

Lowestoft Place Board

Friday 6th June 2025, 10:00 – 12:30

Hamilton House, Lowestoft Town Council Offices

**THINK
LOWESTOFT**

Attendees	Apologies
<p>Stephen Javes – Chair</p> <p>Emma Ratzer – Access Community Trust (Deputy Chair)</p> <p>Clare Varela – CEFAS</p> <p>Cllr Caroline Topping – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Cllr Peter Byatt – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Cllr Richard Smith – Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Danny Steel – Lowestoft Vision</p> <p>Genevieve Christie – First Light Festival</p> <p>Jess Asato – MP for Lowestoft</p> <p>Paul Ager – Associated British Ports</p> <p>Paul Padda – East Coast College</p>	<p>Cllr Nasima Begum - Lowestoft Town Council</p> <p>Matthew Waters - Lowestoft & Waveney Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Rachel Hunt - Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board</p>
Attendees (Officers)	Apologies (Officers)
<p>Gemma Fraser – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Kate Ellis – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Naomi Smith - Cities & Local Growth Unit</p> <p>Paul Wood – East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Sarah Foote – Lowestoft Town Council</p>	<p>Andrew Cook – Suffolk County Council</p> <p>Michelle Burdett - East Suffolk Council</p> <p>Mike Todman - Cities and Local Growth Unit, HM Government</p>

	Description
1	<p>Welcome & Introductions - Chair</p> <p>Declarations of interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma Ratzer noted her existing relationship with the Chair of the Marina Theatre • No other declarations noted <p>Actions from last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on social value and apprenticeships at next meeting – ESC. • Paul Wood advised that ESC do not feel in the position to provide a detailed update at this time, but happy to do this at a future meeting when more information is available. • Reach out to those who have been awarded Towns Fund contracts, to determine whether the projects have supported them with securing other contracts – ESC. • ESC would like to provide would like to provide a comprehensive response, but don't yet have all the data from our contractors to be able to do this. ESC will update at a future meeting. • Ambassador programme to be reviewed and owned by the Place Board, with discussion at the next meeting – ESC. • To be discussed in item 3 • Danny and Paul Wood to meet to discuss the station building – PW/DS. • Danny and Paul will be meeting w/c 9th June to discuss this. • Update from Jess Asato on Lowestoft Hospital to be added to agenda for next meeting • Discussed in item 6 • Paul and Michelle to review the common themes from workshops – ESC. • To be discussed in item 5 • George King to find out when the new Government fund to support teaching of skills will be made available • A link was provided post meeting Government unleashes next generation of construction workers to build 1.5m homes • Clare offered CEFAS to host one of the Place Board meetings, along with a tour of the laboratories

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kate to arrange. We are in the process of rearranging the October Board meeting to meet Towns Fund M&E return, so Kate will reach out once confirmed.
2	<p>Approval of notes from previous meeting - Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes were approved by the Board.
3	<p>Lowestoft Regeneration Programme update – Paul Wood/Sarah Foote Paul provided a high-level presentation of the position of each Towns & Levelling Up Fund project.</p> <p>Battery Green</p> <p>Following a year of joint working, and the former car park having been situated over the mains sewer for the past 40 years, Anglian Water have advised they will not allow a build over agreement. This has had a significant impact on the current design as major sewer runs through the site.</p> <p>A redesign has taken place to account for these constraints, but the programme impact will likely be significant. We are still confident we can deliver a transformational project, but just not how we initially anticipated.</p> <p>To note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are still confident of meeting MHCLG’s ultimate deadline of delivery by March 27 Jess has written to Mark Thurston at Anglian Water and noted that this has unfortunately been a result of poor communication from AW, but as it is the main sewer for the town, we can’t build over. Cllr Topping thanked Jess for her support to date. Next Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree concept and pipe easements with Anglia Water Understand planning process and timeline Test proposal with the market Roundtable meeting with project team to work through constraints Update project timeline <p>Marina Theatre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demolition of existing link building Ground works complete Foundation complete Drainage works complete Lift being erected Auditorium work on track to begin 16th June with Café and Theatre to shut 16th June to 16th October 2025 <p>Post Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal strip out nearing completion Asbestos removal complete, and gas disconnected Vaults and external fire escape removed Demolition of toilet block and internal walls completed. Project still anticipated to complete February 2026 but is currently 2 weeks behind schedule. This is expected to make this up over the course of the programme, however. <p>Seafront Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play and Gym Equipment installed Multi Use Games Area complete Surfacing and planting completed Danny asked if the CCTV can be updated to monitor that there is no ASB around the new planting. Fountains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fountains sub structure has been installed. The fountains are now due for completion before summer holidays, but unfortunately a slight delay in fountains completion means they will not be operational ahead of First Light Festival, and the project team have been working with Genevieve and the FLF team to mitigate this as best we can.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The original location for the Fountain Plant room was challenging and three options were explored. The proposed option is hidden plant room, located in the former underground toilets on Royal Plain. There is no additional project cost or planning permission required with this option, but there is a 4-week delay to the project as a result of this. <p>Jubilee Parade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cliff stabilisation works now complete ● 3.5m excavated for new pump chamber – there were some challenges with the excavation as there were some issues we couldn't have predicted. ● Drainage works in progress ● Steel frame installation will take place after First Light Festival in July ● We are still on schedule to complete early 2026 <p>Town Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progress continues well on site. ● Barnes, the main contractor, has placed contracts within the local supply chain as follows: ● £450k worth of contracts within Lowestoft itself ● £770k worth of contracts within the Lowestoft constituency (£1.22m if combined with the above in total value for wider Lowestoft) ● Within Norfolk and Suffolk (Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket, and Norwich - £2.7m. ● Within Norfolk and Suffolk to date: £3.92m ● There has also been 85 working days from individuals who live in NR32 or NR33 postcodes.
4	<p>Lowestoft Ambassadors – Kate Ellis</p> <p>Kate is the Place Marketing lead for Think Lowestoft, of which the Ambassador Programme sits. The programme is currently undergoing a review, as momentum was lost with the programme. The presentation evaluates the programme achievements to date, and areas needing improvement. We are looking for the Place Board to help shape priorities for the second phase.</p> <p>Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ESC appointed Place Marketing experts, Thinkingplace, in 2019 to create a place brand for Lowestoft, through the Making Waves Together cultural programme. The purpose of this, to promote the town as a great place to live, work, visit and invest. ● One of the ways of achieving positive promotion, was to create a complimenting Ambassador programme. ● Launched in 2021, the Lowestoft Ambassador Programme aimed to promote the town positively through a network of passionate stakeholders. Events provided networking opportunities, project updates from across the town, occasional workshops, and community food bank collections. <p>Ambassador objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote Lowestoft by cascading the 'Lowestoft Story'. 2. Use networks of employees, customers, clients, supply chains and family members to promote Lowestoft. 3. Use the promotional tools provided to aid promotion. 4. Challenge outdated perceptions and misinformation about the town. 5. Be a positive voice within your community or organisation to articulate a more vibrant and optimistic narrative. <p>Where we left off:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Last Ambassador Meeting: March 2024 ● No events in the last 12 months ● Programme purpose became unclear ● Loss of focus of Programme Scope: Members and prospective Ambassadors are uncertain about the programme's purpose and objectives. ● Engagement Issues: Difficulty in engaging younger audiences and unclear role descriptions hindered broader participation. Ambassadors may have been less motivated to participate actively or consistently, especially without tangible or social incentives.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetitive events: Events regularly provided updates on projects in the town, rather than being dynamic, engaging opportunities for ambassadors to actively contribute ideas, build connections, and drive meaningful change within the community. • Strong online start, but lack of in-person events led to declining engagement and loss of focus. <p>What worked well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Recognition: Praised by the LGA as a strong example of place-based storytelling and community engagement. • Brand Impact: The 'Lowestoft Story' and Place Board supported the town's regeneration strategy. • Strategic Value: High Streets Task Force highlighted the brand narrative for helping focus community and stakeholder planning. • Community Participation: Wide involvement from businesses and organisations in events and promotions. • Strong Attendance: Events were well attended by residents and local businesses. • Promotional Toolkit: Provided Ambassadors with free access to photography, copy, and brand assets. • Online Growth: The Think Lowestoft website and social media (@thinklowestoft) continue to grow in reach and engagement. <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-engage: Relaunch with a fresh, defined schedule of events and activities. • Clarify the Vision: Define clear programme & role expectations • Inclusive outreach: Actively engage younger and underrepresented groups • Establish leadership: Formalise a Lead Ambassador group via the Place Board. • Track progress: Use SMART goals to measure wider impact (tourism, investment, business growth). • Energise Our Events: Launch dynamic events and purposeful events, not just updates • Enhance the brand: Add to our assets to enhance the toolkit • Promote Positive Stories: Ensure PB members and Ambassadors receive regular updates containing positive news from across the town to share across their networks. <p>Proposed Timeline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2025: Re-engagement planning • Autumn 2025: Relaunch event • Winter 2025+: Quarterly events & impact reports <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to be clear on our KPI's – Kate to draft these over the next 2-3 weeks. • We also need to be clear on the purpose of the Ambassador programme – what will it do for the town and how we avoid duplicating existing programmes - Jess Asato noted the Love Lowestoft campaign • Kate will circulate the toolkit and assets with the Place Board for wider use. <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to be clear on our KPI's – Kate to draft these over the next 2-3 weeks. • Kate will circulate the toolkit and assets with the Place Board for wider use.
5	<p>Review of last meetings themed workshop – Chair/Kate Ellis</p> <p>Papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowestoft Place Board Delivery Plan (Draft) • 002 03.04.2025 Lowestoft Place board - People and Skills workshop notes <p>The draft delivery plan was shared with the Board. It currently consists of feedback from the previous two workshops. Whilst we gather feedback from the workshops, we are aware there will be some crossover, which will need to be refined the deliverables; these will then feed into the revised Town Investment Plan</p> <p>It was noted that the Place Board will need to agree KPI's for delivery.</p> <p>Action:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery Plan KPI's to be developed for Board discussion and approval. • Data regarding skills available but need to create a picture of skills needed locally. Paul Padda advised that ECC can assist with this.
6	<p>Lowestoft Hospital and Community Health – Jess Asato MP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting held with a number of stakeholders, to understand position of Lowestoft Hospital • Keenness to see the hospital repurposed, however there is an overage clause on the building • Lowestoft Hospital isn't suitable for health purposes at present, but there is concern regarding the lack of movement with progressing development and the continuing decay. • Lowestoft Health Campus – it was suggested that an options appraisal is undertaken on the building, which would include a health campus. • A Frailty hub for the town has secured funding, but no location at present. • Jess noted that Government has announced funding to expand urgent and emergency care facilities which Lowestoft could bid for a new urgent care centre, relieving pressure on local services. Backed by a total of nearly £450 million, the urgent and emergency care plan 2025 to 2026 will deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ around 40 new same day emergency care and urgent treatment centres - which treat and discharge patients in the same day, avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital ○ up to 15 mental health crisis assessment centres ○ almost 500 new ambulances will also be rolled out across the country by March 2026 ○ Read more here: New ambulances and faster emergency care for patients next winter - GOV.UK
7	<p>Theme Workshop: Inequality – Gemma Fraser and Emma Ratzer</p> <p>Gemma Fraser from ESC Communities team attended as a guest to support the themed workshop regarding inequality. Gemma is currently working on the ESC Marmot Place Programme.</p> <p>A Marmot Place recognises that health and health inequalities are mostly shaped by the social determinants of health (SDH): the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and takes action to improve health and reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>Inequalities in East Suffolk which contribute to poor health and poor health outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More children, working age and older people living in deprivation than Suffolk average • 10-year life expectancy gap for both men and women between the most/least deprived wards • Almost 10% of young people are NEET in some wards in/around Lowestoft • Lower average wages across all quintiles compared to the England average • A greater proportion of people in Lowestoft 21% adults in Lowestoft have a disability or long-term condition <p>Action: Lowestoft based stats and sources to be shared with Board</p> <p>The programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-year initial programme, regardless of the makeup of the council following devolution • Partnership with the UCL Institute for Health Equity and Professor Sir Michael Marmot • Intense focus on inequalities between and within communities • Funded by the Community Partnership Board, Suffolk Public Health and the two ICBs – Norfolk and Waveney and SNEE • 4 areas of East Suffolk form part of the study: Lowestoft, Beccles, Sizewell C/Leiston area, and Felixstowe will be included, of which a robust needs assessment needs to take place. • Cllr Byatt noted that there are similarities to the work of Lowestoft Rising, and if are there opportunities to review the research that took place with this. <p>Marmot 8 principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give every child the best start in life. 2. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives. 3. Create fair employment and good work for all. 4. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities. 6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention. 7. Tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes. 8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together <p>Timescales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April/May – initial data collection and programme scoping, stakeholder analysis, engagement strategy • June – inception and start working with the UCL Institute for Health Equity • Sept - official launch with Professor Sir Michael Marmot • We will know by August regarding where Marmot sits within ICB's <p>The Board queried whether we could host the launch in Lowestoft, particularly with Lowestoft holding the poorest statistics in the district. Gemma advised she would speak to Nicole Rickard regarding this.</p> <p>The Board held a discussion regarding the challenges, current interventions and gaps within the town. Some of the key challenges raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness • Job opportunities and employment instability – reliance on seasonal jobs • NEET • Coastal erosion / flooding • High rates of long-term physical and mental health illnesses and poor healthcare access - trends common in coastal communities as noted in Professor Christopher Whitty's 2021 Chief Medical Officer's Health in Coastal Communities – Summary and recommendation report. • Transport and connectivity barriers <p>It was noted that while key interventions, such as apprenticeships, support provided by ESC & ACT for communities, and East Coast College's provision of skills training are seeing significant success, support is still required around the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding for flood protection – our most vulnerable communities were the ones that were impacted the most due to most 'affordable' housing being located within the flood zones. • Wraparound support: integrated welfare-health-education services targeting families and disabled residents. • Economic diversification beyond seasonal or low-paid roles <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gemma to take the proposal of launching the East Suffolk Marmot Place initiative in Lowestoft to Nicole. • Richard to ask Director of Public Health to attend next meeting
8	<p>Forward Plan - Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August: TBC • November: Culture workshop – please note change of date from October to November. • February: Pride of Place workshop
9	<p>AOB – All</p> <p>Town Deal Fund Compliance and Transparency Checks 2025 – Kate Ellis</p> <p>MHCLG have recently undertaken compliance checks for the Place Board. The checks noted that MHCLG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could not find webpage with required information • Code of conduct needs updating with regards to recording gifts/hospitality • Declarations of interest need to be a standing item. We have decided to undertake a review with board members to ensure that these are all up to date, and will review every 12 months • We require personal profiles of board members <p>Whilst we believe these details are accessible on ESC's website, we have taken this on board, and will undertake an update of each of these recommendations.</p>

	<p>The purpose of the paperwork is to ensure that Town Deal Boards provide publicly accessible information to demonstrate the standards of governance, accountability, and transparency required of them and are consistent with their role as set out in the Towns Fund Prospectus.</p> <p>Action: Kate will issue the paperwork with the minutes of the meeting, to be returned as soon as possible for posting on the website.</p>
	<p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draft KPI's to be set out for the Delivery Plan for Place Board discussion 2. Paul Padda to assist data regarding skills and skills still required locally. 3. Lowestoft based stats and sources on inequalities to be shared with Board 4. Gemma to take the proposal of launching the East Suffolk Marmot Place initiative in Lowestoft to Nicole Rickard 5. Cllr Richard Smith to ask Director of Public Health to attend next Place Board meeting – request withdrawn as we will not be looking at Health at the next Board. 6. Kate will issue the Place Board compliance paperwork with the minutes of the meeting, to be returned as soon as possible for posting on the website.
10	<p>Future meeting dates</p> <p>Friday 8 August 2025 – ABP, Lowestoft Port Office</p> <p>Tuesday 4 November 2025 – Cefas please note change of date</p> <p>February 2026 - TBC</p>