

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**19:00 on 4 November 2024**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Jen Jones, John Murray, Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger, Nick Webb (Deputy Chair) and Elise Youngman

**In Attendance:** Lauren Elliott (Senior Committee and Project Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk and Planning Assistant)

**85. Welcome**

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

**86. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence**

Cllr John Pitts was absent with no apologies received.

**87. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

87.1. 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 the Gunton Residents Association.

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

**88. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 7 October 2024**

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of both the minutes and the confidential note; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; nine votes in favour and one abstention from a member who was not in attendance at the meeting on 7 October 2024.

**89. 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 advance comments had been received and no members of the public were in attendance.

**90. To monitor expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets**

There was no updated position to be provided on expenditure.

**91. Parks and Open Spaces:**

91.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Extraordinary Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 15 October 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

91.2. To receive a progress update on obtaining indicative costs for Thirlmere Walk and Clarkes Lane play area refurbishments to assist with budgeting for 2025/2026 – The refurbishment of Thirlmere Walk would be undertaken in 2024/2025 and, depending on the final specification and costs, Clarkes Lane would be refurbished in 2025/2026.

Indicative costs would be required by mid-December 2024 to inform the budget setting process. Officers identified the works for Thirlmere Walk to cost approximately £60,000 and would be funded from the £130,000 Play Areas budget.

The carpark would be the first element to be completed for the Clarkes Lane

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refurbishment, so indicative costs would be sought for that work. The cost to refurbish the Clarkes Lane play area was estimated to be in excess of £100,000.

Officers were due to discuss Clarkes Lane’s refurbishment with East Suffolk Council (ESC) as the land was identified as an open space in the Waveney Local Plan and emerging Neighbourhood Plan, and ESC Officers were uncertain on supporting the creation of a carpark in the area. A meeting between officers would be arranged onsite to discuss the plan and establish if Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) should pursue the current refurbishment plan.

The plan was to use the £130,000 currently in the Play Area budget to fund the refurbishment of Thirlmere Walk and have a balance rolled over as match funding for Clarkes Lane which will also be supported with the submission of a Community Infrastructure Levy application. Indicative costs would be provided to ensure appropriate funds were in place before January 2025 and from January to April 2025, officers would draw up the specification for funding applications.

**91.3. Denes Oval:**

91.3a. To consider the installation of wind breakers at the Denes Oval tennis courts within a maximum budget of £500 – The wind breakers were required for the pickleball courts. Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the installation with a maximum budget of £500; seconded by Cllr Jones. Cllr Pearce requested an amendment for the budget to be allocated from the Denes Oval budget, or Parks Capital if required. This was agreed and a vote was held with all in favour.

91.3b. To consider the timetable and funding strategy for refurbishment of the Denes Oval walls, turrets and pavilion building (confidential) – The Senior Committee and Project Clerk noted the topic was not confidential at this stage and the item could be discussed in public session. Cllr Pearce requested the item be discussed in confidential session so as not to publish indicative costs prior to the tender process.

**91.4. Normanston Park:**

91.4a. To receive an update on skateboarding sessions for the Normanston Park Skate Park (some aspects may be confidential) – An update was requested on lighting for the skate park and officers confirmed two quotes had been received and would be reviewed by the Facilities and Contracts Manager. If three quotes were obtained in time, then this item would be addressed at the Full Council meeting in November.

Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the recommendation from officers and have scaled back trial sessions to monitor the uptake and popularity, with a full session package to be considered in the next financial year; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

91.4b. To consider aspirations of a tenant in Normanston Park (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce proposed the Facilities and Contracts Manager speak with the tenant on their aspirations and how they could be integrated into LTC’s plans; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

**92. Events and Communications:**

92.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 23 October 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

92.2. To consider making VE Day a major event and the budget allocation – It was noted what

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had been budgeted for National Armed Forces Day in 2024/2025, which had now been cancelled, would need to be reallocated. Cllr Pearce proposed to make VE Day a major event and take out what has been rolled forward from the Armed Forces Day and insert a figure of £10,000 as a combined budget for VE and VJ day. It was noted the purpose of the events was commemoration and marking peace and reconciliation.

Cllr Webb declared he was Vice-Chairman for the Lowestoft and District British Legion and would abstain from voting on this item.

*Cllr Jones temporarily left the chamber at 19:32*

Further details of the event, such as music, would be discussed by the Events and Communications Sub-Committee.

Cllr Newsome seconded the proposal and a vote was held with eight votes in favour and one abstention.

**93. To consider budget requirements for the 2025-2026 financial year and make a recommendation to Budget and Loan Working Group for consideration**

It was agreed that budget requirements had been covered under item 91.2 and further recommendations would be received after the stand-alone Five-Year Plans meeting.

*Cllr Jones returned to the chamber at 19:39*

**94. To note the results of the Sports Development Survey and consider outcomes**

It was agreed to arrange a stand-alone meeting to review the survey. Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation be made to officers in conjunction with Committee members to have this as a hybrid meeting with members able to attend in person or via zoom; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; nine votes in favour and one abstention as the member was outside the chamber during the discussions.

**95. To consider public convenience refurbishment priorities for 2025/2026**

Sparrows Nest and Normanston Park were set to be refurbished and funds were in place to deliver the project.

The Public Conveniences budget had £70,000 currently unallocated and the Normanston Park budget had £85,000 allocated to the changing room and toilet refurbishment. The Budget and Loan Working Group were discussing possible grants and match-funding options for the Normanston Park changing room refurbishment.

Cllr Pearce proposed, due to contingency for the Town Hall and Marina Theatre projects, that LTC deliver on the refurbishment of Sparrows Nest and Normanston Park (as the funds were already in place) and not commit to any further public convenience refurbishment in 2025/2026. Furthermore, the Facilities and Contracts Manager would provide a report on the Kirkley Cliff toilets and advise the Committee whether any repairs could be done in advance of a refurbishment in 2026/2027 or if a full refurbishment was necessary in 2025/2026; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

**96. To consider the installation of an additional aeration device for the Fen Park Pond, within a maximum budget of £1,700**

The purchase had been recommended by the Grounds Maintenance Team and the device

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would not be a replacement but a complementary addition to the device currently in the pond as it would agitate the water to mitigate a build-up of algae. Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation and purchase the device to combat the algae build-up in pond, with the funded to be allocated from the Ponds and Waterways budget.

Officers would monitor and report back to the Committee on the effectiveness of the device. It was noted the Grounds Maintenance Team have the expertise and equipment to manage the weed growth of the pond, which will also assist with flow of water.

Cllr Newsome seconded the proposal and a vote was held with nine votes in favour and one abstention.

**97. To consider authorising disposal of items of grounds maintenance equipment, should the Grounds Maintenance Team wish to trade-in, and to consider allocation of proceeds (some aspects may be confidential)**

There were no specific recommendations from officers on disposal of equipment at this time. It was note that there were four mowers at end-of-life that would need to be replaced and the Grounds Maintenance Team may have equipment that could be traded in to offset the new purchase cost.

Cllr Pearce proposed if the Grounds Maintenance Team feels a piece of equipment purchased in the last eighteen months has not used, then they have the discretion to trade the equipment in, provided they notify the Finance Manager to remove the equipment from the asset register and the proceeds are ring-fenced against the replacement cost of the mowers next year; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

**98. To consider repair and funding options for the Euroscope (some aspects may be confidential)**

Officers confirmed the item could be discussed in public as they would not be discussing costs and contracts.

Officers had not yet received a formal quote or full specification, but the situation seemed positive with the possibility of replacements that were close in likeness. It was anticipated that there may be external funding available for the works. However, there could not be a like-for-like replacement as the original manufacturer was no longer trading.

The Committee agreed for officers to continue to progress this administratively.

**99. To consider options for restoration/replacement of the Ness Park drying racks in 2025/2026 (confidential)**

Cllr Pearce requested this item be discussed in confidential session as it concerned an alternative proposal to what had already been considered by the Ness Park Working Group.

**100. Date of the next meeting**

Monday 2 December 2024 – 19:00

**101. Items for the next agenda and close**

An item was requested to discuss the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee's relationship to its Sub-Committees.

**102. 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**

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**interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda:**

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

*The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 20:12*

91.3b.To consider the timetable and funding strategy for refurbishment of the Denes Oval walls, turrets and pavilion building (confidential) – There was a discussion on the costs and timetable to undertake the refurbishment of the walls, turrets and pavilion building.

Cllr Pearce proposed the Facilities and Contracts Manager review the specifications and costs, based on the condition surveys, and then arrange a stand-alone zoom meeting to agree a proposed programme of works to be addressed by this Committee for onward recommendation to Full Council.

Cllr Coleby seconded the proposal and Cllr Pearce noted this project would need to go out for a public consultation. A vote was held on the proposal with all in favour.

**99. To consider options for restoration/replacement of the Ness Park drying racks in 2025/2026 (confidential)**

Estimated costs for refurbishment of the drying racks (partial and full) had been and the working group were considering undertaking a procurement process for the work.

There was a discussion on the different options for undertaking the work.

Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal to receive further information; seconded by Cllr Coleby; nine votes in favour and one abstention.

Cllr Brooks proposed this information be received by the end of January 2025; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

*The Chair closed the meeting at 20:40*

Signed: .....

2 December 2024