

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
19:00 on 21 November 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks (Deputy Chair), Neil Coleby, Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger, Jack-Arthur Smith, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman

In Attendance: Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

115. Welcome

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

116. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Breakspear, Pitts and D Youngman with reasons provided. Cllr Coleby proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

117. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

117.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of Gunton Residents Association.

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

118. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 17 October 2023

Approval of the minutes were deferred to the next meeting.

119. 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 members of the public were in attendance and no advanced comments had been received.

120. To monitor expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget

Two silver birch memorial trees had been purchased, which would be reimbursed once payment has been received from the applicant. Payment had been made for a road closure to progress tree works on Pakefield green.

121. To consider review and implementation of the five-year plans in line with budgeting, noting Councillor's comments regarding the following:

121.1. Normanston Park

121.2. Rosedale Park

121.3. Kensington Gardens

121.4. Gunton Community Park

121.5. Great Eastern Linear Park

121.6. Sparrows Nest

121.7. Fen Park

121.8. Belle Vue Park – Officers confirmed bulb orders had been received and were due to be planted. Cllr Pearce proposed to schedule a zoom meeting before the December meeting of this Sub-Committee to review the existing flower beds and highlight any work needed before the anniversary in May 2024, with a budget to then be set at the December meeting; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.

121.9. Denes Oval

121.10. Cotman Close – It was requested that the community asset transfer with East Suffolk Council at Cotman Close be on the next Quarterly Liaison meeting. A resident had

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queried with a Councillor if there would be a fence installed on this site and it was agreed that they should submit a public comment and request a relevant item on the next Parks and Open Spaces agenda.

- 121.11. Britten Road Play Area
- 121.12. Clarkes Lane – A site visit was suggested to consider if a wildflower garden could be revisited and undertaken inhouse.
- 121.13. Pakefield Green Play Area (Wellington Road)
- 121.14. The Ness
- 121.15. Ness Point
- 121.16. St Margaret's Plain Play Area
- 121.17. Bentley Drive Play Area
- 121.18. Gainsborough Drive Pond
- 121.19. North Denes – Cllr Pearce proposed officers liaise with the East Suffolk Council Asset team on the possible complementary projects across the North Denes and Gunton Warren; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour. It was requested that this item be discussed at the next Quarterly Liaison meeting.
- 121.20. Links Road Car Park
- 121.21. Triangle Market – An item was requested for the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee (AID) agenda to consider plans in 2024 for the Triangle Market and review the available budget. Cllr Pearce proposed a Triangle Market Working Group meeting be arranged before the next AID meeting to provide suggestions and recommendations on seating and planting for the area; seconded by Cllr E Youngman; all in favour.
- 121.22. Town Green
- 121.23. Land at Upland's Road North (including pond)

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the officer recommendation that Clarkes Lane and Thirlmere Walk be the next two play areas for refurbishment, noting the works have been provisionally accommodated in the budget for £130,000; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

122. To consider the development of a wildflower meadow in the Great Eastern Linear Park as part of the five-year plans

Input was required from the Grounds Maintenance team on the logistics of the project and the feasibility of suggestions from Suffolk Wildlife Trust, such as the removal of grass cuttings. Cllr Pearce proposed this be progressed; seconded by Cllr Coleby who noted that as a nature corridor it would increase biodiversity; all in favour.

123. To receive the following updates regarding Normanston Park:

- 123.1. Options for lighting for the skate park – Cllr Pearce proposed this be taken forward to explore the feasibility of spotlights to illuminate the area as an amenity and discourage anti-social activities, with information and costs to be considered by AID in January 2024; seconded by Cllr Smith; all in favour. It was noted that the skate park already had a power supply so there should be a cost saving.
- 123.2. Procurement of a skateboarding instructor – Officers were reviewing the procurement process and suggested this be planned for spring 2024. Cllr Pearce proposed indicative costs for an instructor be obtained and provided to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee for budget consideration, this would then go to AID and Full Council and approved as part of agreeing the 2024-2025 budget in January; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

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124. To consider suggestions for improvement works to the Britten Road and Pakefield Green play areas

Britten Road would accommodate a range of ages and it was agreed that music should be incorporated in the theme.

The budget for the two refurbishments was £90,000 and officers were asked to obtain indicative costs before the end of December so that any shortfall in funding could be identified.

It was noted that much of the equipment across the two sites was in good condition and a full removal and refurbishment may not be required.

Feedback on the trialled games tables and blackboard in play areas was requested for consideration in future refurbishment projects.

125. To consider the proposed Seafarers Memorial and complementary planting in Sparrows Nest

Any complementary planting would be dependent on the appearance and size of the sculpture when in situ, therefore this item was deferred to the January 2024 meeting.

126. To consider a recommendation to Full Council on the use of the Kensington Gardens bowling greens by event applicants

Cllr E Youngman temporarily left the chamber at 19:58

Cllr Newsome proposed a recommendation be made to AID and Full Council to not allow use of the greens for any events due to the damage such events cause to the greens; seconded by Cllr Brooks.

Cllr E Youngman returned to the chamber at 20:01

A vote was held with seven in favour and one abstention as the member was outside the chamber during proposal.

127. To consider the watering methods for the bowling greens

Officers advised watering the greens at night could result in the surface being too damp for cutting the following morning. Cllr Pearce proposed a zoom call with the Grounds Maintenance team be scheduled to discuss the watering methods, with the decision to be made by AID by February 2024 so that an arrangement has been settled before the season starts, and requested that Cllr Newsome specifically be invited, given his knowledge of the bowls greens; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

128. To consider the Town Council Tree Policy in relation to the pledge to replace felled trees

Officers were asked to confirm the percentage of trees recently planted that have survived.

The practicalities of replacing felled trees needed to be considered as the Town Council could either broaden the replacement to hedges and wildflowers, or the policy could specify that replacement planting would be undertaken at the Town Council's discretion. Alternatively, the Town Council could consider sponsoring planting of trees on nearby land owned by other authorities.

Officers were asked to review the trees planted at Uplands Pond and the ash trees at Gainsborough Drive Pond due to reports of disease.

AID was due to receive the tree survey and it was agreed to await a decision on the policy

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until the survey has been reviewed.

129. Date of the next meeting

12 December 2023 19:00

130. Items for the next Agenda and Close

Items would include those deferred in this meeting.

131. 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 issues relating to the matters on this agenda

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:18

Signed:

16 January 2024