

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**19:00 on 18 June 2024**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Bernadette Rappensberger, Deborah Ray and Elise Youngman

**In Attendance:** Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

**Public:** One member of the public in attendance (in person)

**1. To appoint the Chair of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee**

Cllr Ray nominated Cllr Brooks as Chair; seconded by Cllr Pitts.

Cllr Rappensberger nominated Cllr Youngman as Chair; seconded by Cllr Pearce.

A vote was held to appoint Cllr Brooks as Chair with three votes in favour.

A vote was held to appoint Cllr Youngman as Chair with three votes in favour.

As the election of a Chair could not be decided it would be deferred to the next meeting and a member would be elected to preside over this meeting.

Cllr Brooks nominated herself to preside over the meeting; seconded by Cllr Pitts.

Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Rappensberger to preside over the meeting; seconded by Cllr Youngman.

A vote was held for Cllr Brooks to preside over the meeting with three votes in favour.

A vote was held for Cllr Rappensberger to preside over the meeting with three votes in favour.

Cllr Brooks nominated Cllr Ray to preside over the meeting; seconded by Cllr Pitts; all in favour.

**2. Welcome**

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

**3. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Moore and Murray with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

Cllr Coleby was absent with no apologies received.

**4. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations**

4.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Brooks declared she was the Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative on the Plaisir Twinning Association.

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

**5. To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 14 May 2024**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

**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 had been received and there were no comments from members of the public in attendance.

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**7. To review and make recommendations on Sub-Committee arrangements**

- 7.1. To note membership of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee – Cllr Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Christine Moore, John Murray, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Bernadette Rappensberger, Deborah Ray and Elise Youngman were members of the Sub-Committee. Cllr Breakspear had requested to join, which would be approved at the next Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee meeting.
- 7.2. To appoint the Deputy Chair for the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee – Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Rappensberger; seconded by Cllr Youngman; five votes in favour and one abstention.
- 7.3. To review and consider adoption of the Terms of Reference and make any necessary recommendations – Cllr Pearce proposed amendments be made on item 6 with subsection H to be removed as there was no longer any national guidance on COVID-19, and on item 8 with the sentence on the climate emergency to be expanded to include the ecological emergency declaration; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.
- 7.4. To review and recommend the meeting schedule – Cllr Brooks proposed the third Tuesday of the month at 19:00 be maintained for the meeting schedule; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.
- 7.5. To review the delegations of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee and make any necessary recommendations – The delegations were noted.

**8. To monitor expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget**

An updated budget position was provided and there was no new expenditure to report.

**9. To consider a joint approach with the Friends of Fen Park to commemorate the deceased swan**

A male swan, one of a pair of resident breeding swans in Fen Park for the past 9 years, had recently been attacked by a dog and had to be euthanised due to wound infections.

The Friends of Fen Park wanted to place a plaque on the bridge and plant a white flower shrub in memory of the swan. They were requesting permission from LTC as the landowners and were not seeking financial contribution, therefore no budget was required. Cllr Pearce proposed to accept this request and delegate to officers to liaise with the Friends of Fen Park to progress this, such as ensuring the plaque and inscription are appropriate and deciding on the location of the plaque; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

**10. To discuss the possible dog control measures in all parks in the wake of a recent incident in Fen Park**

Officers had suggested different measures such as social media campaigns to educate and remind residents to be responsible dog owners, signs and leaflets and a public space protection order to stipulate dogs must be kept on leads. Officers had queried the latter measures with East Suffolk Council (ESC) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Cllr Pearce proposed to await feedback from ESC and the RSPB and consider this at the next meeting, in meantime Councillors would consider in which parks the protection order could be implemented and the rationale for doing so; seconded by Cllr Brooks who noted it was important to highlight the need for dogs to be kept on leads as it was difficult to enforce public space protection orders.

Cllr Rappensberger reported the majority of residents were not in favour of a public space protection order as the park was popular with dog walkers, and the Friends of Fen Park had suggested signs be used that ask dog owners to be careful and keep their dogs on leads.

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Cllr Pearce clarified his proposal included approval of first two suggestions by officers of social media campaigns and signs in the area.

A vote was held on Cllr Pearce's proposal with all in favour.

**11.To receive ideas from the Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association for flower beds at the Town Green**

Cllr Brooks proposed to proceed with the project.

Officers noted there were tree works and proposed building works on Arnold house pending for the site, therefore this project would not progress until those works have been completed.

Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal with the amendment that whilst the works were pending completion, officers contact Plaisir Twinning Association for specific planting suggestions for this Sub-Committee to consider. Cllr Brooks agreed to the amendment and requested information be received on the proposed works on Arnold house.

There had been previous discussion on a flower bed modelled on the Lowestoft coat of arms and officers were asked to notify Plaisir Twinning Association of this plan and send them an image of the coat of arms and query if this inspired any suggestions for plants and consider the two projects being combined.

A vote was held on Cllr Brooks' proposal with all in favour.

**12.To consider specifications for the Clarkes Lane and Thirlmere Walk play areas**

Cllr Brooks proposed this be progressed and to commence a procurement process; seconded by Cllr Pearce. It was clarified that both Clarkes Lane and Thirlmere Walk would be progressed with contractors invited to visit the site and produce specifications.

Officers noted that the proposal for inclusive play equipment at Clarkes Lane could be more costly than anticipated. The specifications and bids could be reviewed to determine, if Clarkes Lane proved too costly, whether Thirlmere Walk would proceed for the current year and Clarkes Lane be delayed to the following year with LTC to directly budget for the excess, or submit a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) application for contributory funding.

Cllr Pearce proposed to proceed with Clarkes Lane and Thirlmere Walk refurbishment this year, with the costs to be reviewed to determine if both parks would be refurbished or whether Thirlmere Walk would be undertaken first and Clarkes Lane would be split over two financial years for direct budgeting or apply for contributory CIL funding, affirm the suggestions for the Clarkes Lane inclusive and accessible play area and sensory garden, and affirm the suggestions for Thirlmere Walk, with particular consideration of any dog control measures; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

**13.Date of the next meeting**

16 July 2024 19:00

**14.Items for the next Agenda and Close**

An item was requested to receive an update on the proposed installation of the hopscotch and consider the issues of installing one at Cotman Close due to the issue of land ownership.

An item was requested to consider installing blackboards in more parks.

An item was requested to consider ways LTC could assist Lowestoft Library in advertising the sports equipment available for lending on their behalf.

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**15. 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 19:45*

Signed: .....

16 July 2024