

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

MINUTES

Present: Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Jen Jones, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce and Deborah Ray

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Town Clerk), James Cox (Finance Manager and RFO) and Jill Hook (Finance Assistant)

84 Welcome

To explain the fire evacuation procedure, welcome the meeting, and remind councillors and members of the public of the right to report.

85 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Nasima Begum and Bernie Rappensberger with reasons provided. Cllr Parker proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllrs Connor Blowers and Keith Patience were absent with no apologies received.

86 Declarations of Interests and dispensations

86.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda

Cllr Pearce declared he was the Town Council representative for the Kittiwake Partnership at item 91.10 and would leave the chamber for its consideration. Cllr Pearce also declared he had prior knowledge of the Oulton Broad Water Sports Centre grant application but was not a part of the project and was not predetermined.

Cllr Parker declared he had made a contribution in March 2025 to NaturePlay, at item 92.1, as an East Suffolk Councillor and would leave the chamber for its consideration.

Cllr Jones declared she was friends with the applicant but was not part of the grant application for Living with Mental Health at item 91.8 and would leave the chamber for its consideration.

Cllr Brooks declared she has no financial interest in Lowestoft Arts, at item 91.5, but advised them to apply.

Cllr Ray was aware Paperworks were going to submit a grant application but confirmed she was not part of the application process.

86.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted - No written requests for dispensations had been received.

87 To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 12 November 2025

Cllr Pearce proposed the draft minutes be approved; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

88 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.

89 Budget and Loan

- 89.1 To monitor the budget for 2025-2026, including delegated Committee and Sub-Committee budgets – there were no matters to discuss
- 89.2 To note any bank reconciliations – September and October bank reconciliations had been reviewed and November was completed.
- 89.3 To receive the minutes of the Budget and Loan Sub Committee meetings from 10th November to 1 December – the minutes were received

90 Payments and Receipts:

- 90.1 To note the income and expenditure reports for November 2025 and December 2025 to date, including payments made under delegated authority – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the report as a true and accurate record of expenditure and income for the dates provided; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.
- 90.2 To consider any payments for approval (see schedule) – There were no payments for approval.

91 Grants

The RFO gave an overview of the current Grants budget. Following the Full Council virement transfer of £15,000 to Community Grants from the Community Engagement budget, the total Grants budget was £65,000. £61,532 had been spent to date, leaving a balance of £3,468, with an EMR of £33,900. The Food Relief budget had a surplus of approximately £21,000.

To consider the following grant applications:

- 91.1 MN Well Child Support - £5,100 – This application had been withdrawn
- 91.2 St Luke's Whitton Pantry - £2,000 and to receive the Grant Feedback Form. Cllr Brooks proposed approval and to allocate against the Food Relief budget; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.
- 91.3 TruColours - £76 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

- 91.4 Lowestoft Shopmobility - £175 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the grant application. Cllr Pearce declared he knew the Chair of Shopmobility but was not biased and seconded the proposal; all in favour.
- 91.5 Lowestoft Arts - £757.99 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour.
- 91.6 Paperworks - £1,076.76 and to receive the Grant Feedback Form. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Ray; six in favour, one abstention.
- 91.7 Inspire Suffolk - £1,235.95 – Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Cllr Jones temporarily left the chamber at 10:23 due to their declared interest.

- 91.8 Living with Mental Health - £1,346.82 – The organisation had been recently formed by one member but had connections with a well-known local charity. Cllr Brooks proposed to defer the decision until January 2026 requesting the organisation to attend the next Finance and Governance meeting with a presentation to provide more information about their work; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

Cllr Jones returned to the chamber at 10:27.

- 91.9 Lydia Eva and Mincarlo Trust - £7,000 – The members deferred the decision for officers to request the following information from the Trust:
- When the funds were required
 - Whether they were contributing towards the cost from their reserves
 - What the reserves are used for and
 - A copy of their accounts for the year ended March 2025

Cllr Pearce temporarily left the chamber at 10:32 due to their declared interest.

- 91.10 Kittiwake Partnership - £2,000 – The request for such a high contribution in comparison to the East Suffolk Council offering was questioned.

Cllr Parker temporarily left the chamber at 10:34 due to them being an East Suffolk Councillor

The members of the committee agreed the need for promoting positive views on the kittiwakes. Cllr Jones proposed for officers to question why the value requested was considerably higher compared to the East Suffolk Council contribution and to question what is being done in the town for the Kittiwakes in relation to what the Town Council provides at the Marina Theatre; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

Cllrs Pearce and Parker returned to the chamber at 10:40.

An update was provided to the returning councillors.

- 91.11 Oulton Broad Water Sports Centre - £6,658 and to receive the Grant Feedback Form – The training cost was for a paid member of staff and did not cover their salary. The high value was a concern but if it helped to save a life then this was considered a worthy cause. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.
- 91.12 To consider a delegation to officers to determine if an application merits urgent consideration outside of the usual grant awarding cycle and, if necessary, any amendments to the grant awarding policy to support this – Cllr Pearce proposed to update the application form to include the date of the next grant review meeting and a new section to explain why an early decision is required, if the applicant feels this necessary. When the application is received, officers would be given an interim delegation to assess the urgency of the application. This will be reviewed at the end of the financial year. If officers were uncertain as to the urgency, this would be included on the forthcoming Finance and Governance agenda for the committee to consider; seconded by Cllr Ray; all in favour. This would be reviewed at the April 2026 Finance and Governance committee meeting.

92 Sponsorships

To consider the following sponsorships:

- 92.1 NaturePlay Sponsorship £14,400 - To consider a two year sponsorship of £600 per month

Cllr Parker temporarily left the chamber at 10:57 due to their declared interest.

Concerns were raised over the sum of money being applied for. Cllr Pearce requested to comment on this matter in confidential session. Cllr Ray proposed to defer a decision and invite the organisation to a Finance and Governance committee meeting to discuss their application; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

Cllr Parker returned to the chamber at 11:03

Cllr Page temporarily left the chamber at 11:03.

- 92.2 To consider formalising the current Lowestoft Plaisir Twinning arrangement as a sponsorship with reviewable terms – Cllr Brooks confirmed she does not have any voting rights or official position at the Lowestoft Plaisir Twinning association as the Lowestoft Town Council representative.

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

Previous funding for this association was made before sponsorship arrangements were in place at the Town Council.

Cllr Page returned to the chamber at 11:06

With the sponsorship arrangements now in place, Cllr Pearce proposed to begin a sponsorship from 2026/27, with a review every 3 years; seconded by Cllr Ray; six votes in favour and one abstention.

93 Other financial and governance matters, including:

- 93.1 To consider a recommendation from the Budget and Loan Sub Committee to use the Town Hall reserves of £9,165 for Town Hall publicity costs – The costs would be used to fund the publicity of the Town Hall before its official opening. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the recommendation; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 93.2 To review the Complaints Log – The complaints log should include the detail of calls being received in relation to other Councils, to highlight trends. The information would be reviewed in three months.
- 93.3 To consider recommendations from Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee regarding the meeting announcement – Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendations; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

Cllrs Parker and Jones left the chamber at 11:35.

- 93.4 To give a delegation to the Finance Manager and Sports Development Officer to sign on behalf of the council when making claims from the FA Grass Pitch – Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the delegation; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 93.5 To discuss the project tracker and consider how the system is working, what it achieves and whether it could or should be further developed – This matter related to the Decisions tracker. The members requested the Communications and IT Officer provide training on the software as it was a useful tool. Cllr Pearce proposed to authorise staff to refine and develop the tracker; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
- 93.6 To consider a recommendation to Full Council to agree an energy supplier contract from 1st January 2026 (Some aspects may be confidential) – This matter was deferred to the confidential session.

94 To consider the following Standing Order Policies:

- 94.1 Co-option
- 94.2 Complaints Procedure

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

- 94.3 Data Protection
- 94.4 Data Retention
- 94.5 Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and availability schedule
- 94.6 Public Participation Protocol
- 94.7 Representation on Outside Bodies
- 94.8 Protocol for Reporting at Meetings of the Council or Committees
- 94.9 Safeguarding
- 94.10 Video Meeting Protocol

Cllr Coleby proposed to recommend all policies to Full Council; seconded by Cllr Pearce on the basis that if anyone has strong views to submit them to officers who can forward on for consideration by Full Council when they are being discussed; four votes in favour and one against.

95 Date of next meeting

14th January 2026

96 Items for the next agenda and close

97 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 Pearce proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Page; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 11:50.

- 92.1 NaturePlay Sponsorship £14,400 - To consider a two year sponsorship of £600 per month – A confidential discussion was held.

- 93.6 To consider a recommendation to Full Council to agree an energy supplier contract from 1st January 2026 (Some aspects may be confidential) – There was a confidential discussion on contracted costs with a specific energy supplier. Cllr Pearce made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Coleby; four votes in favour and one abstention.

The chair closed the meeting at 12:08.

Lowestoft Town Council
Finance and Governance Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
Wednesday 10 December 2025 at 10:00

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be a stylized, cursive name, possibly 'J. Smith' or similar, written diagonally across the page.

Signed:
14 January 2026