

Lowestoft Town Council
Full Council Meeting
Whitton Residents' Hall, Hawthorn Avenue, Lowestoft, NR33 9BB
18:30 on 21 December 2021

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Wendy Brooks, Alan Green (Mayor), Peter Knight, Christian Newsome, Graham Parker, Keith Patience and Andy Pearce

In attendance (remotely via Zoom): Sarah Foote (Deputy Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee and Project Clerk)

Public: There were two members of the public in attendance (one in person, one on Zoom webinar)

129. Welcome

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

130. Apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Colin Butler, Amanda Frost, Peter Lang, Paul Page, Alice Taylor, David Youngman and Elise 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. Cllrs Begum and Pitts were in attendance via the Zoom webinar, which enabled them to participate in discussions, but not in voting.

131. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

Cllr Newsome declared a local non-pecuniary interest in item 136.2f. Cllr Barker declared a local non-pecuniary interest in items 133 (a public comment circulated in advance references a working group which she was a member of as a Waveney District Councillor), 136.7, 137 and 140. Cllr Patience declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to East Suffolk Council. Cllr Pearce declared a local non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Gunton and Fen Park. Cllr Pearce also declared that he had accepted an offer from the Marina Theatre of complimentary tickets to attend the press night performance of the pantomime. This has been declared on his Register of Interests. Cllr Green also accepted the offer and has declared this on his Register of Interests. Cllr Barker also accepted the offer but did not attend. Cllr Barker declared that she is the Town Council's appointed Trustee to the Marina Theatre Trust Board. Cllr Patience advised he would need to leave the meeting at 20:10. It was agreed that item 134.7 would be considered first, in case the meeting became inquorate later on.

132. The draft minutes of the meeting on 23 November 2021

Cllr Knight proposed acceptance of the minutes; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

133. Public forum

The member of the public in attendance in person wished to speak about an item which was not on the agenda. It was agreed he would send details to Cllr Green for inclusion on a future agenda. The member of the public in attendance via Zoom webinar had sent comments in advance of the meeting, which had been circulated to Councillors and were read out. The comment expressed concern for the missing civic artefacts and thanked the Town Council for the support it has given to history and heritage projects over the last year. Cllr Patience expressed concern regarding the whereabouts of a particular heritage item – the central staircase from the former Planning Office on Rectory Road. Cllr Barker advised she had a full list of the civic artefacts which had been provided to the Clerk. It was agreed that any further discussion should take place at the relevant agenda item.

134.7. Consideration and determination of the 2022 – 2023 budget and precept, and the recommendation from the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee to demand a £1,867,228 precept

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for 2022 - 2023, Band D Council Tax equivalent £146.63 (equating to a 2.77% increase on the Band D Council Tax equivalent for 2021 – 2022), and arrangements for any adjustments – The Budget and Loan Sub-Committee has considered this carefully and has reduced a number of costs to minimise the impact on taxpayers. Contingency is required for the Town Hall, Marina Theatre, Norse contract and Hamilton House, particularly for crucial dates in 2023. Provision has been made to continue meeting obligations for public services, including refurbishment of public conveniences, parks and play areas. Budgets for each of these have increased, to continue the Council's commitment to refurbishing at least one play area and set of public conveniences per year. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation from the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

134. Finance

- 134.1. The draft minutes of the meeting on 30 November 2021 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 134.2. Recommendations from the Finance and Governance Committee:
- 134.2a. Adopting the Financial Regulations, as amended – Cllr Pearce proposed adoption of the Financial Regulations as amended, and to grant delegated authority the Finance and Governance Committee to review and consider adoption of the Financial Risk Assessment and Investment Policy; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 134.2b. Reviewing the following Town Council policies: - This item was covered with the consideration of the previous item.
- 134.2c. 134.2bi. Financial Risk Assessment
134.2bii. Investment Policy
- 134.3. Receipt and consideration of the following:
- 134.3a. 2021 – 2022 budget position – The budget monitoring documents had been circulated. Cllr Green proposed acceptance of the current budget position; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 134.3b. Bank reconciliations – October and November's bank reconciliations had been sent to Councillor bank reconciliation signatory. It was queried whether the Council were receiving payment for the external hiring of its Council Chamber. It may be that payment had not been received within that specific period, but it was agreed this would be discussed further under item 135.1.
- 134.3c. Payments, including those made under delegated authority, income and expenditure reports for the month ending 30 November 2021 and December 2021 to date, and any payments for approval, including the following:
- 134.3ci Society of Local Council Clerks subscription for the Deputy Clerk (£289, noting £144.50 will be reimbursed) – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this payment; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

The income and expenditure reports were received and noted as follows:

Table 1 November Income

Date	Received From	Description	Amount
1 November 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£42.50
1 November 2021	Tenant	Rental Income from Tenant	£213.16
1 November 2021	J Hugman	Hire of Whitton Hall	£42
3 November 2021	C&C Consulting	Return of Double Payment	£42.30 + £8.46 VAT = £50.76

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Date	Received From	Description	Amount
5 November 2021	East Suffolk Council	Contribution for Legal Advice	£2,000
8 November 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£42.50
11 November 2021	G Smith	Hire of Whitton Hall	£56
12 November 2021	HMRC	VAT Return Q2 2021	£36,829.50
15 November 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£42.50
18 November 2021	T Hugman	Whitton Hall Hire	£70
22 November 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£42.50
25 November 2021	Anglian Water	Links Road Car Park Works	£11,000
25 November 2021	R Phipps	Whitton Hall Hire	£56
29 November 2021	Market Income	Weekly Market Income	£18.50
29 November 2021	Tenant	Rental Income from Tenant	£213.16

Table 2 November Expenditure

Date	Payment To	Description	Amount
1 November 2021	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall Gas	£57.11 + £2.86 VAT = £59.97
1 November 2021	East Suffolk Council	Links Road Car Park Business Rates November 2021	£187
1 November 2021	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls Club Business Rates November 2021	£110
1 November 2021	East Suffolk Council	Hamilton House Business Rates November 2021	£2,008
1 November 2021	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit	£250
2 November 2021	C&C Consulting	Health and Safety Support (Direct Debit)	£42.30 + £8.46 VAT = £50.76

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Date	Payment To	Description	Amount
2 November 2021	Land Registry	Land Registry Searches	£6
4 November 2021	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions October 2021	£4,140.74
9 November 2021	Anglian Water	Water charges Denes Oval 2018-2021	£2,370.87 + £474.18 VAT = £2,845.05
10 November 2021	C&C Consulting	Health and Safety Consultancy	£735 + £147 = £882
16 November 2021	Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Purchases	£166.63
17 November 2021	Henry Baker	Remembrance Film	£550
18 November 2021	NPower	Triangle Market Electric	£179.05 + £8.95 VAT = £188
18 November 2021	Need2Store	Civic Artefact Storage	£200 + £40 VAT = £240
19 November 2021	NPower	Kensington Gardens Electric	£71.52+ £3.58 VAT = £75.20
19 November 2021	NPower	Kensington Gardens Electric	£53.77 + £2.69 VAT = £56.46
19 November 2021	NPower	Denes Oval Electric	£208.32 + £10.42 VAT = £218.74
19 November 2021	NPower	Lowestoft Cemetery PC Electric	£59.56 + £2.98 VAT = £62.54
19 November 2021	NPower	Pakefield Street PC Electric	£82.03 + £4.10 VAT = £86.13
19 November 2021	NPower	Sparrows Nest Electric	£943.26 + £188.65 VAT = £1,131.91
19 November 2021	Waveney Glass Co Ltd	Hamilton House Reception Glass	£1,074 + £214.80 VAT = £1,288.80
19 November 2021	East Suffolk Norse	Whitton Hall Cleaning	£120 + £24 VAT = £144
19 November 2021	Boggis Electrical Ltd	Marina Theatre First Floor & Bar Ventilation	£2,541.84 + £508.37 VAT = £3,050.21
19 November 2021	Boggis Electrical	Marina Theatre Disabled Toilet Alarms	£699.60 + £139.92 VAT = £839.62

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Date	Payment To	Description	Amount
19 November 2021	Fatstickman Ltd	Digital prints on Hi Vis Vests	£45 + £9 VAT = £54
19 November 2021	The Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath Donation	£55.50
19 November 2021	HMRC	HMRC October 2021	£4,354.12
22 November 2021	NPower	Normanston Park Electric	£88.14 + £4.40 VAT = £92.54
22 November 2021	Anglian Water	Water Charges	£380.11
23 November 2021	British Gas	Gas Charges Whitton Hall	£10
23 November 2021	Anglian Water	Denes Oval Sewage 2018-2021	£2,801.43 + £560.29 VAT = £3,361.72
23 November 2021	BSA	Whitton Hall Emergency Lights	£136.92 + £27.38 VAT = £164.30
23 November 2021	Salaries	Salaries November 2021	£13,003.51
23 November 2021	Nicholsons Solicitors	Legal Advice	£489.60 + £97.92 VAT = £587.52
24 November 2021	East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Rent	£3,675 + £735 VAT = £4,410
24 November 2021	East Point Business Services	Hamilton House IT Support	£3,231 + £646.20 VAT = £3,877.20
24 November 2021	East Point Business Services	Hamilton House Capital Works Repayment	£3,357.40 + £671.48 VAT = £4,028.88
25 November 2021	C&C Counselling	Health and Safety Support	£180.80 + £36.18 VAT = £217.08
25 November 2021	Community Rail Norfolk	Community Rail Norfolk Support Grant and Contribution to Lowestoft Station Evacuation Day History Panels	£1,000
26 November 2021	St Johns Ambulance	Remembrance Day Support	£192 + £38.40 VAT = £230.40
29 November 2021	Eon	Whitton Hall Electric	£32

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Date	Payment To	Description	Amount
29 November 2021	Gazprom Energy	Town Hall Gas	£59.02 + £2.95 VAT = £61.97
29 November 2021	SALC	SALC Membership	£996.50

Table 3 December Income

Date	Payment from	Description	Amount
6 December 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£42.50
13 December 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£43.50
20 December 2021	Waveney Foster Care Support Group	Whitton Hall Hire	£36
20 December 2021	Market	Weekly Market Income	£18.50

Table 4 December Expenditure

Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
1 December 2021	East Suffolk Council	Links Road Car Park Business Rates December 2021	£187
1 December 2021	East Suffolk Council	Sparrows Nest Bowls Club Business Rates December 2021	£110
1 December 2021	East Suffolk Council	Hamilton House Business Rates December 2021	£2,008
3 December 2021	Suffolk Pension Fund	Pensions November 2021	£5,530.94
6 December 2021	Wave	Water Charges	£133.67
6 December 2021	East Suffolk Norse	Whitton Hall Cleaning	£120 + £24 VAT = £144
7 December 2021	Paul Connew	Reimbursement for expenses	£126.60
8 December 2021	Nicholsons Solicitors	Legal Advice	£306 + £61.20 VAT = £367.20
8 December 2021	M Ryan	Memorial Film Filming	£154.20

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Date	Payment to	Description	Amount
8 December 2021	Andy Pearce	Travel Reimbursement	£27.50
8 December 2021	East Suffolk Council	Elmtree By-Election July 2021	£8,001.24
10 December 2021	C&C Consulting	Health and Safety Consultancy	£735 + £147 = £882
10 December 2021	Sarah Foote	Reimbursement	£218.40
10 December 2021	Chris Meek	Reimbursement	£2.58
13 December 2021	Shona Bendix	Reimbursement	£21.30
14 December 2021	Lowestoft & District Allotment Association	Allotment Management Fee	£1,000
14 December 2021	Wave	Kensington Gardens Water 2018-2021	£6,262.35
15 December 2021	Anglian Water	Water Charges	£133.67
15 December 2021	Northumbrian Water	Legionella Maintenance	£593.97 + 118.79 = £712.76
15 December 2021	Nicholsons Solicitors	Legal Advice	£562.50 + £112.50 VAT = £675
16 December 2021	Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Purchases	£603.91
20 December 2021	NPower	Electricity Charges	£224.77
20 December 2021	East Suffolk Norse	Partnership Charge December 2021	£37,550 + £7,510 VAT = £45,060
20 December 2021	HMRC	HMRC November 2021	£5,683.94
20 December 2021	Fatstickman Ltd	Community Warden Equipment	£126.84 + 25.37 VAT = £152.21
20 December 2021	Odd Bods	Whitton Hall Gutter Works	£295 + £59 VAT= £354

Table 5 Whitton deposit returns

Date of Payment	Date of Hire	Amount Returned
16 November 2021	6 November 2021	£100
16 November 2021	13 November 2021	£100

134.4. A budget and delegation for office equipment for new staff – A specific budget for the purchase non-IT related equipment in 2022 – 2023 has been agreed. The Budget and Loan

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- Sub-Committee included budget provision of £8,000, with the Clerk's input. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to the Clerk for expenditure from this budget; seconded by Cllr Barker; six Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against; one Councillor abstained from the vote. It was understood that expenditure may be required in advance of April, to support the requirements of new staff.
- 134.5. Policy steer regarding the following in consideration of the draft budget recommendations from the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee:
- 134.5a. Capital funding provision for the septic tank at Uplands (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 134.5b. Continued membership of Lowestoft Rising beyond 2021 – 2022 (confidential) - To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 134.5c. Capital funding provision for thatching and other works on the Belle Vue Park cottage (confidential) - To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 134.6. Updates to the Reserves document to reflect the previous decisions of the Council (some aspects may be confidential) – A number of items have previously been approved by Full Council which affect the reserves, primarily transfer and ring fencing of funds. Cllr Pearce proposed delegating authority to the Finance and Governance Committee, in conjunction with officers, to update and agree the Reserves document to reflect the previously approved changes; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 134.7. Consideration and determination of the 2022 – 2023 budget and precept, and the recommendation from the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee to demand a £1,867,228 precept for 2022 - 2023, Band D Council Tax equivalent £146.63 (equating to a 2.77% increase on the Band D Council Tax equivalent for 2021 – 2022), and arrangements for any adjustments – This item was considered earlier in the meeting.
- 134.8. Whether to progress a leaflet to accompany the Council Tax bill, within a maximum budget of £2,000 plus VAT – It was agreed that it is important to highlight that the increase to the Town Council's element of the Council Tax bill equates to less than £10 per year. Cllr Pearce proposed progressing a leaflet to accompany the Council Tax, within a maximum budget of £2,000 plus VAT, with delegated authority to the Clerk to determine the wording, with input from Councillors; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. It was agreed to remove the photographs of Councillors and officers which have been included in previous years, and replace them with photographs of Council projects. Councillors were advised to send any comments to officers.
- 134.9. The process for determining the governance and finance arrangements for the feasibility study and other work for the Marina Theatre development under the Towns Fund, including to appoint representatives to the Marina Theatre Towns Fund Working Group and to consider appointing a VAT consultant – Cllrs Begum, Green, Patience, Pearce and the Clerk attended a meeting with the Marina Theatre Trust on 20 December. Earlier meetings have taken place with the Trust and East Suffolk Council. The Trust will be providing draft reporting procedures to dovetail into an amended bipartite agreement on contributory funding to the management of theatre services, which will include quarterly reporting meetings. The suggested lease term is until 2050. If agreed, a draft lease will be prepared to go to Full Council in the New Year. A document to inform the budget of priorities/future challenges will be sent through shortly. A meeting with East Suffolk Council and the Trust will be taking place in January to discuss the Towns Fund. The Council was asked to appoint representatives to a Marina Theatre Towns Fund Working Group, alongside representatives from the Marina Theatre Trust and East Suffolk Council. These will not necessarily be the same Councillors who will attend the quarterly management meetings with the Marina Theatre. East Suffolk Council has advised that funding from the Towns Fund would need to be paid either to the Marina Theatre Trust or the Town Council. The Trust would prefer the funding to be paid to the Town Council. The Town Council would require further information, such as whether contractor invoices would need to be paid from Town Council funds and reimbursed. Cllr Pearce proposed to appoint Cllrs Barker, Brooks, Green and Pearce to the Marina Theatre

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Towns Fund Working Group; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Regarding the lease with the Marina Theatre Trust, Cllr Pearce proposed setting the end date as 2050. It had been agreed at November's Full Council meeting to standardise the two leases into one, and to have quarterly management meetings, with four representatives from each side, rather than appointing Lowestoft Town Councillors to the Board of Trustees. Cllr Barker seconded the proposal. Seven Councillors voted in favour and one Councillor abstained from the vote. The previously appointed Trustees will remain until the new lease is signed. It was agreed that the four representatives to the quarterly management meetings would be appointed when the lease is agreed and signed. The Town Council can generally reclaim VAT but different rules apply in certain circumstances. The Council may not be able to budget accurately if it is unsure what can be reclaimed as part of the Towns Fund project, if it does manage the funds directly. There could also be the additional impact of the Town Hall project. Cllr Brooks proposed that the Council appoints a VAT consultant, with delegated authority to officers to progress the appointment, within an initial maximum budget of £7,500. It is likely that a consultant would charge an hourly rate and it cannot yet be determined how many hours' work will be required, but any additional funds required exceeding the initial budget of £7,500 can be considered by the Council. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.

- 134.10. An update on the supply of laptops to Councillors who have requested them, and a suitable recipient of the tablets that will be surplus to requirements – The laptops have been delivered and are being built by the IT department to ensure the required software is installed. Local schools, colleges and adult education centres were suggested as potential recipients of the tablets. A couple of Councillors who have requested laptops have been long term inactive. It was proposed at the Finance and Governance Committee meeting that laptops should still be ordered for them but should be retained at Hamilton House until those Councillors are able to participate again. Cllr Pearce reiterated that proposal, which was seconded by Cllr Brooks. Cllr Patience advised that he uses his tablet and did not request a laptop, but would like the opportunity to have a laptop if the tablets become obsolete. The vote on the proposal was taken and all Councillors voted in favour. Cllr Knight proposed delegating authority to the Assets, Inclusion and Development (AID) Committee to decide a suitable recipient for the tablets which will be surplus to requirements; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 134.11. An update on the Hamilton House lease and business rates (confidential) – Legal advice on the lease has been sent to Cllrs Green and Pearce. The Council has until February 2023 to exercise the break clause. By then the position regarding the Town Hall should be clearer. The issue regarding business rates is still to be resolved and it is understood there may be duplicate bills.
- 134.12. Arrangements regarding future repairs and maintenance of the Jubilee Bridge (confidential) - To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 134.13. The contract with East Suffolk Norse for grounds maintenance in 2022 - 2023, and the recent East Suffolk Council announcement, including the implications for the Lowestoft Town Council participation in the cross-jurisdictional Environment and Waste Working Group (confidential) – Some Lowestoft Town Councillors are members of the Environment and Waste Working Group. The next meeting is due to take place in January. The Norse contract may be touched on, but the Town Council is still working through an internal contract review. Cllr Pearce proposed instructing the Town Council's delegates on the Working Group that if the Norse contract is mentioned, it is made clear that the Town Council is in the middle of an internal contract review and is not able to discuss it; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

135. Governance

- 135.1. Meeting arrangements/protocol during current Covid-19 guidance/rules – Currently there is no legislation to enable Council meetings to be held via Zoom. Officers have been able to join meetings remotely. Some Councillors have made the decision not to attend in person

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meetings during the current situation but those who do attend do not wish for it to be suggested that this is an irresponsible decision. The Government has not advised that meetings should be cancelled. The Council Chamber is not being used for Council meetings currently but is still be hired out to external bodies. It was suggested that doing so is inconsistent with the Council's safeguards. The 2022 – 2023 budget has not anticipated any income from external bookings, given the current situation. Cllr Pearce proposed that for as long as the Council Chamber is not in use for Council meetings it should not be hired out to external bodies; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour. Councillors were appreciative of the temporary amplification solution which had been provided for this meeting. Cllr Pearce proposed that the cost of it be taken from the officers earmarked reserve, and that until a more permanent amplification system is installed at Hamilton House, these temporary acoustic facilities are used to hold meetings in Hamilton House, subject to any Government restrictions on social distancing, or legislation preventing its use, and subject to the sound engineer being able to deliver; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

136. Assets, Inclusion and Development

136.1. The draft minutes of the meeting on 6 December 2021 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

136.2. The following recommendations from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee:

136.2a. Delegating authority to officers to respond to any urgent enquiries from the press – The Media Policy already enables this. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation, for any situations requiring an opinion or stance to be expressed, which is not already covered by an existing policy, an officer should be able to respond, in liaison via email with Councillors where possible, where it cannot be taken to a Committee. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal. Sometimes the Mayor is approached by the press requesting an immediate response. It was confirmed that this proposal would not override the Mayor's ability to respond to such requests. The vote was taken and all Councillors voted in favour.

136.2b. Retaining the Pakefield Street public conveniences as part of the Town Council's portfolio of public conveniences, following preliminary advice from the Planning Authority – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

136.2c. Including the public conveniences at the Denes Oval with the wider refurbishment of the pavilion, but address any immediate health and safety concerns in the interim – It was reported that a side window is broken, which will be dealt with as an interim health and safety concern. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

136.2d. For the five remaining public conveniences in the Town Council's portfolio, to refurbish three in year one (subject to budget provision) and two in year two – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

136.2e. Prioritising the refurbishment of the Normanston Park, Kirkley Cliff Road and Lowestoft Cemetery public conveniences in year one, and Kensington Gardens and Pakefield Street in year two, with any immediate health and safety concerns or minor improvements at any site to be progressed as a priority – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of this recommendation; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

136.2f. Approving the purchase of a bus shelter at Harris Avenue, within a maximum budget of £7,500, and delegate authority to officers, in conjunction with Cllr Butler, to select a quotation and progress the works – Cllr Butler has reviewed the quotations and recommends purchasing the shelter from BC Shelters, at a cost of £4,500 plus VAT. Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the recommendation from Cllr Butler; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Patience left the meeting 20:13

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- 136.3. Receiving an update on amplification and recording equipment options for the Council Chamber – This was covered with the discussion of item 135.1.
- 136.4. Conclusions from the handover of The Ness, following further works – The Council made a resolution in November not to accept delivery of works or participate in any joint launch events until the snags and defects had been remedied to the Town Council's satisfaction. The Clerk is checking whether the Town Council is legally able to do this, but has advised East Suffolk Council and Concertus. The defects are being addressed and the Clerk has asked Norse about the repair of the swings. Cllr Pearce proposed to reiterate the Council's position, and if the handover must be accepted, to make it known that the Town Council does so under duress; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 136.5. Reviewing the Town Council's position on 'living memorials' (including memorial tree planting), and consideration of a specific request – Currently, the Town Council works to its Open Spaces Strategy and officers understood that the policy on individual memorial planting was clear. A member of the public had contacted the local Member of Parliament following receipt of an administrative response from Town Council officers upon requesting a memorial tree in a park in the Harbour and Normanston Ward. It was suggested that the Open Spaces Strategy itself is not a policy document and the policy on living memorials is ambiguous. Since adopting the Open Spaces Strategy initially, the Town Council has declared climate and health emergencies, which are not referred to in the Strategy. Cllr Pearce proposed that living memorials should be allowed in principle, subject to the fact that they are sourced by the Council and subject to a maintenance agreement. Cllr Pearce further proposed that any memorial policy the Council has is reviewed by the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee at its next meeting, but in the meantime this specific application is approved on a discretionary basis, and delegated authority is given to officers in conjunction with members of the AID Committee to agree specific details, such as the species of tree and the fee. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Barker and all Councillors voted in favour.
- 136.6. Extreme weather impacts on use of facilities –
It was agreed that this item would be discussed during the confidential session.
Cllr Knight temporarily left the meeting 20:23, during which time the meeting was inquorate
The member of the public in attendance in person left the meeting 20:23
Cllr Knight returned 20:24
- 136.7. The position regarding the civic artefacts transferred from East Suffolk Council (confidential) –
To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 136.8. Lease arrangements for a property in Kensington Gardens, and storage of canoes (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.
- 136.9. A progress update on approved capital projects which are awaiting implementation (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

137. Personnel

- 137.1. The draft minutes of the meeting on 13 December 2021 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 137.2. The following recommendations from the Personnel Committee:
137.2a. A confidential recommendation regarding staff pay (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

138. Planning

- 138.1. The draft minutes of the meeting on 30 November 2021 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 138.2. The consultation on the diversion (not closure) of footpath 52 across The Ness – The Planning Committee were asked to consider a consultee response but had no comments. The Town Council has granted landowner permission, despite having some concerns initially, and could not see why it was being approached as a consultee following this, and once access had already been closed off. These comments will be relayed back to East Suffolk Council..

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139. Climate Emergency and Ecological

139.1. The draft minutes of the meeting on 7 December 2021 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

140. Outside Bodies

140.1. Cllr Barker's report from the Marina Theatre Trust Board meeting on 25 November 2021 – The report was received and noted.

140.2. Cllr Barker's report from the Gull Wing Key Stakeholder Group meeting on 3 December 2021 – The report was received and noted.

141. Legal

141.1. Legal issues relating to land transfers (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

141.2. An update on transfer arrangements relating to the registration of ownership for the North Denes and Tingdene, and enforcement action relating to 'Phase 3' (confidential) – To be discussed during the confidential session.

142. Date of next meeting

25 January 2022 18:30

143. Items for the next agenda and close

Cllr Barker will provide an update at the next meeting on two invitations Councillors have received. Officers were thanked for arranging the amplification equipment for this meeting.

Cllr Pearce proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Knight; all in favour.

144. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

A comfort break was taken 20:35 and the meeting resumed 20:39

144.1. Any matters, including those above as required:

134.5a. Capital funding provision for the septic tank at Uplands (confidential) – The Council has received an estimate of the replacement cost, but it would be difficult to arrange a condition survey of it. The 2022 – 2023 budget includes funds to begin building up a reserve to cover the cost of a replacement. Cllr Pearce proposed that if replacement is required within the next twelve months, funding should consist of the money already budgeted, with additional funds to come from the capital reserve, then replenish the funds taken from reserves in the next financial year. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Brooks and all Councillors voted in favour.

134.5b. Continued membership of Lowestoft Rising beyond 2021 – 2022 (confidential) – It was felt that the membership to Lowestoft Rising had not offered value for money, particularly as the contribution had increased from £10,000 to £15,000. The Council was disappointed that a representative from Lowestoft Rising had been unable to attend a meeting of its Community Safety Committee when invited, but was grateful for the detailed report it had received from an East Suffolk Council officer. Cllr Brooks proposed that the Town Council's membership to Lowestoft Rising should not be continued beyond the current financial year, and the Town Council should instead look to fund community groups directly. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal. Six Councillors voted in favour and one Councillor abstained from the vote.

134.5c. Capital funding provision for thatching and other works on the Belle Vue Park cottage (confidential) – The Council has received an estimated cost of total roof replacement, although it has not been confirmed when this will be required. A thatcher has been approached for advice. Provision for capital works has been included in the 2022 – 2023 budget.

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- 134.11. An update on the Hamilton House lease and business rates (confidential) – Legal advice on the lease has been sent to Cllrs Green and Pearce. There was a discussion regarding the lease term and break clause. Cllr Pearce made a proposal regarding preparations for the future; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 134.12. Arrangements regarding future repairs and maintenance of the Jubilee Bridge (confidential) – An update was given. A planning application containing the full list of repairs has been submitted and will be considered by the Planning Committee. An agent has made the application on behalf of East Suffolk Council. The Town Council has not been consulted and is not named.
At 21:06, Cllr Knight proposed suspending Standing Order 3y to allow the meeting to continue until 21:30; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 134.13. The contract with East Suffolk Norse for grounds maintenance in 2022 - 2023, and the recent East Suffolk Council announcement, including the implications for the Lowestoft Town Council participation in the cross-jurisdictional Environment and Waste Working Group (confidential) – The Town Council is in the middle of an internal contract review. Cllr Pearce proposed that the Town Council should not discuss its own contract with Norse with any other external body until it has completed its internal review, this includes speculating publicly, or entering into discussions with East Suffolk Council and/or the press. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed an in principle agreement to seeking consultant advice, on the understanding that the consultant would work with the Norse Contract Working Group and would not replacement or supersede it. Cllr Pearce further proposed granting delegated authority to the Finance and Governance Committee to set a budget, with the Clerk to seek quotations in the interim. Cllr Brooks seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.
- 136.6. Extreme weather impacts on use of facilities – The Council has not budgeted for gritting but could consider signage. Cllr Knight proposed purchasing at least temporary vinyl signage for Sparrows Nest, Kensington Gardens, Belle Vue Park, Normanston Park, the steps between Sparrows Nest and Belle Vue Park, The Ness and the Great Eastern Linear Park. Cllr Knight further proposed delegating authority to officers to agree the wording and procure the signs within a maximum budget of £3,000, with the AID or Finance and Governance Committee to consider any expenditure exceeding that. Cllr Pearce seconded the proposal and all Councillors voted in favour.
- 136.7. The position regarding the civic artefacts transferred from East Suffolk Council (confidential) – Some items remain missing and are not within the Town Council's container. It is understood that the staircase referred to by Cllr Patience earlier in the meeting is a separate matter and never was included on this particular list of civic items, and will therefore need to be considered separately. The value of the missing items is known. Cllr Pearce made a proposal on how to proceed from here; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.
- 136.8. Lease arrangements for a property in Kensington Gardens, and storage of canoes (confidential) – Canoe storage was discussed and Cllr Pearce made a proposal regarding storage for the remainder of the lease term; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 136.9. A progress update on approved capital projects which are awaiting implementation (confidential) – It was agreed to defer this item to January's AID Committee meeting.
- 141.1. Legal issues relating to land transfers (confidential) – It was agreed to defer this item to January's Full Council meeting.
- 141.2. An update on transfer arrangements relating to the registration of ownership for the North Denes and Tingdene, and enforcement action relating to 'Phase 3' (confidential) – It was agreed to defer this item to January's AID Committee meeting.
- 137.2a. A confidential recommendation regarding staff pay (confidential) – Thanks were offered to officers for arranging publication of the vacancy advertisements. The deadline for applications is 09:00 on 24 January 2022. Interviews will take place in early

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February. It was agreed to defer this item to January's Full Council meeting. If agreed, any changes would take effect from April.

The meeting was closed 21:40.

Signed: 

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