

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
18:00 on 10 January 2022

MINUTES

Present (in person): Cllrs Robert Breakspear (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Alan Green, Andy Pearce and Elise Youngman

In attendance (remotely via Zoom): Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee and Project Clerk)

Public: There was one member of the public in attendance (in person)

124. Welcome

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

125. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Colin Butler, Christian Newsome, Paul Page and John Pitts. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

126. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to the Gunton Ward and Fen Park. Cllr Brooks declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 130.2, 134.1 and 141. Cllr Breakspear declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Kensington Gardens.

127. The draft minutes of the meeting on 6 December 2021

Cllr Brooks proposed acceptance of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

128. Public forum

No advance comments had been received. It was agreed to bring forward item 136, as the member of the public in attendance was a representative from the Cricket Club invited by the Council to discuss their proposals. The representative from the Cricket Club thanked the Council for its support so far. The Club would like the Council's permission to install a new, four bay net training facility, in replacement of the existing two bay net facility. The nets and matting are in a poor state of repair and have become a health and safety concern. The Club has sought advice and intends to contribute funding to the project, alongside sponsors. It is hoped that improved facilities will make the venue more inclusive, and there are plans to develop a female team.

136. The Denes Oval:

136.1. A request from the Cricket Club to install a new cricket net area – Cllr Pearce proposed granting landowner approval to replace the existing net training facility with the new four bay net training facility as detailed in the proposals supplied, subject to any planning permission which may be required; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It is understood that planning permission would be required, as it is part of a conservation area.

136.2. Proposals from the Cricket Club regarding the Denes Oval (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

The member of the public left the meeting 18:20

129. Expenditure by this Committee and its Sub-Committees from their delegated budgets

There has been frequent expenditure relating to events and communications, and regular updates have been received. The Committee requested an updated position on expenditure related to planting, which will be provided for the next meeting.

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130. Parks and open spaces:

- 130.1. Receiving any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee meetings on 14 December 2021 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 130.2. The following recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee:
 - 130.2a. Prioritising refurbishment of the play areas at Bentley Drive, Clarkes Lane and St Margaret's Plain in year one – It was agreed to consider items 130.2a – 130.2d together, taking account of item 130.3, that may now need to be considered as a priority. It was agreed to bring forward the consideration of item 130.3. It was queried whether Clarkes Lane should be a year one priority, as other projects are also being planned for that site. It was suggested that Rosedale Park should replace Clarkes Lane as a year one priority. Clarkes Lane should be added to the schedule for year two, as long as budget provision for an additional play area is made. Those who attended the site visit agreed that the fence should be removed and a separate, fenced, toddler area should be considered. The detail will be considered at a later date, with the purpose of this item being to establish a priority order for refurbishment of the play areas. With regard to item 130.2a, Cllr Pearce proposed inserting Rosedale Park in place of Clarkes Lane. With regard to item 130.2b, Cllr Pearce proposed adding Clarkes Lane to the three parks already listed. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the recommendations at items 130.2c and 130.2d as they are. Cllr Green seconded the proposals and all Councillors voted in favour. The consideration of refurbishment work at the Rosedale Park play area, including whether or not to retain the fence, will be added to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee agenda, and will be considered in the line with the Play Inspection Report and feedback from the recent site visit.
 - 130.2b. Scheduling the refurbishment of the play areas at Britten Road, Fen Park and Pakefield Green in year two – This was included in the consideration of item 130.2a.
 - 130.2c. Scheduling the refurbishment of the play areas at Cotman Close and Normanston Park in year three - This was included in the consideration of item 130.2a.
 - 130.2d. Treating the St Margaret's Plain play area as a pilot site for the installation of a creative/art space - This was included in the consideration of item 130.2a.
- 130.3. Feedback from a site visit to the Rosedale Park play area - This was included in the consideration of item 130.2a.
- 130.4. Play area signage, including problems with dogs in enclosed play areas – The Community Warden has designed signage in line with advice received from the Town Council's Health and Safety Consultant. The draft signage was displayed at the meeting. The Committee agreed that dogs should not be permitted in enclosed play areas, but did not want the wording to be too negative or specific with regards to climbing on equipment and wearing jewellery whilst doing so. The Town Council takes its health and safety obligations seriously and would like its signage to encourage responsible use of the equipment.
- 130.5. The cost of items relating to the Kensington Gardens centenary – Cllr Breakspear has undertaken a site visit with a metal worker, and has sketches of some ideas, which he will circulate and discuss with the Friends of Kensington Gardens also. Quotations are pending. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to officers in conjunction with members of this Committee and the Friends of Kensington Gardens to progress obtaining quotes and furthering the detail to a point where a decision can be made on approving the cost; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
- 130.6. Securing four bins in Kensington Gardens onto concrete pads, at a cost of £142.33 each – Norse approached the Council regarding this. The bins are currently secured with

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- chains. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this work; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 130.7. An update on the purchase of a Holocaust memorial lectern – The content is being checked before the order is placed.
- 130.8. An update on works to the circular Holocaust Memorial bed in Kensington Gardens – This is in preparation of planting which will take place at a later date. It was agreed to add this to the Zoom meeting which will be taking place with Norse to discuss planting.
- 130.9. Additional metal fencing at Kensington Gardens – There is currently an unfenced ‘zig-zag’ area with an unguarded drop. It is not clear whether the area used to be fenced but it is a health and safety concern. It was agreed to add this to the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee’s agenda, to allow Councillors not familiar with the area the chance to visit the site. Cllr Breakspear will also circulate some images.
- 130.10. The status of the swings at The Ness, following recent vandalism – The vandalised swing has been reinstated with chains. The existing swing still has ropes. Norse are contacting the manufacturer to confirm that the chains are acceptable. Cllr Pearce proposed that, subject to the manufacturer’s confirmation, the ropes on the other swing are replaced with chains; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 130.11. Works to widen access gates for lawnmower access at The Ness – Initially a fence had been installed with no gate. A pedestrian gate was subsequently installed but Norse have recommended a six foot, farm style gate instead. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of works to widen access gates at The Ness to provide lawnmower access, with delegated authority to officers to liaise with Norse and agree the width and design, and progress the installation works, with funding to come from the ring fenced earmarked reserve for The Ness; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 130.12. Quotations for work to remove access to the Great Eastern Linear Park ‘Nature Walk’, and to consider re-wilding of that area – The Community Warden is seeking quotations.
- 130.13. Progressing a condition survey of the Normanston Park tennis courts and nets – The nets are easily replaceable and Norse do report any issues with them. It is understood that a condition survey of the courts has not been undertaken recently and can be included in the next round of condition surveys. It was requested that the courts at Kensington Gardens are included also. Refurbishment of the Denes Oval has already been agreed separately so these ones will not needed to be included. It was requested that the nets and boundary fences are included in the condition surveys. There have been issues with algae and moss growth on the courts. The Committee would like to understand the maintenance and health and safety implications. Cllr Pearce proposed progressing a condition survey of the tennis courts, nets and boundary fences at Normanston Park and Kensington Gardens; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.
- 130.14. A recommendation from the Community Safety Committee to further consider the installation of lighting in Belle Vue Park, Normanston Park and Fen Park – The reasons and circumstances around the need for lighting at each site are different, but are primarily around health and safety and discouraging anti-social behaviour, though the parks will not be lit throughout the night. Further detail is required, such as what power supplies currently exist at each of the sites. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the recommendation to explore the provision of lighting in Belle Vue Park, Normanston Park and Fen Park, with the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to draw up a specification to seek quotations; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 130.15. Installation of a Town Council noticeboard in Fen Park, and any other assets which may require a noticeboard – It was reported that the noticeboard in Kensington Gardens is obscured by shrubbery, and the noticeboard at the Gunton Residents’ Meeting Hall needs to be relocated as it is too far away from the path. There is only one noticeboard in the Gunton Ward. It was suggested that the noticeboard in Rosedale Park should be relocated to a different entrance. Officers will circulate the current list of noticeboards for further consideration at the next meeting. Officers will

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check whether noticeboard keys have been ordered for the Councillors who have requested them. The Friends of Fen Park are having a noticeboard installed which was purchased via locality funding. It may also be beneficial for the Town Council to install its own noticeboard within Fen Park.

- 130.16. An update on the repair/replacement of damaged matting at Fen Park – Delivery of replacement tiles is pending.
- 130.17. A quotation to install gates in the gaps in the fencing surrounding the Fen Park play area – It is understood that this had already been agreed with a maximum budget. If not, Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this work, within a maximum budget of £5,000; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 130.18. An update on the Whitton Green play area refurbishment – The specification for the outdoor fitness equipment has been sent to the Working Group of Councillors. The cost should still be inside the overall project budget, even if the cost of the equipment has increased.
- 130.19. The lifespan of the septic tank at Uplands and cost of replacement – Funds are included in the 2022 – 2023 budget to begin building up a reserve to cover the cost of replacement. Full Council has made a decision regarding how to finance the cost of a replacement if it is required within the next twelve months. The age of the septic tank is not known and it would be difficult to progress a condition survey of it. The annual emptying charge has now been included as a separate line in the budget. On top of this, £10,000 is included in the 2022 – 2023 budget to begin building up a capital reserve for the purchase of a replacement. It is understood the cost would be in the region of £25,000. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee that when work commences on the 2023 – 2024 budget, consideration is given to adding a further £15,000 to the reserve for the purchase of the replacement septic tank, to bring the total of the reserve to £25,000; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 130.20. Commencement of approved works at the Britten Road play area (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 130.21. An application to plant a living memorial (tree) at Belle Vue Park (noting the decision at Full Council 21 December) and recommendation to Standing Orders to review the Memorial and Sponsorship Policy contained within the Parks and Open Spaces strategy – It was clarified that this was a direction from Full Council, not a recommendation for the policy to be reviewed. Full Council has approved the application and referred to this Committee to agree the details, and to the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee to update the policy. It was agreed that the Town Council should source the tree and agree the location with the applicant, and should apply a charge for the purchase and maintenance of the tree, as with memorial benches. The applicant would like the tree planted in Belle Vue Park but had no preference regarding its specific location. The preferred species would be a flowering cherry tree, but the Council would need to seek advice from Norse regarding this. Cllr Pearce proposed granting delegated authority to officers in conjunction with members of this Committee and the applicant to determine the species of tree and its location. The applicant has confirmed they are willing to pay for the tree and its maintenance. A quotation will be sought from Norse. The Council requires a clear policy position for any future applications. Officers have communicated differently to other people. The decision takes effect from the date of the Full Council meeting and does not apply retrospectively. Previous applicants would be welcome to reapply. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

131. Events and Communications:

- 131.1. Receipt of any comments and noting the draft minutes of the Events and Communications Sub-Committee meetings on 22 December 2021 – The draft minutes

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were still being prepared and will be circulated for the next meeting.

132. Reviewing the Town Council's Asset Register

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

133. The Sails and Triangle Market:

133.1.Improvements required to support the intended use of the Sails – Cllr Brooks has undertaken some research, which she will send to officers. Expert advice is required. The Council needs to consider whether it would like to retain the Sails before it pays to have them cleaned. The Triangle Market Working Group will consider this further.

133.2.Licensing the area beneath the Sails for market trading – The Triangle Market Working Group has been considering this, but has received conflicting advice from East Suffolk Council. It is now understood that if the Council would like to have market stalls there, the area would need to be licensed as a market. If not, each stallholder in that area would need to apply for a street trading licence. The Working Group will continue its considerations.

133.3.Triangle Market capital investment – This item and the next are being considered by the Triangle Market Working Group. Permanent structures and investment in the market are being discussed. The refurbishment of the public conveniences is being considered within the scope of the refurbishment of the Triangle Market, and will use funds from Triangle Market reserve. East Suffolk Council has capital investment funds earmarked for the Triangle Market. The indicative cost from Norse for a full refurbishment is between £50,000 - £80,000. The Community Warden is reviewing this.

133.4.Terms and conditions for market trading – This was covered with the consideration of the previous item.

134. Ponds:

134.1.Progress with the Fen Park and Gainsborough Drive pond dredging – Following a site visit, a further quotation has been received for the Gainsborough Drive pond. The quotation differs greatly from the last quotation received. An earlier quotation had given the cost per foot of sediment, which also differed. The latest quote is more detailed and has given more consideration to preparatory and site safety work. Full Council would need to give approval overall, but funds are available to cover the total cost. The Committee and Project Clerk will check with the contractor who provided the latest quote whether the work could still be completed by the end of February. This contractor has advised that Fen Park does not require dredging fully and a quotation is pending. The Committee would like a Zoom meeting with the contractor to discuss this further.

134.2.An offer from a private individual to install a water fountain in the Kensington Gardens fish pond – There was no update and it was agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

135. Ownership of the sea wall near The Ness

The Town Council's ownership is confirmed as from Ness Point upwards. The Town Council has resisted ownership of sea walls and beaches due to enormity of liabilities and coastal erosion. There remains some potential opportunity through the process of registering them and the adjacent land masses for the Town Council to remove itself from this ownership. The Town Council cannot manage sea defences by law. The situation requires formalisation by way of the land transfer registrations. The red text on the wall at The Ness was approved as part of the overall design. The seawall has not been listed separately as part of the Council's ground maintenance contract or budget, and if the Council owns the adjacent promenade it has not discussed what facilities it has there in terms of bins and benches, and what else it may wish to see there. The Town Council does now have separate budget provision for The Ness. The

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Town Council owns the Euroscope at Ness Point, but it is understood that a condition survey of it has not been carried out. It was agreed that an item should be added to the next agenda to confirm what is within the Town Council's ownership along its stretch of sea wall, and anything it may wish to add, such as benches or bins. Matters regarding ownership are still being worked through with East Suffolk Council and Land Registry, and the Clerk should be able to provide an update soon.

136. The Denes Oval:

136.1. A request from the Cricket Club to install a new cricket net area – This was considered earlier in the meeting.

136.2. Proposals from the Cricket Club regarding the Denes Oval (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

137. The delegation from Full Council to consider a suitable recipient of the Councillor tablets which will be surplus to requirements

There will be some surplus when the laptops are distributed, but it is understood this will only be approximately twelve. Cllr Pearce proposed that once the final number is known, responsibility is delegated to officers to decide on suitable recipients, subject to there being a proven educational or social need. Officers will manage how applications are received. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Green and all Councillors voted in favour. It was confirmed that all data will be cleared from the tablets by the IT department before they are distributed elsewhere.

138. A policy review regarding utility supply, including ethical considerations (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

139. The decision of Full Council to display adverse weather signage and further consideration of gritting (some aspects may be confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

140. A progress update on approved capital projects which are awaiting implementation (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

141. An update on transfer arrangements relating to the registration of ownership for the North Denes and Tingdene, and enforcement action relating to 'Phase 3' (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

142. Date of the next meeting

7 February 2022 18:00

143. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for items to be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Pearce proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

144. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

144.1. Any legal issues, including those above as required:

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the meeting 20:21

130.20. Commencement of approved works at the Britten Road play area (some aspects may be confidential) – Regarding the boundary fencing, one contractor has

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advised there would be a charge to survey the site. Cllr Brooks proposed that the Town Council should not pay to have the site surveyed; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. One quotation has been received but other contractors approached have been non-responsive.

Cllr Brooks returned 20:23

The replacement surfacing at the Britten Road play area has been installed. It was queried whether this work should also have included installation of an additional piece of equipment. Officers will check the decision. The decision to remove the teen equipment is being progressed. It has also been agreed that Norse should clear the area in question of litter, which they will be providing a quotation for.

136.2. Proposals from the Cricket Club regarding the Denes Oval (some aspects may be confidential) – The Finance and Governance Committee has previously approved proposals including repainting of the clubhouse and dressing rooms, within a maximum budget of £7,000. Cllr Breakspear has been liaising with a third party, who potentially would like to be involved with the works. The Tennis Club has been consulted regarding the proposals which relate to jointly used areas. Cllr Pearce proposed supporting the decision of the Finance and Governance Committee and putting the Cricket Club in contact with the third party to discuss the works. Cllr Breakspear advised he would also like to be involved. Cllr Green seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

Separately, the Cricket Club submitted four further proposals, which had been circulated. One of the proposals was for more significant work which may need to be progressed in line with the wider refurbishment of the clubhouse. The public conveniences would also be included as part of the wider refurbishment. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the three other proposals which were submitted at the same time; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

138. A policy review regarding utility supply, including ethical considerations (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce raised concerns with one of the Town Council's utility suppliers and proposed a recommendation to Full Council to switch away from them with immediate effect; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. There were also concerns regarding another of the Town Council's suppliers. There was no proposal to switch away from the other supplier at this stage, but the Committee would like officers to research alternative suppliers and present their findings to Full Council.

139. The decision of Full Council to display adverse weather signage and further consideration of gritting (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Pearce proposed deferring items 139 and 140 to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It was reported that some temporary signage has been installed and officers are looking into the cost of gritting.

140. A progress update on approved capital projects which are awaiting implementation (confidential) – This was covered with the previous item.

141. An update on transfer arrangements relating to the registration of ownership for the North Denes and Tingdene, and enforcement action relating to 'Phase 3' (confidential) – An update was given, including the legal advice which the Clerk has sought.

The Chair closed the meeting 21:01.

Signed: 
7 February 2021