

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 18 November 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Paul Page (Chair) and Andy Pearce. Non-Councillor members Benjamin Poole and Cathy Williams

In Attendance: Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk & Planning Assistant)

Public: One member of the public (in person)

79. Welcome

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

80. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Graham Parker and Deborah Ray and non-Councillor member John Sillett with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Cllr Janet Craig and Rachel Bunn were absent with no apologies received.

81. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

81.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from members on items on the Agenda – Cllrs Brooks and Page and non-Councillor member Cathy Williams declared they were members of Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Cllr Pearce declared he was the Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative of the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership (LKP). Non-Councillor member Benjamin Poole declared he was a committee member of the Gunton Community Centre.

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

82. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 21 October 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the draft minutes and confidential note; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

83. 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 public in attendance wished to make a comment.

84. Finance and Budget

84.1. To monitor expenditure by this Committee from the climate emergency budget, under delegated authority – The Finance Manager had reported the fuel and travel costs were looking to be overspent at this time and would look at a virement from the Repair and Maintenance budget to cover the costs for the remainder of the financial year. The Finance Manager was asked to factor in a realistic uplift in the budget for fuel and travel costs for 2025/2026.

This Committee's budget was due to cover the purchase of solar panels for the Town Hall. It was requested the Town Hall Project be mindful of where the panels were sourced from in the market and consider the exploration of grant funding.

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 18 November 2024

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

85.1. To receive the minutes of the Public Transport Working Group meeting on 7 November 2024 and consider the following actions:

85.1a. Receive the results of the bus survey – The results of the bus survey were noted and the feedback primarily focussed on buses being more frequent and having bus stops closer to residential areas. It was confirmed that the results of the survey would be published.

85.1b. A response to the Suffolk County Council Local Transport Plan 2025-2040 consultation – Under Q.3 Theme 1 ‘Decarbonisation of transport: travel and transport carbon emissions will be net zero by 2040’ Cllr Pearce proposed the statements be prioritised in the following order:

1. Enable active travel to be the most convenient for shorter journeys
2. Enable bus and train services to be convenient travel options
3. Promote rail-freight for journeys beyond Suffolk
4. Transition away from fossil fuel powered vehicles

The Lowestoft Town Council policies referenced should also include the Climate Emergency Declaration, the Earth Protector Town Declaration and acknowledgement of the emerging Climate Action Plan. Benjamin Poole seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

Under Q.4 Theme 2 ‘A strong, sustainable, and fair economy: secure investment and spread prosperity across the county’ Cllr Pearce proposed the statements be prioritised in the following order:

1. Promote transport infrastructure that unlocks inclusive economic growth
2. Improve network resilience to support sustainable economic growth
3. Secure investment to deliver local transport schemes and public realm improvements
4. Collaborate with district and borough councils to secure investment and promote Suffolk’s unique character

Cllr Page seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

Under Q.5 Theme 3 ‘Health, wellbeing, and social inclusion: enable Suffolk to be a place where everyone can lead a longer, happier, and healthier life’ Cllr Pearce proposed the statements be prioritised in the following order:

1. Enable individuals to have the confidence to travel safely using their preferred mode and not feel restricted by their travel options.
2. Reduce the levels of social isolation and deprivation, and support individuals to lead independent lives
3. Improve road safety by adopting Vision Zero
4. Increase levels of physical activity through active travel
5. Improve air quality by decarbonising travel

Cathy Williams seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

Under Q.6 Theme 4 ‘Creating better places: improve public realms and the transport network for communities’ Cllr Pearce proposed the statements be prioritised in the following order:

1. Reflect road user hierarchy when resourcing maintenance activities
2. Deliver transport schemes that have a positive impact on our natural and built environments
3. Improve access to passenger transport services and promote projects that improve service punctuality and reliability
4. Ensure heavy goods and large vehicles are on the most suitable roads
5. Improve urban and rural rights of way and promote access to Suffolk’s

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 18 November 2024

countryside

Cllr Page seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

85.1c. A response to the Suffolk County Council Lowestoft Area Transport Plan consultation – For Q.3 ‘Which modes of transport do you prefer to use for certain distances in the area’ it was suggested the following modes of transport be preferred for the following distances:

- Short Distance – Cycle.
- Medium Distance – Cycle.
- Long Distance – Public transport.

For Q.4 ‘How satisfied are you with the following in each area’ it was suggested the following ratings be given for the listed modes of transport:

- Walking/wheeling network – 2.
- Cycling network – 2.
- Public transport services in the area – 2.

Benjamin Poole temporarily left the chamber at 16:32

For Q.5 ‘What would encourage you to walk/wheel, cycle and use public transport more in the area’ it was suggested the following ratings be given:

For routes relating to walking/wheeling and/or cycling:

- Have more routes that are connected and simple to navigate and to use (and consistent high quality – cycling) – 5.
- Have more routes that are directly linked to key locations – 5.
- Routes that feel safe to use – 5.
- Routes that are attractive and in places that people want to spend time – 5.
- Routes that are good quality, well-maintained, with minimal stopping and starting, and avoid steep gradients – 5.
- Routes that are well designed, finished in attractive materials and in places that people want to spend time – 4.

For routes relating to public transport:

- Journey time – 5.
- Reliability of service – 5.
- Feeling safe – 5.
- Frequency of service – 5.
- Coverage of service – 5.
- Price – 5.
- Waiting facilities – 5.
- Mobility integration (connections to other modes of sustainable travel) – 5.

Cllr Pearce proposed both consultations be submitted per the amendments made by this Committee; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

85.1d. The submission of a cover letter to Chris Chambers (Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Transport) supporting the response to the Lowestoft Area Transport Plan – This cover letter would accompany the response to the Lowestoft Area Transport Plan. The external Consultant had informed the Public Transport Working of a proposal that had been made under Suffolk County Council’s last round of funding (the Bus Service Improvement Plan) for a bus route to connect Pakefield to Pleasurewood Hills and the working group had agreed to support this proposal in the cover letter as it was currently in the reserves for the funding allocation and would be more likely to be implemented

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 18 November 2024

in the next round of funding.

As many people in the Gunton ward had responded to LTC's Bus Survey, Cllr Pearce proposed for the cover letter to be submitted with an amendment to include LTC's support for a replacement bus service in the Gunton area; seconded by Benjamin Poole; all in favour.

86. To consider the following matter to raise with the appropriate East Suffolk Council Cabinet member:

86.1. The new legislation arounds bins in the district (some aspects may be confidential) – It was agreed to defer this item to next meeting.

87. To consider issues relating to waste and pollution:

87.1. Receive data on the Bulky Waste Collection Service – The data was reviewed. Cllr Brooks proposed a press release be done on the success of the trial and to make the public aware it would be made a permanent service in due course; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

87.2. Receive an update on the tender for the permanent bulky waste contract – The tender was being prepared and would be based on the same frequency as the current trial period. Officers were asked to check if Ace Clearance could advise whether the current budget, uplifted by 8.5%, would be adequate for a permanent service to inform the tender and required budget.

87.3. A response to the East Suffolk Council consultation on the proposed revocation of the Air Quality Management Area in Stratford St. Andrew – Cllr Pearce proposed this consultation be directed to Full Council for a response; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

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

88.1. The Wash tidal barrier and its effect on the coastline – It was agreed to defer the item to the next meeting when Cllr Parker would be present to speak on the item.

88.2. An update from the Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership (some aspects may be confidential) – The LKP had recently met with East Suffolk Council now a full member and the accountable body, but the LKP itself would be independent from East Suffolk Council. Peter Aldous had stood down from the position of Chair and the partnership had voted for Jess Asato MP to be the new Chair for the next year.

The LKP would have two core meetings per year, just before the annual arrival of the kittiwakes and after the nesting season had concluded, with other meetings to be held as required. The next meeting was scheduled for early February 2025 and in the meantime the legal work for the LKP would be finalised and provided to this Committee for a recommendation to Full Council for ratification.

A Kittiwake Officer had been appointed, part-funded by the offshore wind developers, and was hosted at East Suffolk Council to lead on engagement and to act for the LKP. It was noted the LKP was a politically independent body and was not subject to the policy of any individual party.

It was queried what work the LKP would do to address the use of deterrents in London Road North. It was noted the LKP was not an enforcement body, its aim was to promote co-existence and encourage alternative deterrents that had a lesser capacity to be lethal.

88.3. An alternative location for one of the water bottle refill stations – Officers had reviewed Fen Park for the installation of one of the water bottle refill stations and reported there

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 18 November 2024

would be issues with access to the station and connection to the water mains. It was suggested to consider locating the station in Kensington Gardens near the entrance that opens out to the seaward side.

There had been previous discussions with East Suffolk Council to fund the installation of water bottle refill stations on their land on the sea front and it was requested that dialogue be maintained with suggestions of locations and numbers. An alternative suggestion was made to encourage East Suffolk Council to fund and install their own stations.

Cllr Pearce proposed the water bottle refill stations be installed at Kensington Gardens and Normanston Park (the latter for which had been previously agreed) and for officers to progress the promotion of the refill scheme with local businesses. As officers had attempted to contact the Refill Scheme organisation already, one final attempt would be made and if there was no response then the Town Council would consider producing its own initiative rolled out to its tenants initially. Cllr Page seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

89. To consider issues relating to the energy and water supply of the built environment of Lowestoft and relevant actions:

89.1. Discuss the Direct Air Capture facility – It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting when John Sillett would be in attendance to speak on the item.

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

90.1. An approach to the council's tenants to understand what challenges their organisation would face if there was a move to reduce single use plastic and plastic reliance – Cllr Pearce proposed officers approach the tenants in person for an informal conversation on the move to reduce single-use plastic and plastic reliance, what challenges their organisations would face and how the Town Council could assist them; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

91. Date of the next meeting

Monday 16 December 2024 – 15:30

92. Items for the next agenda and close

It was requested an item go on the next agenda should a response be received from East Suffolk Council on Sizewell C and the issues of coastal erosion and water shortages. An item was requested to receive an update on the installation of water butts.

93. 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 17:29

Signed:

16 December 2024