

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
14:30 on 28 October 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby (Deputy Chair), Graham Parker, Andy Pearce (Chair) and Bernadette Rappensberger

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk), James Cox (Finance Manager) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk & Planning Assistant)

66. Welcome

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

67. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Nasima Begum, Connor Blowers and Paul Page with reasons provided. Cllr Parker proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

68. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

68.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Rappensberger declared she was the Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative to the Kirkley People’s Forum but was not a Committee member. Cllr Pearce declared he had previous knowledge of the application from HighTide as he had explained the grant application process to them, and noted Roman Hill Primary School was not confirmed at this time to be involved in the project.

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

69. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 8 October 2024

The minutes were still in progress and would be considered at the next meeting.

70. 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 the public were in attendance.

71. Grants and Sponsorships

71.1. To note the receipt of the following grant applications and consider whether they require urgent consideration:

71.1a. HighTide - £10,000 – It was noted that the funds were not required until December 2024.

Cllr Brooks suggested more information be sought on the outreach of the project and who would be involved, as this application requested more than the standard grant amount of £2,000.

Cllr Coleby suggested a condition be attached for at least two of the schools in the project to be based in Lowestoft. Cllr Pearce suggested there also be a condition for the event venue to be local as LTC’s support on this project was contingent on the benefit it would bring to the parish.

Cllr Coleby proposed to approve the grant application with the condition that a minimum of two schools in the Lowestoft parish must be involved in the project and a local theatre (such as the Marina Theatre) must be used as the venue for the event and other schools be invited to send children of similar age groups to the performance, so that HighTide can consider building up succession planning for the future and alternative grant funding. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal

Lowestoft Town Council

Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee

First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE

14:30 on 28 October 2024

and requested the grant be funded from the Arts and Heritage budget and that the applicants be notified of the planned closure period of the Marina Theatre (June-October 2025). A vote was held with four in favour and one against.

71.1b. Kirkley People's Forum – £1,395 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Coleby. Cllr Pearce requested an amendment for the grant to be funded from the Stakeholder and Friends Group Support budget, with any remaining surplus to be funded from the Grants budget. This was accepted and a vote was held with all in favour.

71.2. To consider a request for sponsorship from Kirkley People's Forum – If agreed, this sponsorship would commence from April 2025 to fund the venue hire for the Kirley People's Forum for a period of two to three years. It was noted that the cost for one year was £5,580. It was suggested to consider the arrangement and cost implications at a future meeting. An alternative suggestion was made to pre-approve one year's sponsorship now and request Full Council to consider the remaining two years, or the item could be referred to Full Council for full consideration. Cllr Coleby proposed to agree to cover on year but request the group to seek alternative funding to offset the fees, and the ongoing sponsorship would be considered by Full Council; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

72. Other financial and governance matters, including:

72.1. To consider the purchase of a Grillo mower – LTC were already considering the replacement of four mowers at end of life and it was noted this mower would be beneficial as it was a specialist kit that would enable the Grounds Maintenance Team to maintain areas in difficult terrain.

Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the expenditure and allocate the funding from the Parks Repair and Maintenance budget; seconded by Cllr Coleby who requested an amendment to establish the lifetime of the mower and consider reserving funds for this mower (and other equipment) to service any required replacements, maintenance and repair works. Cllr Pearce agreed to the amendment and a vote was held with all in favour.

72.2. To consider a maximum budget for business cards for Councillors who would like them – Cllr Pearce proposed a maximum budget of £500 be delegated to officers to take requests from Councillor who wish to carry business cards and place the order. Officers would notify Councillors of this offer via the weekly Councillor Update and this would be a print-to-order service.

Cllr Parker suggested £250 be the maximum budget as it was unlikely the orders would require a larger budget. Cllr Pearce agreed to a £350 maximum budget and requested officers put an item on the Finance and Governance agenda to consider the budget if the demand exceeds the £250 budget. The notification to Councillors to order the business cards would include an instruction that business cards not be used for promotion or endorsement. The Acting Town Clerk suggested there be an inclusion of the protocol on business cards in LTC's Media Policy. It was confirmed the business cards would only have the LTC emails and there would be no personal numbers, only the office number. Cllr Parker seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

72.3. To consider terms for previously agreed funding support for Marina Theatre (confidential) – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

73. Date of the next meeting

12 November 2024 - 10:30. Cllrs Brooks and Parker provided their apologies and it was noted that the Committee would have difficulty to meet the quorum requirements. Officers were asked to send a poll to all members to confirm their availability for a new schedule with an item on the next Full Council meeting to approve amending the schedule. An extraordinary meeting may be required in November if the scheduled meeting on 12 November did not have

Lowestoft Town Council

Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee

First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE

14:30 on 28 October 2024

quorate numbers.

74. Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested for the next agenda.

75. 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 employment matters and legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda, including the following:

75.1. Any legal matters, including those above as required – Cllr Rappensberger propose the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 15:27

72.3. To consider terms for previously agreed funding support for Marina Theatre (confidential) – The Committee were provided feedback comments from the solicitors regarding the previously agreed funding support for Marina Theatre. The questions posed by the solicitor were answered and would be provided to the solicitors to progress the funding agreement.

The Chair closed the meeting at 16:48

Signed:

9 December 2024