

**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 16 July 2024**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks, Christine Moore, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger (Deputy Chair), Deborah Ray and Elise Youngman

**In Attendance:** Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

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

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

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

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

A vote was held to appoint Cllr Youngman as Chair, with five votes in favour Cllr Youngman was appointed Chair of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee.

**17. Welcome**

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

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

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

**19. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations**

19.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of the Gunton Residents Association. Cllr Moore declared she was an employee of East Suffolk Council.

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

**20. To consider the draft minutes of the meetings on 14 May and 18 June 2024**

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

**21. 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 no members of the public were in attendance.

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

There were no new items of expenditure to review and no comments raised on previous expenditure.

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

Cllr Brooks proposed signs for dog control in parks be put up as a matter of urgency; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) had suggested a fence be considered for the pond, provided there be no restriction of access for the wildlife to and from the water, as well as alternative nesting on the water with elevated rafts.

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Cllr Pearce proposed officers act on the advice received from the RSPCA and RSPB and contact the Swan Sanctuary for input into design of a possible fence around the pond that would not restrict access to and from the water, speak with the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Manager concerning the viability of elevated rafts as alternative nesting measures, and invite a representative of East Suffolk Council to speak with the Sub-Committee and provide general information on public protection orders in case it should become relevant in future considerations. If a site visit is arranged with the experts to discuss the proposed measures, then Friends Groups and other locals should be invited to contribute to the discussion. All feedback would be brought back to this Sub-Committee to make a decision on how to proceed. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

**24. To receive an update on the proposed installation of a hopscotch pad at the Cotman Close play area**

Cllr Brooks proposed, depending on feasibility, either or both Thirlmere Walk or Clarkes Lane pilot the hopscotch pad with its installation included in their refurbishment plans; seconded by Cllr Pearce who noted that the pilot had originally been intended for Cotman Close, which could be revisited should the prospective land transfer progress in the future; all in favour.

**25. To consider the installation of blackboards at more parks**

Cllr Brooks proposed blackboards be installed in Clarkes Lane, Thirlmere Walk and Sparrows Nest, with a request to officers to check if there were different costs for different sizes; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

**26. To consider planting options for Sparrows Nest in place of the Charter Tree**

Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation be made to officers to decide which tree should be planted, with considerations given for native species and for the decision to be made based on the species that would benefit biodiversity, and for officers to advise on the watering requirements for grounds maintenance and the required Horticultural budget for the next financial year; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

**27. To discuss how announcements on new play areas are made**

After the opening of Britten Road play area, Councillors had noted several complaints on social media regarding the lack of inclusivity and accessibility.

Cllr Brooks proposed the announcements for new play areas include explanations on what inclusivity means, how the play area is inclusive and how it is sustainable. Officers would confirm the Waveney Disability Forum had been consulted on the play areas and would invite their representatives to speak with the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee on accessibility for parks and toilets. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal and requested the invite be made through the East Suffolk Council officer who clerks the Waveney Disability Forum meetings. A vote was held with all in favour.

**28. To consider payment of an invoice for the Sparrows Nest Sensory Garden and an ongoing budget for maintenance**

Cllr Pearce proposed the invoice be settled from the Parks Development budget and to request Budget and Loan to build an allowance into the Horticultural budget for ongoing annual maintenance; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

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**29. To consider recycling bin provision for parks, as requested by the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee**

Cllr Pearce proposed to trial recycling bins in Normanston Park, Sparrows Nest and Kensington Gardens (near the tenanted properties), the Grounds Maintenance team confirm the waste disposal contractor would be able to deal with segregated waste. With the permission of the relevant Committees, the cost would be split between the Waste budget under Climate and Ecological Emergency and the Parks Development budget.

Queries were raised on whether it would be beneficial to begin with glass recycling.

Cllr Pearce amended his proposal to clarify the trial would be for non-glass waste with one bin in each park and signage to encourage the public to recycle correctly, subject to confirmation that the waste disposal contractor would be able to deal with segregated waste.

Cllr Pearce amended his proposal to include exploring the feasibility of providing a glass collection bin in parks with advice to be received from the Grounds Maintenance team on whether a separate arrangement with a different company able to deal with glass waste would be required and it would be considered in line with possible legislative changes to provide glass and food recycling to residents. This information on glass recycling would be provided to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee.

Officers were asked to confirm if there was already recycling provision in Kensington Gardens.

Cllr Rappensberger seconded the proposal and a vote was held with six votes in favour and one abstention.

**30. To consider ways Lowestoft Town Council can assist the Lowestoft Library in advertising the sports equipment available for lending**

Cllr Pearce proposed a delegation be made to officers to contact the library to ask if they would like Lowestoft Town Council to help promote their sports equipment lending initiative online and in the public parks (Triangle Market, Fen Park and Sparrows Nest), and if so whether they have promotional material they would prefer to be used. Should any physical signage be required then a maximum budget of £750 was delegated to officers to progress. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

**31. Date of the next meeting**

20 August 2024 19:00

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

An update was requested on the order of bike racks, benches and the parks signs.

With regards to the bike racks their location in Denes Oval would need to be discussed to ensure they do not block vehicle access.

**33. 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**

*The Chair closed the meeting at 20:02*

Signed: .....

20 August 2024