

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Marina Theatre Project Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**14:00 on Thursday 8 May 2025**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby and Christine Moore. Non-Councillor members Emma Bellward (Project Manager, East Suffolk Council Officer) and David Blythe, Norman Cullingford, Andy Gallant and Sam Vallerius (Marina Theatre Trust)

**In Attendance:** Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk), Mark Smith (Facilities and Contracts Manager) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk and Planning Assistant)

**122. Welcome**

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

**123. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from non-Councillor member Robin Townley with reasons provided. Cllr Coleby proposed approval of apologies received; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour. Darren Newman was absent with no apologies received.

**124. Declarations of Interests and dispensations**

124.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from members of the Committee on items on the agenda – Cllr Moore declared she was an employee of East Suffolk Council.

124.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

**125. To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the extraordinary meeting on 18 March 2025 and the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 10 April 2025**

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of all draft minutes and confidential notes; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

**126. Public forum**

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public – No advance comments had been received and no members of the public were in attendance.

**127. To consider the Terms of Reference of this Committee**

Cllr Brooks proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference so the Mayor would not be automatically appointed the Chair of this Committee and instead the Chair would be elected at the Annual General Meeting, as is the case with all other Standing Committees.

The members of the Marina Theatre Trust (MTT) welcomed the Mayor being appointed Chair of the meeting as it gave gravitas to the project. There was no seconder for the proposal and no changes were made to the Terms of Reference.

**128. To receive a report from the Project Manager, including:**

128.1. The Highlight Report update (some aspects may be confidential) – The Project Manager reported 41% of the contingency had been spent and £291,334 of contingency remained. The project was at 49% completion.

The additional costs the past month were associated with an unexpected project delay, and it was requested this be discussed further in confidential session due to contractual sensitivities.

The works currently being undertaken included the instalment of the steel frame and lift shaft and the next works focussed on the rear wall brickwork, roof slab and floors.

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128.2. The risk register (some aspects may be confidential) – There were no changes to report. Cllr Coleby requested a query concerning the risk register be discussed in confidential session.

**129. To consider and make a recommendation to Full Council regarding out of project scope work to make improvements to first floor auditorium seating**

The Project Manager and Facilities and Contracts Manager reviewed the activities that presented a risk, such as the performance bond and sub-contractor payments, and discussed how these additional works could be funded. The Project Manager advised the additional works would be viable and deliverable within the theatre closure period and the budget.

Cllr Brooks proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council to approve the addition of improvement works to the first-floor auditorium seating; seconded by Cllr Coleby who requested it be on the condition that the works could be funded from the Variance, as opposed to other budgets. The Project Manager confirmed the works would be funded through the project variance.

The Acting Town Clerk requested reassurance from the Project Manager that the works were considered viable and would not affect the projected reopening of the theatre, with consideration of the current project programme and the reported three-week delay on the project timescale.

As there were further queries of a commercially confidential nature concerning the programme timeline, it was agreed for this item to be discussed further in confidential session, though the vote would be recorded in the public minutes.

**130. To consider the funding agreement for financial support to the Marina Theatre (some aspects may be confidential)**

This item would be discussed further in confidential session.

**131. To consider any additional recommendations to Full Council**

This item would be discussed further in confidential session.

**132. Date of the next meeting**

To be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting. A provisional meeting date has been set for 12 June 2025 14:00

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

None.

**134. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda:**

134.1. To consider any legal issues, including those above as required – Cllr Coleby proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

*The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 14:18*

128.1. The Highlight Report update (some aspects may be confidential) – There was a confidential discussion regarding a recent project delay and the measures in place to minimise its impact on the overall project timeline.

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Cllr Brooks amended her proposal to require the works to be completed by a specified date with an extra contract drawn up to detail the terms and conditions of the work; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

The Acting Town Clerk advised the Committee this item would be put on the Annual General Meeting agenda so it could be resolved at an earlier date.

128.2. The risk register (some aspects may be confidential) – Cllr Coleby confirmed his query had been answered under 128.1.

**130. To consider the funding agreement for financial support to the Marina Theatre (some aspects may be confidential)**

A confidential update was provided regarding the funding agreement.

*The Chair closed the meeting at 14:51*

Signed: .....

12 June 2025

