

**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 3 February 2025**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Jen Jones, John Murray, Andy Pearce and Bernadette Rappensberger

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

**Public:** One member of the public was in attendance in person

**141. Welcome**

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

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby, John Pitts, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

**143. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

143.1. 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.

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

**144. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 6 January 2025**

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the draft minutes and confidential note.

Cllr Murray queried a point raised in the previous meeting regarding follow up actions and the process for updating Committees on these actions being applied across all Committees and therefore it needed to be taken to Full Council for consideration.

Cllr Pearce proposed the Standing Orders and Policies Working Group have an exploratory discussion on the formation of a tracked document on projects in progress, particularly those of high value or on a longer timescale for delivery; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

Cllr Jones seconded Cllr Brooks' proposal to approve the minutes and confidential note; five votes in favour and one abstention.

**145. 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 – Mr Webster attended as a representative of Community Volunteers to answer any queries on item 147.5. Landowner permission was being sought for phase one of the project, the planting element of which would need to be completed by March 2025.

A query was raised on how many volunteers were signed on for the project and it was requested further details be provided on the plans, such as the names of the species of trees and shrubs to be planted. Mr Webb confirmed twenty responses had been received on the consultation for the project and agreed the plans could be amended to provide exact details. The intention was for the trees and shrubs to be mixed native species, with an emphasis on

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trees with nectar for insects as wildlife was key to the project.

*Cllr Newsome entered the chamber at 19:13*

Community Volunteers had met with the Grounds Maintenance Team (GMT), who were happy with the proposals.

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

There was no update on expenditure by this Committee.

**147. Parks and Open Spaces:**

147.1.To receive and note the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 21 January 2025 – The minutes were in progress.

147.2.To receive an update on plans for approved wildflower areas – A query was raised on whether the process to implement a wildflower area would damage existing plants. Officers would take this comment back to the GMT to ensure this was considered. It was noted the delegated budget to proceed had already been set.

147.3.To consider a request for a replacement memorial tree and plaque in Sparrows Nest – The request was for permission to replace the tree, the GMT would purchase and plant the tree, with an invoice to then be sent to the member of public for the cost. The planting location would be dependent on the species chosen by the applicant in liaison with the GMT. Cllr Pearce proposed to agree to the request, on the understanding the applicant would be paying the costs and the GMT would confirm if the chosen location would be suitable for the replacement tree; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

147.4.To consider cost and specification for fencing at the Britten Road play area – Whilst the cost had previously been approved, it had been explicitly given for a maximum budget of £5,000 plus VAT, therefore a recorded decision needed to be made on approval of the maximum budget. The GMT have a plan on the specification and style of fencing that would be within the budget and would enable public access.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the maximum budget of £5,000 plus VAT; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger. It was queried if the fence could be painted a different colour and officers advised this may require a higher maximum budget. It was agreed for the proposal to remain as it stands and to add that if an alternative colour would increase the costs, then the approval of the excess cost would be delegated to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee. A vote was held with all in favour.

147.5.To consider plans and costs for the Gunton Community Park Community Garden – Cllr Pearce proposed, as the Public Forum had confirmed this was only to give permission for phase one planting to proceed, that Community Volunteers be granted landowner permission for phase one, noting the group were due to return with plans for subsequent phases; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

147.6.To receive a report on Fen Park from Suffolk Wildlife Trust and note required tree works – Cllr Brooks proposed to welcome the report and thank Suffolk Wildlife Trust for their work.

Officers confirmed the tree works would be progressed in line with the advice received from Suffolk Wildlife Trust. A query was raised on page two of the report where there appeared to be an unfinished sentence concerning the current management arrangements. Officers would check this with Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

It was queried if a specific budget and delegation would be required for these works or

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if the delegation made to cover the works recommended as part of the tree audit would cover these works.

Officers confirmed the GMT would review the report and supply a meeting paper on how they would implement the recommendations.

It was uncertain if a particular budget was required as the works would be undertaken inhouse and was likely covered under the original delegation, but it would be good to have a record of the report being received and the Sub-Committee notes the recommendations that would be acted on by the GMT, with actions to be brought to appropriate agendas.

As a contingency, should the original delegation not cover these works, Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the tree works being undertaken on the basis all costs would be inhouse, with any further costs to be addressed by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

**148. Events and Communications:**

148.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 22 January 2025 – The minutes were in progress.

**149. Allotments:**

149.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Allotments Sub-Committee meeting on 15 January 2025 – The minutes were in progress.

**150. To consider the purchase of a Town Council drone within a maximum budget of £350**

Cllr Brooks proposed approval.

Officers confirmed the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Manager was a licenced drone operator and the drone should be covered under Lowestoft Town Council's insurance. Further training could be reviewed to enable more GMT members to operate the drone.

It was requested a second officer be trained to operate the drone to cover officer absences and it was noted the Staff Training budget was delegated to officers.

It was also requested officers check if the purchase would trigger a premium increase or require separate insurance and if so, notify the next meeting of this Committee or the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee.

Cllr Jones seconded Cllr Brooks' proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

**151. To receive an update on proposed sculptures:**

151.1. Seafarers Memorial – It was requested this be discussed in confidential session.

151.2. Ness Park – Cllr Brooks offered to start looking for available sculptors and bring back the findings to the Committee. Officers noted there had been no conclusions or recommendations made by the Ness Park Working Group with regards to the size, material and location of the sculptures. Cllr Brooks suggested the sculptures be life-sized, sited in the drying racks and be of a steel or alloy material.

Cllr Pearce proposed Cllr Brooks meet with the Facilities and Contracts Manager to outline the specification for the statues, including height, materials and indicative costs for a maximum budget, with the feedback to be provided to a future Parks and

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Open Spaces or Assets, Inclusion and Development meeting to consider procurement strategy.

An observation was made on the Town Council's recent increase in its precept demand and it was suggested there be cautious spending and consideration of spending money on projects at a time of austerity, particularly as the costs for this project were currently unknown.

It was clarified this project has not been approved and the proposal was to enable officers to obtain costs so that the priority of the project could be considered at the Five-Year Plan meetings, along with how expenditure could be managed.

151.3. Kindertransport – It was requested this be discussed in confidential session due to named third parties. It was noted the next significant anniversary for Kindertransport was December 2028.

**152. Date of the next meeting**

Monday 3 March 2025 – 19:00

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

An item was requested to consider how to manage community safety as a Council with regards to vandalism.

**154. 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:**

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

*The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 19:56*

**151. To receive an update on proposed sculptures:**

Seafarers Memorial – There was a confidential discussion concerning the potential funding strategy and timescales of the project.

Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

151.3. Kindertransport – There was a confidential discussion concerning the potential funding strategy and timescales of the project.

*The Chair closed the meeting at 20:15*

Signed: .....

3 March 2025