

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 17 June 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Janet Craig, Paul Page (Chair), Andy Pearce and Deborah Ray. Non-Councillor member John Sillett

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

Public: One member of the public in attendance (via zoom)

1. Welcome

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

2. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Parker with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

Rachel Bunn was absent with no apologies received.

3. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

3.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from members on items on the Agenda – Cllrs Brooks, Page and Ray declared they were members of Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Cllr Pearce declared he was the Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative on the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership (LKP). Mr Sillett declared he was a member of East Suffolk Travel Association.

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

4. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 20 May 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.

5. 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 – A member of the public was in attendance to speak on item 10.1b. Cllr Page proposed to bring forward item 10.1b to discuss after the public forum; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.

Cllr Craig entered the chamber at 15:40

The member of public introduced their proposal to support recycling in St Mary's Primary School with their Eco Council Initiative by producing a sign for Kensington Gardens that encourages visitors to dispose of their plastic waste efficiently. The proposal was for LTC to be involved in the design of the new sign. The member of public had already completed initial work on the budget and was not seeking funding from LTC at this time.

10.1b. Collaboration with the Eco Council of St Mary's Primary School to produce a sign encouraging visitors to dispose of their plastic waste efficiently – The Committee agreed this would connect to their Plastic Free Communities initiative and noted that a recycling bin was required near Kensington Gardens to support the sign.

Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the request for design involvement and added that should funding become an issue, then they could pursue funding through a grant; seconded by Mr

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Sillett; all in favour. Officers would contact the member of public to progress this further.

An item was requested for the next Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to clarify if Kensington Gardens had separate recycling and consider recycling bin provision.

6. To review and adopt Committee arrangements:

6.1. To note the membership of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee – Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Janet Craig, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce and Deborah Ray were members of the Committee. The Committee currently has two non-councillor members: Mr John Sillett and Ms Rachel Bunn.

6.2. To consider the appointment of a non-Councillor member – The office had received a formal expression of interest that was due to be considered by the Committee. Cllr Page had been approached by a member of the public and received their written expression of interest. Cllr Brooks had been approached by two members of the public and suggested the Committee consider increasing the number of non-Councillor members.

Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council for an amendment to their Terms of Reference that there be no fixed number of non-Councillor members, however the number of non-Councillor members shall not exceed the number of Councillors in attendance of a meeting, and this item be deferred to the next meeting to consider all applications; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

6.3. To appoint the Deputy Chair of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee – Cllr Brooks nominated Cllr Ray; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

6.4. To note the Terms of Reference – An amendment would be recommended per item 6.2. Cllr Brooks proposed the remainder be accepted; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

6.5. To agree the meeting schedule – The current schedule was the third Monday of the month at 15:30. Cllr Brooks proposed to recommend the current schedule be maintained; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

6.6. To review the delegations of this Committee – The financial delegations and budgets were noted to include the Climate and Ecological Emergency, Bulky Waste, Water Improvements, Waste Disposal, Kittiwake Cleaning for the Marina Theatre, Water Refill Stations and Travel Costs. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept this and requested the Public Transport Working Group be added to the Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

7. To review and adopt Working Group arrangements for the Public Transport Working Group and the Bulky Waste Working Group

It was agreed that the Bulky Waste Working Group was no longer required as all decisions and recommendations would be made by this Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed the Bulky Waste Working Group be made dormant with the work to be conducted in Committee meetings and ad-hoc meetings when necessary; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Requests to join the Public Transport Working Group had been received from Cllrs Jen Jones and Graham Parker and non-Councillor member John Sillett. Cllrs Brooks and Pearce requested to join. Cllr Page proposed all requests be accepted; seconded by Mr Sillett; all in favour.

8. To monitor expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority

There was no update on expenditure and it was noted the kittiwake ledges for the Marina Theatre had been allocated to the Climate and Ecological Emergency budget.

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9. To consider any matters to raise with the appropriate East Suffolk Council Cabinet member and to receive feedback on any matter previously raised:

9.1. To note the meeting with East Suffolk Council on the 'East Suffolk is Amazing' initiative and consider any actions required of this Committee – Cllrs Page and Ray attended the meeting and had raised ideas on Lowestoft's participation, including regaining the blue flag status, general greening of the town, cleaning the town and dealing with litter, which East Suffolk Council (ESC) had indicated it was happy to support with.

ESC had reported they were coordinating volunteer groups for litter picking and were currently focussed on four priority areas, including Lowestoft, due to their tourism industries.

It was suggested to provide feedback to ESC on regeneration matters and the need for legacy planning for these capital projects as street cleaning and maintenance should form a core element of their services and not be substituted by volunteer activities, therefore it was asked that the policy direction for their core service be clarified.

Cllr Craig declared she was an East Suffolk Councillor.

ESC had reiterated their interest in receiving data on LTC's Bulky Waste Collection and officers were due to share further data with a breakdown of collections, locations collected from and the upcycling operation.

Cllr Pearce proposed ESC be contacted to arrange another meeting with Cllrs Page and Ray as representatives, with the remaining Committee members to send comments to office, to confirm what actions can be progressed and highlight the need for a policy and sense of direction; seconded by Cllr Brooks; five votes in favour and one abstention.

10. To consider avenues of community engagement and relevant actions:

10.1a. Receive Cllr Murray's report from the 'Threat Posed to Coastal Communities by Flooding Risk' and consider appropriate engagement following the election – Cllr Murray's report was noted. Cllr Pearce proposed to have the appropriate engagement on this matter after the election to challenge the flood barrier postponement and the Waveney Local Plan; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

10.1b. Collaboration with the Eco Council of St Mary's Primary School to produce a sign encouraging visitors to dispose of their plastic waste efficiently – This item was brought forward in the meeting.

10.1c. Discuss the climate crisis play 'Phoenix, Dodo, Butterfly' and its relevance to the work of Lowestoft Town Council – This play was due to be performed at First Light Festival with a Q&A session to follow. As the play dealt with food security and the importance of community resilience – which is part of the remit of this Committee – anything relevant to Lowestoft could be raised in the Q&A session by attending Councillors.

11. To consider the following in relation to the Earth Protector Town Status of Lowestoft Town Council and relevant actions:

11.1a. Appointment of a Town Council representative to the Earth Protector Town steering group – Cllr Page nominated Cllr Pearce; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.

11.1b. Discuss which groups should be approached to join the steering group – Cllr Ray would circulate the compiled list to members and Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation be made to officers, in conjunction with members of the Committee, to agree a final list of groups to approach; seconded by Cllr Page; all.

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12. To consider the natural environment with regards to Lowestoft's parks and open spaces, and other ecology related matters, and relevant actions:

- 12.1a. Review Suffolk County Council's proposed weed treatments and the impact on the environment – The destructive nature of glyphosate and its negative effects on pollinators, butterflies and the risk of entering water supplies was noted.

Cllr Brooks proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council to send a strong message to Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council that LTC was not in favour of the indiscriminate use of glyphosate and highlight the risk it poses to wildlife and the water supply; seconded by Mr Sillett; five votes in favour and one abstention.

- 12.1b. Receive an update from the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership – Cllr Pearce informed members that the LKP's next meeting was due to be held after the elections and ESC had appointed a Kittiwake Officer. Cllr Pearce had received a request from a member of public to inform ESC that the kittiwake fouling had not been cleaned up in their area, which was further off-road from the highways where ESC had been cleaning up the mess from kittiwakes, and asked the office to approach ESC and request someone to approach the landlord 'Taylor Properties' to obtain permissions for cleaning in the area.

13. To consider issues relating to waste and pollution and relevant actions:

- 13.1a. Support for a campaign to improve the safety and disposal of lithium batteries – Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the campaign; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

14. To consider public transport and alternative methods of travel and relevant actions:

- 14.1a. Receive an update from the Public Transport Working Group – The working group had received clarification on what they were permitted to do by law and agreed a new direction with a statement of intent and survey to be provided to public, via the LTC website, to gauge the current opinion on public transport and if an additional bus service was required in Lowestoft. The survey data would be provided to Suffolk County Council to evidence the need for improved bus services in Lowestoft and it was suggested the survey be live for six weeks.

The working group members queried if the Climate and Ecological Emergency budget could accommodate hiring an organisation or individual to analyse the data from the survey.

It was suggested to engage East Coast College for data analysis work and query with Rachel Bunn if a student at the college could undertake the work, and what the estimated number of hours and hourly rate would be.

Once this information has been received then a delegation could be made to enable the work to continue outside of committee meetings.

Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council to approve the statement and survey questions, with officers to liaise with East Coast College to find a student willing to undertake data analysis work, and for officers, in conjunction with this Committee, to approve the payment for data analysis work from the Climate and Ecological Emergency budget based on Rachel Bunn's suggested fee; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

- 14.1b. Consider working with '20's Plenty' in Suffolk and with local communities in Lowestoft to identify roads where '20's Plenty' – This campaign would be beneficial to addressing the climate emergency as it reduces tail piping emission, ensures quieter surroundings and would be healthier for residents as there would be more space to cycle and walk.

Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of the Gunton Residents Association who were

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working to implement '20's Plenty' in the area, with support from the police, schools and County Councillors.

Cllr Ray proposed a representative of the campaign be invited to the next meeting for a presentation; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

15. To review the decisions on this agenda from the perspective of nature

It was agreed that the perspective of nature had been considered in all decisions.

16. Date of the next meeting

Monday 15th July 2024 15:30

17. Items for the next agenda and close

Mr Sillett requested an item to receive feedback on the Big Green Weekend.

18. 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

There were no resolutions.

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:32

Signed:

15 July 2024