

Lowestoft Town Council

Full Council

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

Tuesday 28 July 2026 18:30

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum, Kinsey Foster, Joseph Hynes, Jen Jones, John Murray, Paul Page, Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger, 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)

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

77 Welcome

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

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs Wendy Brooks, Neil Coleby, Christian Newsome, Graham Parker, Deborah Ray and Dom Taylor with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

Cllrs Christine Moore was absent with no apologies received.

It was noted that Cllrs John Pitts and Terry Robinson had resigned from the Town Council.

79 Declarations and dispensations

79.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests, and of bias and pre-determination on items on the agenda – There were no declarations.

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

80 To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the Full Council meeting on 23 June 2026

Cllr Foster proposed approval of the draft minutes and confidential note; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

81 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 in attendance did not wish to speak on any agenda items and no advance comments had been received.

82 Finance and Governance

82.1 To receive and consider the following:

1. 2026 - 2027 budget and reserves – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the report as an accurate record of the current budget and reserves position; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.
2. Any bank reconciliations – June 2026 was complete and July 2026 was in progress.
3. Payments and income for the month ending June 2026 and July 2026 to date (see schedules) – Cllr Pearce proposed to accept the report as a true and accurate record of income and expenditure for the defined period; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.
4. Payments for approval – There were no payments to be approved.

82.2 To consider a recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee to amend Financial Regulation 5.6 and increase the threshold for contract value – Cllr Pearce proposed

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approval of the amendment, noting the statutory position was inclusive of VAT, and to increase the threshold for contract value to £60,000; seconded by Cllr Hynes; all in favour.

- 82.3 To receive a report from Town Council representation at the ESC Audit and Governance Committee 13 July in relation to a Code of Conduct complaint (confidential) – This item would be discussed in confidential session.

83 Town Hall Project

- 83.1 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager (some aspects may be confidential), including:

The Project Manager first gave an overall progress report, noting the main construction contract was progressing well with significant progress made on the New Market Inn, the completion of lime plastering in the Council Chamber and the progression of the café joint venture operator with a shortlist of candidates due to be reviewed. The interpretation has been re-costed and concluded to be slightly under budget due to minor amendments such as postponing the installation of sculptures in the garden.

Barnes Construction were committed to practical completion on 22 Feb 2027. The Quantity Surveyor has noted expenditure was slower than expected to reach that completion date. The Project Manager has requested their programme be re-examined against recent progress.

1. Current budget position – The Project Manager confirmed £6.525 million has been spent and £5.865 million remained. Further discussions on this item would be taken into confidential session.
 2. Current position on Design Team Fees (confidential) – This item would be discussed in confidential session.
 3. Registrar's Lease – The draft agreement to lease and supporting documents have been shared with the Registrars, both legal teams were seeking to have the agreement signed by the end of summer.
- 83.2 To consider funding of enhanced equipment to support council meetings – The cost for the enhanced equipment was £6,513. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the request with a delegation to the Finance Manager to arrange the budget allocation, requesting the IT capital reserve be considered before other reserves. The Project Manager confirmed software could be upgraded without affecting the fabric of the building. Cllr Barker seconded the proposal and a vote was held with all in favour.

84 Marina Theatre

- 84.1 To note the project progress report (some aspects may be confidential) – The report was received and noted.
- 84.2 To consider a recommendation from the Project Committee for additional in-project scope works, including:

1. Exterior decoration
2. Toilet refurbishment (west side)
3. Digital information boards
4. Bike racks

Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation to use the project variance of £200,000 for the specified additional in project scope works, subject to it being made clear that exterior decoration was not to be considered as annual maintenance but as additional work to visually link the two buildings, going forward it would then be directly funded as annual maintenance; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

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85 Assets, Inclusion and Development

- 85.1 To consider a recommendation from the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee to progress a sculpture for Ness Park – The Committee had been advised the sculpture would need to be one aspect of a larger scope project. One suggestion was to resurrect the Grit Fest. The contamination of the site would need to be considered when planning the location of the sculpture.

Cllr Pearce proposed the exploratory discussions be progressed by the Committee with a funding application to be drafted for the overall project; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

- 85.2 To consider the purchase of a football goal to be located in Sparrows Nest – Cllr Jones proposed approval of the purchase. It was hoped the football goals would satisfy the need for other recreational sport activities in the area and deter people from miss-using the bowls green, due to the cost of ongoing vandalism of the greens.

Cllr Pearce requested an amendment to the proposal to approve option one, with funds to be allocated to the Parks and Open Spaces capital budget, and to request the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee on further solutions should this not reduced vandalism in the area. Cllr Jones accepted the amendment and Cllr Pearce seconded the amended proposal. A vote was held with all in favour.

86 Personnel

- 86.1 To consider a request from Cllr Sonia Barker to join the Personnel Committee – Cllr Pearce proposed approval; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.
- 86.2 To receive a recommendation from the Personnel Committee on the scope of DBS checks for all Councillors – The Committee recommended to apply for the enhanced checks and that if any financial or safeguarding risks were flagged in the check, the Town Clerk would consider the risk and take legal advice on the matter. Cllr Murray proposed to endorse the recommendation and opt for the enhanced check; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.
- 86.3 To consider adoption of the draft Pension Policy – Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the current content but requested clarification on how the policy would be applied to staff who were not enrolled on LGPS and for a paragraph be added to explain how to enrol on the scheme as some members of staff would not be eligible for auto-enrolment, and bring the document back for consideration; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.
- 86.4 To receive a recommendation for staffing for weekend sports activities – Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation from the Sports Officer and Personnel Committee on staffing for weekend sports activities; second by Cllr Page; all in favour.
- 86.5 To receive any recommendations from the review of compliance with mandatory training – The Committee had agreed one member who had not completed Chair training would be contacted by the Town Clerk. Another member had not completed any of the mandatory training. Cllr Pearce proposed the Town Clerk speak with the Councillor who has not completed the mandatory training to establish how they intended to comply with the training and review this further at August Full Council; seconded by Cllr Jones; all in favour.

87 Climate and Ecological Emergency

- 87.1 To consider a recommendation from the Climate and Ecological Emergency Committee to support a blister packs recycling scheme run by Use It All and investigate its effectiveness – Cllr Pearce proposed to support to the initiative; seconded by Cllr Hynes; all in favour.
- The Climate and Ecological Emergency were tasked to agree a scope for the investigation of the scheme.

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88 To agree on items and representatives for the next East Suffolk Council Quarterly Liaison meeting

The following items were requested:

- An update on flood defences for the town and the formation of the governance group by East Suffolk Council.
- Dog fouling on the seafront, esplanade and play areas and how this will be enforced.
- Street cleaning in the town and the upkeep of empty properties.
- Engagement between East Suffolk Council and Lowestoft Town Council in relation to the Local Plan flood defences, with a request that the Local Planning Authority engage meaningfully with Lowestoft Town Council, and other Councils at risk of flooding, to ensure the increased risk is reflected meaningfully in the new Local Plan.

Cllrs Begum, Brooks, Hynes, Murray and Rappensberger requested to be considered as attendees.

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the requests; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

89 Outside Bodies

89.1 To consider appointing a Town Councillor to become an independent member of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, should a future opportunity arise – Cllr Pearce proposed to follow the first option provided to be kept abreast of information via agendas and observing meetings, with Cllrs Hynes and Murray to be sent to observe the meetings with a clarification requested on whether there was a limit to the number of Councillors who could attend to observe the meeting; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

90 To consider the following legal matters (confidential):

An update report on legal matters

This item would be discussed in confidential session.

91 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 25 August 18:30

92 Items for the next agenda and close

No items were requested for the next agenda.

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

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

Cllr Hynes temporarily left the chamber at 19:45

Cllr Hynes returned to the chamber at 19:46

83.1 To receive and note a progress report from the Project Manager (some aspects may be confidential), including:

1. Current budget position – There was a confidential discussion on the current budget position.

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

2. Current position on Design Team Fees (confidential) – There was a confidential discussion on the current position on Design Team fees.

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

Sheila Moss King left the meeting at 20:11

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

90 To consider the following legal matters (confidential):

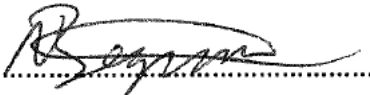
Full Council noted the updates from the report. Officers would continue to pursue the items in progress and no further actions were required.

Cllr Pearce left the chamber at 20:23

82.3 To receive a report from Town Council representation at the ESC Audit and Governance Committee 13 July in relation to a Code of Conduct complaint (confidential) – The report was received and noted.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:27

Signed:



25 August 2026