

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee

Via Video Meeting
18:00 on 5 October 2020

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard (Chair), Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Peter Knight, Paul Page, Andy Pearce and Alice Taylor

Also participating: Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

63. Welcome

Councillors and members of the public were reminded of the right to report and application of the video meeting protocol.

64. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Coleby, Hardie, Parker and Pitts. Cllr Collecott had not provided apologies and was absent. Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

65. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Knight declared a pecuniary interest in item 69. Cllr Green declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 69. Cllr Breakspear declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 68.5. Cllr Butler declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 70.

Cllr Pearce joined the meeting 18:04

66. Receipt of any comments and noting that the draft minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

The minutes were noted and there were no comments.

67. Any advance comments from the public on any matters on this agenda

There were none.

68. Parks and open spaces:

68.1. Receipt of any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meeting on 22 September 2020 – It was queried how the name changes, as per item 68.2a, had arisen, and how these particular suggestions could be progressed with no public consultation. This will be discussed at that agenda item, including the need for public consultation.

68.2. Recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:

68.2a. Renaming areas of land owned by the Town Council, subject to community engagement and appropriate signage, as follows:

- 'Land at Uplands Road North' to 'Uplands Green'
- 'Land at Clarkes Lane' to 'Clarkes Meadow'
- 'Land at Stoven Close' to 'Stoven Green'
- 'Amenity Land Delius Close' to 'Delius Piece'
- 'Britten Road play area' to 'Britten Piece'
- 'Open Space High Street Lowestoft' to 'Town Green'
- 'Great Eastern Linear Park' to 'The Trams'
- 'Rosedale Park' to 'Broadwaters Park'
- 'Parkhill Play Area' to 'Bracken Rise'

It was confirmed that there will be community engagement and this needs to be thorough. The environmental impact and cost of associated signage will need to be carefully considered, particularly with the potential budget constraints. It is understood that the open space at the top of the High Street is already known locally as High Green,

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and it was requested that this name also be considered, should these name changes be progressed. It was explained that Parks and Open Spaces have suggested name changes as certain pieces of land seem to have several different names locally and it is hoped this would offer some clarity. Most of the sites do not have signage at the moment, but this could be considered in the future if the budget allows. The suggestion of 'The Trams' for the Great Eastern Linear Park could be confused with land in Pakefield with a similar name. Some of Parkhill Play Area land belongs to Oulton Parish Council, so it may be that a name change cannot be progressed without their approval. Cllr Knight proposed to use the names suggested by the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee internally and initiate public consultation as to whether they should be changed officially. There were concerns that progressing the name changes could cause difficulties with the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Cllr Frost proposed deferring this item until after the Neighbourhood Development Plan is adopted. Cllr Knight withdrew his proposal and seconded Cllr Frost's proposal. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour.

- 68.3. The future use of the old toilet block in Belle Vue Park – If the plans to extend planting to this area of the park proceed it could make watering difficult as there is no water supply to that area. East Suffolk Norse are investigating whether the old toilet block still has an active water supply.
- 68.4. Progress with the Gunton Division County Councillors' request to install a bench in Belle Vue Park, following its approval by Full Council – The Clerk has formally accepted the County Councillors' offer. Cllr Coleby has been liaising with Cllr Patience regarding the style of bench, which will be determined by the Town Council. The Deputy Clerk will circulate the link to the online catalogue of the company which provided the benches for the Poppy Garden. There will be no cost to the Council. Once the design has been selected, the Town Council will need to give East Suffolk Norse permission to install the bench. Cllr Barnard proposed that the preference expressed by Committee members is what will be recommended to Full Council to put forward to the County Councillors, and it was requested that all Committee members submit their preferences within a week; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 68.5. Progress with memorial lecterns for the Belle Vue Park Peace Garden and Kensington Gardens Holocaust Memorial Garden – It is understood that Cllr Coleby would be providing design and wording suggestions. Costs are needed as well, although it is understood that a maximum budget has already been agreed by the Finance and Governance Committee. This will be checked in preparation for the next meeting. The Friends of Kensington Gardens are maintaining the Holocaust Memorial Garden in preparation for planting.
- 68.6. Progressing autumn bulb planting and the related cost – East Suffolk Norse has provided a quotation, which has been checked against other suppliers to ensure the costs are competitive. This will be presented to the Finance and Governance Committee at their meeting on 8 October for consideration.

69. Whether to support the CEFAS and Promoting Pakefield Group, and if so how the Town Council may be involved with the project

Cllr Knight temporarily left the meeting at 18:29 for the discussion of this item

The aim of the project is to celebrate the history of the area, and is being well supported locally. Information provided by Cllr Pitts suggests that the project may be seeking financial support for signage for the CEFAS site. This would be difficult for the Town Council to progress as CEFAS is a business in its own right, and given the potential budget constraints. No formal request for funding has been received but if it were the Council would still consider it on its own merits. If the Promoting Pakefield Group were a formally constituted group, the Council

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could enquire about appointing a formal representative to it and any further support could be considered following this. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to Full Council to appoint a representative from the Town Council to the CEFAS and Promoting Pakefield Group, subject to the group confirming that is how they wish to proceed; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. In the interim, Cllr Breakspear will circulate the first newsletter produced by the group.

Cllr Knight returned 18:36

70. How to progress the installation of a bus shelter on Harris Avenue

The Council has ringfenced funding within the play areas improvement budget for the purchase and installation of the bus shelter. Cllrs Butler and Youngman are liaising with Suffolk County Council and have a site visit planned. If one of the County Council's standard shelters is installed, the County Council will take on the ongoing maintenance responsibility. Highways consent would be required rather than planning permission and to date, they have been supportive of the request based on the contact by Cllrs Butler and Youngman. Cllrs Butler and Youngman have completed some public consultation with residents of Harris Avenue and users of the bus service. There were concerns raised about the potential for anti-social behaviour, although the standard style bus shelter is as robust as possible. Suffolk County Council will only take on responsibility for routine maintenance if a standard style is installed – the Town Council would be responsible for insurance. Users of the bus service were supportive of the idea of the bus shelter. Cllr Pearce proposed support of the idea in principle to install a bus shelter on Harris Avenue, and approval for Cllrs Butler and Youngman to progress a site meeting with Suffolk County Council and report back to the next meeting for consideration to be given as to if and how this can be progressed; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

71. Making formal recommendations to Full Council for land transfer requests to East Suffolk Council, including urban pockets of land to accommodate noticeboards and bottle banks, and to enhance existing Town Council assets

East Suffolk Council has indicated that it has welcomed requests from other Parish Councils to transfer areas of land for community benefit, and such transfers would be cost neutral. Four parcels of land in the Trafalgar Street area were identified at the last meeting, and the Deputy Clerk has enquired with East Suffolk Council about any associated cost implications, wayleaves, etc, that the Town Council should know about if it were to formally request transfer of the land. Additionally, there were two pieces of land in Pakefield for which the Committee would like to establish who the owner is, with a view to accommodating noticeboards. Staff have been looking into this, but cannot determine ownership of one of the sites, and the other is privately owned. Land transfers more generally will be discussed at the quarterly liaison meeting with East Suffolk Council this month. The possible transfer of land adjacent to the Town Hall had been discussed previously. The current owner has indicated they would be willing to release it, and East Suffolk Council has indicated it would also be agreeable. A local community group would like to maintain the land as a community garden, but would not wish to take on its legal ownership, and would be happy to see ownership pass to the Town Council. It was queried whether this has been progressed and the status will be checked ahead of the quarterly liaison meeting. Councillors were going to give some consideration to potential bottle bank locations. Normanston Park was suggested. Any potential locations must meet the waste contractor's criteria. Some urban pockets of land may be suitable. It is understood that a bottle bank is being considered for the Village Rise car park. It was requested that the criteria for installing a bottle bank be circulated to the Committee and this item be carried forward to the next agenda. The Links Road car park was

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suggested as a potential location, along with pay and display car parks in the town, even though these are not owned by the Town Council.

Cllr Frost left the meeting 19:00

Cllr Taylor arrived 19:00

72. Submitting an application to Suffolk County Council for carbon reduction funding

It had previously been suggested that this funding could be put towards installing solar panels on the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall. Those managing the Hall have welcomed the idea but are not sure if the roof is strong enough to support solar panels. It is understood that the maximum amount of funding for a single application is £2,000, but the total cost of installing solar panels would be significantly more. This Committee would like to support climate emergency and environmental initiatives but with the potential budget constraints next year it did not feel that this could be progressed at this time. Cllr Taylor proposed not to submit an application to Suffolk County Council for carbon reduction funding towards solar panels for the Gunton Estate Residents Meeting Hall at this stage; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

73. The results of the environmental assessments of the Town Council's ponds

Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in this item, specifically the Gainsborough Drive pond. Cllr Barnard had not declared a local non-pecuniary interest in this item as she is aware that the report has not yet been received. The assessments have all been completed and the report was due to be received last week. Staff have chased for the results and will continue to do so. This item will be carried forward to the next agenda.

74. Progress with the development of Youth Engagement and Communities Engagement policies

Staff have started work on a draft of the Communities Engagement Policy. It was queried why youth engagement had been identified over other community groups who are typically seen as harder to reach. Youth engagement had been specified in the Terms of Reference but it was suggested that this could be built into the Communities Engagement Policy, rather than as a separate policy, and include other harder to reach groups as well. Overall, communities engagement is part of the role of the Town Council, but an overarching policy would offer more clarity about what is and is not within the Council's remit and may help improve the Council's engagement, particularly with harder to reach groups.

75. Date of the next meeting

2 November 2020 18:00

76. Items for the next agenda and close

Some items are being carried forward from this agenda. There has been a report of further anti-social behaviour at the Rotterdam Road public conveniences. It was requested than an item be added to the next agenda to discuss such incidents at the Town Council's public conveniences, to see if there is a way of improving the situation.

77. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

There were no confidential items for consideration. Thanks were offered to those who had observed the livestream of the meeting and the Chair closed the meeting 19:15.

Signed: 

17 May 2021