

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council

Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE

Tuesday 24 March 2026 18:30

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum, Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, John Murray, Christian Newsome, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger, Deborah Ray, Terry Robinson, Dom Taylor, Nick Webb and Elise Youngman

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

Also in attendance: Sheila Moss King (Town Hall Project Manager, via webinar) and Emma Bellward (Marina Theatre Project Manager, via webinar)

Public: One member of the public was in attendance (in person)

226 Welcome

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

227 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence from any Councillors not in attendance

Apologies were received from Cllrs Jen Jones, John Pitts and Christine Moore with reasons provided. Cllr Newsome gave apologies as he may be late to the meeting. Cllr Webb proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

228 Declarations and dispensations

228.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests, and of bias and pre-determination on items on the agenda – Cllr Parker declared he was a member of East Suffolk Council (ESC). Cllr Brooks declared she was the Lowestoft Town Council (LTC) representative of the Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association and was due to join the trip. Cllr Begum declared she was a member of the Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association. Cllr Taylor declared a pecuniary interest in item 234 as he was writing a show that may be produced at the Marina Theatre.

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

229 To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the full council meeting on 24 February 2026

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the draft minutes and confidential note; seconded by Cllr Youngman; thirteen votes in favour and one abstention.

230 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 – The member of public introduced themselves as a Suffolk County Councillor and would speak after reviewing the agenda. At the Chair's discretion they would be given permission to speak outside of the public forum.

231 To consider the following requests for Committee membership:

Cllr Dom Taylor: Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee, Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee, Finance and Governance Committee, Personnel Committee. Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Parker; all in favour.

Cllr Terry Robinson: Personnel Committee. Cllr Brooks proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

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232 Finance and Governance

232.1 To receive and consider the following:

1. 2025 - 2026 budget and reserves – Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the document as a true and accurate record; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
2. Any bank reconciliations – The bank reconciliations were up to date.
3. Payments and income for the month ending February 2026 and March 2026 to date (see schedules) – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the report as a true and accurate record; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
4. Payments for approval – There were no payments to approve.

232.2 To receive and note the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting on 11 February 2026 – The minutes were received and noted.

232.3 To consider the following recommendations from the Finance and Governance Committee:

1. The awarding of the contract for the insurance tender (confidential) – Cllr Coleby proposed to approve and proceed; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
2. A revised Committee structure, with the addition to restrict the number of Committees a Councillor could be a member of (up to a maximum of four) – Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the revised Committee structure; seconded by Cllr Barker.

It was clarified the restriction of the number of Committees a Councillor could be a member of had been recommended as a suggestion and not as a strict rule.

It was agreed to take the two recommendations separately.

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the revised Committee structure; seconded by Cllr Barker.

Officers clarified that should a Committee have a project that excessively loaded the agenda, it had the power to form a working group to accommodate the work. A vote was held with thirteen votes in favour and one vote against.

Cllr Brooks proposed to not restrict the number of Committees a Councillor could be a member of; seconded by Cllr Pearce; twelve votes in favour and two abstentions.

3. The Business Plan review – Full Council received and noted the review document.

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the chamber at 18:55

Cllr Brooks returned to the chamber at 18:57

It was suggested future agenda items be linked to the relevant Business Plan objectives to help focus the activities of LTC.

Cllr Barker proposed to adopt the Business Plan review; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

4. Adoption of the following policies:

- a. Cycling Pledge
- b. Environmental, with suggested amendments

Cllr Brooks proposed to approve and adopt the policies as amended; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

232.4 To consider a grant application from Lowestoft and Plaisir Twinning Association for £1,500

Cllr Brooks temporarily left the chamber at 18:58 due to her declared interests.

Cllr Begum temporarily left the chamber at 19:04 due to her declared interests.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the grant application; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

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Cllrs Begum and Brooks returned to the chamber at 19:05

- 232.5 To consider the Terms of Reference and nomination process for Lowestoft Town Council Youth Council – It was agreed this Youth Council would not duplicate or rival the Waveney Youth Forum, its purpose would be to promote youth engagement in the parish.

Cllr Youngman proposed to approve the Terms of Reference and nomination process.

The Youth Council would be advertised widely and open to 10 to 18-year-olds living, or attending school, in the parish. An example of a task the Youth Council could undertake would be the design of communal seating at the Normanston Park skate park.

Cllr Newsome entered the chamber at 19:09

Cllr Barker seconded the proposal and a vote was held with fourteen votes in favour and one abstention as the member was not in attendance for discussion on the item.

- 232.6 To read outcomes and recommendations of the East Suffolk Council Audit and Governance Committee in relation to a Town Councillor Code of Conduct complaint (confidential) – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

233 Town Hall Project

- 233.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Town Hall Project Committee meeting on 12 March 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

- 233.2 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager (some aspects may be confidential) – The Project Manager reported on the progress of the Event Hall and gallery space.

The Extension of Time request had been concluded with four weeks awarded of the twelve requested, which took the project to an official completion date of 14 October 2026.

At this stage in the project there was active consideration of building the capacity to run and manage the Town Hall. The Town Hall Manager was brought onboard at the beginning of March and has been working well with the Heritage Team.

The project spend to date was £4.6 million with £7.9 million remaining.

Cllr Taylor temporarily left the chamber at 19:14 due to his declared interests

234 Marina Theatre

- 234.1 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager (some aspects may be confidential) – The Project Manager reported the progress to date on the snagging works, including the placing of coping on the new canopy, the installation of vents in the auditorium and having the handrails re-checked. Whilst some items were still outstanding, the required works to address the items were scheduled, this included the seating spaces, the installation of roof overflows and increasing the size of one of the pipes in the toilets. The LED screen and replacement of non-patterned carpet at the back of the circle were planned to commence on 20 April. All works have been coordinated to not conflict with the business of the theatre. The completion programme end date was 24 April 2026.

Cllr Taylor returned to the chamber at 19:20

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235 Assets, Inclusion and Development

- 235.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Extraordinary Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee meeting on 16 March 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 235.2 To consider the following recommendations from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee:

Cllr Parker temporarily left the chamber at 19:20 due to his declared interests

1. To approve progressing fencing off the Cotman Close children's play area, including a Licence to Occupy and acceptance of contributory funding from East Suffolk Council – Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

Cllr Parker returned to the chamber at 19:21

2. To approve the proposed refurbishment works to the Normanston Park changing rooms – Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.
3. To approve progressing the provision of padel tennis and the Town Council's contribution, subject to grant funding being secured – Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the progression of padel tennis courts and seek the required funding; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.
4. To approve costs for a twelve-month contract extension for the Town Council's Christmas lights – Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.
5. To approve Belle Vue Cottage being repurposed as a retail kiosk, subject to obtaining the necessary planning permissions – Cllr Pearce proposed approval to repurpose the cottage as a retail kiosk; seconded by Cllr Murray. It was noted that the feasibility and maintenance and capital costs had been considered extensively by the Committee with several different options considered, including community and residential use. A vote was held with fourteen votes in favour and one vote against.

236 Planning

- 236.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning Committee meetings on 26 February 2026 and 12 March 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

237 Personnel

- 237.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting on 5 March 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

238 Climate and Ecological Emergency

- 238.1 To receive and note the minutes of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee meetings on 19 January and 16 February 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

239 Outside Bodies

- 239.1 To appoint a representative to attend ESCEP Energy Projects meetings for East Suffolk Town and Parish Councils - The Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee has recommended Cllrs Wendy Brooks and Deborah Ray be the nominated representatives. Cllr Begum

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proposed to approve and appoint Cllrs Brooks and Ray as the representatives; seconded by Cllr Barker; fourteen votes in favour and one abstention.

- 239.2 To appoint up to three representatives to attend a County Service of Celebration at St. Edmundsbury Cathedral on Saturday 18 April – Cllr Youngman would attend as Deputy Mayor. Cllr Barker asked to be considered as a representative. Cllr Brooks proposed Cllrs Barker and Youngman be appointed to attend the celebration; seconded by Cllr Pearce. Cllr Taylor also asked to be considered. Cllr Brooks amended the proposal to have Cllr Taylor appointed as the third representative; seconded by Cllr Pearce; thirteen votes in favour and two abstentions.

- 239.3 To receive and note a report on the Town of Culture bid – The report was received and noted.

Cllr Pearce left the chamber at 19:40

240 To consider the following legal matters (confidential):

An update report on legal matters – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

The member of public in attendance was asked if they had any comments to raise on items on the agenda. The member of public introduced themselves as a Suffolk County Councillor and raised comments regarding the Belle Vue Cottage and how it would be repurposed as a refreshment kiosk.

241 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 28 April 18:30

242 Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested for the next agenda.

243 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 legal and employment issues relating to the matters on this agenda, including the following:

Any matters, including those above as required – Cllr Barker proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Robinson; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 19:45

Cllr Barker temporarily left the chamber at 19:46

Cllr Barker returned to the chamber at 19:47

240 To consider the following legal matters (confidential):

A confidential update was provided on legal matters.

Cllr Taylor temporarily left the chamber at 19:48 due to his declared interests

Cllr Taylor returned to the chamber at 19:49

Cllr Brooks left the chamber at 19:55

- 232.6 To read outcomes and recommendations of the East Suffolk Council Audit and Governance Committee in relation to a Town Councillor Code of Conduct complaint (confidential)

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Cllr Parker left the chamber at 19:56 due to his declared Disclosable Pecuniary interest

The purpose of the item was to note the outcomes of the Audit and Governance Committee, as instructed by ESC the outcomes were to be read in a meeting of the Full Council.

A break was taken at 19:55

The meeting resumed at 20:08

The recommendations were read and discussed by the Council.

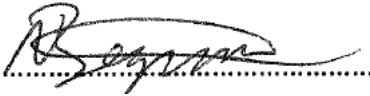
Cllr Begum proposed to suspend Standing Order 3y for fifteen minutes at 20:30 for fifteen minutes; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

It was requested the Personnel Committee to reconsider their resolution on whether Councillors should have access to the assistance programme.

Cllr Begum made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:42

Signed:



28 April 2026