

Lowestoft Town Council

Meeting of the Community Safety Committee

Via Video Meeting
15:30 on 19 November 2020

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Neil Coleby, Peter Lang, Keith Patience (Chair) and Andy Pearce

Also participating: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

22. Welcome

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

23. Apologies for absence

No apologies had been received. Cllrs Peter Collecott, Paul Page and Graham Parker had not provided apologies and were absent.

24. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Lang declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 27, should it include contractual matters relating to the CCTV service. Cllr Patience declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 29 and item 27, should it include discussion about East Suffolk Council's CCTV service.

25. Receipt of any comments and noting that the draft minutes of the meeting on 22 October 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

The draft minutes were noted.

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

There were no comments.

27. Any measures required to improve the safety of the Town Council's assets, including extending the provision of CCTV

East Suffolk Council does not yet have a CCTV strategy. The Smart Towns initiative and Lowestoft Masterplan will provide a framework for which decisions about the future of the CCTV service can be made. The project will enable the continuation of the CCTV service at a reduced cost. The Smart Towns initiative aims to improve the Wi-Fi provision in the town and the technology to measure footfall. A presentation to the Town Council is being arranged to provide some further information about the project. The Town Council would have a major role in taking the project forward, which could have cost implications. The project may also improve the infrastructure to extend the provision of CCTV. There will be positives and negatives to the Town Council partnering with another organisations or establishing its own CCTV service, and could be met with the responsibility of maintaining equipment which only partly covers its assets. The Town Council has a lot of assets away from the town centre which are unlikely to be priorities for funding. The Town Council still needs to consider where it may wish to provide CCTV, whilst it awaits the presentation and further information from East Suffolk Council. The lack of power sources at some Town Council sites may be an issue.

28. Any recommendations from the Toilet Strategy Working Group regarding the security of the Town Council's public conveniences

The Working Group is aware of the need for additional security measures, but has made no formal recommendations at this stage. The Town Council is providing public conveniences at the taxpayers' expense; anti-social behaviour puts contractors and visitors at risk. CCTV or other security measures are important, along with the locations of the public conveniences. Most of them are now locked overnight to try to prevent further issues.

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29. East Suffolk Council's approval for a representative from Lowestoft Town Council to join the East Suffolk Community Partnership (representative to be appointed at November's Full Council meeting)

Cllr Patience declared he is a member of this Partnership in his role as a District Councillor. A representative from the Town Council will be considered at the Full Council meeting. In response to enquiries made, East Suffolk Council has advised that the Safer Neighbourhoods Committee does not exist, but the East Suffolk Community Partnership discusses matters relating to community safety.

30. Covid-19 recovery and safety measures the Town Council could take to support the community

The Home But Not Alone service has restarted. The Citizen's Advice Bureau are running a befriending service for people who are isolated. There were large voluntary groups in operation during the first lockdown who have not resumed their activities during the second lockdown. It was agreed the Council should consider what support would be required in the community, particularly if the lockdown is extended and over the Christmas period. This may involve providing support to other organisations. The Town Council has been liaising closely with East Suffolk Council since the start of the pandemic. This Committee will be primarily considering matters regarding community safety. Full Council will be considering the budget provision for CCTV.

The Committee was asked whether it would consider supporting at least a £50,000 budget provision for security measures. Without this, the Council would struggle to provide any measures at all, given its portfolio of assets. Funds were set aside this year for the provision of CCTV, and this budget is unspent and could be carried forward. This Committee was formerly the CCTV Committee, and its Terms of Reference have been updated and broadened to include responding to emergency situations, such as Covid-19. It is unlikely East Suffolk Council's CCTV strategy will be available ahead of the budget being agreed, so it was suggested that the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee could be asked to consider additional funding of £50,000 for community safety measures, if a clear need can be demonstrated. Cllr Coleby proposed a recommendation to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee to include provision for up to an additional £50,000 for a community safety budget, for improving the safety for the Town Council's assets, such as CCTV; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

31. Noting that the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee is considering Committee and Sub-Committee structures and Terms of Reference, and consideration of whether to submit any comments

It was suggested that, by an agreed date each year, such as the beginning of October, each Committee and Sub-Committee should provide details of its priorities and projects to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee for consideration of the budget. This comment will be fed back to the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee to consider as part of their review.

32. Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting was provisionally agreed as 18 December at 15:30.

33. Items for the next agenda and close

It was requested that item 30 be carried forward to the next meeting, so the Committee can continue to consider Covid-19 recovery and safety measures. It was requested that item 27 be carried forward, to receive any updates on the CCTV service. It was requested that a standalone item for budget considerations be added, as it will be the last opportunity for this Committee to put forward any further suggestions.

The Chair thanked those who had been viewing the meeting via live stream. There were no confidential matters for consideration and the Chair closed the meeting at 16:14.

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34. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'R' or similar character, written over a horizontal dotted line.

Signed:
15 June 2021