

Lowestoft Town Council

For the attention of all Councillors

You are summoned to attend a **Town Hall Project Committee** meeting of Lowestoft Town Council, which will be held at **Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE** at **10:00 on Thursday 11 December 2025**.

The meeting is held in accessible premises and open to the public and press to attend.

Those attending shall be informed that the meeting may be reported on (including recording, photographing and filming). This does not apply to confidential items. Comments can also be submitting regarding any item on the agenda in advance of the meeting. Members of the public can join the meeting remotely via [Teams](#). The meeting can also be observed via [YouTube](#).

In providing any comments members of the public accept that, where they are suitable, they may be considered at the meeting and published in our minutes. Any individual submitting the comments should ensure that their name, address and contact details are included in their communication and should note that anonymous submissions will not be accepted. Members of the public accept that their name may be noted and recorded at the meeting. However, their contact details will not be noted and reported publicly.

Councillors must register relevant interests and declare them at a meeting if they have such an interest in a matter to be considered. Under the Localism Act 2011, a councillor with relevant interests in matters on the agenda cannot take part or vote on those matters, unless they have been granted a dispensation. Under the Council's Code of Conduct, a councillor must leave the meeting room if they have such an interest, unless they have been granted a dispensation. There may be other interests or matters in which councillors might be considered to be biased or predetermined in which case they will need to consider whether they should leave the room.

The Council has a duty to pay due regard to preventing crime and disorder and to conserve biodiversity as part of relevant decisions.

S. L. Foote

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Sarah Foote, Town Clerk
10 December 2025

Lowestoft Town Council
Town Hall Project Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE
10:00 Thursday 11 December 2025

AGENDA

74 Welcome

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

75 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

76 Declarations of Interests and dispensations

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

76.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted

77 To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 13 November 2025

78 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.

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

79.1 An update on contractual matters (some aspects may be confidential)

79.2 Any planned actions to be authorised for progression

79.3 The Risk Register

79.4 Updated Business Plan

79.5 An update on the Activity Plan

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

To note and consider income and expenditure

80.1 Monitoring the budget

80.2 Any payments for approval

81 Date of next meeting

Thursday 8 January 10:00

Lowestoft Town Council
Town Hall Project Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE
10:00 Thursday 11 December 2025

82 Items for the next agenda and close

83 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

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Thursday 13 November 2025 10:00

MINUTES

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

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Town Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk and Planning Assistant)

Also in attendance: Sheila Moss King (Town Hall Project Manager)

As the Chair was not in attendance the Committee needed to resolve who would preside as Chair for this meeting. Cllr Coleby nominated Cllr Barker; seconded by Cllr Pearce; five votes in favour and one abstention.

63 Welcome

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

64 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Nasima Begum, Bernie Rappensberger and Nick Webb with reasons provided. Cllr Coleby proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

65 Declarations of interests and dispensations

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

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

66 To consider the draft minutes of the meeting on 9 October 2025

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of both the public minutes and confidential note; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

67 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.

68 To receive an update report from the project manager, including the following:

68.1 An update on contractual matters – The Project Manager discussed the construction elements of the project and highlighted the commencement of the new build on the New Market Inn extension, which would house the toilet facilities, south meeting room, co-working space and Town Council offices.

The roof strengthening works were ongoing with mechanical ventilation due to be installed where required in the loft spaces.

Further roof works were progressing, with the Compass Street side nearing completion and the roof on the Mariners Street side was ready for the slates to be placed.

The concrete roof for the substation has been installed, ready for the substation to be energised in spring 2026.

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Regarding conservation work, all wallpaper has now been removed without damaging the plaster beneath. The removal of wallpaper in the Council Chamber uncovered significant cracks on the south wall. Therefore, the lime plastering required in the Council Chamber will be more extensive than expected. Lime plastering will also be required in the Registrars Suite and the heritage area.

The programme of works continued to run behind schedule. A meeting had been held with Barnes Construction, and they have re-stacked the entire programme with a clear, critical path. The Project Manager noted project delay would be inevitable and requested this be discussed further in confidential session due to contractual issues.

The Committee were notified that the Registrars' IT requirements were more complicated than anticipated as their databases required their own secure fibre into the building. This was being taken forward and would not be an issue for the project.

The Committee noted that any slippage in project timeline that moved its delivery to the first quarter of 2027 would need to consider the elections in May 2027 and the pre-election period due to begin in mid-March. Any announcements or decisions that may be difficult to make during this time would need to be timed to take place before the pre-election period.

The Project Manager noted there would be cost implications with the delay in project delivery and requested this be discussed further in confidential session.

The Project Manager corrected a mistake in the report submitted regarding the Public Works Loan and confirmed the amount due to be drawn from the loan was £4.074 million.

- 68.2 Any planned actions to be authorised for progression – There were no planned actions to be authorised for progression.
- 68.3 The risk register – There were no specific updates to raise this month, it would continue to reflect the likelihood of the programme overrunning the original timeframe, but until the mitigations and cost implications were known there was no need to update the risks at this time.
- 68.4 Updated business plan – The operational financials were updated to include forecasts for budgeting purposes for the end of the next financial year and the 2027-2028 financial year. The Project Manager was due to meet with the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee to discuss this further.
- 68.5 An update on the activity plan – The Heritage Officer and Apprentice had been very active with engagement, and the Committee noted the success of a recent filmmaking workshop. The next two Town Hall tours and drop-in session were due to take place in January 2026. The Project Manager informed the Committee the film on restoration of the stained-glass windows was ready to be released soon.

The Committee requested the number of participants and their demographic be provided to the Committee.

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

To note and consider income and expenditure

- 69.1 Monitoring the budget – Expenditure to date was over £2.9million and just over £9.65million remained in the budget. A list of settled invoices was provided. Contingency spend to date was £333,000, which was well within the budget.
- 69.2 Any payments for approval – There were no payments for approval.

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- 70 To receive a recommendation from the interview panel on the appointment of a Town Hall Manager**
This item would be discussed in confidential session.

- 71 Date of next meeting**
Thursday 11 December 10:00

- 72 Items for the next agenda and close**
The Evaluation Consultant had previously spoken to the Project Committee and was due to provide an interim report, it was requested this be tabled on the next appropriate agenda in the new year.

- 73 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 Coleby proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 10:43

- 68 To receive an update report from the project manager, including the following:**
68.1 An update on contractual matters – The Project Manager provided further updates on contractual matters.

There were further discussions on the programme of works and mitigations to consider with regards to the project timeline.

The cost implications of a potential delay were reviewed and the Project Manager would discuss budget requirements further with the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee.

- 70 To receive a recommendation from the interview panel on the appointment of a Town Hall Manager**
The Project Committee agreed with the recommended appointment. The appointment was due to be consider by Full Council.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:34

Signed:
11 December 2025

Lowestoft Town Hall Project

Progress Report for December 2025 Steering Committee

This report covers the period 12 November to 6 December 2025.

Construction

- Striking of some of the scaffolding is now underway, over the Compass Street section, now that the roofs are complete there. This will enable access to further works. Similarly, scaffolding around the clock tower is being reduced, which will allow the reinstatement of the clock faces in mid-January. We will then be able to trial illumination of the faces.
 - Floor joists have been installed along the ground floor of the Compass Street section including the heritage hub and messy space.
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- A new lintel has been installed above the double doors into the Council Chamber, to address structural issues on that wall.
 - It has been agreed to include a teapoint in the green room adjacent to the Council Chamber. This will be used for drinks during meetings in the Council Chamber (now that the café will be leased to a third party, there will be no free access to the café kitchen).
 - The AV schematics have been signed off and shared with Laressi, Barnes' M&E subcontractor.
 - First fix electrics are ongoing in the café area.
 - The construction continues to run behind programme. A follow-up meeting was held on 1 December at Barnes' offices, at which potential mitigations were discussed. I will share this at the meeting in confidential session given the contractual issues involved.
 - Barnes had a further inspection as part of the Considerate Contractor Scheme and scored 100%. This is a rare score and is in part due to the social value activities being undertaken, as specified in the contract (and beyond).

Social Value

- Barnes has delivered £500 of social value relating to educational activities and delivering employability support sessions. A careers talk was given brick and carpentry students at East Coast College and a site visit was organised for Lofty Heights students. Two students also participated in mock interviews.
- Two orders have recently been placed with PJ Spillings and WFP Plasterers, within the Lowestoft constituency boundary, generating £679k in social value (against a Barnes' target of £500k

Grant Funding

- Our design team lead, Contract Admin, QS and I met with Historic England's architect and QS to review the programme, eligible costs etc. In the light of delays, it is probable that some conservation elements planned to be funded by Historic England will not fit within their tight timescales eg lime plastering.
- We reviewed Barnes' programme and our list of potential conservation elements. Several other areas may well fit within the approved funding (eg secondary glazing to the Council Chamber windows), to ensure that we utilise the full grant.
- Our design team and QS are now working to provide the detailed information that Historic England requires in order to agree any additional costs.

Activity & Interpretation

- An update on the activity plan has been issued to the committee, and our Heritage Officer will attend to give a verbal report.
- We have agreed that artwork for interpretation will not start until the new year, given delays to the programme.
- I will be meeting with PLB to review the capital costs in the light of later procurement. Orders have not yet been placed for manufacture, and it is inevitable given the delays that some inflation will have arisen.

Business Plan/Staffing

- The Town Hall Manager has been appointed and will begin on 2 March 2026. This will give us the opportunity to develop the Town Hall's operating model as a team and will also provide a direct line manager for the heritage staff.
- I attended Budget and Loans in mid-November to provide an overview of the Town Hall's financial impacts on the 26/27 budget. I have subsequently updated the operational financials once more to take into account potential construction project delays.

Financials

- Total spend to date is below:

Lowestoft Town Hall Project (NL-21-00031)	
Spend to date	TOTALS
Budget	£ 12,561,234
Actual spend to date	£ 3,270,598
Balance remaining	£ 9,290,636

- Invoices since the last report are below (note that several more will be settled prior to Christmas):

Invoice								Project
Date	Inv Ref N	Supplier	Description	Amount	VAT	Total inc VA	PO	
28/11/25	LTH326	Daniel Connal Partnership	CDM to Oct 25	£ 1,410.00	£ 282.00	£ 1,692.00	TH71	
01/12/25	LTH327	Jess Johnston	Heritage PM Nov 25	£ 825.00	£ -	£ 825.00	TH53	
02/12/25	LTH328	Barnes Group	Main construction cert 9, Nov 25	£ 361,534.53	£ 72,306.91	£ 433,841.44	TH99	
03/12/25	LTH329	Andrew Morton Associates	QS November 25	£ 2,598.08	£ 519.62	£ 3,117.70	TH52	

- The contingency spend to date is £603k, which is within budget. Note that this figure has increased significantly since the last period as I have amended the way I report contingency – both the budget and the spend have increased by the amount saved at value engineering. I will discuss this at the meeting.
- A second Extension of Time claim has been received (8/12/25). This will be assessed over the next couple of weeks, based on the evidence provided by the contractor.
- The previous claim was assessed by the contract administrator, and a total of eight weeks' delay was granted (out of a potential 12.2 weeks). I confirmed we would support this additional cost, which was already including in our contingency expenditure.

PWLB Loan

- The PWLB loan for £4.074m has been drawn down and the money received.

Next steps

- Over the next month, I will be managing/undertaking the following:
 - Responding to construction related queries, attending site meetings and approving instructions in liaison with nominated officers.
 - Working with the professional team and Barnes to review the time and cost implications of construction delay and the options for mitigation.
 - Supporting the Historic England grant process, including the review of eligible expenditure.
 - Continuing to drive business requirements/design issues in liaison with staff.
 - Financial control over expenditure to support the above (in line with approved budgets).
 - Reporting as necessary to funders including Historic England.

Sheila Moss King
Project Manager



MEETING PAPER

Subject: Town Hall activity plan.

Meeting: Town Hall Project Committee - 79.5

Date: 11 December 2025

Author: John Chamberlain, Heritage Officer

CONFIDENTIAL/NON-CONFIDENTIAL

PAST EVENTS		
Date	Event	Outcomes
27.11.25.	Collections digitisation at Hamilton House plus the induction of a new volunteer. Currently five collections digitisation volunteers.	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage. (AWR4.) People will have learnt about heritage leading to change in ideas and actions. (LEA1) People will have developed skills. (SK11) People will have greater wellbeing. (WEL1/WEL2/WEL3/WEL7/WEL8/WEL9) Heritage will be in better condition. (HC01)
6.11.25. 13.11.25.	Suffolk Artlink workshops, at the Battery of Ideas.	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage. (AWR1/AWR2/AWR4) People will have developed skills. (SK14)

27.11.25. 4.12.25.	A series of group workshops, working with Suffolk Artlink, encouraging people to explore Lowestoft memories and history, through different creative skills.	People will have greater wellbeing. (WEL1-WEL8)
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UPCOMING EVENTS		
Date	Event	Anticipated outcomes
2026. Town Hall Talks. Exact dates/ times tbc.	Town Hall Talks. After Daryl Fraser's talk on the 26 th of November, four more speakers have been confirmed, for early next year: Francesca Vanke, on Lowestoft porcelain. Katie George, on folklore and superstition. Rowena Burgess, on Crime and Punishment before the twentieth century. Richard Hoggett, on JMW Turner in Lowestoft.	People will have learnt about heritage leading to change in ideas and actions. (LEA1) People will have developed skills. (SK14)
Early and late 2026. Tbc.	Your Lowestoft Hall of Fame A wall display and digital console in the Town Hall, celebrating Lowestoft individuals past and present. A possible related popup exhibition in early 2026.	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage. (AWR1/AWR2/AWR4) Heritage will be identified and better explained. (HEX1/HEX2)
End of January. (date and details tbc)	When Lowestoft Rocked. Launch of the pop culture project, early next year. To culminate in the first exhibition in the Town Hall, once it reopens. Branding/research by project facilitators (Clare Lucas and Liz Baalham) confirmed before Christmas.	A wider range of people will be involved in heritage. (AWR1-AWR4) People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions. (LEA1) People will have developed skills. (SK4) People will have greater wellbeing. (WEL1-WEL9) Heritage will be identified and better explained. (HEX1)