cooke	Waste collection	£433.80
8 February 2024	Seletar Signs	Tennis court signs	£540

Table 2 January and February Receipts

Date	Received From	Description	Amount
19 January 2024	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£300
22 January 2024	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£213.16
23 January 2024	Whitton Hire	Whitton Hall Hire	£105
24 January 2024	Resident	Memorial Bench	£1,228.80
24 January 2024	Resident	Memorial Bush	£24
26 January 2024	Lil Kickers	Use of Normanston Park for Coaching	£372
26 January 2024	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£6,000
2 February 2024	Tenant	Rental income from tenant	£300
5 February 2024	Whitton Hire	Whitton Hall Hire	£49
7 February 2024	HMRC	VAT return Q3	£121,531.60
7 February 2024	Whitton Hire	Whitton Hall Hire	£378
10 February 2024	Market Income	Monthly Market Income	£52.50
13 February 2024	Lil Kickers	Use of Normanston Park for Coaching	£168

144. Grants & Sponsorships

144.1. To consider the following grant applications:

144.1a. Lowestoft Foodbank - £1,500 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour. This would be allocated from the Food and Social Relief budget.

144.1b. The Hygiene Bank (Waveney Grassroots Project) - £1,500 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour. This would be allocated from the Food and Social Relief budget.

144.1c. First Light Festival - £5,000 – If approved this would not be funded from the Grants budget as it had a major events allocation.

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A query was raised on whether Cllr Parker should remain in the chamber for this discussion as the festival is an East Suffolk Council backed project. The Acting Town Clerk advised Councillors to consider if they were pre-determined and if any East Suffolk Councillors had prior involvement with this application. Cllr Parker confirmed he had not been involved with this application as an East Suffolk Councillor and was not pre-determined.

Cllr Brooks proposed to refuse the application as the festival was not sustainable, there was no evidence of its benefit to Lowestoft and as the festival received enough financial support from other organisations. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal to reach a conclusion and the vote was held with one vote in favour, one vote against and two abstentions. As the vote was tied the Chair was used his casting vote to vote against the proposal.

Cllr Parker proposed to approve the grant as LTC had already set aside funding for the event, with a proviso that First Light be asked to update LTC on their plan and timescale to become a sustainable event and start making a direct contribution to the festival; seconded by Cllr Pearce; three votes in favour and one vote against.

- 144.1d. To receive a presentation from Project Apocalypse in relation to their grant application for £1,000 – The presenters were not in attendance and it was agreed to revisit this only if the office has been contacted by the organisation to reschedule the presentation.
- 144.2. To receive an update from Ventura Cottage on the SKYLINE project – This item was brought forward.
- 144.3. To receive a partnership request from Ventura Cottage – This item was brought forward.
- 144.4. To consider engagement with International Boatbuilding Training College to explore grant and sponsorship opportunities (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce proposed the International Boatbuilding Training College be contacted officially through the office to schedule a presentation to this Committee at a standalone meeting on possible funding or sponsorship opportunities, with any considerations to be brought back to this Committee; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 144.5. To consider engagement with the Excelsior Trust to explore grant and sponsorship opportunities (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Brooks proposed to recommend the approval of a sponsorship arrangement of £15,000 per year for three years to Full Council, with the year one costs already set aside in the 2024-2025 budget; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

145. Marina Theatre:

- 145.1. To consider costs of servicing of equipment for Marina Theatre – This referred to the annual maintenance of the flying rig, the cost of which LTC was not aware of at the time of purchase. Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the cost; seconded by Cllr Parker. An amendment was requested for the supplier to invoice this to LTC in April 2024, which was accepted by Cllrs Brooks and Parker. A vote was held with all in favour.
- 145.2. To note the resolution of the Marina Theatre Project Committee regarding Party Wall Agreement with the Marina Centre (Cultural Quarter Redevelopment) and consider statutory requirements to appoint a surveyor – The Marina Theatre Project Committee, in conjunction with the Marina Theatre Trust, had resolved to not consent to the works, as concerns from the two parties had not been taken into account, and to not appoint a surveyor. The office had since been advised that under the Party Wall Act they were not able to refuse consent and the party wall survey needs to be enabled with a surveyor appointed. The Acting Clerk advised the Committee that the independent surveyor

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appointed by East Suffolk Council were completely impartial and recommended the Committee appoint the same surveyor. As this was a statutory duty and would be at no cost to LTC, Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the officer recommendation and opt for the surveyor appointed by East Suffolk Council; seconded by Cllr Brooks; three votes in favour and one abstention. The Acting Clerk confirmed this had been discussed with the Marina Theatre and the Trustees would be notified of this decision.

146. Other financial and governance matters, including:

- 146.1. To consider the following quotations recommended for approval by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee and review the budget allocation:
- 146.1a. Refurbishment of the Kensington Gardens bridge, within a maximum budget £7,970 – The Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee had approved up to £7,500 to be allocated from the Parks Development budget and requested this Committee approve the remaining £470. It was noted that this cost had already been ring-fenced in the 2024-2025 Waterways and Ponds budget. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the entire cost, noting that the 2024-2025 Waterways and Ponds budget was to be offset against the Earmarked Reserves so the works could proceed this financial year; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 146.2. Grounds Maintenance:
- 146.2a. To receive an update on the expenditure against budget for the changes to grounds maintenance operations from 2023/2024, including areas where the budget may be challenged (some aspects may be confidential) – This would be reviewed with the Finance Officer.
- 146.2b. To consider reallocation of budget from Grounds Maintenance to General Reserves where express leasing provision has been made – Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the reallocation noting that the existing delegation to officers under the Grounds Maintenance budget for 2023-2024 had to be used to secure a vehicle lease and therefore a reallocation of funds from the Grounds Maintenance budget to the ring-fenced leasing provision within General Reserves; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 146.3. To consider changes to timetabling of the staffing budget (confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.
- 146.4. To consider any staff terms and conditions (confidential) – To be discussed in confidential session.
- 146.5. To consider transfer of Arnold's Bequest funds to the charity board's newly created bank account – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 146.6. To receive an update regarding the pending condition survey on the Denes Oval clubhouse and using the findings of the survey to commission a schedule of works for refurbishment of the clubhouse (some aspects may be confidential) – An update on the status of the condition survey would be provided either at February Full Council or the March Finance and Governance meeting.
- 146.7. To consider the feasibility of a Public Works Loan in 2024 for the refurbishment of the Denes Oval wall and essential clubhouse repairs as discussed by the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee – This it was deferred to the next agenda as it was dependent on the outcome of item 146.6.
- 146.8. To receive an update regarding obtaining an updated prioritised and costed schedule of works for capital preventative repair work to a building in Sparrows Nest (some aspects may be confidential) – An updated surveyor report for the works was required, though it would need to note that the window replacement works have progressed, and it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.
- 146.9. To consider obtaining legal advice regarding planned demolition works and disturbance to nesting red listed Kittiwakes – Cllr Pearce proposed this issue be resolved through dialogue with East Suffolk Council to understand their mitigations to prevent disturbance of the nesting kittiwakes on the Marina Theatre building and to seek legal

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advice if it is required; seconded by Cllr Brooks; three votes in favour and one abstention.

146.10. To consider the merits of Lowestoft Town Council adopting a bespoke Code of Conduct – It was agreed to defer this item to the next agenda.

146.11. To consider the implementation of the Town Council’s IT Policy with regard to email correspondence – It was agreed to defer this item to the next agenda.

147. To review the following policies:

147.1.Appraisals

147.2.Environmental

147.3.Equality and Diversity

147.4.Financial Regulations

147.5.Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

147.6.Friends Group

147.7.Grant Awarding

147.8.Health and Safety

147.9.Heritage Plaques

147.10. Infrastructure Investment Plan

147.11. Investment

147.12. IT

Concerns were raised that this was an inadequate way to resolve and it was suggested to convene a working group. Cllr Rappensberger offered to join the working group, if the meetings are held between 10:00 – 13:30. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation to this working group to discuss and make a recommendation directly to February Full Council; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Numbers for membership would be considered at the Full Council meeting to ascertain if the Sub-Committee could be re-established.

148. To consider the Heads of Terms and lease for Unit 2 (some aspects may be confidential)

There was no update and it was agreed to defer this item to the next agenda.

149. To note all matters of outstanding legal work, set priorities and agree actions (some aspects may be confidential)

150. Date of the next meeting

12 March 2024 10:30

151. Items for the next agenda and close

Any items should be sent to the office.

152. 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 employment matters and legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda, including the following:

152.1.Any legal matters, including those above as required – Cllr Brooks proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

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The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 12:11

146.3. To consider changes to timetabling of the staffing budget (confidential)

The position of Asset Manager was originally budgeted to begin in October 2024. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the recommendation to Full Council for the appointment to be brought forward, subject to Full Council approving the specification for recruitment; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

149. To note all matters of outstanding legal work, set priorities and agree actions (some aspects may be confidential)

Cllr Pearce proposed to delegate prioritisation of the legal work to the Acting Town Clerk, in conjunction with the consultant, subject to this prioritisation taking into account the risks of deferral and for this Committee to be updated on a monthly basis; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 12:14

Signed:
9 April 2024