

Lowestoft Town Council
Budget and Loan Sub-Committee Meeting
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:30 on 12 August 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Graham Parker, Andy Pearce and Bernadette Rappensberger

In Attendance: James Cox (Finance and Information Officer)

Public: One member of the public (in person)

1. To appoint the Chair of this Sub-Committee

Cllr Rappensberger nominated Cllr Youngman; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

2. Welcome

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

3. To Consider Sub-Committee arrangements:

3.1. To note the membership of the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee – Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger and Elise Youngman.

3.2. To appoint the Deputy Chair of the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Rappensberger; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

3.3. To review and consider adoption of the Terms of Reference and make any necessary recommendations – As this Sub-Committee had no delegation and its work covered confidential information, Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation be made to Finance and Governance for the Sub-Committee to revert to a Working Group; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour. As a Working Group it could still have a Chair and formal minutes.

3.4. To review and recommend the meeting schedule – It was agreed for the schedule to be 12:30 on Monday, likely on a weekly basis.

4. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllrs Wendy Brooks and Elise Youngman with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

5. Declarations and dispensations

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

5.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – There were no written requests for dispensations to consider.

6. 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 received and the member of public in attendance did not speak on any items.

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7. **To consider the draft minutes from the meetings on 4th December 2023, 11th December 2023, 8th January 2024 and the 15th January 2024**

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

8. **To review the 2024 – 2025 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential).**

The Finance and Information Officer presented a paper to the Sub-Committee detailing overspend by year-end and the reasons for it.

- The legionella service cost overspend was estimated to be £11,000.
- There may be some underspend for the condition surveys for this year. This would be discussed with the contractors and brought to a future meeting.
- Money needed to be moved from the Staffing budget to cover some of the public convenience cleaning.
- The overspend on the IT Service Charge budget was predicted to be £7,000 due to staffing increasing since the budget was set.
- The office had been noted the council would need to start paying the electricity for the festive lights. This had not been required before and therefore was not budgeted for. It was not yet certain what the expected costs were.

The Finance and Information Officer presented a paper to the Sub-Committee detailing areas where there may be overspend.

- Officers raised concerns on the play area refurbishment budget of £130,000 as that may not be able to cover a fully accessible play area at Clarke' Lane.
- The Unit 2 service charge was not budgeted for last year and would need to be considered.
- £38,500 had been spent to date from the £65,000 Grants Budget, based on this trajectory the entire budget would be spent by November, therefore the budget would need to be closely monitored.

9. **To review the 2025 – 26 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential).**

As reserves had been used to offset the budget for this year, the precept percentage was starting at 22%. The Sub-Committee were asked to be mindful of this as there was an expected large number of expected capital purchases, ongoing projects current not accounted in the budget and compliance works and condition survey works.

10. **Date of next meeting**

9 September 2024 – 12:30.

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

To discuss the tarmacking budget.

12. **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 and employment issues relating to the matters on this agenda.**

There were no resolutions and the Chair closed the meeting at 11:20

Signed:

10 October 2024