

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Town Hall Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on 13 February 2025

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum (Chair), Wendy Brooks and Andy Pearce. Non-Councillor member Benjamin Porter (East Suffolk Council)

In Attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk and Planning Assistant)

Also in Attendance: Sheila MossKing (Project Manager)

115. Welcome

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

116. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Neil Coleby, Bernadette Rappensberger and Elise Youngman and non-Councillor member Helen Johnson, with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

117. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

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

117.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

118. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 9 January 2025

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the draft minutes and confidential note; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

119. 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.

120. To receive an update report from the Project Manager, including the following:

120.1. An update on contractual and insurance matters – The Project Manager reported they were nearly ready to sign the contract with Barnes Construction, pending securing insurance for the project, and noted that until the contract was signed, Barnes Construction would not be able to issue instructions to sub-contractors. The Project Manager confirmed a suitable insurance policy had been received that would cover the works and the building during the works period and requested this be discussed further in confidential session.

The site manager had access to the site this week to establish the site compound on East Suffolk Council (ESC) land, and it was confirmed Barnes Construction would be responsible for the hoardings around ESC land.

It was confirmed Barnes Construction would undertake weekly inspections and a full preliminary condition survey, with any problems or repairs to be reported to ESC to rectify as Lowestoft Town Council were not responsible for the hoardings. The hoardings would be covered by CCTV. Ben Porter would notify ESC of the condition survey to be undertaken to prepare for any repairs or improvements.

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UK Power Networks were due to be onsite this week to remove streetlighting from the building, and there would be a pavement closure order to ensure no endangerment to the public during works.

The Town Hall Heritage Manager has met with Barnes Construction to discuss the social value elements of the project, including site visits, public engagement and training. Training would be coordinated with the Post Office project and would involve training and heritage skills opportunities for East Coast College. Career days were also being considered to introduce young people to career opportunities in construction work.

The contractor was due to undertake a mail-drop in the area to alert neighbours to the expected hours of work, what works would be taking place and contact details. A bi-monthly newsletter would also be provided via social media and physical drops in the library.

Once the contract has been signed, a time-lapse camera would be installed on the clock tower to capture the installation of scaffolding.

The Project Manager requested the procurement of clock repairs and the weathervane be discussed in confidential session as it included quotations from different companies.

120.2. Any planned actions to be authorised for progression – Aside from signing the contract, agreeing the insurance policy and the procurement to be discussed in confidential session, there were no further actions to be authorised for progression.

120.3. The Risk Register – The register had not been updated since the previous meeting. The most significant risk was related to insurance and has been resolved. It was requested any element of the project subject to the excess in the insurance policy be entered on the risk register with all mitigations.

120.4. Updated Business Plan – The updated plan would be provided in April, alongside an update on the co-working space.

121. Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report):

121.1. To note and consider income and expenditure, including:

121.1a. To monitor the budget – The Project Manager was in the process of reworking cash flow, in terms of payments from the Towns Fund and East Suffolk Council, with a view to link the cashflow, in terms of the cost profile, to the plans from Barnes Construction to monitor what was being paid out on a monthly basis. The Project Manager has queried with the National Lottery Heritage Fund how to handle the £900,000 contingency in the contract sum and to establish how the project could call on the contingency when needed, rather than awaiting permission from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

121.1b. To consider any payments for approval – There were no payments for approval.

122. To receive any updates on the Activity Plan

The pop-up shop was in place in the Triangle Market for the next four months.

It was noted there was a wide variety of community groups who could engage or provide input into the Town Hall project and the Project Manager requested the details of such groups be provided to the team.

123. To consider the use of the title ‘Heritage Hub’ and alternative descriptions

The Committee agreed it would prefer an alternative title to ‘Heritage Hub’. It was suggested there be a separate meeting arranged to discuss ideas, and the Project Manager would obtain

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ideas from the Interpretation Designers and Architects. These recommendations would be brought back to a future meeting.

124. To consider any recommendations to Full Council

There were no recommendations.

125. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 13 March 2025 – 10:00

126. Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested for the next agenda.

127. 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:

127.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required – Cllr Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 11:05

120. To receive an update report from the Project Manager, including the following:

120.1. An update on contractual and insurance matters – An update was provided to the Committee on insurance matters.

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the insurance policy received. Cllr Brooks amended her proposal to approve the insurance policy and delegate to officers the finalisation of details; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

A comfort break was taken for five minutes at 11:25

The meeting resumed at 11:30

Cllr Pearce proposed this approval cover the construction contract policy and the separate policy for terrorism; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Cllr Pearce proposed officers make arrangements to sign the construction contract whilst finalising the details of the insurance policy, provided no work would commence until the insurance policy was in place; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

Three quotes had been received for repairs to the Town Hall clockface repairs. All companies had received the same specification of work and were accredited members of the British Horological Institute.

Cllr Begum proposed to accept the first quote listed; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

The Project Manager informed the Committee there had been interest and a quote received to repair the weathervane. The Project Manager offered to write up a specification to send out for further quotes to repair the weathervane.

Cllr Pearce proposed to consider the restoration of the weathervane and delegate the procurement of repair works to the Acting Town Clerk in conjunction with the Project

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Manager; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:46

Signed:
13 March 2025