

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of extraordinary meeting of Finance and Governance**  
**Committee**

**Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**10.30 on 1 September 2022**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Paul Page, Graham Parker, and Andy Pearce (Chair)  
(arrived at 10.36)

**In attendance:** Sarah Foote (Deputy Town Clerk)

**Public:** There were no members of the public in attendance

As Cllr Pearce was absent at the start of the meeting and there was currently no Deputy Chair for this committee, it was proposed by Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr Brooks and all agreed that Cllr Page would chair the meeting.

**44. Welcome**

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

*Cllr Pearce arrived 10.36 and took over chairing of the meeting.*

**45. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Green, Begum and Patience, who had provided reasons. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

**46. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

Cllr Pearce declared that whilst the applicant was known to him he was not in any way predetermined on the application.

**47. The draft minutes of the meeting of 8 August 2022**

It was agreed that these would be deferred to the meeting of 12 September 2022 for approval.

**48. Public forum**

No advance comments had been received.

**49. Grants:**

The following Guidance from the Responsible Financial Officer was displayed for members to note:

Regarding discretionary grants. Given the existing situation where the end of year position did not enable the planned budget of £50k for grants, leaving the Town Council already about £9000 overspend to date:

1. The position of the taxpayer and those unable to advocate for themselves should be considered. Potential gain for vocal grant applicants could disadvantage the wider population with hidden needs.
2. The Council has considerable needs for dealing with its inherited asset (including health and safety, repairs and maintenance, and capital programme) and significant contractual and practical transitional needs. Reduction of these budgets and/or any increased degradation of assets will increase costs overall to the taxpayer.
3. Any consideration of grant expenditure for the remainder of the year should only arise where there will be no adverse impact on the wider taxpayer, including the following:
  - a) A suitable virement/income to address the £9000 deficit is found

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- b) A suitable virement/income to address any further grant is identified in advance of the agreement to the grant
- c) Grants are only provided where there is evidence that other sources of grants have been exhausted
- d) Grants are only provided where the expenditure is commensurate with the expenditure and is beneficial to a significant number of individuals
- e) Grants are only for non-statutory purposes

49.1. To consider the following grant applications:

49.1a. Sunrise Studios for £1,840

The application was considered in light of the above advice. Cllr Pearce asked that the September meeting of this committee consider the shortfall on the grants budget and virement from other budget areas. Cllr Parker asked for this agenda item to be deferred to the next committee meeting but Cllr Pearce explained that the application was time sensitive.

Given the deficit in the grant budget, Cllr Pearce proposed that £5,000 underspend (from a 'major event' which did not proceed) be transferred to the Grants EMR. Seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Cllr Brooks proposed that the full amount of the grant requested is paid with a delegation to staff in conjunction with committee members to ascertain that the match funding had been secured before the payment was made. Cllr Pearce requested an amendment to the proposal to give delegation to officers, in consultation with committee members, to ascertain what to do if the match funding was not forthcoming, working with the applicant to agree if the full amount, reduced amount or no grant was offered. This amendment was agreed by Cllr Brooks. Seconded by Cllr Pearce and approved four votes in favour, one abstention (Cllr Parker).

**50. Date of next meeting:**

12 September 2022 15:00

**51. Items for the next agenda and close.**

Acknowledgement of Town Council financial support by recipients particularly in any promotional materials produced.

For the Budget and Loan Sub Committee to receive an analysis of all grants paid during the financial year and the demographics of how the budget is being awarded and the people benefiting from the awards.

**52. 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 employment matters and legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda, including the following:**

52.1. Any legal matters, including those above as required – there were none.



Signed: .....

26 September 2022