

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 2 September 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Jen Jones, John Murray, Christian Newsome, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Bernadette Rappensberger and Elise Youngman

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

53. Welcome

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

54. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby and Nick Webb with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Jones; eight votes in favour and one abstention.

55. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

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

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

56. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 5 August 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; six votes in favour and three abstentions.

57. 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.

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

There was no updated position on expenditure to provide.

59. Parks and Open Spaces:

59.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 20 August 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the Sub-Committee's next meeting.

60. Events and Communications:

60.1. To receive and note the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meeting on 28 August 2024 – The minutes would be signed off at the Sub-Committee's next meeting.

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

Officers suggested this be maintained as a standing item on the agenda to cost up the first year of the five-year plans.

Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the officer recommendations and keep this as a standing item until end of the 2024 calendar year; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

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Cllr Brooks proposed to hold stand-alone meetings to discuss the five-year plans, what needs to be done and the costings, with the first meeting to be scheduled for the end of October; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce proposed a request be made to the Budget and Loan Working Group (B&L) for the following budgets to not be reduced and maintained in real terms in the 2025-2026 budget: Parks Capital, Horticulture, Arts and Heritage, Play Areas and Toilets; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

The Project and Committee Clerk raised the proposed refurbishment of the Clarkes Lane play area as a priority for the current financial year. Officers had visited the site and recommended fully accessible parking spaces be provided before the play area refurbishment commences, followed by consideration of accessible toilet facilities. This would need to be fully costed and budgeted and due to the large-scale of the project it may not be deliverable in a single year. It was agreed this could be discussed through the five-year plan meetings.

A stand-alone meeting would be arranged to review the results of the sports survey before further scheduling of projects, with recommendations to be made to relevant committees.

62. To review the assets and facilities risks, as set out in the Risk Management document

Per the Risk Management document adopted at the annual meeting in May 2024, this Committee would be primarily monitoring the asset register, the condition surveys, inspections for play equipment, ensuring physical assets are kept secure and insured and monitor the insurance levels. The daily tasks for this would be handled by the Facilities and Contracts Manager with reports produced for this Committee.

Cllr Pearce proposed officers schedule the renewals for the next condition surveys in staggered intervals; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

It was suggested to schedule a stand-alone to review the condition surveys with the Facilities and Contracts Manager in attendance.

63. To consider fencing as an alternative method to safeguard the bowls area

The Grounds Maintenance team had reported damage to the bowls green that was affecting the quality of the playing surface and it would over time be difficult to maintain at a playable standard. It was noted to be incidental vandalism and not malicious and there was a need to provide young people a space for sports and recreation, which could be pursued with East Suffolk Council (ESC).

Cllr Pearce proposed officers put together a specification for fencing with costs for the Committee to consider; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

Cllr Pitts proposed officers explore the feasibility of the green space next to the Whapload carpark being used for sports, including dealing with the land being under lease; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

64. To consider proposals and a budget to run skateboarding lessons at Normanston Park Skate Park (some aspects may be confidential)

Cllr Pearce proposed, per the budget recommendations, to ask B&L to factor an allowance for

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a dedicated sports development budget from April 2025; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

This item would be discussed further in confidential.

65. To consider the installation of a sculpture on Town Council land in collaboration with East Suffolk Council (confidential)

This item would be discussed further in confidential session and it was noted the Committee had received a presentation from ESC prior to this meeting.

66. To receive a proposal and consider a recommendation on the future operations of the car park on Whapload Road (confidential)

This item would be discussed in confidential session.

67. Date of the next meeting

Monday 7 October 2024 – 19:00

68. Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested.

69. 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:

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

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 19:52

Cllr Jones temporarily left the chamber at 19:53

64. To consider proposals and a budget to run skateboarding lessons at Normanston Park Skate Park (some aspects may be confidential)

Cllr Brooks proposed to endorse the Sports Development Officer's suggestion to run a ten-week block of sessions at a cost of £2,500 over the six weeks of summer school holidays; seconded by Cllr Pearce who requested an amendment to delegate to officers consideration on timelines and for the Finance and Governance Committee to consider the budget allocation, which Cllr Brooks approved, and a vote was held with all in favour.

The Sports Development Officer has suggested an eleventh session for a competition, but no quote had been received for that cost. Cllr Pearce proposed officers obtain that cost and consider this as a stand-alone item at the next meeting with full details of the proposal; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

Cllr Jones returned to the chamber at 19:56

65. To consider the installation of a sculpture on Town Council land in collaboration with East Suffolk Council (confidential)

ESC had consulted with the Committee on the installation of a sculpture on Lowestoft Town Council land and requested suggestions for locations. The Committee suggested Links Road Carpark and Fen Park be considered as potential locations.

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Cllr Brooks proposed no decision be made at this time and instead continue the conversation with ESC; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

66. To receive a proposal and consider a recommendation on the future operations of the car park on Whapload Road (confidential)

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

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:13

Signed:

7 October 2024