

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Community Safety Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
15:30 on 28 July 2021

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Alan Green, Peter Lang (Chair) and Andy Pearce

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance (either in person or via Zoom webinar)

17. Welcome

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

18. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Paul Page and Graham Parker. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

19. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllrs Brooks and Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 27.3.

20. The draft minutes of the meeting on 15 June 2021

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the minutes of 15 June 2021; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

21. Public forum

There were no members of the public in attendance (either in person or via Zoom webinar) and no comments had been received in advance.

22. Any expenditure by this Committee from its delegated budget

There had been no expenditure so far by this Committee from its delegated budget. It was queried whether the delegation transferred to this Committee when Full Council approved the transfer of responsibility for administering the Defibrillator Policy and associated budget from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee. Officers will check this.

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

The Committee Clerk has been in contact with East Suffolk Cllr Letitia Smith. There is a support team dedicated to the Lowestoft area, led by an East Suffolk Council officer who Town Council officers have been liaising with throughout the pandemic. The Committee would like information on how people facing eviction will be supported. It has been reported that there is a high number of requests for support coming from Lowestoft compared to other areas. Many people are anxious about coming out of lockdown, and the Committee would like to discuss how support can be offered to those people, particularly since the two largest voluntary groups which were operating in the town have stopped. Some social groups which did meet before the pandemic may not have reopened, particularly those for older people. Cllr Brooks proposed that officers make enquiries to see which groups are still running, and how they have adapted facilitating people attending. Cllr Brooks further proposed contacting organisations such as Age UK to see what practical support can be offered to those feeling anxious. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Pearce and all Councillors voted in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed that officers ask the East Suffolk Council officer leading the Lowestoft response team to talk to this Committee at its next meeting; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

24. Any actions in relation to the health emergency declaration and how it can be applied to

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wider issues

The Sustainability Strategy has been on a number of agendas and should be considered to see how it relates to the health emergency declaration. The Town Council has established an Allotments Sub-Committee which has not yet met. Cllr Pearce proposed that a meeting of the Allotments Sub-Committee is convened, with representatives from the Allotments Association, to consider how the Council may support the Association and its work, promote and expand the use of allotments and to discuss the possibility of allotment holders growing surplus produce to sell; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Certain aspects of the Strategy and health emergency declaration are being progressed through the five year plans. Given some of the costs involved, this is being progressed as rapidly as it can. In terms of promoting health and wellbeing initiatives, the Council has appointed representatives to outside bodies which cover this. Lowestoft Rising has said it will be prioritising mental health wellbeing. Cllr Brooks proposed that officers seek an update from Lowestoft Rising on what actions it is taking to support mental health wellbeing in Lowestoft, and how the Town Council's financial contribution is being used; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

The Town Council has declared a Climate Emergency and adopted a Cycling Pledge. Proposals to install outdoor fitness equipment are being explored. It had previously been requested that the Town Council puts a tool on its website to enable members of the public to report issues regarding cycle routes in Lowestoft. This is being looked into. Issues can be reported via the Suffolk Highways online reporting tool as well, and a representative from Suffolk Highways periodically meets with the Planning Committee.

In terms of local economic opportunities, recruitment of additional Town Council officers was delayed by the pandemic, but the Events and Communications Officer was appointed. The Clerk is reviewing the requirements for the other positions and liaising with Cllr Barker as Chair of the Personnel Committee.

To support outdoor shopping and entertainment, the Town Council is looking to resume its weekly market at the Triangle. The Council has approved the purchase/hire of barriers to support this. Longer term, the Council is participating in a feasibility study to look at a solution for the issues with traffic in that area.

The Town Council has again decided not to impose a charge for the use of its leisure facilities and is considering major investment at the Denes Oval. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee has recommended establishing a new earmarked reserve for the Town Council's Community Halls, and this will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee to consider establishing a budget for maintenance and improvements to the Town Council's Community Halls; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. The halls currently do not have bicycle storage or outside seating, but the grass area at Whitton Hall is being used by a group which hires the hall to support summer activities for children. The Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee will be asked to consider what the priorities are for improvements to the halls, to inform the budgeting process, and there will be liaison with tenants where applicable. In the current budget, the three halls each have a maintenance charge, but the figures differ greatly. Whitton Residents' Hall is £200 per year, Gunton Estate Residents' Meeting Hall is £400 per year and the Uplands Community Centre is £1,900 per year. Whitton Residents' Hall also has a repairs and maintenance charge of £1,964. Officers will look what these charges relate to and why they vary between each hall.

The Council has supported local food banks through the pandemic but the Committee would

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like to understand what ongoing support local food banks and food fridges require, particularly those which do not receive funding from partner organisations. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to consider item 12 of the health emergency declaration, particularly how the Council may support local food banks and fridges, which are not already supported by partner organisations, either via the grant scheme or a small annual budget; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

The Clerk had been reviewing options for drinking water fountains but Legionella management has been a big concern and other options may need to be researched instead. It was queried whether drinking water facilities could be incorporated into the public conveniences refurbishments. The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee will be asked to consider any viable alternatives.

The Events and Communications Sub-Committee would like to arrange a food market as part of this year's Heritage Open Days. A food market is being held at the train station during the first week. Cllr Pearce proposed that the Council should aim to schedule a food market at the Triangle Market during the second week of Heritage Open Days; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Supporting the reduction in pollution is under active consideration by the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee.

25. Measures to improve the security of the Town Council's assets, including the following:

- 25.1. Which sites the Council may wish to prioritise – An update on East Suffolk Council's plans for its CCTV service was requested at the recent Liaison Meeting. There is no firm date but it is hoped there will be an update by the end of August. East Suffolk Council is trying to tie in the installation of the system with the broadband upgrade taking place in Lowestoft and the Smart Towns initiative. East Suffolk Council has confirmed it would be willing to consider partnering with Town and Parish Councils. It was agreed to carry this item forward to the next agenda.
- 25.2. The provision of lighting – There is the issue of light pollution affecting wildlife versus the issue of public safety. Some research has reportedly indicated that switching street lights off earlier has actually resulted in a decrease in crime. The Town Council may however wish to provide some kind of lighting in its parks, even if they were not on all night, and could look at low level lighting. Normanston Park has very little lighting and the Council could seek the views of groups who regularly use the park as to whether it is needed and where. It was suggested the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee could consider putting together a proposal regarding lighting as a year two project. It was suggested that the views of local sports groups and Friends Groups could be sought. It was queried whether the Community Halls are inspected by the Council. The tenants have a responsibility to check the Halls and advise the Council of any issues. The tenants of the Gunton Residents' Community Meeting Hall have already requested support once a public meeting can be progressed to set up a new management committee. Cllr Pearce proposed asking the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee to consider options for lighting in the Town Council's parks, including consultation with local groups and deciding at what stage to progress it under the five year plans; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Consideration will also be given to the security of the Council's living assets as well, not just its buildings.

26. Purchasing a speed indicator device

The cost of a pole-mounted device will be between £1,500 - £3,500. Brackets cost an extra £200. Proposed locations need to have a one hundred metre clear distance along the road and there would need to be consultation with local residents. The devices can only stay in one location for a maximum of twenty eight days and only in thirty miles per hour speed limits. The devices tend to be most effective where there is an existing traffic sign. Where that is the

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case, the bracket can be attached to the sign and consultation with residents would not be required. Solar devices are available but would require stronger brackets. Police Community Support Officers recommend installing a device which records data, as this can be used to identify patterns and any problem times/areas which can then be targeted by Police. In addition to this, Community Speedwatch Teams can be formed, which would need six volunteers from the community at a safe and appropriate place. The handheld equipment to support this costs approximately £3,000. It was agreed that the pole-mounted equipment would be more straightforward to progress. If progressed, it would need to be agreed in advance how many locations there would be and who would be responsible for moving the device. Cllr Pearce proposed asking all Councillors to put forward suggestions of locations within their wards with perceived issues with speeding, so long as they meet the criteria; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

27. Defibrillators:

- 27.1. Reviewing the current provision of defibrillators in Lowestoft – There is a list of the defibrillators in Lowestoft. Members of the public would however be told where their nearest defibrillator is located if they phoned the emergency services and one is required.
- 27.2. Implementation of the Defibrillator Policy, including the Council's commitment to install at least two per year and match fund an additional five – There is specific budget provision to support this. Cllr Pearce proposed asking all Councillors for two proposed locations within their wards for defibrillators to be installed, and to contact Friends and stakeholder groups to publicise the match funding and see if they would like to talk to the Council; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour. The policy states that training will be made available to all Councillors and officers. Cllr Pearce proposed progressing defibrillator training this year; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 27.3. Arrangements for the Gunton Drive telephone kiosk and defibrillator (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

28. Date of the next meeting

22 September 2021 15:30

29. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for items to be added to the next agenda in addition to those already being carried forward.

Cllr Pearce proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. The Chair thanked those who had been viewing the meeting via live stream and the live stream was closed as the meeting went into confidential session. It was confirmed the meeting would end following the confidential session.

30. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

- 27.3 Arrangements for the Gunton Drive telephone kiosk and defibrillator (confidential) – Some concerns had been raised regarding the condition of the telephone kiosk and arrangements for the defibrillator. Cllr Pearce made a proposal in response to this; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

The meeting was closed 17:24.

Signed:



P. LANG

22 September 2021