

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council Meeting

Held via Video Meeting

19:30 on 26 January 2021

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Bob Breakspear, Colin Butler, Neil Coleby, Amanda Frost, Alan Green (Chair), Jacqueline Hardie, Peter Knight, Peter Lang, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, John Pitts and Alice Taylor

Also participating: Shona Bendix (Clerk), James Cox (Finance and Administration Assistant) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

149. Welcome

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

150. Apologies for absence from any councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllrs Sue Barnard and David Youngman. Cllrs Tara Carlton and Tracey Eastwood had not provided apologies and were absent. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

151. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllrs Butler, Green and Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 156.4.

152. Receipt of any comments and noting that the draft minutes of the meeting on 15 December 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

The draft minutes were noted.

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

A member of the public had submitted a comment suggesting the Council should consider closing the Pakefield Street public conveniences to prevent anti-social behaviour, and selling the land.

154. Finance

154.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 14 January 2021 – The draft minutes were noted.

154.2. The following recommendations from the Finance and Governance Committee:

154.2a. Adopting the Community Engagement Policy, as amended – Cllr Pearce proposed adoption of the policies and procedures as specified in items 154.2a – 154.2g. It was agreed the Financial Regulations (at item 154.2h) should be considered separately. Cllr All Councillors voted in favour.

154.2b. Adopting the Equality and Diversity Policy

154.2c. Adopting the Mulch Policy

154.2d. Adopting the Co-option Policy, as amended

154.2e. Adopting the Disciplinary Procedure and Disciplinary Rules, as amended

154.2f. Adopting the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme, subject to officer review and amendments where necessary – The Clerk has reviewed and made a slight amendment, as identified by the Finance and Governance Committee, that the reference to members' allowances and/or expenses will only be where applicable, as this does not often happen.

154.2g. Adopting the Risk Assessment and Management Policy, the Financial Risk Assessment and the checklist for Internal Controllers – The Clerk has reviewed these for typos and date changes as requested by the Finance and Governance Committee.

154.2h. Adoption of the Financial Regulations – Cllr Coleby proposed adoption of the Financial

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Regulations; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

- 154.2i. Funding an additional piece of equipment at the Stoven Close play area using planning mitigation money (which is also supported by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee) – It was clarified that the recommendation is to use an alternative source of funding to purchase the additional piece of play equipment. Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the recommendation to fund an additional piece of equipment at the Stoven Close play area using planning mitigation money; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.
- 154.2j. Waiving charges for the use of the Town Council’s sports and leisure fees in 2021 – 2022 for clubs and members of the public, with the requirement that sports clubs benefitting from the fee waiver produce an annual report to the Council on how the funds saved have been reinvested – The Finance and Governance Committee would like clubs to demonstrate how they have reinvested funds saved to either support their facilities, or a growth in club membership, or both, in order to be eligible for the fee waiver. The Finance and Governance Committee has suggested that the Council reserves the right to apply a charge in the following year, should a club decline to produce a report, and this was supported by the Council. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the recommendation to waive charges for the use of the Town Council’s sports and leisure fees in 2021 – 2022 for clubs and members of the public. For sports clubs benefitting from the fee waiver, this will be conditional on the production of an annual report to the Council on how the funds saved have been reinvested; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.
- 154.2k. A budget provision of £25,000 for climate emergency related adjustments, with any underspend being allocated to a climate emergency reserve – The Council has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Any measures towards this would be funded from this budget. Costs would be identified and quotations sought in the normal way. This would be the first time the Council has had a climate emergency related budget provision so if only a small amount of it is spent the position can be reviewed again as part of the 2022 – 2023 budget setting process. Expenditure could include a carbon footprint survey and identifying appropriate changes to buildings owned by the Town Council, such as replacing standard lightbulbs with LED lights and installing solar panels, etc. Any underspend would be allocated to a climate emergency reserve. It was clarified that any repairs or maintenance required, such as due to a weather incident, would still be funded from the repairs and maintenance budget. Cllr Lang proposed approval of the budget provision of £25,000 for climate emergency related adjustments, with any underspend being allocated to a climate emergency reserve; seconded by Cllr Pearce; ten Councillors voted in favour; four Councillors voted against.
- 154.2l. An additional budget contingency of £25,000 for Christmas lights – It was clarified that there is no recommendation to spend the full £25,000 on Christmas lights, as it would be a contingency. The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee had hoped that Full Council would provide a steer, as quotations for different options had been sought. The Council has previously purchased braided lights for areas in the North of the town, but it would be more expensive to extend this provision to London Road South due to the infrastructure required. Projectors and uplighters are less expensive but projectors need to be installed indoors, and finding appropriate locations could be difficult. Without a steer from Full Council, the Finance and Governance Committee has recommended budget provision be made for the most expensive option, with any underspend to be allocated to reserves to use as the Council decides. Cllr Hardie proposed approval of the additional budget contingency of £25,000 for Christmas lights; seconded by Cllr Pearce; thirteen Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.

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154.2m. Allocating the Local Council Tax Support Grant of £52,405 from East Suffolk Council to general reserves – The Town Council has now received formal confirmation of the grant. Cllr Coleby proposed allocating the Local Council Tax Support Grant of £52,405 from East Suffolk Council to general reserves; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

154.2n. Consideration and determination of the 2021 – 2022 budget and precept and to consider the recommendation to demand a £1,765,245 precept for 2021 - 2022, Band D Council Tax equivalent £142.68 (equating to a 1.54% reduction on the Band D Council Tax equivalent for 2020 – 2021) – As requested, two alternative options had also been prepared, one equating to a 0% increase on the Band D Council Tax equivalent for 2020 – 2021 and the other equating to a 2% increase. The draft budget had been circulated in advance and was displayed at the meeting. The recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee is to demand a precept of £1,765,245 for 2021 – 2022, which would be a Band D Council Tax equivalent of £142.68, equating to a 1.54% reduction on the Band D Council Tax equivalent for 2020 – 2021. A 0% increase would result in a Band D Council Tax equivalent of £144.91 and a precept of £1,792,774, and a 2% increase would result in a Band D Council Tax equivalent of £147.81 and a precept of £1,828,629. The only difference between the three options is that 0% or 2% increase would result in more money being allocated to general reserves. There was a discussion as to whether it would be appropriate to consider the option of a 2% increase, given the current economic situation. The Council does however have several projects it would like to progress and it was suggested that the Council's budget plans should be in line with inflation. In some previous years there has been an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the budget. This has not happened this year but the draft budget was considered at the last Full Council meeting and has been considered in detail by the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee and the Finance and Governance Committee, and all Councillors have had the opportunity to submit their comments as the draft budget was being produced. Many key areas of the budget, including buildings, play areas, parks and staff have all at least remained the same or increased beyond the usual rate of inflation.

Cllr Barnard joined the meeting 20:03

A recommendation of a 1.54% reduction was possible due to a significant underspend on the staffing budget in the current year, as not all of the Council's intended recruitment could take place and the Events and Communications Officer was appointed later than planned. Budget provision has also previously been made for capital works loan repayments but the Council has not yet decided to progress a loan application and these funds have been allocated to general reserves. Through prudent budgeting in previous years, the Council has been able to put funds aside for capital projects which are in discussion, including contingency amounts within existing capital reserves funds. As Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), the Clerk advised that the Council can decide to set whatever precept it thinks is right for the budget, as does not have to select one of the three options presented, although Council did specifically request three options and the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee and Finance and Governance Committee have both put forward a specific recommendation. The Interim Internal Audit Report has identified that the Council is deviating slightly from its own Reserves Policy. The Council is deliberately moving to maintain general reserves equivalent to six months' precept, but may have to adjust its policy to align with any decision today. No timescale has been set yet to achieve this target. Even if the Council selected the 1.54% reduction, funds would still be allocated to general reserves and there is a planned move to five year budgeting to try to factor in attaining the target of maintaining general reserve equivalent to six months' precept.

Cllr Barnard left the meeting 20:09

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Cllr Lang proposed approval of the recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee to demand a £1,765,245 precept for 2021 - 2022, Band D Council Tax equivalent £142.68 (equating to a 1.54% reduction on the Band D Council Tax equivalent for 2020 – 2021); seconded by Cllr Pearce; eight Councillors voted in favour; six Councillors voted against. A vote of thanks was extended to the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee, the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer and the Finance and Administration Assistant for their work in preparing the budget.

154.3. Receipt and consideration of the following:

154.3a. The 2020 – 2021 budget position – The budget monitoring papers had been circulated and were noted.

154.3b. Whether to progress a leaflet to accompany the Council Tax bill, and the cost of doing so – This had been suggested as a way of explaining the Town Council’s decision regarding its budget for 2021 – 2022, in recognition of the wider economic situation in Lowestoft, and other circumstances which have enabled this whilst not reducing services, but allowing an increase in certain budgets. It should be indicated that this does not mean that the same can happen year on year. In previous years the leaflet was not intended to give a detailed picture of the budget, but to present a positive image of the Council, what it does and its objectives. A budget summary must be submitted with the precept demand and this was displayed at the meeting. Last year the cost of the leaflets was £1,192.32. As this is an opportunity for widespread communication with the town it was suggested this should go ahead, with an update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and notifying the public of the Council’s intentions to develop five-year working plans for its parks. The deadline for the final draft is 8 February. The leaflet will not just focus on the budget, but will cover the work of the Council in more overall terms, whilst not raising public expectation.

Cllr Hardie temporarily left the meeting 20:25

Cllr Coleby proposed proceeding with the leaflet to accompany the Council Tax bill, with delegated authority to officers to finalise the content; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

154.3c. Any bank reconciliations – It was noted that the bank reconciliations are up to date to end of December 2020.

Cllr Patience left the meeting 20:27

Cllr Hardie returned 20:27

154.3d. Payments, including those made under delegated authority, any Covid-19 grant awards and any for approval, and income and expenditure reports for the month ending 31 December 2020 and January 2021 to date – It was noted that a Covid-19 grant application of £1,500 from Disability Advice North East Suffolk had been approved and paid. The income and expenditure reports were received and noted as follows:

Table 1 December Income

| Date | Received from | Description | Amount |
|------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 December 2020 | Lamarti | Use of Links Road Car Park | £360 + £72 VAT = £432 |
| 7 December 2020 | Market income | Weekly market income 7 December 2020 | £42.50 |
| 14 December 2020 | Market income | Weekly market income 14 December 2020 | £42.50 |

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| Date | Received from | Description | Amount |
|------------------|----------------------|--|---------------|
| 21 December 2020 | Market income | Weekly market income 21 December 2020 | £42.50 |
| 24 December 2020 | Tenant | Rental income from tenant | £213.16 |
| 24 December 2020 | Tenant | Rental income from tenant | £1,000 |
| 29 December 2020 | Market income | Weekly market income 29 December 2020 | £18.50 |
| 29 December 2020 | Tenant | Rental income from tenant | £10,000 |

Table 2 December Expenditure

| Date | Payment to | Description | Amount |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 December 2020 | East Suffolk Council | Pakefield Street PC business rates | £122 |
| 1 December 2020 | East Suffolk Council | Kensington Gardens PC business rates | £210 |
| 1 December 2020 | East Suffolk Council | Sparrows Nest bowls pavilion business rates | £110 |
| 1 December 2020 | East Suffolk Council | Links Road car park business rates | £187 |
| 1 December 2020 | East Suffolk Council | Triangle Market PC business rates | £117 |
| 1 December 2020 | Zurich Municipal | Insurance for the Ness | £527.96 |
| 4 December 2020 | SCC Pension Fund | Pensions November 2020 | £4,438.65 |
| 7 December 2020 | Blachere Illuminations | Christmas Light uninstallation | £2,349 + £469.84 VAT = £2,819.04 |
| 7 December 2020 | Liquid DJ | VJ Day event Sound | £400 |
| 7 December 2020 | Michlmayr | Annual service to Town Hall clock | £314 + £62.80 VAT = £376.80 |
| 7 December 2020 | Henry Baker | Lest we Forget Video | £175 |
| 7 December 2020 | BSA Security | Gunton Hall Alarm | £80.40 |
| 8 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £214.11 |

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| Date | Payment to | Description | Amount |
|------------------|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 8 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £124.79 |
| 8 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £74.70 |
| 8 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £71.42 |
| 8 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £93.37 |
| 8 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £63.18 |
| 10 December 2020 | NALC | Leaders Talk Planning for the Future Webinar | £43.09 + £8.62 VAT = £51.71 |
| 16 December 2020 | Gazprom Energy | Town Hall gas | £44.22 |
| 16 December 2020 | Lloyds Bank Account | Credit card charges | £72.89 |
| 18 December 2020 | Need2Store Ltd | Civic artefact storage | £200 + £40 VAT = £240 |
| 18 December 2020 | East Point Business Services | Service charge | £7,397.50 + £1,479.50 VAT = £8,877 |
| 18 December 2020 | British Hamper Company | Hamper overpayment refund | -£37.50 + -£7.50 VAT = -£45 |
| 21 December 2020 | East Suffolk Norse | Clearing of rubbish Denes Oval | £400 + £80 VAT = £480 |
| 21 December 2020 | Fibre Management | Marina Theatre asbestos survey | £3,100 + £620 VAT = £3,720 |
| 21 December 2020 | Marina Theatre Trust | Marina Theatre management fee | £37,500 + £7,500 VAT = £45,000 |
| 21 December 2020 | East Point Business Services | Hamilton House rent | £3,675 + £735 VAT = £4,410 |
| 21 December 2020 | East Point Business Services | Hamilton House capital repay | £3,357.40 + £671.48 VAT = £4,028.88 |
| 21 December 2020 | HMRC | HMRC November 2020 | £4,211.62 |
| 23 December 2020 | Salaries | Salaries December 2020 | £10,248.01 |
| 31 December 2020 | NPower | Electricity charges | £100.59 + £5.03 VAT = £105.62 |
| 31 December 2020 | Unity Trust Bank | Bank charges | £40.65 |

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Table 3 January Income

| Date | Received from | Description | Amount |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| 4 January 2021 | Market Income | Weekly Market Income | £54.50 |
| 8 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Refund for Planning Application | £231 |
| 11 January 2021 | Market Income | Weekly market Income | £18.50 |
| 18 January 2021 | Market Income | Weekly Market Income | £30.50 |
| 18 January 2021 | Groundwork UK | Neighbourhood Plan Grant | £4,354 |
| 19 January 2021 | Tenant | Rental Income from Tenant | £6,300 |
| 20 January 2021 | Tenant | Rental Income from Tenant | £6,250 |
| 25 January 2021 | Market Income | Weekly Market Income | £42.50 |
| 25 January 2021 | Tenant | Rental Income from Tenant | £213.16 |

Table 4 January Expenditure

| Date | Payment to | Description | Amount |
|-----------------|----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 4 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Pakefield Street PC business rates | £122 |
| 4 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Kensington Gardens PC business rates | £210 |
| 4 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Sparrows Nest bowls pavilion business rates | £110 |
| 4 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Links Road car park business rates | £187 |
| 4 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Triangle Market PC business rates | £117 |
| 6 January 2021 | Suffolk Pension Fund | Pensions December 2020 | £4,438.65 |
| 8 January 2021 | NPower | Electricity Charges | £352.93 |
| 15 January 2021 | East Suffolk Norse | Partnership Charge December 2020 | £36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830 |

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| Date | Payment to | Description | Amount |
|-----------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 15 January 2021 | East Suffolk Norse | Partnership Charge January 2020 | £36,525 + £7,305 VAT = £43,830 |
| 15 January 2021 | SLCC | Deputy Clerk Membership (half being recharged to Brome and Oakley Parish Council) | £289 |
| 15 January 2021 | Disability Advice North East Suffolk | Covid-19 Grant | £1,500 |
| 15 January 2021 | East Suffolk Council | Membership Contribution to Lowestoft Rising Jan 2021 to Mar 2022 | £15,000 |
| 15 January 2021 | ID Asbestos | Removal of Asbestos Denes Oval | £470 + £94 VAT = £564 |
| 18 January 2021 | Lloyds Bank | Credit Card Charges | £32.03 |
| 18 January 2021 | Need2Store Ltd | Civic Artefact Storage | £200 + £40 VAT = £240 |
| 19 January 2021 | Public Works Loan Board | Repayment of PWLB Loan | £7,151 |
| 19 January 2021 | Land Registry | Land Registry Search | £3 |
| 21 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £177.76 |
| 21 January 2021 | HMRC | HMRC December 2020 | £4,211.42 |
| 22 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £351.67 |
| 22 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £74.31 |
| 22 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £69.62 |
| 22 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £68.80 |
| 22 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £378.88 |
| 22 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £105.04 |
| 22 January 2021 | Salaries | Salaries January 2021 | £10,273.21 |
| 25 January 2021 | Gazprom Energy | Town Hall Gas | £45.70 |
| 26 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £240.14 |
| 26 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £75.12 |
| 26 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £74.26 |

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| Date | Payment to | Description | Amount |
|-----------------|------------|------------------|---------|
| 26 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £69.58 |
| 26 January 2021 | NPower | Electric Charges | £170.55 |

154.3e. Whether to progress investment of funds – This requires consideration as to whether the Council would wish to tie up funds given the overall cash flow may not be quite the same. Having long term funds with relatively low return may be more problematic at the moment. This can be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee or at a future Full Council meeting as required.

154.3f. The Internal Audit Report, to be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee on 11 February 2021 – The report is being finalised, and will be presented to the Finance and Governance Committee, together with the RFO's Action Plan, before being considered by Full Council. There has been an improvement in the debtor situation. It would be useful to review the Reserves Policy and the Council's ambitions, whilst ensuring the implications of the budget are reflected properly. With the 1.54% reduction the Council has agreed there will still be a reserves contribution of almost £80,000.

154.3g. Review the Asset Register and insurance arrangements, including insurance procurement – The Council is nearing the end of its current contract for insurance. A Chartered Surveyor is looking at insurance values for the Town Council's sites at the moment, then there will be an open procurement process for the new contract. The Council now has a clearer idea about its asset base and values, and experience of insurance over the last three years. Given that, it was queried whether the Council would be happy to delegate authority to the Clerk to draw up a process which would cover the Council for the next three years - if a better deal can be secured over three years than it can over one year – as this needs to progress quickly now. Additionally, there is a consultation running at the moment about the Local Government Pension Scheme provision and related insurance arrangements for ill health. The Town Council does not currently have insurance for pension-linked ill health cover. The Council has key worker accident cover. The Clerk would like to look into this further. It is hoped the Council can reach a stage where it can obtain insurance cover over the next three years at no greater amount than it is currently paying year on year, and it can also secure some pension-linked ill health cover. The insurance cover will be considered by the Finance and Governance Committee first as it is not something the Council currently has. The Council would like some information regarding what risks are insured and what is uninsurable at any new assets the Council has, particularly The Ness, once the Clerk has completed the procurement exercise. It was queried whether, if there is a question over whether additional insurance is required for The Ness, this should extend to the entire North Denes. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to the Clerk to carry out the procurement exercise for insurance, before reporting the results back to the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council for approval; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

A comfort break was taken 20:37 and the meeting resumed 20:43

Cllr Page temporarily left the meeting 20:37

The Finance and Administration Assistant left the meeting 20:43

154.3h. The progress and cost of repair work to the Jubilee Bridge (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

155. Governance

155.1. Actions by the Town Council in response to the Covid-19 pandemic – The Covid-19 grant fund

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is still available. Liaison with other bodies about the current and future situation is ongoing.

156. Assets, Inclusion and Development

156.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 4 January 2021 – The draft minutes were noted.

Cllr Page returned 20:45

156.2. The following recommendations from the AID Committee:

156.2a. Install the wheelchair accessible picnic bench at the Stoven Close play area at a reasonable distance from the existing bench and bin, and at the Gunton Community Park along the pathway where there is an existing bench – The question of providing a pathway to the benches has been raised. A wheelchair user currently accesses the play area without a path. Norse has recommended not installing a path if the current surface is reasonable, and it could be quite expensive to do. An indicative quotation is being sought for consideration. It was queried whether the installation of the new bench should be delayed until after the current lockdown restrictions have been lifted, but the other benches on Town Council land are still available for use and it was not thought that the addition of a new bench would increase the risk. Cllr Coleby proposed proceeding with the installation of wheelchair accessible picnic benches in the Stoven Close play area and Gunton Community Park, as per the locations identified by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee; seconded by Cllr Lang; twelve Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

156.2b. Accepting the offer of a memorial bench for the Belle Vue Park cemetery, subject to there being no issues with a bench being sited in this location – The offer has been received from a District Councillor. There was some concern about the limitations as to what can be placed in this location, but there should be no issues if the Council is happy to proceed, as long as the bench is in keeping with any other benches nearby. Longer term, the Council is reviewing its memorial bench policy, which will take account of East Suffolk Council's policy. It was suggested that the bench could have a maritime theme. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the offer of a memorial bench for the Belle Vue Park cemetery; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

156.2c. Appointing Cllr Green as the Town Council's representative for the East Suffolk Council Open Space Study Consultation, with Cllr Coleby as the substitute representative (subject to his agreement) – Cllr Coleby confirmed he would be happy to be the substitute representative. Cllr Green proposed approval of the recommendation to appoint Cllr Green as the Town Council's representative for the East Suffolk Council Open Space Study Consultation, with Cllr Coleby as the substitute representative; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

156.2d. Not reinstating the pedestrian gate removed from the footpath alongside The Ravine (also supported by the Climate Emergency Committee) –

Cllr Pitts temporarily left the meeting 20:56

The gate was removed as it is in a state of disrepair. It appears that the gate does not serve a purpose, particularly as the one at the top of The Ravine was removed some time ago.

Cllr Pitts returned 20:58

This location is part of the conservation area so it was requested that this item is deferred whilst officers make enquiries to ensure that the gate is not of historical significance. It was agreed the gate should not be reinstated in the interim but should not be disposed of either, until enquiries have been made.

156.3. Changes to the rights of way in line with the new layout of The Ness – The layout was changed with the development of The Ness. Rights of way now need to be changed on a longer term basis, and needs to be progressed promptly or further costs will be due. East Suffolk Council is currently covering the cost. It is understood that an historic right of way

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dating back to the 1800s is being removed, which East Suffolk Council may not have the authority to do. East Suffolk Council has advised that the right of way being created in its place is better. As landowner, it was queried whether the Town Council should first research whether there are any historic covenants attached to the right of way being removed, and whether any public consultation should take place. The rope walk may also be an issue preventing the change. It was suggested that legal advice should be sought, but rights of way legislation can be complex and this needs to be resolved promptly. A temporary right of way closure was put in place which the Town Council agreed to whilst work was ongoing. The Town Council was informed at various stages about how the layout would work. Suffolk County Council will look at the rights of way layouts, but this should not preclude other rights of way being claimed. It is hoped Suffolk County Council would not progress anything which is not within its remit. It was queried how much it would cost to close the right of way and how much it would cost to reopen it if needed. An application for a temporary closure of up to six months would cost £970, application to the Secretary of State for an extended closure would be £600 and emergency closure would be £600. A rights of way diversion is usually £3,000. It was felt that an historical right of way had been affected by the designation of this area and queried why East Suffolk Council had not gone through this process before development of the site started. It was suggested that the Town Council could therefore ask East Suffolk Council to bear any additional costs, although if it is simply a case of asking Suffolk County Council to extend the deadline, additional costs may not be applicable. Cllr Taylor proposed approval to progress the application for the new right of way; seconded by Cllr Green; eight Councillors voted in favour; three Councillors voted against; two Councillors abstained from the vote.

- 156.4. Arrangements for bestowing Freedom of the Town (some aspects may be confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 156.5. Finalising the arrangements for the Whitton Green play area refurbishment (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

157. Planning and Environment

- 157.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meetings on 15 December 2020 and 5 January 2021 – The draft minutes were noted. Cllr Hardie advised she was dismayed and alarmed following comments made at the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee about the Planning and Environment Committee and its members. The Councillor who had made the comments was not present at this meeting but had been advised and would be amending their statement.

158. Climate Emergency

- 158.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 12 January 2021 – The draft minutes were noted.
- 158.2. The following recommendations from the Climate Emergency Committee:
 - 158.2a. Proceeding with an assessment of the Town Council's carbon footprint – This has also been considered by the Finance and Governance Committee. If the Town Council is to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030, the assessment should provide a starting point and indicate the required actions to achieve this. Cllr Pearce proposed proceeding with an assessment of the Town Council's carbon footprint; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

159. Community Safety

- 159.1. Receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting on 21 January 2021 and note that any recommendations will be considered at February's Full Council meeting – The draft minutes were noted.

160. Representative Roles

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- 160.1. The request for the Events and Communications Officer to join the Heritage Open Days Steering Group – Cllr Pearce proposed approval for the Events and Communications Officer to join the Heritage Open Days Steering Group; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 160.2. Appointing a representative to the Lowestoft Rising Sponsor Board – The Clerk attended the last meeting as there was not time to appoint a Councillor representative beforehand, and the notes have been circulated. The Town Council has become a funding partner and will have voting rights at the meeting. Cllr Coleby put himself forward as the Town Council's representative, and was seconded by Cllr Pearce. Cllr Green put himself forward as the substitute representative, and was seconded by Cllr Pearce. All Councillors voted in favour.
- 160.3. Appointing a representative to the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership – It was clarified that items 160.3 – 160.6 are roles previously fulfilled by Peter Collecott. Cllr Pearce put himself forward and was seconded by Cllr Green; twelve Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.
- 160.4. Appointing a representative to Lowestoft in Bloom – Cllr Breakspear put himself forward and was seconded by Cllr Lang; all Councillors voted in favour.
- 160.5. Appointing a representative to the Lowestoft Vision Board – Cllr Knight is the substitute representative currently and would be happy to become the representative. Cllr Hardie put herself forward as the substitute representative. Cllr Pearce proposed Cllr Knight as the Town Council's representative to the Lowestoft Vision Board, with Cllr Hardie as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 160.6. Appointing a substitute representative to the Third Crossing Stakeholders' Group – Cllr Lang put himself forward for this position as it fits with community safety, particularly ensuring that due consideration is given to arrangements for the bicycle lanes. This was seconded by Cllr Butler and all Councillors voted in favour.

161. Date of next meeting

23 February 2021 19:30

162. 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 Coleby; all in favour. The Mayor 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.

163. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

163.1. Any legal matters, including those above as required

154.3h The progress and cost of repair work to the Jubilee Bridge (confidential) – An update was given.

Cllr Frost left the meeting 21:44

Cllr Hardie made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

Cllr Hardie left the meeting 21:55

Cllr Coleby proposed suspending Standing Order 3y to allow the meeting to continue; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Page left the meeting 21:56

156.4 Arrangements for bestowing Freedom of the Town (some aspects may be confidential) Arrangements for bestowing Freedom of the Town were discussed and officers will look into this further.

156.5 Finalising the arrangements for the Whitton Green play area refurbishment (confidential) – The arrangements for the project were discussed. Cllr Coleby made a

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council Meeting

Held via Video Meeting

19:30 on 26 January 2021

confidential proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

The Mayor closed the meeting 22:08.

Signed:

27 April 2021

