

Lowestoft Town Council
Town Hall Project Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE
Thursday 12 June 2025 at 10:00 AM

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger. Non-Councillor members Helen Johnson and Ben Porter (East Suffolk Council Officers)

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk), Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk and Planning Assistant) and John Chamberlain (Heritage Officer)

Also in attendance: Sheila MossKing (Project Manager)

1 Welcome

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

2 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Nick Webb with reasons provided. Cllr Rappensberger proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Barker; all.
Cllr Neil Coleby was absent.

3 Declarations of interests and dispensations

- 3.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from members on items on the agenda – There were no declarations.
- 3.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

4 To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 8 May 2025

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the draft minutes; seconded by Cllr Barker; five votes in favour and two abstentions (as the members were absent from the meeting).

5 To review and adopt Committee arrangements

- 5.1 To note the membership of the town hall project committee – Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum, Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger and Nick Webb were members of the Committee. East Suffolk Council Officers Helen Johnson and Ben Porter were non-Councillor members of the Committee.
- 5.2 To appoint the Deputy Chair of the Town Hall Project Committee – Cllr Brooks proposed, as agreed last year, no Deputy Chair be appointed for this Committee; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.
- 5.3 To consider the Terms of Reference – Cllr Pearce proposed to adopt the Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.
- 5.4 To agree the meeting schedule – Cllr Brooks proposed the schedule be maintained as second Thursday of the month at 10:00; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 5.5 To review the delegations of this Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed the delegations be accepted as set out in the Terms of Reference; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

6 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.

7 To receive an update report from the Project Manager, including the following:

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- 7.1 An update on contractual matters – Two draft proposals for consultants are to be reviewed under item 9 for support of the activity plan, and the Project Manager advised this be discussed in confidential session.
- 7.2 Any planned actions to be authorised for progression - Hutton + Rostron have been onsite to review the dry rot and were due to send further information and costs for actions to be taken.

The Acting Town Clerk entered the chamber at 10:09

The Design Team were due to draw up amendments for the design of the Council space on the second floor of the Newmarket Inn section of the building, in order to provide more space for the office team. The incurred costs for this would be covered under the professional fees.

- 7.3 The Risk Register – There was no update to provide on the Risk Register and the project was reported to be on schedule.
External funding was still being monitored. An application had been submitted to Hornsea Community Fund for £49,000 to cover the cost of the PVP panels for the hall. The application for the Historic England grant has also been submitted for £707,000 to be used for restoration costs.
- 7.4 The updated Business Plan – Updates had been made to the Business Plan as part of the preparation work for the Historic England grant submission.
The Project Manager had reviewed the café operations and advised the Committee it would not be feasible to run the café inhouse. It was agreed to discuss this further in confidential session.

8 Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report):

To note and consider income and expenditure

- 8.1 Monitoring the budget – There were no comments on the budget.
- 8.2 Any payments for approval – There were no payments for approval.

9 To receive updates on the Activity Plan, including to comment on briefs for consultants:

- 9.1 Pop Culture Project Facilitator – This item would be discussed in confidential session.
- 9.2 Schools Learning Resource Consultant – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

The Heritage Officer provided an update on the Activity Plan.

The popup shop had recently been vacated and it had proven an excellent opportunity to engage with various community groups and raise awareness of the Town Hall Project.

The Heritage Officer was due to attend various town-wide events over the summer and would be working with volunteers to progress the digitisation of the Town Council's civic collection.

A competition had been held with East Coast College to design the hoardings for the Town Hall and the Heritage Officer was due to meet with the College next week to discuss the entries.

The potential offer of work experience placements has been discussed with Barnes Construction's Social Value Coordinator, who confirmed this would be feasible in the next academic year.

10 To consider staffing requirements and budget preparations (some aspects may be confidential)

The Project Manager and Acting Town Clerk were due to begin reviewing the job description for the Town Hall Manager.

11 To consider any recommendations to Full Council

There were no recommendations made to Full Council.

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12 Date of next meeting

Thursday 10 July 2025 10:00

13 Items for the next agenda and close

An item was requested to discuss financial planning for the year.

14 Admission to Meetings

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 employment matters and legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda – Cllr Rappensberger 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 10:42

7.4 The updated Business Plan – A document that detailed the finances of different café models was reviewed.

Cllr Pearce proposed the inhouse model for the café be removed as an option and for the Project Manager to continue exploring the commercial or community model for the café; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

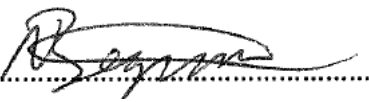
9 To receive updates on the Activity Plan, including to comment on briefs for consultants:

9.1 Pop Culture Project Facilitator

9.2 Schools Learning Resource Consultant

The briefs were reviewed and it was noted that the funding would be allocated from the Contingency budget.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:47

Signed: 
10 July 2025