

# Lowestoft Place Board

31<sup>st</sup> October 2024, 10:00 – 12:00 | Riverside Council Offices

**THINK  
LOWESTOFT**

Attendees (Board)	Apologies (Board)
<p>Stephen Javes – Chair</p> <p>Andrew Brown – Anglian Water (&amp; BiTC)</p> <p>Clare Varela – CEFAS (attending on behalf of Tim Green)</p> <p>Cllr Caroline Topping – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Cllr Paul Ashdown - Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership</p> <p>Cllr Richard Smith – Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Danny Steel – Lowestoft Vision</p> <p>Emma Ratzer – Access Community Trust</p> <p>Genevieve Christie – First Light Festival</p> <p>George Wall – Department of Work and Pensions</p> <p>Jess Asato – MP for Lowestoft</p> <p>Marjorie Barnes – Sizewell C</p> <p>Paul Padda – East Coast College</p> <p>Toby Warren – Suffolk Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Cllr Ben Falat – Parish Councils representative</p> <p>Keith Moore – Environment Agency</p> <p>Tim Green – CEFAS</p> <p>Tom Duit – Associated British Ports</p>
Attendees (Officers)	Apologies (Officers)
<p>Darren Newman – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Jai Raithatha – Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Kate Ellis – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Michelle Burdett – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Nicole Rickard – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Paul Wood – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Sarah Foote – Lowestoft Town Council</p> <p>Sheila Moss-King (guest speaker, Lowestoft Town Hall) – MossKing Associates</p>	<p>Benjamin Porter – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>David Johnson – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Gary Bellward – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Naomi Smith - Cities &amp; Local Growth Unit</p>

	Description
1	<p>Welcome and apologies - Stephen Javes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Board members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul Padda, Principal &amp; CEO, East Coast College</li> <li>Jess Asato, MP for Lowestoft</li> <li>Cllr Caroline Topping, East Suffolk Council (ESC)</li> <li>Toby Warren, Suffolk Chamber of Commerce (replacing Amanda Ankin)</li> </ul> </li> <li>New Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michelle Burdett, Strategic Director, ESC</li> <li>David Johnson, ESC</li> <li>Naomi Smith, Cities &amp; Local Growth Unit</li> </ul> </li> <li>Declarations of Interest – none raised</li> </ul>
2	<p>Actions and approval of minutes from previous meeting - Stephen Javes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kate to circulate progress report for UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) once available – <i>included with agenda pack</i></li> <li>Cllr Fallat to send event details for Oulton Broad Parish Council for circulation with the minutes – <i>Cllr Fallat to send post meeting</i></li> <li>Regarding flooding and climate change within East Suffolk and East Norfolk, Stephen will write to Chris Bally to ask if there is an opportunity to explore partnership with Norfolk/Great Yarmouth councils - <i>ESC has been working in partnership with GYBC and North Norfolk DC for a number years as part of the coastal management team, Coastal Partnership East.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The partner local authorities who make up Coastal Partnership East all have coast protection responsibilities under the Coast Protection Act 1949 – they are what is known as Risk Management</i></p>

	<p><i>Authorities. This means that they have permissive powers, not duties, to manage the coast whether this is through coastal adaptation, building new coastal/erosion defences, monitoring changes or repairing and maintaining existing defences.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place Board to monitor when High Street Auctions goes live and Ben Porter to circulate a briefing paper with minutes – <i>awaiting further information from Government</i></li> </ul>
3	<p>Lowestoft Vision Business Improvement District (BID) Update - Danny Steel</p> <p>Danny provided an update on each of the themes of the BID's business plan. Events listings for 2024/25 were circulated prior to the meeting</p> <p>Pride of Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Summer trail saw over 500 young people taking part. Summer of 2025 will see the BID support the St Elizabeth Hop to it Art Trail.</li> <li>The BID took on extra planters that were purchased by the Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) on Bevan Street, and following feedback some planters have been moved to the Historic High Street.</li> <li>With thanks to funding from ESC the BID has been able to extend the ever popular Spooky Saturday to a week of events in the town centre throughout the October half term, attracting families to the town centre. The Christmas Light Switch on is planned for Saturday 30 November, with an added extra this year of a live band playing when the lights are switched on from 5pm-6pm.</li> </ul> <p>Regenerate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The BID have offered discounted first aid and fire safety training to BID businesses, which has been extremely popular.</li> <li>Quarterly Business meetings are continuing to grow, hosted at various times of the day to suit the business.</li> </ul> <p>Protect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PCSO Michael Soanes and his team have been regularly offering fraud prevention advice to the public in Barclays and other banks.</li> <li>The BID are working with East Suffolk Services (ESSL) to upgrade the radio scheme, the radios are a popular offering to the businesses, but are very old and in need of an upgrade.</li> </ul> <p>Represent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thanks to grant funding from ESC, Discover Lowestoft will launch a brand new website in Jan 2025.</li> <li>Angela Grey, BID manager, is regularly meeting businesses, partners and stakeholders and also attends town marketing meetings with the other towns in East Suffolk to learn and share ideas with our friends across the region.</li> </ul> <p>Additional points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jess Asato's constituency office will now move to London Road North</li> <li>Cllr Smith asked if the new bridge could be incorporated into the logo – Danny advised he would take this away as an action to review</li> <li>Jess queried if there is footfall data available covering the past 11 years, the volume of empty units, and what the BID are doing to support tourism. The BID boundary ends at the bascule bridge so does not cover the seafront, but it is hoped the boundary may expand in the future</li> <li>Cllr Topping advised Greater Anglia are keen to offer £5 tickets to market towns for the Christmas light switch ons</li> <li>The Lowestoft carnival date currently clashes with Beccles carnival - Cllr Topping and Jess Asato would be keen to see if this could be moved so both towns can be supported.</li> <li>Cllr Smith wanted to provide reassurance that the bascule bridge will not close now the Gull wing is open. It may close for maintenance, but will not close permanently.</li> </ul> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Danny to review Gull Wing addition in Lowestoft Vision town silhouette</li> <li>Footfall data to be included with circulation of minutes</li> <li>Discussion to be held with Seagull to see if the carnival could be moved to an alternative date</li> </ul>
4	<p>First Light Festival (FLF) 2024 review - Genevieve Christie</p>

	<p>Genevieve provided an overview of this years festival, following the publishing of the festival evaluation.</p> <p>Some key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Venues have been expanded to now include Seagull Theatre, St Peter and St John Church, Mossy's, East Point Pavilion, Royal Norfolk &amp; Suffolk Yacht Club.</li> <li>• Over 30% of our volunteers are under 24 with 37% returning from previous years</li> <li>• Over 40,000+ in attended</li> <li>• 70 local businesses traded at the festival</li> <li>• The festival was powered by solar power and vegetable oil, replacing diesel generators - Cllr Topping asked if reusable cups be used in the future. Genevieve advised that the festival are trying to work with traders on this.</li> <li>• Jess Asato asked that if accommodation is fully booked in advance, could the website direct visitors to alternative accommodation in the local area.</li> <li>• Battery of Ideas, which is located in Tesco, will work on developing programmes for the Cultural Quarter, with Suffolk Artlink and other organisations also working with FLF</li> <li>• Cllr Ashdown suggested linking in with BACT community transport next year, to provide transport between rural villages to Lowestoft.</li> </ul> <p>Genevieve shared the film of this years festival with the Board which can be viewed <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>The evaluation for this years festival can be viewed <a href="#">here</a></p>
5	<p>Sizewell C Update - Marjorie Barnes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation strategy – Sizewell C (SZC) is taking a dynamic and thorough approach to accommodation. Utilisation of the Pontins site will provide a legacy benefit to the site. 7,900 will work on the project at peak build phase, with a third anticipated to be from the local area. At full capacity, it is expected 500 of the SZC workforce will reside at Pontins. A direct park and ride bus service will be established to SZC. 112 apartments are anticipated to be available from January 2025.</li> <li>• Direct Air Capture (DAC) – SZC, University of Nottingham, Helical Energy, Atkins and Doosan Babcock have formed a consortium to develop technology which will extract carbon dioxide from air, using heat as driving force. The demonstrator DAC facility is being constructed at the Port of Lowestoft on disused ABP land. Once operational, the plant is expected to extract around 100 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year.</li> <li>• Education/social partners – SZC has developed key partnerships with local social and education partners. This network will support outreach activity to ensure SZC can meet local employment commitments.</li> <li>• Local employment – Lowestoft will be a key centre for the SZC workforce. Outreach activity is ongoing to promote jobs/training to people in Lowestoft.</li> <li>• Land requirements – The site delivery team continue to develop plans for SZC's land requirements as the scale and pace of the project grows. SZC have explored sites at Lowestoft for the logistics, movement and storage of goods required for the project. Option agreements are now held with ABP on two sites at Lowestoft – the Former Shell Base &amp; Belvedere Road.</li> <li>• Cllr Topping advised she is mindful of workforce displacement, with SZC's commitment of having at least third of the workforce being locally employed. Marjorie advised they are trying to leave a legacy by providing skills opportunities.</li> </ul>
6	<p>Winter support package - Nicole Rickard</p> <p>Nicole introduced the winter support package, highlighting challenges, statistics, and the offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ongoing cost of living impacts e.g. fewer donations / increased demand on food projects</li> <li>– Those who were just about managing now aren't</li> <li>– Confirmed changes to Winter Fuel allowance (and impact on SCF Surviving Winter)</li> <li>– Range of pressures on housing (supply, affordability, heating costs, mould and damp)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Some of the key statistics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Five new Community Pantries set up in East Suffolk (including 3 in Lowestoft and Bloodmoor)</li> <li>– 2,100+ referrals through Community Help Hub</li> <li>– 4 Uniform Banks funded (including Bloodmoor covering the Lowestoft area)</li> <li>– Warmth on Prescription pilot for people with respiratory conditions with N&amp;WICB and Warm Homes Team</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The offer includes:</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Work with SCC and schools on poverty proofing the school day – biggest issues are hunger and uniform costs</li> <li>– Cost of Living Community Grants – Lowestoft CC Foodbank and YMCA Trinity</li> <li>– Warm Welcomes (x 6) – Seagull Theatre, DANES, Reutilise, Lowestoft Library, Nature Place CIC, St Andrews Church</li> <li>– Top-up grants to existing Community Pantries</li> <li>• Referrals can be made via the <a href="#">ESC website</a></li> <li>• Jess Asato noted that the school uniform bank at Bloodmoor have advised that schools are not currently adhering to government guidance, and still insisting on branded uniform, and asked if the Communities team working on addressing this with schools? Nicole advised that they are working with the schools individually to address this and encourage them to consider the implications of branded uniform in deprived area.</li> </ul>
7	<p>Towns Deal update: Post Office, Cultural Quarter, Seafront Vision, Jubilee Parade, LEEF and Port Gateway - Darren Newman</p> <p>Darren presented the progress and position of the programme as well as approval from the board to sign off the monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) submission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme vs original profile - Original profile was amended in September 2022 return, since then no change</li> <li>• Progress over past 6 months - Transition from development, to initiation to delivery</li> <li>• Current Challenges - Rising costs and removal of the Station building from the programme</li> <li>• Challenges over the next 6 months – Weather, costs</li> <li>• Cultural Quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Demolition of car park due to be completed by end of November – social value already being evidenced</li> <li>– Marina Centre contract awarded to PJ Spilling's (Nov 2024 – Feb 2025), Battery Green main contract awarded to Morgan Sindall (Jan 2025 – Feb 2026), Marina Theatre main contract awarded (contractor to be announced)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Post Office: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tender process completed, with 4 tenders received (all within budget)</li> <li>– Award of contract pending</li> <li>– Continued work with Messums East of Gallery operations</li> <li>– Next steps: Award contract and start on site late Nov / Dec</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Port Gateway <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lowestoft Eastern Energy Facility (LEEF) is on target, and first vessel has now visited</li> <li>– Ice House demolition nearing completion</li> <li>– Pocket Park construction contract awarded</li> <li>– Next steps: Complete pocket park lease and delivery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Seafront Vision (Royal Plain and Royal Green) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Blakedown Landscapes appointed</li> <li>– Delivery Nov 2024 to June 2025</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Jubilee Parade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Demolition completed in time for First Light Festival in June</li> <li>– Local company, PJ Spilling's, awarded construction contract</li> <li>– October 2024 – October 2025</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Chair asked if the Board would be happy with the updates presented to be submitted as part of the Towns Fund M&amp;E process. Jess advised she would like to see the full M&amp;E report, but there was unanimous approval for this to be submitted.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Station building future to be picked up outside meeting</li> <li>• M&amp;E to be shared with Jess Asato</li> </ul>
8	<p>Lowestoft Towns Deal: Lowestoft Town Hall - Sarah Foote &amp; Sheila Moss King</p> <p>Sheila presented the latest position with the Town Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Footfall expected in the High Street to increase by 80,000 per year</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenders returned exceeded budget, due to increased construction costs, design changes which has tripled the size of the soakaway, and the condition of the building.</li> <li>• Submitting an grant uplift request to National Lottery Heritage Fund, and increasing public works loan to £5m – if this fails, there is no alternative.</li> <li>• Timescales have altered, and the following need to be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Full public procurement is required - all major work must be tendered.</li> <li>– With taking out a public loan we need to ensure sure it's affordable and supported by residents.</li> <li>– Planning/listed building consent needed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Revised timescales: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Project started – Dec 2020</li> <li>– Initial funding secured – Sept 2021</li> <li>– Full funding secured – Sept 2023</li> <li>– Out to tender - Summer 2024</li> <li>– Work starts onsite – Jan 2025</li> <li>– Work finishes onsite - July/August 2026</li> <li>– New town hall opens – Sept 2026</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
9	Lowestoft Healthy Hearts - Nicole Rickard Postponed until next meeting
10	Place Board Governance - Paul Wood With the Board being established in 2020, Paul advised to the Board that we need to review the governance and broaden the remit of the group, whilst still reporting on Towns Deal, with the hope to launch new governance early 2025.
11	<p>AOB - Stephen Javes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> November will see HRH Princess Anne officially open Gull Wing</li> <li>• Shopfront grant scheme has been launched for Lowestoft, following the success of the grant scheme through the Heritage Action Zones</li> <li>• Further promotion of the town in the Sun newspaper. There was a consensus that we need to promote the town further.</li> </ul> <p>Next meeting: 09:30, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – hybrid meeting. Details for in person and virtual attendance in meeting invite.</p>