

Lowestoft Town Council

Annual Meeting

Whitton Residents' Hall, Hawthorn Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 9BB

19:30 on 18 May 2021

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum, Wendy Brooks, Robert Breakspear, Colin Butler, Neil Coleby (for part), Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Peter Knight, Peter Lang, Paul Page, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, John Pitts, Alice Taylor and David Youngman

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: Two members of the public were in attendance (via Zoom webinar)

1. Election of the Mayor

There had been a request from members of the public for Councillors to remove their masks when speaking, if they feel comfortable doing so.

Cllr Youngman nominated Cllr Hardie for the position of Mayor; seconded by Cllr Butler. Cllr Coleby nominated Cllr Green for the position of Mayor; seconded by Cllr Pearce. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllr Hardie received seven votes and Cllr Green received ten votes. There was a request for all votes to be taken as recorded votes. Cllr Patience raised a point of order that this should have been requested before the vote was taken, but it was agreed that recorded voting would apply from this point on. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Coleby, Green, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce and Pitts voted in favour of Cllr Green being elected as the Mayor.

2. Appointment of the Deputy Mayor

Cllr Taylor nominated Cllr Hardie for the position of Deputy Mayor; seconded by Cllr Knight. Cllr Page nominated Cllr Begum for the position of Deputy Mayor; seconded by Cllr Patience. Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Lang for the position of Deputy Mayor; seconded by Cllr Pitts. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllrs Breakspear, Butler, Frost, Hardie, Knight, Taylor and Youngman voted for Cllr Hardie. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Green, Page, Parker and Patience voted for Cllr Begum. Cllrs Coleby, Lang, Pearce and Pitts voted for Cllr Lang. An absolute majority was required. Cllr Lang withdrew and the vote was taken again for Cllrs Hardie and Begum. Cllrs Breakspear, Butler, Frost, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Hardie. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Coleby, Green, Page, Parker, Patience and Pearce voted in favour of Cllr Begum. As both Councillors had received nine votes each it was suggested that they could both be appointed as Deputy Mayor for six months each, or the Mayor could use his casting vote. Cllr Knight advised he would like to change his vote to support Cllr Begum instead. Cllr Hardie advised she would like to withdraw and Cllr Begum was duly appointed as the Deputy Mayor. Cllr Coleby made a statement and announced he was resigning.

Cllr Coleby left the meeting 19:44

3. Mayor's Welcome

The Mayor reminded Councillors and members of the public of the application of the video meeting protocol and that, in the interests of openness and transparency, the law permits filming, recording or other means of reporting of meetings. Cllr Green as Mayor duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4. Apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

No apologies had been received. Cllrs Tara Carlton and Tracey Eastwood had not provided apologies and were absent. Cllrs Begum and Parker had advised they may need to leave the meeting early.

5. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

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There were none.

6. The draft minutes of the meeting on 5 May 2021

Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the minutes of the meeting on 5 May 2021; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

7. Public forum

There were two members of the public present on the Zoom webinar but did not indicate a wish to speak. No advance comments had been received.

8. Review and adoption of the Council's policies and procedures, including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

All policies and procedures have been reviewed throughout the year by the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee, the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council. Full Council has already voted to adopt the Standing Orders in their current form, subject to there being a full review of them in 2021 – 2022. Cllr Pearce proposed adopting all policies and procedures in their current form, with the Standing Orders being subject to a full review in 2021 – 2022; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

9. Review and adoption of delegated authority and Committee arrangements

9.1 Committees, including the following:

9.1a Review and adoption of the Terms of Reference – Cllr Pearce had identified some minor amendments with a couple of the documents, which have been applied. All amendments previously agreed by Full Council to take effect from the Annual Meeting have been applied. Cllr Pearce proposed to adopt the Terms of Reference for all Committees; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

9.1b Composition –

Finance and Governance Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Green, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce and Taylor.

Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Page, Pearce and Pitts.

Personnel Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Barker, Brooks, Frost, Hardie, Parker, Patience, Pearce and Taylor.

Planning Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Brooks, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Pearce and Taylor.

Community Safety Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Brooks, Lang, Page, Parker and Pearce.

Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Barker, Brooks, Lang, Page, Pearce and Youngman.

9.1c Delegations (officer, Committee and Sub-Committee) – Delegations have been reviewed by the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the current delegations to officers, Committees and Sub-Committees; seconded by Cllr Parker; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Page, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Frost voted against.

9.1d Appointment of Chairs:

Finance and Governance Committee – Cllr Begum nominated Cllr Pearce as Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee; seconded by Cllr Barker. Cllr Hardie nominated Cllr Taylor as Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee; seconded by Cllr Breakspear. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Butler, Green, Lang, Page, Parker,

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Patience, Pearce and Pitts voted in favour of Cllr Pearce. Cllrs Breakspear, Frost, Hardie, Knight and Taylor voted in favour of Cllr Taylor. Cllr Youngman abstained from the vote. Cllr Pearce was duly appointed as Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee.

Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee – Cllr Butler nominated Cllr Breakspear as Chair of the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee Chair; seconded by Cllr Taylor. Cllr Page nominated Cllr Brooks as Chair of the AID Committee; seconded by Cllr Patience. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllrs Breakspear, Butler, Frost, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Pitts and Taylor voted in favour of Cllr Breakspear. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Brooks. Cllr Green used his casting vote as Mayor to vote for Cllr Breakspear. Cllr Breakspear was duly appointed as Chair of the AID Committee.

Personnel Committee – Cllr Brooks nominated Cllr Barker as Chair of the Personnel Committee; seconded by Cllr Patience. Cllr Hardie nominated Cllr Taylor as Chair of the Personnel Committee; seconded by Cllr Frost. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Green, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce and Pitts voted in favour of Cllr Barker. Cllrs Breakspear, Butler, Frost, Hardie, Knight, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Taylor. Cllr Barker was duly appointed as Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Planning Committee – Cllr Youngman nominated Cllr Knight as Chair of the Planning Committee; seconded by Cllr Hardie. There were no other nominations. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Hardie, Lang, Page, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Knight. Cllrs Knight and Patience voted against. Cllr Knight was duly appointed as Chair of the Planning Committee.

Community Safety Committee – Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Lang as Chair of the Community Safety Committee; seconded by Cllr Begum. There were no other nominations. All Councillors voted in favour and Cllr Lang was duly appointed as Chair of the Community Safety Committee.

Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee – Cllr Begum nominated Cllr Youngman and Chair of the Climate Emergency and Ecological Committee; seconded by Cllr Lang. There were no other nominations. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Butler, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Page, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour. Cllr Patience voted against; Cllr Brooks abstained from the vote.

- 9.2 Officer delegations and signatory delegations – This was covered to some extent by item 9.1c. Delegations have been reviewed by the Finance and Governance Committee and Full Council. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the current officer and signatory delegations; seconded by Cllr Youngman; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Page, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Frost abstained from the vote.

10. Review and appointment of representatives of the Council on other bodies

Board of Trustees of Lowestoft Charity Board Charities – Cllr Pearce proposed that Cllrs Hardie and Knight continue in their roles as Trustees; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

Britten as a Boy Statue Steering Committee – Cllr Brooks proposed that Cllr Pearce become the representative (previously the substitute representative. Cllr Page advised he would like to be substitute representative. The vote to appoint Cllr Pearce as the representative was

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taken. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Frost voted against. The vote to appoint Cllr Page as the substitute representative was taken. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Frost abstained from the vote.

CEFAS and Promoting Pakefield Group – Cllr Knight declared a pecuniary interest in this item and temporarily left the meeting at 20:11. Cllr Pearce proposed that Cllr Pitts continue in his representative role; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour. Cllr Knight returned 20:12.

Community Enabler Project Board – Cllr Hardie advised she wished to stand down from her representative role. Cllr Brooks advised she would like to be the representative. The vote was taken and Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Frost voted against; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote.

Cultural Leadership Group – Cllr Patience nominated Cllr Barker as the Town Council's representative. Cllrs Taylor and Hardie advised they would also like to be considered as representatives. Cllr Pearce seconded Cllr Barker's nomination. Cllr Frost seconded Cllr Taylor and Cllr Hardie's nominations. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience and Pearce voted in favour of Cllr Barker. Cllrs Breakspear, Frost, Green, Hardie, Knight, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Taylor. Cllr Butler voted in favour of Cllr Hardie. An absolute majority was required. Cllr Hardie withdrew her nomination. The votes for Cllrs Barker and Taylor were taken again. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Brooks, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience and Pearce voted in favour of Cllr Barker. Cllrs Breakspear, Butler, Frost, Green, Hardie, Knight, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Taylor. Cllr Taylor was duly appointed as the representative to the Cultural Leadership Group. Cllr Taylor nominated Cllr Barker as the substitute representative. There were no further nominations. The vote was taken and Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote.

East Suffolk Community Partnership – Cllr Pearce advised he would like to remain as the Town Council's representative. Cllr Taylor nominated Cllr Lang as the representative. Cllr Pearce proposed that he become the substitute to Cllr Lang, and this was seconded by Cllr Lang. Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote.

East Suffolk Communities Team - Whitton – Cllr Lang nominated Cllr Barker as the Council's representative; seconded by Cllr Begum; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote. Cllr Lang advised he would like to be the substitute representative; seconded by Cllr Green; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote.

East Suffolk Council Open Space Study Consultation – Cllr Brooks advised she would like to be the substitute representative. Cllr Green (as the current representative) advised he wished to step down from this role. Cllr Lang nominated Cllr Brooks as the Town Council's representative; seconded by Cllr Pearce; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts and Youngman voted in favour; Cllrs Frost, Hardie and Taylor voted against. Cllr Lang advised he would like to be the

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substitute representative; seconded by Cllr Pearce; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote.

First Light Festival Steering Group – Cllr Lang nominated Cllr Taylor as the Council's representative; seconded by Cllr Hardie. Cllr Patience nominated Cllr Barker as the Town Council's representative; seconded by Cllr Brooks. The vote was taken in the order the nominations were made. Cllrs Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour of Cllr Taylor. It was noted that there are two representative roles to this Steering Group, and two nominations had been put forward. It was requested that the rest of the items on the agenda are deferred to June's Full Council meeting. It was clarified that Cllrs Barker and Taylor could both be appointed to the First Light Festival Steering Group and all Councillors voted in favour to support this.

Friends of Fen Park – Cllr Hardie advised she wished to stand down from this representative role. Cllr Frost advised she would like to be appointed as the representative; seconded by Cllr Knight; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Hardie, Knight, Lang, Page, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Parker abstained from the vote. Cllr Lang advised he would like to continue as the substitute representative. Cllr Taylor proposed approval for Cllr Lang to continue his substitute representative role; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

Heritage Action Zone Steering Group and Heritage Champions, High Street HAZ and Seafront Masterplan and London Road Lowestoft High Street HAZ – Cllr Knight advised he would like to stand down as the Council's representative. Cllr Taylor advised she would like to remain as the Council's representative, and this was seconded by Cllr Hardie. Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Begum as the representative; seconded by Cllr Lang. Cllr Page nominated Cllr Patience as the representative; seconded by Cllr Pearce. Cllr Begum advised that she would be happy to be the substitute representative, with Cllrs Patience and Taylor as the representative. All Councillors voted in favour to appoint Cllrs Patience and Taylor as the representatives. All Councillors voted in favour to appoint Cllr Begum as the substitute representative.

Cllr Begum temporarily left the meeting 20:35 and returned 20:36

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the meeting 20:36

Kirkley People's Forum – Cllr Hardie advised she would like to stand down as the Council's substitute representative. Cllr Lang nominated Cllrs Frost and Taylor to continue as the Town Council's representatives; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour. There were no nominations for a substitute representative.

Cllr Brooks returned 20:38

Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership – Cllr Pearce advised he would like to continue in this representative role; seconded by Cllr Parker. Cllr Lang advised he would like to be the substitute representative; seconded by Cllr Taylor. All Councillors voted in favour to appoint Cllr Pearce as the representative. All Councillors voted in favour to appoint Cllr Lang as the substitute representative.

Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association – Cllr Pearce nominated Cllr Lang to continue in this representative role, and Cllr Youngman to continue in the substitute representative role; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

Lowestoft Development Group – It is understood this group has not met and may have disbanded. Cllr Pearce proposed that Cllrs Knight and Taylor continue in their representative roles; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

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It was agreed that the remainder of the representative roles would be carried forward to be considered at June's Full Council meeting. Cllr Breakspear proposed that in the interim those roles which have not yet been reviewed will continue to be fulfilled by the current representatives and substitute representatives; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

A comfort break was taken 20:43 and the meeting resumed 20:49

Cllrs Begum, Frost and Patience left the meeting 20:49

11. Review and agreement of the meeting schedule for 2021 – 2022

It was agreed to take items 11, 12, 13 and 14 as one vote. Cllr Green proposed agreement of the meeting schedule for 2021 – 2022, approval to the receipt of summonses to meetings electronically, approval of the register of land and assets including building and office equipment and approval of the arrangements for insurance cover; seconded by Cllr Hardie; all in favour.

12. Receipt of summonses to meetings electronically

This was included in the vote at item 11.

13. Review of the register of land and assets including building and office equipment

This was included in the vote at item 11.

14. The arrangements for insurance cover

This was included in the vote at item 11.

15. Finance and Governance:

15.1 Financial matters for the year ending 31 March 2021, including the following:

15.1a Completion of the Internal Controls review and receipt of the report (received at Full Council 27 April 2021) – The report had been circulated and received previously. Completion of the review was noted.

15.1b The end of year accounts and completion of the bank reconciliation for the year ending 31 March 2021 – Cllr Taylor proposed approval of the end of year accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ending 31 March 2021; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

15.2 Any audit matters including the following:

15.2a Receipt of internal audit report and RFO Action Plan and review of internal audit services at Full Council meeting on 27 April 2021 – It was noted that the internal audit report and RFO Action Plan had been received and accepted at the Full Council meeting on 27 April 2021.

15.2b The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2020 – 2021 and associated papers and processes for external audit, including:

15.2bi The internal audit report (AGAR) – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the internal audit report (AGAR); seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

15.2bii Approval of the Annual Governance Statements (Section 1 AGAR) – Cllr Pearce proposed to approval the Annual Governance Statements (Section 1 AGAR); seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

15.2biii Approval of the Accounting Statements (Section 2 AGAR) and noting the associated papers, including significant variations and bank reconciliation – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the Accounting Statements (Section 2 AGAR) and the associated papers, including the significant variations and bank reconciliation; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

15.2biv The period for the exercise of public rights – It was noted that the period for the exercise of public right was from 14 June 2021 – 23 July 2021.

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15.3 Urgent financial matters for the current year, including the following:

15.3a Bank signatories – The bank signatories were Cllrs Neil Coleby, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Peter Lang and Andy Pearce. Cllr Pearce proposed removing Cllr Coleby as a bank signatory and appointing Cllr Begum instead, subject to her approval, and for the other bank signatories to continue in this role; seconded by Cllr Page; Cllrs Barker, Begum, Breakspear, Brooks, Butler, Frost, Green, Knight, Lang, Page, Parker, Patience, Pearce, Pitts, Taylor and Youngman voted in favour; Cllr Hardie abstained from the vote.

15.3b Bank reconciliation signatories – Cllr Pearce proposed that Cllrs Page and Youngman continue as bank reconciliation signatories; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

15.3c Internal controller and substitute – Cllr Pearce proposed that Cllr Hardie continues as the internal controller, with Cllr Taylor as the substitute; seconded by Cllr Butler; all in favour.

15.3d Internal control arrangements – The Finance and Governance Committee has reviewed the arrangements and the internal control checklist. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the current internal control arrangements; seconded by Cllr Breakspear; all in favour.

15.3e Fees and charges remaining at 2020 – 2021 rates, pending review if necessary by the Finance and Governance Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed approval for the fees and charges to remain at the 2020 – 2021 rates; seconded by Cllr Lang; all in favour.

16. Date of the next meeting

25 May 2021 19:30 (tbc)

17. Items for the next Agenda

It was queried whether the meeting venue could be reviewed, particularly whether it would be possible to hold some of the Committee and Sub-Committee meetings at Hamilton House, particularly those with fewer members. Officers did carry out an assessment. Lack of ventilation would prevent use of the Council Chamber but it may be possible to use the kitchen area. If it is safe to do so this could be progressed automatically, without the need for it to be added to an agenda. Now that Committee compositions are known it should be easier to judge. It was queried whether a microphone system could be installed at Whitton Residents' Hall. The Council no longer has portable microphones at Hamilton House. Officers will try to make improvements where possible, but certain things will be difficult to achieve if it is likely that meetings will only be held at this venue for a short period. Other venues were explored, such as the Uplands Community Centre, but most had other difficulties attached, such as availability.

The Mayor thanked those who had been viewing the livestream of the meeting. There were no confidential matters for consideration and the Mayor closed the meeting 21:02.

18. Resolution to close the meeting to the public

Signed: 

22 June 2021