

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10.00am on Wednesday 27 November 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Andy Pearce (*arrived 10:12*), John Pitts, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman.

In attendance: Christopher Meek (Events and Office Manager) and Michael Winter (Communications and IT Officer).

Public: Oliver Paul (Deputy Lieutenant for Suffolk on behalf of Suffolk Day).

46. Welcome

The meeting was welcomed and the fire evacuation and reporting at meetings procedures were read out.

Cllr Barker thanked the Excelsior Trust and its crew for their hospitality during the official opening of the Gull Wing Bridge.

47. To receive and consider acceptance of apologies absence

Apologies with reasons provide were received from Cllr Rappensberger. Cllr Youngman proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Webb, all in favour.

It was noted that Cllr Pearce would be arriving late for the meeting.

48. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations

48.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda.

Cllr Webb declared that he is Vice-Chair for the Lowestoft and District Branch of the Royal British Legion. Cllr Barker declared that she is a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Greenpeace.

48.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted.

None were received.

49. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 23 October 2024

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the minutes, noting that there was a typo in the section on the Climate Event. This was seconded by Cllr Barker; four votes in favour with one abstention.

50. Public Forum

50.1. An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda and to consider any advance comments from the public.

It was agreed that item 53.1 would be brought forward so that the member of public attending via Zoom could give a presentation on this item.

The member of public reported that they had produced a summary document on what hosting Suffolk Day would entail for the host town. It was noted that there was no set formula for Suffolk Day as the event tends to look to amplify an existing theme, initiative or event. Some elements are standardised, such as inviting local schools to write the Suffolk Day proclamation.

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Cllr Pearce arrived at 10:12

The member of public also reported that medal presentations are also held on Suffolk Day, as Suffolk presents its highest award. The selection process for the award winners is already underway.

Many Town Mayors also use the event to invite fellow Mayors from across the county. The steering committee for Suffolk Day try to ensure that the event's costs can be covered by the hosting Town Council as the only finances needed were to cover teas/coffees for the Mayoral event, a PA system and small stage and bunting/flags around the town.

Cllr Barker asked if the Town Council would have an input on the theme and ideas for the event.

Cllr Pearce commented that Suffolk Day has often been perceived to be oriented towards Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds so would like to see a more local/regional flavour to the event if hosted by Lowestoft.

Cllr Brooks commented that she thought Carlton Marshes would be a suitable location as the "gateway to the broads". Cllr Brooks declared that she is a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Cllr Barker commented that it would be good for the event to have a strong heritage input and to show the town at its best. The member of public confirmed that the event would look to shine a light on the Town and that Haverhill, who hosted Suffolk Day in 2024, had similar concerns and queries.

The member of public confirmed that the 2025 would fall on a Sunday (21st June), which would fall on the same day as First Light Festival. The member of public commented that they thought the two events could be tied together but with the Suffolk Day activities taking place in a distinct area with the Mayor hosting. Cllr Pearce commented that with the events sharing the same day, he wouldn't want the two events to become conflated.

The Events and Office Manager commented that Suffolk Day could look to use the town centre, liaising with local businesses and Lowestoft Vision, as First Light Festival is a predominantly beach festival.

The member of public confirmed that the steering committee would like to hold the event in Lowestoft and make the organisation of it as easy as possible. With that in mind, they weren't concerned about the message of Suffolk Day being lost but was nervous about the event being dislocated from other events happening in the town.

Cllr Pearce asked if officers would be able to attend the steering group meetings to act as a liaison. The member of public confirmed this could happen once they had liaised with Suffolk County Council.

Cllr Barker commented that this sub-committee needed to make a decision in principal on whether to support Lowestoft hosting Suffolk Day in 2025. Cllr Webb commented that he broadly welcomes the opportunity to host Suffolk Day and believed there was sufficient space in the town for this to take place alongside First Light Festival.

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Cllr Pearce proposed to agree to Lowestoft Town Council supporting, hosting and funding the local aspects of Suffolk Day with the event taking place in a discreet location so that it doesn't get subsumed into another event, with the two events coordinating to share footfall and resources and to signpost to each other. This was seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

The member of public thanked the sub-committee for its support and confirmed they would liaise with the Events and Office Manager on the dates for the steering group.

Cllr Pearce asked if the Events and Office Manager could work with the member of public to come up with an indicative budget for the event to go to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee for Major Event budget approval.

Cllr Webb asked how the award shortlist was made for the event. The member of public reported that nominations were made through the Suffolk Awards Medal website (suffolkmedal.org) with the selection process taking around a year from nomination to creating a shortlist. Cllr Pearce commented that holding the event in Lowestoft may encourage more nominations from the area in the future.

Cllr Barker thanked the member of public for attending the meeting.

Member of public left at 10:52

51. Finance

51.1. To monitor expenditure by the sub-committee from its delegated budget.
Cllr Pearce reported that the Budget and Loan Working Group had yet to look at the Events budget but noted that the D-Day event line would be coming out for 2025/26 and be replaced by the VE/VJ Day event budget.

The Events and Office Manager confirmed that the Town Hall Project had agreed to absorb the Heritage Market costs and will take a lead on this event in 2025.

Cllr Brooks asked if there was an update on having permanent stallholders at the Triangle Market. The Events and Office Manager reported that there had been some interest with potential stallholders using the kiosks at the themed markets.

The budget spreadsheet in its current form was noted.

Cllr Pearce asked for officers, following the Suffolk Day discussion, could look at adding a budget line for Suffolk Day as a Major Event in 2025.

52. Events

52.1. To consider any applications for events on Town Council owned land.
None were received.

52.2. To receive a report of permissions granted for events on Town Council owned land.
The Events and Office Manager confirmed that permissions had been granted for the Gunton Residents Association Christmas Tree and Christmas Carol Event, East Suffolk Council for use of Ness Point and the Friends of Fen Park for a carol singing event.

Cllr Pearce declared that he is the Chair of the Gunton Residents Association.

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52.3. To review and consider the following timetable of events:

Table 1 - Schedule of events

Date	Item
October 2024	<p>Black History Month 2024</p> <p>Cllr Barker thanked officers for their organising of the awards ceremony at Hotel Victoria. Cllr Brooks commented that the ceremony was well received but raised that there had been issues with schools not entering the competition element.</p> <p><i>Cllr Youngman temporarily left the meeting at 11:04.</i></p> <p>Cllr Brooks commented that it would be good to host the event at the same venue next year, alongside having some appropriate buffet refreshments. It was also noted that the music who was booked for the event did not show up.</p> <p>Cllr Barker commented that she enjoyed the poignancy of Anthony Ogogo’s video and thanked Ivya Scott for her contribution.</p> <p><i>Cllr Youngman returned at 11:06.</i></p> <p>Cllr Pearce asked whether officers thought the venue was appropriate for this style of event. The Communications and IT Officer confirmed that the venue was suitable due to its location, size and accessibility. It was also confirmed that around 90 people attended, and the venue could have seated more if needed.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce asked about participation in the competition. The Communications and IT Officer confirmed that five schools took part, which was down on last year, but that some schools had been in contact following the sending of a review/feedback email apologising for not entering in 2024.</p> <p>Cllr Barker thanked everyone who helped judge the entries.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce commented that he was getting the impression that this venue was a big step up from previous years and wondered if, in the planning for 2025, if there could be more promotion for schools offered as an incentive for entry.</p> <p>The Communications and IT Officer confirmed that he had delivered the prizes that were not collected at the ceremony and wondered whether offering visits into the schools and encouraging larger, school displays might be a way of engaging with schools.</p>

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Date	Item
10 November 2024	<p>Remembrance Service and Parade</p> <p>Cllr Barker commented that she thought the event was well organised and showed Lowestoft at its best. Cllr Brooks commented that there were concerns around the sound quality when in the crowd. The Events and Office Manager reported that this was always a concern due to the nature of the area.</p> <p>Cllr Pearce reported that he had heard positive comments throughout with only one negative comment on the format of the service.</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that both the Deputy Lieutenant and High Sheriff had sent their gratitude for their invitation to the event and the hospitality received.</p>
11 November 2024	<p>Armistice Day</p> <p>Cllr Barker thank all who were involved in these events.</p>
27 January 2025	<p>Holocaust Memorial Day 2025 to include Stockholm Convention and Auschwitz Anniversary</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that he had been liaising with existing and new stakeholders for the event in order to make sure its poignancy was reflected.</p> <p>Cllr Brooks asked for some details on the film element. The Events and Office Manager confirmed that the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust has released some films which would be shown at East Coast Cinema. The Events and Office Manager is in liaison with East Coast Cinema to ensure the right permissions and formats were received. An event would also be taking place at Lowestoft Railway Station alongside an event with a local school at Kensington Gardens, reflecting the theme of 80 candles for 80 days.</p>
2025	<p>Climate Event</p> <p>The Events and Office Manager reported that, following the decision taken on Suffolk Day, there would need to be a rethink on the date for this event.</p> <p>It was agreed that the other items in the events table could be discussed at the next meeting.</p>
6 February 2025	<p>Boston Pionair Loss</p>
8 March 2025	<p>International Women's Day</p>

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Date	Item
8 May 2025	VE 2025 The Events and Office Manager commented that the sub-committee should note that VE Day or VJ Day may have a bank holiday attached to them. An announcement regarding this is expected from the UK Government.
August 2025	Lowestoft Pride
15 August 2025	VJ 2025
August 2025	Norfolk and Waveney Mind Wellness Festival
September 2025	Heritage Open Days
2026	Civic Event

It was agreed that item 54.1 would be moved forward and discussed at this point in the meeting.

Item 54.1 - To receive an update from the Communications Officer regarding advertising and communication strategy.

The Communications and IT Officer reported that he had produced two papers which had been circulated – a draft Communications Strategy and a Budget Outline. It was noted that the Communications Strategy, when finalised, would help to better inform the budget outline.

Cllr Pearce asked if the Communications and IT Officer could bring the costs together so that the Budget and Loan Working Group could consider adding a communications budget line in the 2025/26 budget.

Cllr Brooks commented that online communications about the Grounds Maintenance Team was always well received from the public and thought that this should feature in the communications strategy. Cllr Brooks also commented that, although the Town Council doesn't actively promote its meetings on social media, it should look to, as mentioned in the Communications Strategy, as this might encourage more public comments on important items.

Cllr Barker asked for all members of the committee to review the documents and send any comments or queries into the Communications and IT Officer so that these could be added and discussed at the next meeting.

53. Events

53.1. To receive proposal from organisers of Suffolk Day 2025 (some aspects may be confidential).

This was considered during the public forum.

53.2. To receive proposal from Royal Naval Patrol Service Association 50th anniversary year celebrations.

The Events and Office Manager passed on the thanks of the Royal Naval Patrol Service Association for the awarding of the Freedom of the Town. For their 50th anniversary in 2025, the RNPSA is looking to hold a small concert in Sparrows Nest Gardens to

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accompany their annual reunion event and service. It had been suggested the Town Council may wish to support this event, having helped provide the PA system and cost for a wreath for the 2024 event.

Cllr Pearce asked whether this event would be taking place in October. The Events and Office Manager confirmed that this would be the case.

Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the event, with officers to liaise with the RNPSA on arrangements and finalising a budget. This was seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

- 53.3. To consider memorial plaque to Vera Brittain.

It was agreed that this would be considered at the next meeting.

- 53.4. To consider Triangle Market events 2025.

The Events and Office Manager commented that there would be themed events planned for 2025 with a campaign to encourage local charities and businesses to use the new kiosks.

- 53.5. To consider hosting Lowestoft 10k Sports event.

Cllr Barker confirmed that the Sports Development Office had written a paper on this proposal.

Cllr Pearce said that he was in favour of the idea and noted that, although the event was intended to be cost neutral, some funds would need to be made available up-front. Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the proposal of holding a Lowestoft 10k event, and to make a recommendation to AID and F&G with the expectation that some funding may be required from the current financial year. This was seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

54. Communications

- 54.1. To receive an update from the Communications Officer regarding advertising and communication strategy.

This item was moved before item 53.1 in the agenda.

55. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 18 December 2024 10:00am

56. Items for the next Agenda and Close.

It was agreed to add Lowestoft 10K and Suffolk Day to the events table. The item on Vera Britten was also agreed to be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Brooks asked if there could be an item on what the word “consort” means with regards to the Mayor attending events. Cllr Barker asked if there could be an update on events that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have attended. Cllr Brooks added that she would like to know what the criteria for accepting event invitations is.

57. 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.

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Meeting closed 11:59