

**Annual Assembly of the Town**  
**Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ**  
**18:30 Thursday 17 May 2018**

**Minutes**

**Presiding:**

Cllr Ian Graham (Mayor)

**Present:**

38 members of the public

Representatives from the Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association, Lowestoft Rising, Lowestoft Lions, Lowestoft in Bloom, Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society, Lowestoft Vision, Lowestoft and Waveney Chamber of Commerce, Lowestoft Police, the Sizewell C project, the Marina Theatre, the Community Enablers and Lowestoft Museum

Lowestoft Town Councillors Sue Barnard, Allyson Barron, Peter Byatt, Neil Coleby, Peter Collecott, Amanda Frost, Dick Houghton, Peter Knight, Graham Parker and Alice Taylor  
Shona Bendix (Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

**7. Mayor's welcome**

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

**8. Lowestoft Town Council report to the electors**

A response is being prepared to Waveney District Council's Local Plan and a Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared.

The internal audit has just been completed and the result was very positive. The report will be available on the website, along with the minutes from the previous meeting.

Plans are ongoing for the Town Hall, and potentially the surrounding area.

Lowestoft has lost its marketplace so the Town Council has been working with the National Association of British Market Authorities to establish when, where and how a market can be re-introduced to the area.

The leisure fee waiver for this year has so far proved successful, with sports clubs reporting an increase in membership. The money which has been saved has been used by the clubs to improve their facilities.

Lowestoft Town Council has been working with the Lowestoft Museum to preserve the Lowestoft Collection, and the Plaisir Twinning Association to welcome visitors from Plaisir in the summer.

Work is progressing on the new office space at Hamilton House and it is anticipated that it should be completed in July.

The CCTV service is being reviewed with a view to providing a service which the public needs.

Waveney Norse and Sentinel have been working to refurbish play areas around the town and Lowestoft in Bloom have had approval from the Town Council to tend to a showpiece flowerbed in Sparrows Nest. Events are being organised to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War I, which will include an installation at Belle Vue Park.

Lowestoft Town Council is continuing to identify its assets and how to get the best from them; as well as deciding if there is anything else it would like to own. This includes the Marina Theatre 'Zenith' Building. LTC is in the process of applying for a loan to purchase the building, to then lease back to the Theatre.

Cllr Barron proposed accepting the minutes of the previous Annual Assembly of the Town; seconded by Cllr Taylor; carried.

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**9. Police report to the electors**

T/Superintendent Sarsfield Donohue gave a presentation.

He spoke of the threats facing the police in the area at the moment. These include London-based drug gangs filtering into Suffolk, cybercrime (including grooming and online fraud), which uses a lot of the Police's resources, and modern day slavery, human trafficking and terrorism threats.

The Police's resources have been cut by 14% in Suffolk and 120 officers are due to retire shortly.

They struggle to find candidates locally to fill these vacancies. Budgets have also been cut.

The Police have been affected by the resource cuts to the ambulance service as well.

Work is always being done to improve response times and the force is currently undergoing a remodelling which will look to reduce internal processes and increase the number of local police volunteers.

Crime generally in the UK has increased and Suffolk is not an exception. There have been reports of a rise in serious sexual offences in the UK, but this could be due to more people reporting offences following several high profile cases recently and historic cases.

Dwelling burglary has reduced. The East has the lowest level of burglary and highest level of detection. Robbery has also reduced, along with drug trafficking but the Police will remain vigilant.

A member of the public enquired as to the future of Lowestoft Police Station. Currently every room of the building is used.

A member of the public enquired as to police patrols. These must be intelligence lead, as there are not the resources to patrol every street. Priorities are allocated according to trends and the CCTV service and the staff who monitor it are a big help.

An enquiry was raised as to whether efficiency savings will help to put more police officers on the beat. The money will be reinvested but it has not yet been determined where specifically.

An enquiry was raised as to what extent the reported increase in crime can be put down to a rise in the number of crimes being reported. There are lots of reasons for increases in crimes and reporting and it would be huge piece of work to separate that information. The Police UK website may show the percentage rise in crime but this information must be taken in context.

It was queried how to become involved in Neighbourhood Watch. Details should be passed to Inspector Liz Casey.

The Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society secretary Ian Robb spoke to provide more information about the society and their activities.

JROLS was established in 1990 and continues to promote the town's heritage. They have been involved in commemorating many historic events and introducing plaques and celebrating the history of the High Street.

Mr Robb expressed thanks to those who have given their support, including the Deputy Mayor Peter Knight.

Lowestoft Town Council will be working with the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society to introduce more plaques, plus relocation and renovation of others.

**10. Sizewell C Presentation**

John McNamara from EDF Energy provided a presentation regarding the Sizewell C Project.

The Government have decided that new nuclear power stations are needed. It is currently going through the development process so it has not yet been confirmed that Sizewell C will be constructed. Any concerns about nuclear power should be directed to the local MP.

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The Eastern region is the only area with the potential for 2 nuclear power stations – Bradwell B and Sizewell C.

The benefits for the East of England were outlined. This would be a major construction creating employment and apprenticeship opportunities, with a 60 – 65% UK supply chain. 1,300 companies from this region have already registered on the supply chain portal. Regional economic benefit could rise £200million per year during construction with a total of £4billion over the lifetime of the project.

Currently a public-focussed consultation is in progress. The next stage of the consultation will begin next year but no date has yet been fixed. This will be impacted by the formation of the new East Suffolk Council.

Comments were made in support of the project, for the secure source of energy it will provide and the employment opportunities.

Concerns were expressed over the cost of the project and the view given that the cost per job is higher than that of renewable energy, although nuclear energy has a longer lifespan. There was also a concern that experienced skilled individuals will be brought in from other areas of the country to work on the project, rather than employment opportunities being created for local people.

#### **11. Lowestoft Rising Presentation**

Phil Aves and Richard Best provided a presentation. Lowestoft Rising is a partnership between Waveney District and Suffolk County Councils, Suffolk Constabulary, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Great Yarmouth and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group and Community Action Suffolk.

Their priorities are to promote mental health and wellbeing, raise aspirations, provide drug and alcohol services and encourage integration and collaboration and pride in Lowestoft.

Lowestoft Rising have created the role of a Mental Health Ambassador and Transition Ambassadors in schools are receiving training to become Mental Health Champions.

Funding has been secured from the Big Lottery Fund for the LOWY project, which will aim to promote mental health and wellbeing in schools. The Lowestoft Walk and Talks and Sporting Memories also aim to engage people and encourage wellbeing.

Additional cultural and heritage training is being given to teachers and lots of cultural and heritage projects are being organised, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra working with schools.

The Lowestoft Sixth Form College is in the top 5% nationally and the top in East Anglia for the highest A Level results in 2017.

The issue of street-drinking in the town has improved, but homelessness and drug issues are being addressed. Dedicated support workers are offering assistance and multiple agencies are working together to provide severe weather emergency provision. They provided valuable support during the inclement weather conditions earlier in the year.

Projects are being created to encourage people to stay healthy and active as they get older. The role of Community Enablers has just been created and a street chaplaincy scheme is now in place to help the homeless.

Lowestoft Town Council have also been invited to join Lowestoft Rising.

The 2018 Summer Festival is being organised, with funding in place from Lowestoft Town, Waveney District and Suffolk County Councils. Lowestoft Rising are also working to support the local museums.

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The social prescribing scheme was explained. It is a shared vision to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, looking to assist those stuck in the cycle of visiting their GP. This has led to a reduction in visits being made to GPs and A&E.

Lowestoft Rising have introduced a mentoring programme to help young people with mental health issues, low confidence, low aspirations or anger issues achieve their GCSEs.

A member of public expressed thanks to Lowestoft Rising and the positive impact they have had on the town.

## **12. Community Organisation Forum**

Richard Pulham from the Plaisir Twinning Association explained that this year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first visit from Plaisir to Lowestoft. This year, between 7 – 12 July, the Mayor of Plaisir will be visiting for the first time, and it is hoped that shops and local businesses will display welcoming flags.

Thanks were expressed to Lowestoft Town Council for the help and support they have provided. It is hoped that more young people will also be inspired to get involved with the association.

Cllr Collecott spoke as Chairman of Lowestoft in Bloom. They were formed by Waveney District Council 22 years ago to encourage community engagement through displaying flowers in the local area.

The competition is run in the NR32 and NR33 areas of Lowestoft, and Lowestoft subsequently enters the Anglia in Bloom competition. Lowestoft received a gold award two years ago in the Seaside Towns category, and was awarded silver gilt last year.

This year, they have not been able to enter the competition due to a shortage in membership. Lowestoft in Bloom have been working with schools to inspire young people to get involved.

Cllr Collecott explained the entry process for this year's Lowestoft in Bloom competition.

Dan Poitras from Lowestoft Vision explained who they are and their activities; including working with Councils and businesses in the town to make the area more appealing and more secure for residents, businesses and visitors. The ballot for the renewal of the Lowestoft Vision BID is now open.

Lowestoft Vision have been successful in securing a full time Police Community Support Officer for the town centre.

They organise the Christmas lights display for the town each year and have been involved with the organisation of the Summer Festival.

The President of the Lowestoft Lions, Derek Ward, gave an overview of their work this year.

They held a very successful Easter Egg Hunt in Sparrows Nest on Easter Sunday and have been involved with the organisation of the Summer Festival.

Each year they hold a Charity Gala Day over the August Bank Holiday, culminating in a fireworks display.

Mr Ward explained their 'Message in a Bottle' initiative, where any medication which an individual is taking is written on a leaflet, which is put inside the bottle and placed in the fridge. In the event of a medical emergency the medical staff then have easy and quick access to see the list of medication.

The James Paget Hospital, doctors' surgeries and paramedics all support this initiative.

The Lowestoft Lions are looking to boost their membership. All money they raise goes back into the town.

The Chair of Lowestoft and Waveney Chamber of Commerce, Jules Shurrock, gave more information about them. They are a member-led organisation and work to drive forward economic development and improve facilities and investment in the town.

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Mentors from the Chamber of Commerce are supporting schools and looking to involve more businesses to support the economy locally. Their manifesto is launched at the end of June.

The new CEO of the Marina Theatre, Emma Butler-Smith, introduced herself. She has only been in post less than three weeks but is looking forward to the lively programme of events the Theatre has planned for this year.

The new Community Enablers, Clare and Roy, introduced themselves and explained more about this new initiative. The Community Enablers will work with the Harbour and Kirkley wards of Lowestoft and residents of Kessingland to identify opportunities to improve the wellbeing of their communities.

A Lowestoft Youth Events Committee is being established to engage young people. The Community Enablers will also be supporting Neighbourhood Watch, residents associations, the Kirkley Choir and many of the groups present today, as well as supporting residents in social isolation or affected by mental health issues.

The project is being funded for three years.

Thanks were offered to the Mayor and Lowestoft Town Council for what they have achieved this year. He spoke of ensuring that open spaces are preserved for the benefit of the public and queried the temporary fence which is still in place in the North Denes area. This is an issue Lowestoft Town Council is aware of and has been taking steps to resolve.

Waveney District Council has received a £1million grant for the East of England Park, including the North Denes area of the drying racks and seafront. LTC cannot legally spend money on sea defences and has requested confirmation that Waveney District Council will assume this responsibility.

Lowestoft Town Council is proposing that Waveney District Council takes back ownership of land at Gunton Warren, which has been affected by an historic oil spill.

Thanks were expressed to the Town Council for supporting the museums and heritage groups, to celebrate the town's history. LTC have put together a grant programme to support groups who create a positive impact on residents of the town. Further details available on the website.

Chris Brooks from the Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society also thanked Lowestoft Town Council for its support in commemorating the historic High Street area.

This year marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the most destructive air raid in the area and a plaque is being introduced to commemorate this. The future plaques which JROLS will be working with LTC to produce will be important in encouraging visitors to the area.

Lowestoft Town Council has two representatives on the board for the Heritage Action Zone and they will be looking at how the money from the grant can be used in the area, including for the Town Hall. This will also be important for securing more funding for the area.

The Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Signed:.....

Date: .....2019