

# Lowestoft Place Board

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023, 10:00 – 12:00 | Virtual



Attendees (Board)	Apologies (Board)
Stuart Rimmer – East Coast College (Vice Chair) Andrew Peck – Department of Work and Pensions Cllr Ben Falat – Parish Councils representative Cllr Keith Patience – Lowestoft Town Council Cllr Paul Ashdown - Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership Cllr Toby Hammond – East Suffolk Council Danny Steel – Lowestoft Vision David Dukes – New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership James Garland – Park Holidays Marjorie Barnes - EDF Peter Aldous – MP for Waveney Phil Aves – Lowestoft Rising Steve Hodger – Scottish Power Renewables Toby Warren – Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Tom Duit – Associated British Ports	Stephen Javes – (Chair) Amanda Ankin – Suffolk Chamber of Commerce Andrew Brown – Anglian Water (& BiTC) Cllr Richard Smith – Suffolk County Council Genevieve Christie – First Light Festival Keith Moore – Environment Agency Tim Green – CEFAS
Attendees (Officers/Speakers)	Apologies (Officers)
Andrew Jarvis – East Suffolk Council Benjamin Porter - East Suffolk Council Darren Newman – East Suffolk Council Emily Cashen - Cities & Local Growth Unit Gary Bellward – East Suffolk Council Jai Raithatha – Suffolk County Council Kate Ellis - East Suffolk Council Kate McFarland – East Suffolk Council Kerry Blair – East Suffolk Council Nicole Rickard – East Suffolk Council Paul Wood – East Suffolk Council Philip Ridley – East Suffolk Council Rachel Bunn – East Coast College Shona Bendix – Lowestoft Town Council	Karen Thomas - East Suffolk Council Marie Webster-Fitch – East Suffolk Council

	Description	Lead
1	<b>Welcome and approval of previous meeting minutes</b> Minutes were unanimously approved by the Board.	Stuart Rimmer
2	<b>Actions from previous meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update to be provided on the baseline project benefits and issues impacting the community at beginning of meeting – <i>see item 3</i></li> <li>Town Council to provide an update of the Town Hall at next meeting – see item 5</li> <li>Discussion to be held surrounding communication and promotion of the projects.</li> <li>Marjorie to provide an update on benefits of Sizewell C to Lowestoft – the largest contract locally is with Cefas who have also worked with Hinkley Point, estimated to be approx. £20m, ABP with regards to space at the port, smaller contracts with James Fisher and Seawards Safety. Marjorie noted EDF are working closely with the Chamber of Commerce to support local suppliers and are looking to set up an MOU. EDF are now in delivery phase and will be 50% government owned. Peter queried whether there is an opportunity to create an aggregated system for local businesses. David wanted to note that aggregating local businesses, there needs to be an appointed representative for the group. NALEP are in discussion with another nuclear setting, who perhaps have</li> </ul>	Stuart Rimmer

	<p>the resources to supply all services regarding cleaning, security, catering etc. Marjorie advised EDF are committed to supporting local businesses. Jai suggested that some case studies from Hinkley Point are created to show how the aggregated system works.</p> <p><b>Action: Marjorie to work with the Chamber on case studies regarding aggregating etc.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next meeting to discuss Ambassadors communication plan (how do we communicate with them).</li> <li>• Place Board members asked to nominate themselves to form a working group to support the Lead Ambassadors. Please email these nominations to Kate Ellis – <i>see item 9</i>.</li> <li>• Place Board members to suggest projects/activities for the Ambassador programme – <i>see item 9</i></li> <li>• Street clean to be coordinated under Think Clean.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b>Latest position</b></p> <p>Darren provided a review of the Town Investment Plan objectives, as well as an overview of the results of the ESC residents survey, Vacancy rates, crime statistics and footfall. The projects were then presented in a matrix to identify how they propose to overcome these issues.</p> <p>An overview of the statistics presented showed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancy rates for Lowestoft are above the national average (13.8%). Lowestoft is currently experiencing the highest vacancy rates for the last 5 years</li> <li>• Universal credit claims continue to rise</li> <li>• Total monthly visitors to Lowestoft for the period beginning May 2023 are currently higher than they were for the previous period from May 2022- April 2023 however average daily visitors are currently lower than the previous period</li> <li>• Dwell time for June 2023 is on average 15 minutes longer than dwell time for May 2022. This is also the highest dwell time recorded in the last two periods</li> <li>• As a result of the resident's survey, the ratings for people who gave a 4 or 5 equated to 28% and 32% of people gave a 1 or 2. Most people (38%) rated Lowestoft a 3 for how proud they are of the town</li> <li>• Crime in Lowestoft is above the national average (83.77 per 1000 people) however the data is starting to show a trend that is decreasing</li> <li>• Revised KPI's will be measured and presented to future Place Board meetings.</li> </ul> <p>Sarah queried where the data for the resident's survey came from and whether the data can be broken into wards. Darren advised this is from the East Suffolk Council residents survey, which is promoted via ESC's website and newsletter, and can be broken into wards.</p> <p>With regards to the Universal Credit figures, Peter noted that the cost-of-living crisis is very much still an issue and will raise this again in Parliament. Peter advised he's had complaints about the cleanliness of the Britten Centre car park which also smells. Peter was concerned about the 26.4% vacancy rate and the condition of the buildings that are empty – Danny advised that as a group, we perhaps need to encourage landlords to invest in their buildings to attract tenants, suggesting a meeting with Darren and Andy to discuss approaches.</p>	Darren Newman
4	<p><b>Partner update</b></p> <p><b>Lowestoft Vision</b></p> <p>Angela Grey has now joined Lowestoft Vision as BID Business Engagement Manager. On 26<sup>th</sup> July, a walkaround the Town Centre took place with councillors and East Suffolk Services for a positive discussion regarding town Centre cleanliness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Open Days takes place 8<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> September - Lowestoft historically has the largest number of events in the country. The Seagull Theatre and Lowestoft Heritage Action Zones will be hosting an 1880s weekend in the historic High Street, with full programme of Victorian entertainment.</li> <li>• 10<sup>th</sup> October, Water Lane Leisure Centre – Lowestoft Vision BID member meeting</li> </ul>	Danny Steel

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28<sup>th</sup> October – Scary Saturday Halloween event, which usually sees the largest footfall of the year.</li> <li>• Christmas events are in preparation, with more information to follow.</li> </ul> <p><b>Suffolk Chamber of Commerce</b> Toby discussed the Local Skills Improvement Plan, which is a new initiative from the Department for Education (DfE) that will set out the key priorities needed to make technical education and skills provision more responsive to the changing needs of employers and the local economy. More information can be read here about this initiative: <a href="#">Local Skills Improvement Plan</a></p> <p><b>Lowestoft &amp; Northern Parishes Community Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Partnership meetings will now be hosted in different venues within the Partnership boundary, with the next meetings hosted at Somerleyton Village Hall.</li> <li>• The BuzzBus will now have a new stop added at North Quay Retail Park but will no longer run on Mondays as this wasn't popular.</li> <li>• 15 schools now involved with the fruit and veg planters.</li> <li>• Lowestoft Town Council – bulky waste collection for those who are struggling with paying the district collection fee, however only available to those who pay their council tax to LTC.</li> <li>• 4 new stalls will be installed in the Triangle Market to support new businesses.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lowestoft Town Council</b> Most Easterly Pride took place in August, which was a great success despite the rain. Remembrance Day will take place this year, with Lady Clare, the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, in attendance.</p> <p><b>Lowestoft Rising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food bank still operating but seeing reductions in donations.</li> <li>• Community Pantries still have capacity and are exploring a fourth potential pantry at Bloodmoor Community Centre.</li> <li>• School uniform bank has been busy this year, which has been moved to Bloodmoor Community Centre, and have put finance into school shoe vouchers.</li> <li>• ABP have supported the recent incident at Bloodmoor, but we are still seeking further support from businesses and Board members.</li> <li>• North and South Men's Shed running well, supporting mental health in the community.</li> <li>• 5-6 rough sleepers currently. East Suffolk have received £34k uplift to support rough sleepers</li> <li>• Public Space Protection Order - The PSPO prohibits the consumption of alcohol in specific areas and is currently in place for the Harbour ward in Lowestoft, which includes the town centre and High Street. This order was introduced in 2020 and following a review of data collected by Suffolk Police, it is recommended that the order is renewed. 64% of 182 incidents in the last year have been related to alcohol. The current town centre PSPO - which helps to reduce anti-social behaviour by stopping people drinking alcohol in public spaces and is due to expire in October. A public consultation has now opened online with people encouraged to give their views on the proposed renewal.</li> </ul> <p>East Coast College – Please see item 10</p>	<p>Toby Warren</p> <p>Paul Ashdown</p> <p>Sarah Foote</p> <p>Phil Aves</p> <p>Stuart Rimmer</p>
5	<p><b>Town Deal update</b> Darren reviewed the Monitoring and Evaluation schedule with the Board, advising when the status of the reports, and then proceeded to provide an overview of the Towns Fund projects.</p> <p><b>Cultural Quarter</b></p>	<p>Darren Newman Darren Newman</p>

Darren presented the latest concept drawing to the Board for the CQ, which will contain a courtyard, exhibition and performance space, improved accessibility, and leisure facilities. Early discussions are being held with a regional operator. It has sadly been announced this morning that the Lowestoft Wilko will be one of the stores closing through their administration process.

#### Progress

- Concept Design completed
- Pre-Planning application process complete
- Cost within budget
- Ecological Surveys completed
- MTT developed Concept Work & Cost Plan

#### Next steps

- Public Consultation
- Vacant procession of complex
- Continue to review project cashflow
- Market testing
- Meanwhile Programme

The Marina Theatre has now submitted their planning application for improvements.

Town Hall – ecology surveys have been undertaken and are still awaiting to hear the outcome of the bid to NLHF.

#### **Station Quarter - Post Office**

Darren presented the latest designs and floor plan for the Post Office gallery, advising we will be submitting an additional funding application to Arts Council England regarding access.

#### Progress

- Planning and Listed Building Consent submission for Post Office
- Fire safety assessment commissioned
- Commission of structural engineer
- Commission of parting wall surveyor
- Noise Risk Assessment
- Window displays completed
- EOI of Arts council funding approved

#### Actions

- Planning approval
- Funding and financial review
- Technical Design
- Asbestos removal
- Procurement of construction contract

#### **Station Quarter – Lowestoft Railway Station Refreshments Building**

Darren presented the latest, revised concept designs for the Railway Station, which will see the derelict building, which has been vacant for over 50 years, sensitively restored, and the introduction of a glass extension to increase cover space. Darren emphasised that this project is about retaining and restoring an important heritage asset. Richard has arranged meetings with key stakeholders to update them on the plans, but ultimately if the work isn't undertaken, then the building will deteriorate further.

#### Actions

- Commercial Assessment
- Ecological Assessment
- Structural Assessment

#### Next Steps

- Complete purchase
- Review commercial viability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit planning application for Station Building</li> <li>• Engagement with key stakeholders</li> <li>• Procurement of design RIBA 4-7</li> </ul> <p><b>Seafront Vision</b></p> <p>The designs have now been submitted for planning permission. The project will see Royal Plain fountains replaced, multi-use games area, improvements to Royal Green event space, and a new pocket park introduced at South Quay Wharf, increasing the green space in this area.</p> <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre application process completed</li> <li>• Survey works completed</li> <li>• Public engagement completed</li> <li>• Planning application completed</li> </ul> <p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning approval</li> <li>• Technical Design</li> <li>• Appoint main contractor</li> <li>• Construction Jan 2024</li> </ul> <p><b>Jubilee Parade (Levelling Up Fund)</b></p> <p>Darren presented the latest designs to the Board. A Public Engagement event was held in July at East Point Pavilion, with positive responses relating to the designs. This will be submitted for planning permission imminently.</p> <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preplanning application completed</li> <li>• Cliff survey completed</li> <li>• Public Engagement completed</li> <li>• Business engagement</li> </ul> <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Planning Application</li> <li>• Approve lease of current tenants</li> <li>• Technical Design</li> <li>• Procurement of main contractors</li> <li>• Feedback from Suffolk Police</li> </ul> <p><b>Port Gateway</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pocket Park - ABP will prepare the Site and hand over to ESC to deliver Pocket-park vision. Waste removal from previous occupants is currently being planned. Quayside surveys suggest suspended deck is in poor condition. ABP will demolish the suspended deck prior to ESC taking occupation, which is expected to take approx. 6 weeks. Demolition contractors are expected to start Q4 2023.</li> <li>• Ice Factory – Works are expected to start from October, with asbestos removal campaign expected to take approx. 14 weeks. The demolition will take approx. 4 weeks. Which will see the site will be cleared, levelled and surfaced. The site will then be ready to support the LEEF project by providing carparking, warehouse or laydown area options. New boundary fencing will be erected post demolition works.</li> </ul>	Tom Duit
8	<p><b>Procurement Opportunities</b></p> <p>An overview of East Suffolk’s Dynamic Purchasing System and Social Value aspirations, which was set up to support businesses with pre-tendering for construction projects under the Towns Fund, were presented to the Board. Further information about the system can be found here: <a href="#">New tendering tool designed to deliver long-term benefits for Lowestoft</a></p>	Darren Newman
9	<p><b>Ambassador Programme – update</b></p> <p>At the last meeting, we asked for Place Board members to come forward to support a working group for the Ambassador programme. Representatives from First Light Festival, Lowestoft Vision, and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce have come forward, as well as Phil</p>	Darren Newman

	Aves. Planning for a future Ambassador event is taking place, but the group will review the objectives, ambitions, and communications plan, and present any proposed alterations to the Board.	
10	<p><b>East Coast College – Civil Engineering &amp; Construction campus, Lound update</b></p> <p>Rachel provided an overview of the new campus at Lound, which will become a sustainable training facility to support regional skills needs, with partnership and collaboration central to opportunity and success, as well as an overview of the skills need.</p> <p>The college has refurbished 2 buildings for training classrooms, office space and canteen facilities. The next phase in planning is to demolish the large school building and finalise new resource space in this area.</p> <p>The planned curriculum will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support adult new entrants from unemployed, service leavers, returners, those seeking a new career. College delivery or Workplace Diplomas</li> <li>• 16-18 construction students providing career knowledge as well as upskilling</li> <li>• Apprenticeships</li> <li>• School STEM to inspire and target next step choices</li> <li>• Commercial training for mandated courses as well as upskilling the workforce for example CSCS, CPCS</li> <li>• Partnership training models to be explored for specialist areas</li> <li>• Capacity to explore wider sector areas linked to regional skills needs</li> <li>• Wider regional skills such as Heritage and Traditional skills, as well as Environmental.</li> </ul>	Rachel Bunn
11	<b>AOB</b>	Stuart Rimmer