

# Lowestoft Town Council

## Meeting of the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee

Via Video Meeting  
14:00 on 21 October 2020

### MINUTES

**Video meeting participants:** Cllrs Sue Barnard, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Paul Page (Chair), Andy Pearce and Alice Taylor

**Also participating:** Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

#### 13. Welcome

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

#### 14. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Patience. Cllr Coleby had not provided apologies and was absent. Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Barnard; all in favour. Cllr Barnard advised she would need to leave at 14:50.

#### 15. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

#### 16. Receipt of any comments and noting that the draft minutes of the meetings on 8 July 2020 and 16 September 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

There were no comments and the minutes were noted.

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

There were none.

#### 18. Review of the following Town Council policies:

18.1 Data Protection Policy – It was suggested that references to specific legislation should be amended to say ‘prevailing legislation’ instead, so that the policy will not need to be reviewed each time there is a legislative change. There is a sub-heading within the policy named ‘timely processing’, but the text beneath it relates to data retention, so it was suggested that a more appropriate sub-heading is required. A Town Council officer is referred to in the policy by name, and it was suggested it may be more appropriate to provide the general admin email address instead as a point of contact. The policy stipulates that any breaches must be reported to the Information Commissioner’s Office within seventy-two hours. In order to comply with this, it was suggested that the policy should stipulate that any internal breaches must be reported within a maximum of forty-eight hours. The wording of section 3.3 (Personal Data) had been queried previously, but this has been reviewed by the Clerk, who did not recommend any amendments to the wording.

*Cllr Taylor joined the meeting 14:09*

The Clerk is liaising with East Coast Community Healthcare regarding their arrangements for the storage of backup data.

*Cllr Hardie joined the meeting 14:10 to provide her apologies and left the meeting 14:11*

Cllr Pearce proposed acceptance of Cllr Hardie’s apologies; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Data Protection Policy as amended; seconded by Cllr Barnard; four Councillors voted in favour; two Councillors abstained from the vote.

18.2 Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy – Paragraphs 1.3 and 3.1, which both cover similar territory, were discussed. It was agreed that the wording at point 1.3 is sufficient to cover the Council’s requirement of contractors to treat the Town Council’s employees with respect when executing contracts, and vice versa. When the Town Council enters a contract with another party there is an expectation that they will behave in a way which aligns with the Council’s policies, and this should be made clear in the contract

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and tender process. It was agreed that point 3.1 was not required, as 1.3 sufficiently covers this aspect of the policy. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy, with paragraph 3.1 removed in its entirety; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

18.3 Appraisals Guidance – This has been reviewed since May, and provisions for training are now included. It has been confirmed that staff do have advance notice of their appraisals. There is provision for appraisals to take place at six-monthly intervals where required. New staff have an induction and probation period and will not necessarily have additional appraisals. The appraisal form is provided in advance, and this is stated in the guidance. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Appraisals Guidance; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

18.4 Code of Conduct – Full Council and the Finance and Governance Committee has considered the new model Code of Conduct, which has gone out to consultation. The Town Council's formal response was that it approved of the new draft. There is no timescale yet for the publishing of the new model Code of Conduct. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Code of Conduct; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

18.5 Complaints Procedure – This has been reviewed in detail recently and adopted. Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation to the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Complaints Procedure; seconded by Cllr Page; five Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

18.6 Tree Policy, including to consider any recommendations from the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee

*Cllr Barnard left the meeting 14:39*

The Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee has also considered the Tree Policy, and requested that officers incorporate the legal rights of members of the public within the policy. The Council has a duty to promote biodiversity and it was queried whether the policy should be amended to allow more discretion when there are requests to remove or prune trees which are not dead, diseased or dying. The policy also contains reference to a staff position which no longer exists. Cllr Taylor proposed that officers complete a review of the Tree Policy and report back to the next meeting; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

**19. Information on outstanding matters regarding Financial Regulations**

The Clerk had considered the suggested amendments and could see no issues with them. The Clerk is making enquiries about the nature of the off-site storage and will report back to this Sub-Committee. The Financial Regulations can then be amended if necessary.

**20. Date of the next meeting**

18 November 2020 14:00

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

The list of policies has been scheduled to be reviewed by this Sub-Committee in alphabetical order, up to May 2021, unless a query or issue is raised with a specific policy and requires consideration.

The Chair thanked those who had been viewing the livestream of the meeting. There were no confidential matters for consideration and the Chair closed the meeting at 14:50.

**22. Resolution to close the meeting to the public**

Signed:  .....

16 June 2021