

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Town Hall Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on 11 April 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Andy Pearce and Bernie Rappensberger. Non-Councillor members Helen Johnson and Ben Porter (East Suffolk Council Officers)

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

Also in Attendance: Sheila Moss King (Project Manager)

80. Welcome

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

Cllr Barker reported she had attended the funeral of former Cllr Colin Butler as a representative of Lowestoft Town Council and recognised his contribution to this project.

81. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Patience and Youngman with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce provided apologies that he may be late to the meeting.

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

82. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

82.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from Councillors and members on items on the agenda – There were no declarations.

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

83. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 14 March 2024

Cllr Brooks proposed approval subject to the amendment of 'land evaluation' to 'land valuation'; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

84. 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.

Cllr Pearce entered the chamber at 10:07

85. Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report):

85.1. To note and consider income and expenditure, including:

85.1a. To monitor the budget – The expenditure to date was estimated to be £540,000, and the first claim to the heritage fund should result in a reclaim of £180,000 back to Lowestoft Town Council (LTC). The Project Manager would work with the Finance and Information Officer to identify any remaining invoices that are part of the expenditure that could be reclaimed.

85.1b. To consider any payments for approval – This item was covered under 85.1a.

85.2. To note details of initial reclaim submission and anticipated Lowestoft Town Council cashflow liability between the first and second NLHF reclaims – This item was covered under 85.1a.

86. To consider a report from the Project Manager, including progress with the following:

86.1. Procurement of the Main Building Contract – This was on schedule for the main tender

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to be published on 17th May 2024 and assistance was being provided by the Procurement Consultant. An open day for contractors was scheduled at the Town Hall for Monday 15th April 2024.

- 86.2. The boundary agreement and process of registering with the Land Registry – There were two matters with the Land Registry: the land for the UK Power Networks (UKPN) substation and two title deeds where the project's development boundary overlapped with East Suffolk Council land.

For the two title deeds, East Suffolk Council (ESC) confirmed they were open to transferring as much of the title deeds as needed to cover the land at the rear of the hall and provide access to the hall.

ESC had suggested granting LTC a 125-year lease on the land that would be the site of the substation. The Project Manager had queried with UKPN if a lease holder with the right to grant third party rights would be satisfactory for them, as they required unfettered access to the site. If UKPN were in agreement then the decision to proceed would be referred to the ESC Cabinet meeting in June 2024.

- 86.3. The updated risk register – There were no changes to report. If the lease of the land for the substation is agreed then the legal work would be under LTC control and the risk would be reduced.

87. To consider a contract for the Contract Administration

As it had been decided to produce a specification with terms and conditions, a legal representative was reviewing the contract to ensure it was robust enough to inform an enforceable contract.

88. To receive a report on the recruitment of the Heritage Manager

To be discussed in confidential session.

89. To receive a list of planned actions from the Project Manager to be authorised for progression

Full Council had agreed to appoint Daniel Connell Partnership, who have been on the Design Team for the duration of the project, to undertake the role Client Design Manager, and this would ensure better value for money and quality. They would represent the ongoing health and safety from a client's perspective.

The specifications for the clock face repairs were being finalised and the Project Manager noted that this would be a specialist service, therefore it might be more practical for her to approach individual firms rather than advertise the work for bids. The Project Manager had identified a Norwich-based company and suggested she approach them first to obtain quotes, noting that three quotes would be sought per the financial regulations as the work was estimated to be no more than £25,000. The company selected would then become a nominated sub-contractor to the main contract.

90. To receive an update on the Heads of Terms for the Registrars, including consideration of the rent appraisal (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed in confidential.

91. To consider appointing a member of the public to this Committee and making a recommendation to Full Council to approve the change to the Terms of Reference

If there was an agreement to proceed with this then there would need to be a clear recruitment and selection process. The knowledge that this non-Councillor member would

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bring to the Committee needed to be clarified as the professional team through the Project Manager would already be able to provide the necessary professional knowledge and experience to the meetings.

It was noted that per this Committee's Terms of Reference, a quorum required 50% of the voting members to be LTC Councillors and this could be complicated with the addition of another non-Councillor member.

It was agreed for Cllr Brooks to provide a brief describing what this non-Councillor member would do, with the rest of the Committee to provide input before the next meeting where it would be decided whether to proceed with the appointment.

92. To consider any recommendations to Full Council

There were no recommendations to Full Council.

93. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 9th May 2024 – 10:00

Should the same timetable be maintained after the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the Project Manager notified the Committee that she would be unable to attend a meeting on 13th June and it would be preferable to meet before 7th June. This would be considered at the AGM.

94. Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested for the next agenda.

95. 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:

95.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required – Cllr Rappensberger proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 10:55

88. To receive a report on the recruitment of the Heritage Manager

Appointment of the role was offered to a candidate and officers were awaiting their response.

90. To receive an update on the Heads of Terms for the Registrars, including consideration of the rent appraisal (some aspects may be confidential)

A confidential update was provided to the Committee.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:24

Signed:

9 May 2024