

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council

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

Tuesday 28 April 2026 18:30

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum (Chair), Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Jen Jones, Christine Moore, John Murray, Paul Page, Graham Parker, Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger, Dom Taylor and Elise Youngman (Deputy Chair)

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 Teams)

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

244 Welcome

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

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs John Pitts, Christian Newsome, Deborah Ray, Terry Robinson and Nick Webb with reasons provided. Cllr Jones proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

246 Declarations and dispensations

246.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests, and of bias and pre-determination on items on the agenda – Cllr Taylor notified the Town Council he had withdrawn from the co-production of as how with Marina Theatre and no longer had a pecuniary interest in matters relating to the theatre. Cllr Moore declared she was an employee of East Suffolk Council (ESC). Cllr Parker declared he was a member of ESC.

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

247 To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the Full Council meeting on 24 March 2026

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the public minutes; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

Cllr Coleby proposed approval of the confidential note; seconded by Cllr Youngman; eleven votes in favour and two abstentions.

248 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, the member of public in attendance via the webinar experienced technical difficulties but had provided the full proposal previously to the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee.

249 Finance and Governance

249.1 To receive and consider the following:

1. 2026 - 2027 budget and reserves – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the reported budget and reserves as a true and accurate record of the current financial position; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.
2. Any bank reconciliations – Year end was being finalised and would be provided to the next Full Council meeting.

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3. Payments and income for the month ending March 2026 and April 2026 to date (see schedules) – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the report as a true and accurate record of payments and income for the specified period; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.
4. Payments for approval – There were no payments to approve.
- 249.2 To note that the appointed Internal Controller has completed the review for the year ending 31 March 2026 – The completed review was noted and signed off by the Chair.
- 249.3 To receive and note the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee meeting on 11 March 2026 – The minutes were received and noted.
- 249.4 To receive a recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Health and Safety Policy with suggested amendments – Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the amendment and adopt the policy, but to request items 2.5 and 2.6 be amended and written in third person; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

250 Town Hall Project

- 250.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Town Hall Project Committee meeting on 9 April 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 250.2 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager, including the following (some aspects may be confidential) – The Project Manager reported on the continuing work to remove and reinstate the lime plaster, and notified Full Council that this had been a larger task than anticipated due to the mixed finishes on the walls of the Town Hall.

The Project Manager has attended planning sessions with the Town Hall Manager to finalise details on staffing and café operations for the Town Hall.

The spend to date was £5.2 million and £7.3 million remained in the budget.

The full £707,000 grant had been received from Historic England.

There had been adverse movement on the cost plan relating to capital works, which would be discussed in confidential session due to the commercial sensitivity of the information.

1. The Cost Plan – This item would be discussed in confidential session.
2. Land to the rear of the Town Hall – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

251 Marina Theatre

- 251.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Marina Theatre Project Committee meeting on 9 April 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 251.2 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager (some aspects may be confidential) – The progress report was received and noted. The LED sign has been installed, which was a significant item for project completion, and other outstanding items were progressing.

252 Assets, Inclusion and Development

- 252.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee meeting on 13 April 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.
- 252.2 To consider the following recommendations from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee:
 1. To purchase a kersten brush, endorsing a recommendation from the Grounds Maintenance Team on the preferred supplier – Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the purchase of a kersten brush from the recommended supplier provided by the Grounds Maintenance Team; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
 2. To progress a twinning arrangement with Kremenchuk City of Territorial Community,

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Ukraine – Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation for officers to have further discussions with the appropriate representatives and develop a formal proposal with full detail for Full Council to consider; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

- 252.3 To receive a recommendation on the appointment of a contractor for the refurbishment of public conveniences at Normanston Park and Sparrows Nest – Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the recommended contractor and delegate to the Facilities and Contracts Manager to confirm the finishes and colour selections; seconded by Cllr Brooks; all in favour.

253 Planning

- 253.1 To receive and note the draft minutes of the Planning Committee meetings on 26 March and 23 April 2026 – The draft minutes were received and noted.

254 Climate and Ecological Emergency

- 254.1 To receive and note the minutes of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee meeting on 16 March 2026 – The minutes were received and noted.
- 254.2 To consider a recommendation from the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee on the Town Council's draft Firework Position Statement – Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation and adopt the Firework Position Statement; seconded by Cllr Page.

A request was made for 3.4 to be amended to state the Town Council 'would not ordinarily permit firework displays' and for 3.5 to be amended to state that 'any application for funding for firework displays will be considered on its merits' and not specify a location. It was felt the statement should be endorsed in its current iteration as it was in line with the declared climate emergency.

No amendments were made to the proposal and a vote was held with nine votes in favour and four abstentions.

- 254.3 To receive a recommendation on the awarding of the contract for the Carbon Emissions Report and approve an amendment to the contract fee and budget allocation – A budget of £10,000 had been provisionally set for this work and upon review of the bids there was found to be a significant variation in the cost of bids. The majority of quotes below £10,000 were felt to have not met the needs of the commission.

The review panel made a unanimous recommendation on who to award the contract to, noting that the preferred contractor had covered scopes one and two per the specification, and had included scope three as an additional option. The review panel had therefore also requested an increase in the budget to accommodate the quote.

Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation and award the contract to the specified bid; seconded by Cllr Brooks.

A concern was raised on whether this commission would lead to actual decarbonisation for the Town Council. It was clarified that the report would provide measurable data for the Town Council to act on to meet its intended target of net zero by 2030.

Cllr Murray requested an amendment be made to seek contributory funding to help mitigate the cost to public funds. Cllr Pearce amended the proposal to endorse the recommendation and, whilst the report would be budgeted as direct funding, if able to officers would source contributory funding. Furthermore, the inception meeting with the recommended contractor would establish the level of works to be commissioned, which may reduce the overall cost.

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Cllrs Brooks seconded the amended proposal and a vote was held with twelve votes in favour and one vote against.

255 Outside Bodies

255.1 To receive and note a report from the Marmot Place/ESDC Workshop – The report was received and noted.

256 To consider the following legal matters (confidential):

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

257 Date of the next meeting

Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 19 May 18:30

258 Items for the next agenda and close

An item was requested for the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to consider repainting the Marina Theatre.

An item was requested for the next agenda to review how value for money was assessed in expenditure, with a detailed proposal on how to ensure the population of Lowestoft received value for money from the Town Council.

Cllr Barker temporarily left the chamber at 19:37

It was clarified this item would need to be debated by the Finance and Governance Committee first with more reasoning provided on what the item was seeking to achieve and how such a consultation would be conducted. It was noted the Town Council abided by its Finance Regulations and undertook extensive budget setting work each year, via the Budget and Loan Sub-Committee.

Cllr Barker returned to the chamber at 19:38

259 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 Coleby proposed the meeting be moved into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour

The Chair closed the meeting to the public and moved into confidential session at 19:43

A comfort break was taken at 19:43

The meeting resumed at 19:45

250.2 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager, including the following (some aspects may be confidential) – A confidential update was provided by the Project Manager.

It was agreed that regular monthly updates on the contingency would be provided to the Town Hall Project Committee.

Cllrs Parker and Moore temporarily left the chamber at 20:03 due to their declared interests

Cllrs Parker and Moore returned to the chamber at 20:20

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256 To consider the following legal matters (confidential):

A confidential update on legal matters was provided to Full Council.

Cllr Brooks made a confidential proposal; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

Full Council agreed in the new civic year to no longer receive a full report on legal items, as most legal items and asset transfers were now concluded, and instead legal issues would be detailed separately and on the Decisions tracker.

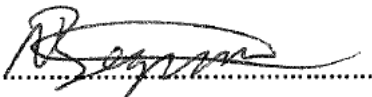
Cllrs Parker and Moore left the chamber at 20:23 due to their declared interests

Full Council were presented the TR1 document to transfer the public conveniences at Lowestoft Cemetery back to East Suffolk Council. Cllr Pearce proposed the TR1 be signed off; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

Full Council were presented the TR5 document to transfer the final section of the sea wall, and the Licence to Occupy the land to enable the Town Council to carry out repair works to the vandalised Euroscope (which the Town Council has budgeted for). Cllr Pearce proposed both documents be signed off; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:26

Signed:



19 May 2026