

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**12:30pm on Tuesday 8 November 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Wendy Brooks (Deputy Chair), Alan Green (Chair), Elise Youngman, Andy Pearce and Sonia Barker

**In attendance:** Shona Bendix (Town Clerk), James Cox (Finance and Information Officer) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk)

90. **Welcome.**

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

91. **Approval of apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr Parker, who had provided reasons. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

92. **Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

92.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda.

None declared

92.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted

None received

93. **To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 24 October 2022 and 1 November 2022. –**

The Finance and Information Officer (FIO) confirmed these are being produced.

94. **Public forum.**

There were no members of the public in attendance and no comments had been received in advance of the meeting.

95. **To review the 2022 – 2023 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves (some aspects may be confidential).** – It was queried with the FIO if any budgets caused concern, the FIO confirmed he will monitor and notify the Sub-Committee if there is anything causing pressure, particularly on the repair and maintenance budget. It was noted that if repairs occurred at a higher rate than projected, and with the cost of repairs at a higher rate on inflation, the Sub-Committee will need to monitor and determine if a higher annual figure is required next year.

96. **To receive the East Suffolk Council letter advising of the council tax base and precept demand information** – It was confirmed a cabinet meeting in December will finalise this. It was requested to add this figure into the new template.

97. **To review the 2023 – 2024 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves including the following (some aspects may be confidential)**

**Budget spreadsheet**

**Civic and Event tab** – It was noted that a recommendation was received from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee (AID) to cover logistical and administration support for

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existing and new Stakeholders/Friends Groups. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of recommendation; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It was requested on the spreadsheet a line be added under the community engagement budget for 'Stakeholder/Friends Group Support' and the agreed £1,000 budget was inserted on that line.

It was suggested that any items that may come in-house required further input from the Facilities Maintenance Officer (FMO) and the Parks and Community Officer (PCO). It was noted that costs are needed for items that may be contracted out, such as bins. It was agreed to return to the grounds maintenance separately after the Town Clerk speaks with staff and provides the Sub-Committee with the action points. It was suggested that the cricket club enquiry would be decided at a later stage and other items needed a steer from Full Council.

It was noted that unbudgeted expenditure funded out of reserves in 2022-23 needed to be topped up and factor in recovery and that, dependent on the total amount, it could be spread over two or three years.

**Community Halls tab** - It was noted the total expected underspend of community halls by year-end would be £20,000. It was suggested that £10,000 be added to next year's budget. The FIO clarified this is connected to reserves and suggested it be reviewed at the next meeting on 15 November to which the Councillors agreed.

It was noted 2022-23 was the first year of having a community halls budget and that the budget provisioned for capital works such as roof or boiler repairs. It was queried whether the Sub-Committee would consider reducing the budget in the second year or reach the agreed reserve levels.

The FIO confirmed utilities would be sorted separately for the Sub-Committee to review based on experience this year.

97.1. The Marina Theatre - To be discussed in the confidential session

97.2. Staffing - To be discussed in the confidential session

98. **Date of the next meeting**

Tuesday 15 November 12:30PM.

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

Cllr Pearce requested the week following from 15 November, the Sub-Committee speak with The Project Manager for the Town Hall about the Town Hall budget for 2023-24.

100. **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.**

Cllr Brooks proposed the meeting be taken into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Pearce;

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all in favour.

*The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved to confidential session at 13:01*

The Town Hall project was discussed.

**97. To review the 2023 – 2024 Lowestoft Town Council Budget and reserves including the following (some aspects may be confidential)**

97.1 The Marina Theatre – It was suggested there be a short service reissue of the Finance and Governance Committee (F&G) agenda to add on budget allocation for the lighting upgrade and then a recommendation can be made by F&G to Full Council.

A working figure for the capital investment in the Marina Theatre was proposed by Cllr Pearce; seconded by Cllr Barker; all were in favour.

It was agreed a repairs and capital investment meeting was needed.

It was suggested the Council arrange for a new condition survey to provide a baseline for comparison and clarification of what works are required.

97.2 Staffing – It was confirmed the Sub-Committee needed to know the totals for salary, pension and national insurance and the allocation of the staff budget was discussed.

It was agreed further clarifications were needed on the item of staffing which would be addressed at November Full Council with a requested delegation to Personnel.

*The Chair closed the meeting at 14:00*

Signed: 

12 December 2022