

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Marina Theatre Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
13:00 on Tuesday 18 March 2025

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Wendy Brooks and Neil Coleby. Non-Councillor members Emma Bellward and Darren Newman (East Suffolk Council Officers) and David Blythe, Hazel Clover, Andy Gallant, Robin Townley (Deputy Chair) 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)

As the Chair was absent, a member of the Committee would need to be voted to preside as Chair for this meeting. Cllr Coleby proposed Andy Gallant preside as Chair for this meeting; seconded by Darren Newman; all in favour.

To maintain quorum for the meeting, the number of voting non-Councillor members could not exceed the number of Councillors in attendance. It was agreed for Emma Bellward, David Blythe, Hazel Clover and Sam Vallerius to rescind their voting rights for this meeting.

100. Welcome

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

101. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Sonia Barker and Nasima Begum with reasons provided. Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Darren Newman; all in favour.

Cllr Christine Moore was absent with no apologies received.

102. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

102.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from members of the Committee on items on the agenda – There were no declarations.

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

103. 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.

104. To consider scope and cost of project addition to make improvements to first-floor auditorium seating

The Marina Theatre Trust (MTT) had queried the possibility of using the closed period of the theatre refurbishment to change the circle seating plans. Whilst these plans would reduce the number of seats in the circle, it would be more comfortable for users. MTT also queried if some of the contingency budget could be released to finance this.

As these works were not included in the scope of the project, approval would be required from Place Board and therefore evidence would need to be submitted on how this addition would benefit the project.

The Town Council had raised concerns on spending from the contingency budget at this early

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Marina Theatre Project Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
13:00 on Tuesday 18 March 2025

stage of the project.

105. To note progress with the lease

The solicitors of both parties were due to have a discussion later this week. There were no further updates.

MTT expressed concern on whether there would be dramatic changes made to the lease and Management Services Agreement. It was agreed these concerns be discussed further in confidential session.

106. Date of the next meeting

10 April 2025 – 14:00

107. Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested for the next agenda.

108. 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:

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

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 13:20

104. To consider scope and cost of project addition to make improvements to first-floor auditorium seating

A confidential discussion took place regarding the scope and cost of project addition for improvements to the circle seating.

Robin Townley entered the chamber at 13:32

It was confirmed the next Place Board meeting was 4 April with the next Project Committee meeting scheduled for 10 April, therefore there would be time to make a recommendation to the next Full Council meeting.

Cllr Coleby proposed to await the feedback from Place Board and for the next Project Committee meeting to make a recommendation to Full Council on the additional works; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the chamber at 14:00

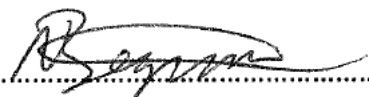
Cllr Brooks returned to the chamber at 14:01

105. To note progress with the lease

There was a further discussion on progress with the lease.

An item would be on the next agenda with a view to discuss the lease with both solicitors prior to the meeting so that it can be effectively progressed.

The Chair closed the meeting at 14:07

Signed:  8 May 2025