

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 20 February 2024

MINUTES

Present: Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks (Deputy Chair), Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Bernadette Rappensberger, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman

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

162. Welcome

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

163. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Smith with reasons provided. Cllr Rappensberger proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce; five votes in favour; two votes against; one abstention.

Cllr Coleby was absent with no apologies received.

164. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

164.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Brooks declared she was a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

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

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

Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

166. 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 no members of the public were in attendance.

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

No further items of expenditure had approved since the previous meeting. Cllr Brooks requested clarification on whether the palisade fencing at Fen Park was included in the original budget for refurbishment works.

168. To consider proposals from a member of the public regarding the 'Sunrise Parks'

The Committee noted issues with the proposals, such as Arnold's Bequest not being owned by Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) and the expenses a new score would cost. It was agreed that several aspects of the proposals conflicted with current plans of Lowestoft Town Council and were not viable at this time.

No further information had been received from the member of the public, despite requests from the officer, and Cllr Brooks proposed to not take this current proposal forward, if a more detailed proposal is received in the future then it can be discussed again; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

169. To consider the first-year priorities of the five-year plans and their implementation

Sub-Committee members raised issues over accessing word documents on the members area and requested PDF documents be used.

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The priorities discussed included Belle Vue Park's 150th anniversary, refurbishment of Normanston Park changing rooms and toilets and the Lowestoft Cemetery toilets, play area refurbishments for Britten Road and Wellington Road in 2023-2024 and Thirlmere Walk and Clarkes Lane in 2024-2025, bicycle racks, installation of games tables, The Ness coastal garden, work on the Great Eastern Linear Park and the work on the Cotman Close and Bentley Drive pathways.

These priorities would be agreed by the Sub-Committee whilst the Grounds Maintenance team would prioritise each project within the year.

The sports survey would be key in identifying the prioritisation of projects. As the surveys for the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan and Town Hall had been concluded, this sports survey was now ready to be published and the Sub-Committee would be notified when it goes live.

The purchase of a pump track would also be included in the survey, in addition to its full public consultation that would be required due to the significant capital expenditure.

Officers were asked to ascertain if procurement and refurbishment for the Normanston Park toilets and changing rooms could proceed by April 2024, or if a condition survey was required. An update was requested for Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee in March on the state of condition surveys and chartered surveyor reports for Lowestoft Cemetery toilets and Normanston Park toilets and changing rooms ahead of the procurement and refurbishment.

170. To consider outcomes from previous site visits to the Great Eastern Linear Park with Suffolk Wildlife Trust and the Water Management Alliance

From previous site visits it had been agreed to progress a wildflower area and improve the water flow to avoid stagnation.

Officers were asked to check the proposals from the site visits in relation to the viaducts bridge and confirm the costs.

It was suggested for the Grounds Maintenance team to check the trees in the area and remove excessive ivy.

Bird boxes had been installed, though some in the area had been destroyed, and bat boxes had been considered but the height needed to install the boxes required careful consideration of the logistics and safety risks.

Community Payback were thanked for their work clearing the site of fly tipping and a letter would be sent from the Committee to thank them. Officers were due to meet with Community Payback to discuss further collaboration projects.

171. To consider an approach from a member of the public for the Town Council to acquire a Punch and Judy Booth and the Laughing Sailor

As there was no storage space available for the booth it was suggested to not accept either asset.

An alternative suggestion was to acquire the booth and loan it to a theatre, as theatrical outlets were considered best placed to make use of the booth, with a possible grant to the theatre to treat the woodworm.

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Officers would contact the owner querying the possible purchase price of the booth and then contact the theatres for their interest and provide feedback at the March Assets, Inclusion and Development meeting.

- 172. To locate the registers detailing the names on the RNPSA memorial in Belle Vue Park, as formerly held in the Town Hall and Belle Vue Park Gatekeeper’s Cottage**
The Committee Clerk confirmed a bound register copy was owned by the RNPSA Museum. The Sub-Committee requested clarification on when the bound register came into their custody and if the museum has any knowledge of when the other register was moved and to where.

- 173. Date of the next meeting**
19 March 2024 19:00

- 174. Items for the next Agenda and Close**
To consider measures, such as a low wall or picket fence, to reduce litter on the Town Green and open dialogue with the opposite businesses.

- 175. 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 20:16

Signed:
19 March 2024