

Lowestoft Town Council

Annual Meeting

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

18:30 on 21 May 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum (Mayor), Connor Blowers, Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks, Janet Craig, Jen Jones, Christine Moore, John Murray, Christian Newsome, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

Public: There was one member of the public in attendance in person and one member of the public in attendance via Zoom webinar. Cllrs Coleby and Ray were in attendance via Zoom webinar

1. Election of the Mayor

Cllr Barker gave a speech reflecting on her year as the Mayor and the achievements of Lowestoft Town Council.

Cllr Patience nominated Cllr Begum; seconded by Cllr Parker.

Cllr Brooks nominated Cllr Barker; seconded by Cllr Breakspear. Cllr Begum accepted the nomination. Cllr Barker was grateful for the support but did not wish to accept the nomination. The vote was taken for the election of Cllr Begum as Mayor; sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against. Cllr Begum duly signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Cllr Begum gave a speech thanking those who had supported and encouraged her.

2. Appointing the Deputy Mayor

Cllr Breakspear nominated Cllr Youngman; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger. There were no further nominations. Sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.

3. Mayor's Welcome

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

4. Apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby and Deborah Ray, with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

5. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

5.1 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda – Cllr Blowers declared he is an employee of the Marina Theatre. Cllr Moore declared she is an employee of East Suffolk Council. Cllrs Craig, Parker and Patience declared they are East Suffolk Councillors.

5.2 Written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

6. The draft minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 16 May 2024

There was no confidential note from this meeting. It was noted that the date of the meeting had changed and it had taken place on 14 May. Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the minutes, but requested an amendment to clarify when it would be necessary for the substitute member to attend. It was agreed to defer the minutes to the next meeting and officers would check them.

7. Noting the minutes from the following Committees and noting any recommendations will be considered at the Full Council meeting on 30 May 2024:

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The minutes were noted.

7.1 Finance and Governance Committee Meeting 14 May 2024

7.2 Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee Meeting 13 May 2024

7.3 Planning Committee Meetings 25 April and 9 May 2024

7.4 Personnel Committee Extraordinary Meetings 7 and 16 May 2024

7.5 Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee Meeting 20 May 2024

7.6 Town Hall Project Committee Meeting 9 May 2024

7.7 Marina Theatre Project Committee Meeting 9 May 2024

8. Public forum

No advance comments had been received. Those observing the meeting via the Zoom webinar were given the opportunity to speak. Cllr Ray was in attendance via Zoom.

9. Review and adoption of the Council's policies and procedures, including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

As most of the policies had been reviewed over the previous twelve months and will be reviewed again over the next twelve months, Cllr Pearce proposed to adopt all of the policies again. Some amendments to the Financial Regulations had been proposed, but it had been agreed not to apply them at this stage, as new Model Financial Regulations had been produced. The recommendation had been to adopt the existing Financial Regulations, on the basis they would be reviewed again within two months of this meeting and a decision made whether or not to adopt the new Model Financial Regulations. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

10. The Council's approach to risk management and appropriate policies and documents

A meeting paper had been made available. A new approach to risk management had been put forward, reflecting the significant changes to the Council over the last five years. Cllr Barker proposed to adopt what had been provided; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It was noted that it was a duty of the Council to keep its risk management under review during the year. The new policy gave review responsibilities to relevant Committees and the Terms of Reference for those Committee may require updating to reflect this.

11. Delegated authority and Committee arrangements

11.1 Committees, including the following:

11.1a Adoption of the Terms of Reference – It was noted that the Terms of Reference for the Marina Theatre and Town Hall Project Committees specified that the Mayor would Chair the meetings. Cllr Begum confirmed her intention to join those Committees. Cllr Pearce proposed to adopt the Terms of Reference for all Committees, noting that each individual Committee would review its own Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Patience; all in favour.

11.1b Committee membership, including non-Councillor members of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee, and the appointment of substitutes:

Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee: Cllrs Breakspear, Brooks Coleby, Jones, Murray, Newsome, Pearce, Rappensberger, Webb and Youngman put their names forward to join this Committee.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee: It was noted that applications had been received from three members of the public to join this Committee as non-Councillor members. Two had been received from the existing two non-Councillor members of the Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed to renew the membership of

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the existing two non-Councillor members, and delegate authority to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee to consider the appointment of a third non-Councillor member at its next meeting; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

Cllrs Brooks, Craig, Page, Parker, Pearce and Ray put their names forward to join this Committee.

Finance and Governance Committee: Cllrs Begum, Brooks, Coleby, Page, Parker, Pearce and Rappensberger put their names forward to join this Committee.

Marina Theatre Project Committee: Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Coleby, Moore and Pearce put their names forward to join this Committee.

Personnel Committee: Cllrs Barker, Begum, Blowers, Brooks, Jones, Murray, Newsome, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Rappensberger, Webb and Youngman put their names forward to join this Committee. Cllr Coleby had put his name forward as a substitute member.

Planning Committee: Cllrs Blowers, Brooks, Coleby, Jones, Murray, Newsome, Pearce, Rappensberger, Ray and Youngman put their names forward to join this Committee. All members of the Planning Committee were required to undertake planning training, and an online course had been booked for 11 June.

Town Hall Project Committee: Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Coleby, Pearce, Rappensberger and Youngman put their names forward to join this Committee.

Cllr Pearce proposed to appoint those who had put their names forward for Committee membership for the 2024 – 2025 civic year, as listed above; seconded by Cllr Newsome; all in favour.

11.1c Any delegations (officer, Committee and Sub-Committee) – Officer delegations had been reviewed by Full Council in conjunction with officers. Cllr Pearce proposed to renew them for a further twelve months, and they will remain renewable annually between January and April. It had been agreed with two of the budgets which had been wholly delegated to officers, expenditure from the legal budget would be monitored by the Finance and Governance Committee monthly, and expenditure from the staffing contingency budget would be monitored by the Personnel Committee monthly. Cllr Pearce proposed to renew officer delegations on that basis; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed to renew all Committee and Sub-Committee delegations and ask each Committee and Sub-Committee to review and make recommendations on their own delegations at their first meetings of the new civic year; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.

11.1d Appointing Committee Chairs:

Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee: Cllr Parker nominated Cllr Breakspear; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger. There were no further nominations. All Councillors voted in favour.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee: Cllr Brooks nominated Cllr Page; seconded by Cllr Pearce. There were no further nominations. All Councillors voted in favour.

Finance and Governance Committee: Cllr Begum nominated Cllr Pearce;

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seconded by Cllr Jones. There were no further nominations. All Councillors voted in favour.

Marina Theatre Project Committee: The Terms of Reference specified that the Mayor would Chair these meetings.

Personnel Committee: Cllr Parker nominated Cllr Newsome; seconded by Cllr Pearce. There were no further nominations. All Councillors voted in favour.

Planning Committee: Cllr Brooks nominated Cllr Murray. Cllr Youngman nominated Cllr Jones. Cllr Murray did not accept the nomination as he did not consider he had sufficient experience at this time. Cllr Pearce seconded the nomination for Cllr Jones. Sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.

Town Hall Project Committee: The Terms of Reference specified that the Mayor would Chair these meetings.

11.2 The requirement for the Mayor and Chair of the Personnel Committee, and their respective Deputies, to undertake appraisals training – Cllrs Begum and Newsome had completed training recently, however it had been agreed this would be an annual requirement. The Acting Town Clerk’s appraisal had been completed. If the 2025 Clerk’s appraisal is due to take place before the next Annual Meeting, Cllr Pearce proposed that the appraisals training be completed between November and the next Annual Meeting; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

11.3 Other officer delegations and signatory delegations – Delegations had been covered under item 11.1c. The Mayor and Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee had previously been appointed as signatories for any formal documents. Cllr Pearce proposed for the Mayor and Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee to remain as the signatories for formal documents; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

12. Representatives of the Council on other bodies

Outside Body	Councillor Appointed and Agreed Substitute
Board of Trustees of Lowestoft Charity Board Charities	Cllr Pearce proposed for himself and Cllr Page to continue their joint representative role; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.
CEFAS and Promoting Pakefield Group	Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Pitts to remain as the representative and Cllr Breakspear to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
Cultural Leadership Group	Cllr Coleby had put his name forward for this role. Cllr Brooks was the current representative and understood that the group no longer existed. Officers were asked to check the status formally and add an item to the next Full Council agenda if the group had been replaced with another body.
East Suffolk Community Safety Partnership	Cllr Brooks proposed for herself to remain as the representative and Cllr Ray to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.

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East Suffolk Lines Community Rail Partnership (Line Group North)	Cllrs Parker and Pearce advised that the group had merged with another and was now defunct.
Environment and Waste Working Group	Cllr Brooks understood the group no longer existed. Officers were asked to determine the status of the group. Cllrs Coleby, Newsome, Parker and Pearce put their names forward to join the group if it does still meet. Cllr Jones proposed for these Councillors to join the group; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
First Light Festival Environmental Task Force	Cllr Barker nominated Cllr Ray to remain as the representative and Cllr Page to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
First Light Festival Steering Group	Cllr Blowers declared he was a member of the Steering Group for a different organisation. Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Pearce nominated Cllrs Barker and Ray to remain as the joint representatives; seconded by Cllr Youngman; sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
Friends of Fen Park	Cllr Blowers declared he is Chair of the Friends of Fen Park. Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Newsome to remain as the representative and Cllr Rappensberger to remain as the substitute; sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
Heritage Action Zone Steering Group and Heritage Champions, High Street HAZ and Seafront Masterplan and London Road Lowestoft High Street HAZ	It was noted these groups were now defunct.
Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society	Cllr Pearce declared he is the current treasurer. Cllr Page nominated Cllr Coleby to remain as the representative and Cllr Rappensberger to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
Joint Coastal Projects Board	Cllr Brooks understood this had been renamed. Cllr Patience advised the Resilience Board was meeting the following day. Officers were asked to confirm the status of the Board and the number of representatives the Town Council could appoint.
Kindertransport Statue Working Group	The group had been inactive. Officers were asked to contact the other bodies involved in the project to arrange a meeting, and add an item to the next Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee agenda to receive an update. Cllrs Barker, Brooks, Coleby, Pearce

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	<p>and Youngman put their names forward to join the group. Cllr Rappensberger proposed to appoint all those who had put their names forward; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.</p>
<p><i>A five minute comfort break was taken 19:37 and the meeting resumed 19:42</i></p>	
<p>Kirkley People's Forum</p>	<p>Cllr Blowers declared he is on the Management Committee of the Kirkley People's Forum and temporarily left the meeting 19:44 for the consideration of this item. Cllr Pearce to appoint Cllrs Newsome and Rappensberger as joint representatives, and to decide between them who will attend each meeting, based on their availability; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour. Cllr Blowers returned 19:45.</p>
<p>Kirkley Pocket Park Group</p>	<p>Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Newsome to remain as the representative and Cllr Rappensberger to remain as the substitute, though it was understood both could attend meetings; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.</p>
<p>Lowestoft and District Allotment Association</p>	<p>Cllr Pearce nominated himself and Cllr Coleby to remain as the joint representatives. It was noted that the meetings currently clashed with Full Council and an item was requested for the next Allotments Sub-Committee meeting to ask the Association if their meeting schedule could be changed. Cllr Breakspear seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.</p>
<p>Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership</p>	<p>Cllr Pearce nominated himself and Cllr Coleby to remain as the joint representatives; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.</p>
<p>Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association</p>	<p>Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Brooks to remain as the representative and himself to remain as the substitute. It was noted there was a scheduling clash with meetings of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee and officers were asked to enquire if it were possible for the Association to change its meeting schedule. Cllr Page seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.</p>
<p>Lowestoft Flood Risk Management Project's Strategic Steering Group</p>	<p>Cllr Patience nominated Cllr Murray as the representative and Cllr Ray as the substitute, though it may be possible for both to attend meetings. Cllr Parker seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour. Cllr Brooks requested a description of the duties of each of the outside bodies.</p>

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Lowestoft Food Network	Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Begum to remain as the representative and himself to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour. Cllr Pearce explained the purpose of the Lowestoft Food Network and would provide further information regarding the governance arrangements once it was available.
Lowestoft in Bloom	Cllr Brooks nominated herself to remain as the representative; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.
Lowestoft Kittiwake Partnership	Cllr Barker declared she is a member of Suffolk Wildlife Trust. Cllr Parker nominated Cllr Pearce to remain as the representative and Cllr Brooks as the substitute. Cllr Brooks would like to attend the meetings as well, and officers were asked to find out if both the representative and substitute could vote if they both attended the meetings. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.
Lowestoft Museum	Cllr Patience nominated Cllr Pitts to remain as the Trustee, subject to his acceptance of the nomination; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.
Lowestoft Place Board	Cllr Patience nominated himself to remain as the representative; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.
Lowestoft South Pier Ltd's Management Committee	Cllr Pearce nominated himself to remain as the representative and Cllr Rappensberger to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
Lowestoft Vision Board	Cllr Begum nominated herself to remain as the representative and confirmed she did not have a conflict of interest as a local business owner. Cllr Parker seconded the proposal; sixteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
Lowestoft Youth Forum Steering Group	It was confirmed this was a new internal working group, rather than an external body. Cllrs Barker, Blowers, Coleby, Pearce and Youngman put their names forward to join. Cllr Pearce proposed to appoint all those who had put their names forward to the working group; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.
Marina Theatre Quarterly Management Meetings	Cllr Blowers temporarily left the meeting 20:07 for the consideration of this item. It was confirmed this was not an external body. The Acting Town Clerk explained the differences between these meetings and meetings of the Marina Theatre Project Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed to reappoint Cllrs Barker, Brooks, Coleby and Pearce as the Town Council's representatives;

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	seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
Pakefield Coast Protection Steering Group	Cllr Blowers returned 20:09. Cllr Patience nominated to reappoint Cllr Pitts as the representative and Cllr Breakspear as the substitute, subject to their acceptance of the nominations; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour. Following comments about Councillors having to leave the room for the consideration of certain items, the Acting Town Clerk explained the legal position regarding this.
Plastic Free Communities Steering Group	Cllr Pearce proposed to appoint Cllr Ray as the representative; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.
Suffolk Enhanced Passenger Interest Group	Cllr Brooks nominated John Sillett (non-Councillor member to the Climate and Ecological Committee) to remain as the representative; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
Waveney Disability Forum	Cllr Pearce had been appointed a Disability Advice Trustee, and did not therefore wish to take a representative or substitute role on behalf of the Town Council. Cllr Begum proposed to appoint Cllr Coleby as the representative and Cllr Brooks as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.
Wherry Lines Community Rail Partnership Steering Group	Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Parker to remain as the representative and Cllr Newsome to remain as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

13. The Full Council and Committee meeting schedule for 2024 – 2025, and noting the planned schedule for Sub-Committees

Cllr Brooks proposed to keep the meeting schedule the same as it is, and ask each Committee and Sub-Committee to review its own meeting schedule and recommend any amendments. The Personnel Committee meeting was on the same day as the D Day event, however the event was scheduled to start later in the day. Cllr Patience gave his apologies for the Personnel Committee meeting. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

14. Receipt of summons to meetings electronically

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of this item; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

15. The register of land and assets including building and office equipment

Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the Asset Register, noting it had been reviewed by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee and would be duly updated with any new assets acquired by the Town Council; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

16. The arrangements for insurance cover

A two-year arrangement had been agreed. Negotiations regarding renewal arrangements would take place the following year. Cllr Brooks proposed to endorse the insurance arrangements; seconded by Cllr Pearce. An agenda item was requested for the Personnel

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Committee to review what personnel-related insurance is in place and consider what may be required.

17. Subscriptions to other bodies

A meeting paper had been provided. Cllr Brooks proposed to continue all of the Town Council's existing subscriptions; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

18. Noting Lowestoft Town Council's eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence, all expenditure between the years 2019 – 2024 has been made under the General Power of Competence, and adoption of the General Power of Competence

Cllr Brooks proposed to continue the adoption of the General Power of Competence; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

19. The following financial matters for 2024 - 2025:

- 19.1 Bank signatories – Cllr Begum proposed for the existing bank signatories (Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks and Pearce) to continue in this role; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 19.2 Bank reconciliation signatories – Cllr Begum proposed for the existing bank reconciliation signatories (Cllrs Page and Rappensberger) to continue in this role; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 19.3 Internal controllers and substitute – Cllr Pearce proposed for the current internal controllers (Cllr Youngman, with Cllrs Coleby and Jones as substitutes) to continue in this role; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.
- 19.4 Internal control arrangements – The internal control statement had been provided as a meeting paper. Councillors were asked to confirm if they considered the measures laid in the statement to be robust enough. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the internal control arrangements; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.
- 19.5 Confirming fees and charges will remain at 2023 – 2024 rates, pending review if necessary by the Finance and Governance Committee – The current schedule of fees and charges had been provided as a meeting paper. Cllr Jones proposed to approve the schedule; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

20. Date of the next meeting

30 May 2024 at 18:30

21. Items for the next Agenda

There were no requests for items to be added to the next agenda.

There were no confidential items for consideration and the meeting was closed at 20:22.

22. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

Signed:

30 May 2024